

MIDWIFERY DEPARTMENT

POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMME

"REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH – CHILDBIRTH – PARENTHOOD – BREASTFEEDING"

**Midwifery Department
School of Health Sciences
International Hellenic University (IHU)**

STUDY GUIDE

June 2025

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POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME

"REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH – CHILDBIRTH – PARENTHOOD – BREASTFEEDING"

INTERNATIONAL HELLENIC UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES MIDWIFERY DEPARTMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Postgraduate Programme (PGP) aligns with the mission and scientific orientation of the Department of Midwifery at the International Hellenic University (IHU), and is part of its strategic development plan.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME

The Master's program aims to equip students with postgraduate-level knowledge, education, scientific grounding, and expertise in modern fields of Midwifery Science and Reproductive Health, with particular focus on childbirth, and midwifery care during the transition to parenthood, including the pre-conception, pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum, and breastfeeding periods.

The program specifically targets the biological, physical, psychological, and social preparation of prospective parents for parenthood, ensuring optimal and safe conditions for the child's well-being. It covers a range of areas, including preparation programs, health promotion, prevention, early diagnosis, and management of potentially dangerous situations (such as endocrine disorders, sexually transmitted diseases, mental health concerns, etc.), as well as complications that may arise during the reproductive years.

A core objective of the Master's program is to advance knowledge, stimulate research, and meet the educational, research, social, cultural, and developmental needs of the country in the essential area of Midwifery Science. The program provides specialized, high-level knowledge in the latest developments in reproductive health, midwifery care during pregnancy, childbirth, and parenthood. Additionally, it delivers both theoretical and applied knowledge to healthcare professionals working within the community, especially in areas related to the psychological and physical preparation of pregnant women.

This approach not only enhances the quality of midwifery care but also contributes to the growth of the field, creating a solid foundation for professionals who aim to improve reproductive health services and provide comprehensive care during critical life stages.

Key objectives include:

- High-level training of professionals for public or private health services positions at all levels (e.g., hospitals, maternity centres, family planning units, reproductive health centres).

- Academic and clinical training for independent health professionals specialising in reproductive health, childbirth, parenting, and breastfeeding.
 - Promotion of research in all relevant fields.
 - Preparation of scientists for educational institutions, research centres, and health promotion programme design.
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3. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The graduates of the Master's program are expected to acquire the knowledge, skills, and competencies to:

- a) Provide high-level information, expertise, and counseling on reproductive health, family planning, pregnancy, childbirth, parenthood, and breastfeeding to expectant parents.
- b) Support expectant parents with comprehensive information on both national and international developments in the field of Midwifery Science and Reproductive Health, especially concerning assisted reproduction technologies and modern developments in prenatal screening.
- c) Offer counseling, holistic care, and guidance to prospective parents regarding parenthood, preparation for childbirth, and breastfeeding.

Specifically, the graduates of the Master's program, upon successful completion of their studies, are expected to:

1. Be able to write a research protocol for studies with the ability to gather and interpret relevant data in order to develop an appropriate framework for conducting and completing research while adhering to ethical principles. They should be able to select and apply the appropriate statistical tools according to the principles of biostatistics.
2. Be capable of cultivating communication and counseling skills to establish trusting relationships between healthcare professionals and recipients of healthcare services, fostering teamwork, negotiation, and emotional management.
3. Be able to design prenatal counseling programs and provide guidance on laboratory tests for the early diagnosis of high-risk pregnancies, family planning, breastfeeding, hygiene, nutrition, etc.
4. Be able to provide evidence-based nutritional counseling for pregnant women, mothers, and breastfeeding women according to increased dietary requirements or special cases and collaborate effectively with

other specialties for specific populations or cases (e.g., gestational diabetes, etc.).

5. Be able to offer evidence-based counseling, planning, and interpretation of prenatal screening tests for pregnancy within the scope of their duties.
6. Be able to recognize and understand the legal framework of midwifery care centers and the requirements for providing safe care, promoting service quality and reducing malfunctions.
7. Be capable of supporting cultural and social sensitivity in midwifery care for different cultural groups and special populations, promoting their health.
8. Be able to provide evidence-based psychological support counseling to postpartum women in primary care, and refer them to specialized services, including adolescents, women of reproductive age, postmenopausal women, and other groups of women.
9. Be able to apply and promote the use of midwifery-centered, gynecology-centered, and holistic protocols for ongoing high-quality care during pregnancy, childbirth, the postpartum period, and neonatal care.
10. Be capable of using modern technological tools to provide services related to online preparation programs, e-learning platforms, etc.
11. Be able to take a leading role in organizing preparation programs and coordinate an interdisciplinary team.
12. Be able to organize and update the midwifery care and monitoring plan for the mother-infant dyad, according to updated guidelines for supporting normal childbirth and breastfeeding, promoting health, reducing morbidity, and lowering healthcare costs.
13. Be skilled in applying both basic and advanced skills during the breastfeeding period and in preventing and managing complications related to it.
14. Be able to coordinate and provide high-level emergency care for both the woman and the newborn, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for the pregnant woman, postpartum woman, and newborn in all levels of care, as well as in crisis and disaster situations.

This comprehensive skillset enables graduates to contribute significantly to the advancement of reproductive health, midwifery practices, and family-centered care.

4. AWARDED DEGREES

The programme awards a **Postgraduate Diploma (MSc) in “Reproductive Health – Childbirth – Parenthood – Breastfeeding”**, corresponding to Level 7 of the National and European Qualifications Framework (according to Law 4763/2020, Article 47).

A certificate of completion may be issued prior to the formal degree. The Master's Degree is accompanied by a Diploma Supplement in both Greek and English, in accordance with the provisions of Article 15 of Law 3374/2005 and the ministerial decision under number Φ5/89656/BE/13-8-2007 (Government Gazette B` 1466). This supplementary document is explanatory, providing information about nature, level, overall educational context, content, and status of the studies successfully completed. It does not substitute for the official degree, or the transcript of courses awarded by the University of International Hellenic University.

5. CURRICULUM AND ECTS CREDITS

Each academic semester consists of 13 teaching weeks. During the first two semesters, students must complete 10 courses (5 courses in the 1st and 2nd semester), each representing six (6) ECTS credits. The Master's Dissertation corresponds to 30 ECTS credits, bringing the total to 90 ECTS.

The courses include a single educational unit combining both theoretical knowledge and practical application. Each course is taught for 3 hours per week. In the first two semesters, the student is required to successfully complete 10 courses (5 in the 1st semester and 5 in the 2nd semester), each of which corresponds to six (6) ECTS credits.

Students are also encouraged to participate in seminars, workshops, conferences, and professional site visits.

Code	Course Title (EN)	Teaching Hours	ECTS
Semester 1 Modules (30 ECTS)			
MM100	Research Methods in Health Science	39	6
MM101	Reproductive Health Psychology, Counselling & Communication Skills	39	6
MM102	Woman's/ Family's Health Care: Health promotion models for Reproductive Health	39	6
MM103	Prenatal Testing/ Pregnancy complications	39	6
MM104	Intercultural approach, sociological aspects and legal issues during midwifery practice	39	6
	Total of 1st semester	195	30
Semester 2 Modules (30 ECTS)			
MM200	Biostatistics - Applying research in Health Sciences- Writing a paper	39	6
MM201	Advanced Midwifery Care for promoting normal childbirth	39	6
MM202	Advanced Midwifery care during Parental Preparation	39	6
MM203	Advanced Midwifery Care for mother & newborn- Breastfeeding	39	6
MM204	Dealing with obstetric & neonatal emergencies	39	6
	Total of 2nd semester	195	30
Semester 3 Modules			
MM301	Final Thesis		30
	Total ECTS		90

Each course is taught by one or more academic instructors. For each course, the Assembly designates one instructor as the course coordinator/leader, following a recommendation from the Graduate Program's Steering Committee.

6. DISTANCE LEARNING REGULATIONS

A. Rationale for Distance Learning

The Postgraduate Program (P.G.P.) "Reproductive Health – Childbirth – Parenthood – Breastfeeding" has been designed with a focus on contemporary scientific, professional, and societal demands in its field.

From the outset, the content and teaching methodology of the courses have been structured to support distance learning, in accordance with the Joint Ministerial Order 18137/Z1/16.02.2023 (JMD) of the Minister of Education, Religious Affairs, and the State. The use of technological tools such as online platforms, video tutorials, educational podcasts, etc., is expected to enhance the teaching process and contribute to the achievement of high-quality learning outcomes.

Distance education meets the current learning conditions, is integrated into all levels of education, and has become an essential skill for the modern professional. As part of the P.G.P., a portion of the curriculum is related to the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) by healthcare professionals during communication and counseling with mothers, couples, or individuals. Therefore, the application of these technologies within the program serves multiple pedagogical purposes, familiarizing students with the tools they are expected to utilize in their professional work.

The subjects covered in the program are not restricted; instead, they are expanded and enriched through distance learning, making the program accessible and functional for healthcare professionals – especially midwives – who typically work in rotating shifts and are unable to attend face-to-face programs. Distance education facilitates autonomous learning, a fundamental principle of adult education, enhancing active participation and deepening knowledge.

Furthermore, the P.G.P. "Reproductive Health – Childbirth – Parenthood – Breastfeeding" is the only one of its kind in Greece, covering in-depth and comprehensively the critical and innovative areas of modern midwifery care. The demand is expected to extend nationwide, making the adoption of flexible teaching methods imperative, allowing candidates from remote areas to

participate equally, promoting access to continuing education, and ultimately improving the quality of healthcare services provided.

From a technical perspective, attending the program requires only basic technological equipment (PC with internet connection) and is fully supported by the D.I.P.A.E.'s modern synchronous (Zoom) and asynchronous (Moodle) educational platforms. The design of the teaching methodology includes tools that enhance interactivity and student participation, such as virtual discussion rooms, group assignments, and digital presentations.

To meet the complex needs of postgraduate students, the teaching process primarily relies on Synchronous Distance Learning (according to Article 88 of Law 4957/2022), with the use of ICT, and is supported by Asynchronous Distance Learning. The latter provides additional study material, strengthening the autonomous learning process during students' personal time.

The teaching method is fully aligned with the current trends in higher education in Greece and internationally. It responds to the adult needs, working students, leverages the new legal framework, and makes participation in the P.G.P. both financially and operationally accessible, reducing the overall implementation costs.

B. Technical Infrastructure

The programme uses:

- **Moodle** (asynchronous learning): for sharing resources, submitting assignments, hosting discussions, quizzes, and collaborative tasks.
- **Zoom** (synchronous): for live lectures, Q&A. The meetings can be recorded for later viewing by students, serving for revision or for catching up in case of absence.

Students only need a basic computer setup with internet access. To enhance participation, detailed user guides and technical support will be offered at the beginning of the semester, with the secretariat and technical team available for assistance throughout the entire duration of the program.

The infrastructure of DIPAE ensures the security of data, the maintenance of records (backup), as well as compliance with personal data protection regulations (GDPR), ensuring the proper functioning of the educational process and safeguarding the rights of students and instructors.

C. Analysis of Proposed Methods for Organizing & Implementing Distance Learning

The blended learning model includes, (according to the 88 article of the law 4957/2022):

- **Synchronous Learning (75–80%):** real-time online sessions with participation, interaction, and teamwork
- **Asynchronous Learning (20–25%):** recorded lectures, readings, podcasts, quizzes, and reflective tasks.

Educational principles include:

- **Active & experiential learning** (e.g. case studies, simulations): Students are required to participate in case studies, analysis of real-life scenarios, laboratory simulations, and knowledge synthesis through problem-solving
- **Collaborative learning:** The use of digital tools enables the formation of groups, co-creation of tasks, and the exchange of views in virtual environments.
- **Feedback & mentoring:** "Instructors provide systematic guidance and feedback, enhancing the continuous progress of students and maintaining open channels of communication.

The program adopts transparent and clear assessment processes, which are based on assignments, participation, knowledge tests, and final assessments, where required. In addition, the continuous monitoring of student participation on the platform allows for timely intervention in cases of difficulties. The methodological approach is dynamic and flexible, adapting to the needs of the educational content and the adult learner, and is based on the principles of open, lifelong, and participatory learning.

D. Internal Quality Assurance Process for Distance Education

The assurance of the quality of the distance learning process in the Master's Program "Reproductive Health – Childbirth – Parenthood – Breastfeeding" is a central pillar of its operation and is fully aligned with the National Quality Assurance Framework as well as with the European Union's guidelines for higher education in distance learning.

The internal quality assurance process includes the following key components:

1. Academic and Technical Adequacy

Instructor Specifications: The selection of instructors is based on high academic and professional criteria. All instructors have experience in higher education and in the principles of distance learning.

Staff Training: Instructors and administrative staff attend seminars on the use of digital tools, the development of courses in digital environments, as well as modern pedagogical practices.

2. Evaluation of Educational Material and Learning Experience

Regular Review and Updating of Educational Content: This ensures scientific accuracy and pedagogical suitability.

Course Evaluation by Students: At the end of each teaching unit, students evaluate the course using anonymous questionnaires that assess the quality of teaching, the material, platform functionality, and the overall experience.

3. Supervision and Improvement Process

Internal Quality Assurance Team of the Master's Program: Works in collaboration with the MODIP of DIPAE, systematically monitoring the progress of program implementation and identifying areas for improvement.

Quality Indicators: Measurable indicators are monitored, such as successful attendance rates, participation in activities, timely submission of assignments, performance in assessments, and student satisfaction.

Feedback Mechanisms: An annual feedback and improvement cycle is established, based on the collected data, aiming for the continuous enhancement of the services provided.

4. Ensuring Equal Participation & Student Support

Student Support: Comprehensive administrative and technical support is provided, along with the possibility of individual communication with instructors. The student-centered character of the program is enhanced by the flexibility of the distance learning model.

Protection of Personal Data: Strict privacy policies are implemented (according to GDPR), both in the management of educational materials and in the collection/use of evaluation data.

The continuous upgrading of the program is based on systematic documentation of results and the promotion of good practices. The pursuit of academic excellence is combined with social responsibility and active adaptation to the evolving demands of the health and education sectors.