

Developing a new 4-year Midwifery Bachelor's degree at the University of Luxembourg

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INTRODUCTION

Up until 2024, Midwifery education in Luxembourg was structured as a three-year advanced technical diploma. Recent reforms increasing midwife competencies contributed to the decision that a four-year university degree would be required. However, upgrading the three-year advanced technical diploma to a four-year degree course was a challenge because of various constraints, a large number of stakeholders and conflicting ideas on relevant subjects. Methods used to develop midwifery education curricula appear to be lacking in the literature.

OBJECTIVES

The aim of this study is to describe the methods used for curriculum development of a midwifery bachelor's degree to ensure that it meets educational and professional standards, while taking into consideration the national context and experts' opinions

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A modified Delphi survey was used to gather experts' opinions on various elements to be integrated into the future midwifery bachelor curriculum.

Relevant stakeholders were identified, and different experts shortlisted. Between October 2024 and January 2025, expert panels were convened to determine modules and key essential and non-essential subjects.

Clinical placements were also considered. Consensus on curriculum content was obtained through a two-round modified Delphi approach.

For each aspect of the curriculum, closed multiple choice questions were asked

The Wooclap® website was used to obtain real-time individual anonymous answers to reduce the influence of expert bias. Divergent responses were discussed openly. Conclusions of round one were additionally reconsidered in a subsequent round.

The definitive answers were then validated by the University curriculum development team.

This study was approved by the University of Luxembourg's ethical review panel (reference ERP 24 - 116 BMSCD).

RESULTS

Seven consultations with a total of 34 experts from different disciplines took place over a four-month period to finalize the proposed curriculum.

On average 13 experts attended each of the 90 minutes meetings.

This enabled modules, subjects and the contents to be determined using the 2024 version of the International Confederation of Midwives competencies as a template for learning outcomes.

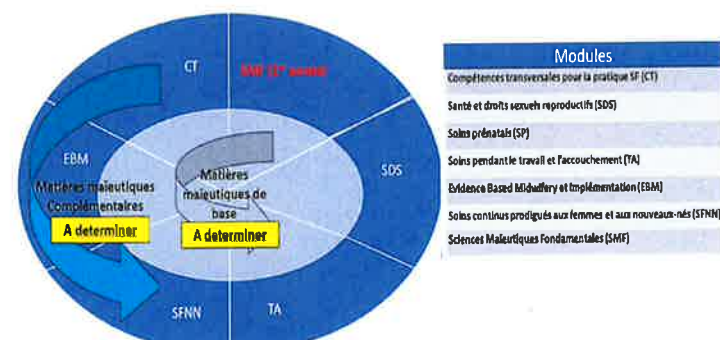


Figure 1: Modular based learning through International Confederation of Midwives competencies

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Table 1: The overall organization of 4 year midwifery curriculum

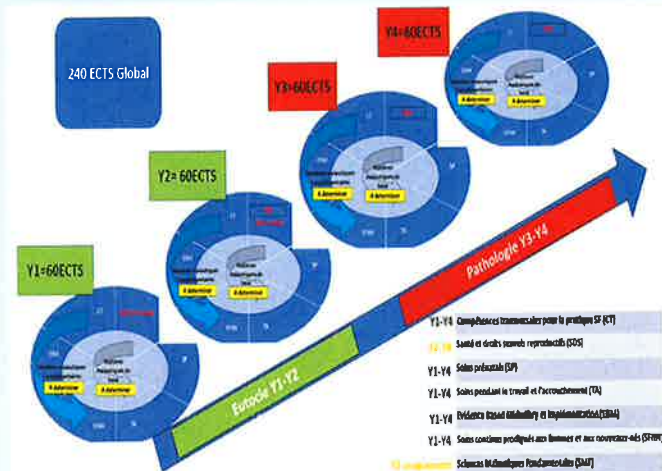
Module	ECTS points	Semester	Type of teaching
Fundamentals of Midwifery sciences	13	1	Theory including simulation/ skills lab
Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights	16	4,5,6,7	Theory including simulation/ skills lab
Antenatal Care	22	2,3,4,5,6,7	Theory including simulation/ skills lab
Care During Labour and Birth	31	1,3,4,5,6,7	Theory including simulation/ skills lab
Ongoing Care of Women and Newborns	21	2,3,5,6	Theory including simulation/ skills lab
Cross-functional Competencies for Midwifery Practice	10	2,4,7	Theory including simulation/ skills lab
Evidence based midwifery and implementation	5	2,5	Theory including simulation/ skills lab
Basic Clinical practice	24	1,2,3	Clinical practice placement
Intermediate clinical practice	24	4,5	Clinical practice placement
Advanced clinical practice	30	7,8	Clinical practice placement
International mobility (Erasmus programme)	30	6	Clinical Practice & Theory
Dissertation	14	7,8	Research based project and defence
Total	240	8	

4170 hours = 59% Clinical placement : 41% Theory

Table 2: Results of the satisfaction survey of participants who attended the consultation meetings

Category	5 (Very Satisfied)	4 (Satisfied)	Total Respondents
Overall Satisfaction	7	4	11
Content Satisfaction	6	5	11
Program Recommendations	7	4	11

Figure 2: Reiterative modular-based and competency-based learning model. The same modules are repeated consistently throughout the four-year course



CONCLUSION

The use of a modified Delphi method enabled a transparent, methodological and consensual approach to design a future proof competency-based midwifery curriculum. This may inspire other institutions in their midwifery curriculum design. In addition to harmonizing methods that are adapted to local contexts, this may also assist the professionalization of midwifery education in an academic context and improve overall standards.

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