

## Frequently Asked Questions

### (A) General

#### 1) **What are the core competencies of an advanced practice midwife?**

An advanced practice midwife should take up additional roles and possess competencies of a higher level compared to a registered midwife at entry level. He/she should possess the core-competencies for advanced practice midwives. The Midwives Council of Hong Kong (“the Council”) has developed the Competencies of Advanced Practice Midwives, which have been uploaded onto the website of the Council for reference.

#### 2) **Does an advanced practice midwife have any legal responsibility?**

While the Scheme is on a voluntary basis, an advanced practice midwife who is also a registered midwife should possess the competencies of advanced practice midwives commensurate with experience and is accountable for practising midwifery according to the code of professional conduct and practice for midwives, the handbook for midwives, core competencies for registered midwives as well as the legal and ethical requirements defined by the Council under the regulation of the Midwives Registration Ordinance, Cap. 162, Laws of Hong Kong.

#### 3) **Where can the public obtain information on the lists of advanced practice midwives?**

List of advanced practice midwives is available on the website of the Council.

#### 4) **Will the Council devise a mechanism for regulation / accreditation of the training institutes and/or the programmes leading to recognition of advanced practice midwives in the future?**

Yes. To facilitate the organisation of training programmes, the Council will devise a mechanism by setting training standards and recognising training institutes offering training for advanced practice midwives at a later stage.

**(B) Eligibility**

**5) Who is eligible to be recognised as an advanced practice midwife under the Scheme?**

A currently employed **registered midwife** in Hong Kong meeting the following criteria should be eligible to apply for recognition as an advanced practice midwife:

- (a) has obtained a Master degree in midwifery; **or**
- (b) has obtained a Master degree in health related stream AND completed a total of 60 hours of the specialised midwifery courses as recognised by the Council; **or**
- (c) is a Fellow of the Hong Kong Academy of Nursing (“HKAN”) in the specialty of Midwifery who was admitted in 2012, 2013 or 2014; or is a Fellow of the HKAN in the specialty of Midwifery who has obtained a Master degree in health related stream; **AND**
- (d) possessed six years of **full time post-registration experience in midwifery practice immediately prior to his/her application.**

**6) Is an applicant with cumulative full time post-registration experience in midwifery practice of six years eligible to apply for recognition as an advanced practice midwife?**

Eligible applicants should have possessed six years of full-time post-registration experience in midwifery practice immediately prior to the application. In other words, the **midwifery experience should be continuous prior to application.** Applications with unconfirmed or unascertained eligibility will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**7) Which master programmes are recognised under the Scheme?**

Master programmes in Midwifery and Master programmes in health related stream organised by the eight universities funded by the University Grants Committee and self-financing institutions in Hong Kong are recognised under the Scheme. Lists of recognised master programmes are uploaded onto the website of the Council for reference. The lists are subject to regular review and update. For non-local qualifications which are not included in the lists, applicants are required to apply for assessment services from the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (“HKCAAVQ”), in order to certify the master degree level.

**8) Is an applicant who has obtained a Doctoral degree in health related stream without a Master’s degree eligible to apply for recognition as an advanced practice midwife?**

Eligible applicants should have at least obtained a post-registration Master degree in health related stream. Applicants with higher academic qualifications proven to be at a level equivalent or above the Master level will be considered.

**9) What documents should be provided by an applicant with non-local qualifications which are not on the lists of recognised master programmes?**

An applicant with non-local qualifications which are not on the lists of recognised master programmes is required to provide the qualifications assessment report issued by the HKCAAVQ, so as to ascertain that the non-local qualifications are comparable to Hong Kong Qualifications Framework Level 6 or above.

**10) Which specialised midwifery courses are recognised under the Scheme?**

Specialised midwifery courses should be provided by accredited Post-registration Education in Midwifery (“PEM”) providers in Hong Kong, local / non-local universities and/or international certification bodies as recognised by the Council. The providers should conduct assessments on the completion of the specialised midwifery courses and the duration of each course should be at least six hours or above. For e-learning programmes (i.e. self-study programmes), number of study hours to be counted for each programme is capped at 30 hours. Lists of recognised specialised midwifery courses are uploaded onto the website of the Council for reference. The lists are subject to regular review and update.

**11) Are e-learning programmes recognised by the Council under the Scheme?**

E-learning programmes should be provided by accredited PEM providers in Hong Kong, local / non-local universities and/or international certification bodies as recognised by the Council. Similar to traditional face-to-face programmes, providers should conduct assessments on the completion of the e-learning programmes and the duration of each course should be at least six hours or above. **A maximum of 30 study hours is capped for each course. Applicants should refer to the list of recognised specialised midwifery courses, which is uploaded onto the Council’s website, for the number of study hours to be counted for each recognised programme.**

**12) Is an applicant who is a Fellow of the HKAN in the specialty of Midwifery eligible to apply for recognition as an advanced practice midwife?**

Fellows of the HKAN in the specialty of Midwifery who were admitted in 2012, 2013 or 2014 are eligible to apply for recognition as advanced practice midwives. For those who were admitted after 2014, they should obtain a Master degree in health related stream.

**13) Is an applicant who has possessed six years of full time post-registration experience in other settings instead of a hospital eligible to apply for recognition as an advanced practice midwife? Does he/she need to undergo any assessment in order to fulfill the eligibility criteria for recognition as an advanced practice midwife?**

An applicant should possess six years of full time post-registration experience in midwifery practice immediately prior to his/her application. The employer should ascertain the eligibility of its employees based on the situation of its own institution. No additional assessment is required.

**14) Can an applicant apply for exemption from any of the eligibility criteria?**

No exemption will be granted.

**15) Is a part-time midwife / agency midwife / self-employed midwife / unemployed midwife eligible to be recognised as an advanced practice midwife under the Scheme?**

An applicant must be a registered midwife who is currently employed in Hong Kong and has possessed six years of full time post-registration experience in midwifery practice immediately prior to his/her application. Application should be submitted via his/her current employer for the Scheme.

**(C) Application Procedures**

**16) How does a registered midwife apply for the Scheme?**

An applicant should submit the duly completed application form for recognition as an advanced practice midwife together with the required supporting documents to his/her current employer. Current employer should certify the application and submit the application to the Council on behalf of its employees who are interested in joining the Scheme.

**17) Can an applicant submit application directly to the Council?**

No. Only submission via current employers will be accepted.

**18) Is an applicant required to pay any application fee?**

No application fee is required for the Scheme at this stage. The Council may set and change the fees and charges from time to time in accordance with the government policies and regulations.

**(D) Vetting Procedures**

**19) Can the Nursing Administration of an institution, instead of the human resources department, certify and complete the application form for its employees?**

Yes. Authorised person(s) appointed by the current employers, including but not limited to human resources managers and supervisors who are responsible for handling matters relating to qualifications of registered midwives, should certify the corresponding documents and complete the application form as appropriate.

**20) Given that current employers should certify applicants' full time post-registration experience by signing the declaration at Part B of the application form, is it still necessary for the employers to issue Certification for Experience in Midwifery Practice for their employees?**

Yes. Employers should issue Certification for Experience in Midwifery Practice for their employees, in order to ascertain the applicant's full time post-registration experience in midwifery practice immediately prior to the application.

**21) How long does it take before an applicant receives the result of his/her application?**

Upon receipt of the applications submitted by the current employers, the Council shall conduct checking on the information and seek clarification with the employers when necessary. It is expected that employers will be notified of the results in three to four months, subject to submission of complete set of documents and correct applications.

**22) If an application is not successful, what can the applicant do?**

Employers should only submit applications which are supported by them to the Council. Applicants whose applications are not supported by their employers may appeal to the Council in 30 days upon receipt of notification by the employers. Such applications for appeal should be submitted with a letter issued by the employers setting out details of the reasons for not recommending the applications, and full set of supporting documents provided by the applicants in support of the applications.

**(E) Timeframe**

**23) Will there be another call for applying for recognition as advanced practice midwives if the first call for applications is missed due to changing jobs, being out of town, and etc.?**

The Scheme aims to promote the advancement of professional competence of midwives and pave the way for setting up a statutory registration system in the long run. At present, it operates as a voluntary scheme to recognise advanced practice midwives in Hong Kong. The Scheme will continue until transition to a statutory regime.

**24) Will the Council conduct briefings / forums to registered midwives for the promotion of the Scheme?**

As applicants are required to submit their applications to their current employers, the Council appeals for the employers' support by inviting their employees to submit applications according to the work schedule of the employers, and stay tuned for further updates and announcements on the Scheme. No briefings / forums will be conducted to registered midwives.

**(F) Others**

**25) What are the benefits for joining the Scheme?**

The Scheme aims to promote the advancement of professional competence of midwives and pave the way for setting up a statutory registration system for regulating advanced practice midwives and their practice in the long run. Successful applicants will be issued a Certificate of Recognition, which will be valid until the implementation of statutory registration of advanced practice midwives. Their names will be included in the lists of advanced practice midwives, which will be maintained and uploaded to the Council's website for public reference.

**26) Does an advanced practice midwife need to renew the Certificate of Recognition as an advanced practice midwife?**

The Certificate of Recognition as advanced practice midwife will be valid until the implementation of statutory registration of advanced practice midwives.

**27) Will a registered midwife be eligible for the statutory registration as an advanced practice midwife if he/she does not join the Scheme at this moment?**

A registered midwife who has not joined the Scheme may also apply for registration as an advanced practice midwife upon the implementation of statutory registration of advanced practice midwives.