



# ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY IN UNIVERSITIES STANDARDS AND GUIDANCE





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### INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative standards for Achieving Sustainability in universities. These standards are designed to build on your success in achieving Baby Friendly accreditation for one or more programmes, by supporting you to make the Baby Friendly standards sustainable over the longer term.

These standards will also support a greater understanding of Baby Friendly throughout the university, with the long term aim of improving the health of babies, their mothers and families, whether they are cared for by the students, are the students themselves or are staff working within the university environment. The standards are the result of collating experience about 'what works' from students, lecturers, mentors, managers and Unicef UK assessors. Universities that meet the standards will be 'Re-accredited as Baby Friendly with Sustainability' and receive a Gold Award.

#### BACKGROUND

In November 2016 Unicef UK introduced new Achieving Sustainability standards for accredited maternity, health visiting and neonatal services. These standards do not describe direct clinical care, but rather the foundation on which good care is built, i.e. leadership, culture, monitoring and progression. The standards are proving highly successful, with most services now incorporating them into their work to achieve and maintain Baby Friendly accreditation. A new Gold Award has been introduced to recognise services that have embedded the Achieving Sustainability standards, after which services can move to a new lighter touch re-validation system to replace the periodic re-assessment visits.



Achieving Sustainability standards are now being introduced for universities so that they too are supported to create a strong foundation for embedding and progressing the Baby Friendly learning outcomes over time.

## WHAT IS MEANT BY ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY?

A university is considered to be achieving sustainability when they have implemented and maintained the core Baby Friendly learning outcomes for at least three years as confirmed by a full re-assessment. In addition, they have the adequate leadership structures in place to promote a positive culture, support continued maintenance of the learning outcomes and for progressing and improving the learning outcomes over time.

## WHY DO WE NEED STANDARDS FOR ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY?

Introducing any significant change requires a great deal of effort, and it then takes time for changes to become embedded. The Baby Friendly Initiative is a particularly unique improvement programme because of the complexities surrounding breastfeeding in the UK. Despite a compelling evidence base, breastfeeding is seen by many in the UK as largely unnecessary because formula feeding is viewed as a close second best. It is also a highly emotive subject because so many families have not breastfed, or have experienced the trauma of trying very hard to breastfeed and not succeeding.

Additionally, responsive parenting and building close and loving relationships with babies can be very sensitive issues, as this is not how many people in the UK were parented or parent their own children. Students, lecturers and managers working in the university may have had painful experiences in their own families and may also share the prevailing UK cultural attitudes. In addition, the UK has one of the most successful breastmilk substitute industries in the world, with sophisticated marketing and public relations constantly targeting parents, health workers, university staff and the general public in order to maintain an annual \$900 million industry.

For Baby Friendly to be successful, not only is education required, but also a mutually supportive environment where issues can be openly and safely addressed. For such an environment to exist, well-informed and consistent leadership is needed, backed up by vigilant monitoring and a desire to keep improving over time.

## HOW WILL THE ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE FOR ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY WORK?

#### **Accreditation**

When a university gains Baby Friendly accreditation for a programme following a successful Stage 2 assessment, they will receive a silver plaque, as they do now, and the programme will be 'Accredited as Baby Friendly'.



#### Re-assessment

We anticipate that many departments with an accredited or re-accredited programme will be working towards implementing the Achieving Sustainability standards by the time of their re-assessment. At this time, all the core Baby Friendly learning outcomes will be re-assessed, as happens now, and in addition evidence gathered to demonstrate that the Achieving Sustainability standards are being implemented. University departments that achieve a positive result at their reassessment by meeting all, or almost all, the Baby Friendly learning outcomes can then apply to be formally assessed for the Achieving Sustainability (Gold) Award. Unlike the initial accreditation, the Gold Award will be made to the midwifery/ health visiting department, rather than just the programme.

It is recognised that not all departments will be ready for the Achieving Sustainability assessment at the time of their re-assessment. When this is the case, the re-assessment will take place as happens now and the timing and structure of the next re-assessment can be discussed with the Baby Friendly team on an individual basis. There is no rush or pressure to go for Gold if the department is not ready; we will support the department to move forward in a way that is suitable for their needs.

## The Achieving Sustainability assessment

A detailed submission form will be required, along with supporting evidence and examples of how the Sustainability standards (see below) are working. The assessment will take place over one day and consist of a review of the evidence gathered at the re-assessment and a review of the submission form and supporting documentation. Interviews will take place with the Head of Department, lead lecturers, managers (departmental leads) and Baby Friendly Guardian (see below). University departments that meet the standards will receive a Gold Award.

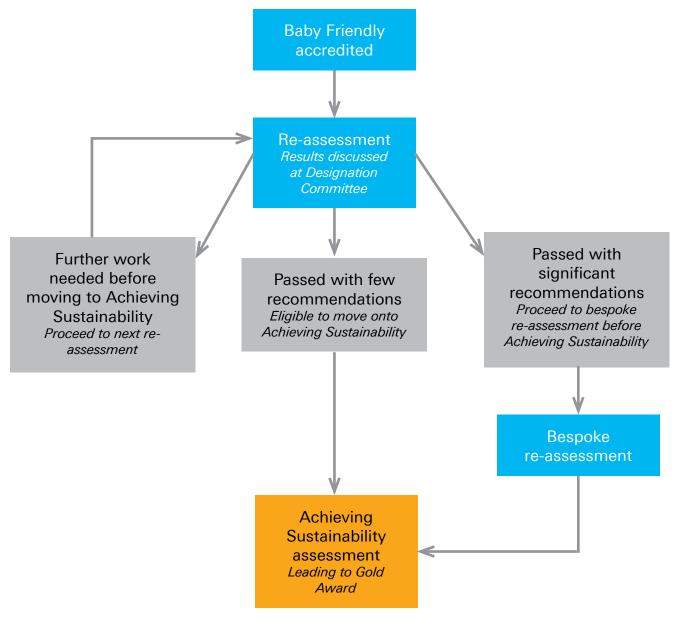
## University programmes that already have a re-accredited course

University programmes that already

have a re-accredited course will have the opportunity to include the Achieving Sustainability standards at their next re-assessment and so achieve the Gold Award. Programmes that have very recently undergone a re-assessment prior to the introduction of the Achieving Sustainability standards may apply to the Designation Committee for special dispensation to undergo the assessment for the Gold Award. The Designation Committee will consider applications based on the re-assessment results.

#### The Achieving Sustainability Pathway

Eligibility to progress to the Gold Award will depend on a successful result at reassessment, as shown in the diagram below:



# OVERVIEW OF THE ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY UNIVERSITY STANDARDS

#### **THEME 1: LEADERSHIP**

## THERE IS A WHOLE TEAM APPROACH TO EMBEDDING THE BABY FRIENDLY LEARNING OUTCOMES

- There is a named Baby Friendly project lead lecturer
- All lecturers\* are educated to deliver the Baby Friendly learning outcomes
- All relevant senior staff are educated to support the Baby Friendly process
- Leadership structures support proportionate responsibility and accountability
- A Baby Friendly Guardian with sufficient seniority and engagement is in post
- Within the department, staff and students adhere to the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (The Code).\*
  - \*This applies to all lecturers with responsibility for delivering content relevant to the Baby Friendly learning outcomes.

#### **THEME 2: MONITORING**

## CONSTRUCT ROBUST MONITORING PROCESSES THAT SUPPORT THE BABY FRIENDLY LEARNING OUTCOMES

Mechanisms exist to ensure that:

- Baby Friendly audits are carried out regularly and according to need
- Audit results are analysed to identify gaps in teaching, learning and assessment
- Student evaluation includes the Baby Friendly learning outcomes
- Action plans are developed in response to findings
- Relevant data is routinely reported to Unicef UK.

#### **THEME 3: PROGRESSION**

## SUSTAIN AND DEVELOP THE BABY FRIENDLY INITIATIVE WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY

- The university demonstrates innovation in order to enhance the teaching, learning and assessment related to the Baby Friendly learning outcomes
- The university demonstrates innovation in order to improve outcomes for students and staff.

#### THEME 1: LEADERSHIP

The following standard will need to be met in order to gain a Gold Award.

## THERE IS A WHOLE TEAM APPROACH TO EMBEDDING THE BABY FRIENDLY LEARNING OUTCOMES

## You will know that the department has met this standard when:

- There is a named Baby Friendly project lead lecturer with sufficient knowledge, skills and hours to meet the Baby Friendly requirements
- There is a mechanism for the Baby Friendly project lead lecturer to remain up-to-date with their education and skills related to the Baby Friendly standards
- All relevant lecturers are educated to deliver the Baby Friendly learning outcomes
- Leadership structures support proportionate responsibility and accountability for sustaining the Baby Friendly award
- All relevant senior staff are educated to support the Baby Friendly process
- A Baby Friendly Guardian with sufficient seniority and engagement is in post
- Within the department, staff and students adhere to the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (The Code).

#### We will assess this by:

#### Reviewing:

- The mechanisms by which the Baby Friendly lead lecturer remains upto-date with their education and skills related to the Baby Friendly standards
- The written curriculum/outline, assessment structure and attendance records for lecturer education

- The organogram (or similar) of the leadership structures, including details of membership of relevant groups and terms of reference/ minutes of meetings etc.
- The written curriculum/outline and attendance records for manager education
- The process for induction and education of new lecturers and managers (including the Guardian)
- The profile and personal statement of the Baby Friendly Guardian.

#### Interviewing:

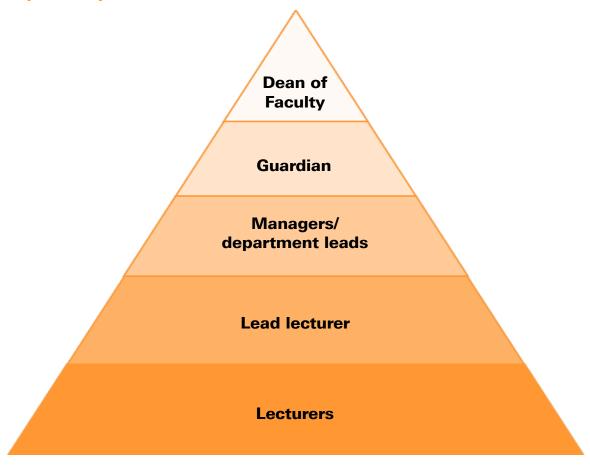
- The Baby Friendly project lead lecturer and asking how she/he remains up-to-date
- A random sample of lecturers to ascertain the education they have received and the knowledge and skills this has given them
- Managers/departmental leads to ascertain:
  - The education they have received and the knowledge this has given them
  - The leadership structures and how these work in practice
  - Their role and how this supports the maintenance of the Baby Friendly standards, including how lecturers and students are supported to uphold the Code.
- The Baby Friendly Guardian, asking them about their role and responsibilities.

#### **GUIDANCE**

It has been common for one or two lecturers to take responsibility for delivering the curriculum related to the Baby Friendly learning outcomes, with other lecturers having limited involvement in or education on the programme. Similarly, managers without a teaching role may have supported the programme, but had little opportunity to develop much

understanding of what it actually means for a programme to be Baby Friendly. This has proven to affect sustainability, with evidence that standards can fall rapidly if the lead lecturer leaves. We are therefore looking for the whole team to receive education and share a proportionate level of responsibility for supporting implementation of the Baby Friendly learning outcomes according to their role.

#### The Baby Friendly team



#### **Lead lecturer**

Maintaining the Baby Friendly standards requires a lecturer to take responsibility for planning, training and supporting staff, as well as monitoring and evaluation. Experience shows that the lead needs to have sufficient capability and time to fulfil this role and to be effectively supported by the team as a whole.

The Baby Friendly project lead lecturer should have the following skills:

 In-depth knowledge and understanding of the Baby Friendly Initiative

- Relevant clinical knowledge and audit skills
- Ability to educate and update lecturers and managers
- Ability to oversee the monitoring process and interpret findings to enable action planning.

For the department to keep up-todate, it is necessary for there to be an understanding of the latest thinking around the Baby Friendly programme. It is therefore important to ensure that the lead lecturer is signed up to relevant news and emailing services, is a member of the university branch of the National Infant Feeding Network (NIFN) and the NIFN University Facebook group where possible, attends the Baby Friendly Annual Conference and takes up other relevant learning opportunities.

#### Lecturers

Experience has shown that when all relevant lecturers are educated to fully understand the Baby Friendly standards, students' knowledge and skills are higher at assessment. When the knowledge of Baby Friendly extends beyond the lead lecturer it becomes much easier to weave the learning outcomes through the course and so create a more holistic understanding of their impact on babies, their mothers and families. Lecturer education also encourages shared understanding and responsibility and enables succession management if the lead lecturer leaves.

The recommended learning outcomes for lecturer education can be found in the Appendix. In-house training can be created using these learning outcomes as a guide, or Unicef UK can provide a lecturers' course. Giving the lecturing team the opportunity to learn together can be particularly successful, as it allows them to explore opportunities and challenges for the courses they teach, as well as to share experiences and understanding. It is expected that this lecturer education will take around two days, and that new lecturers will be educated within six months of joining the team.

At assessment, a random sample of lecturers will be interviewed about the education they have undergone.

#### Managers/department leads

Within the faculty there are usually managers who have some influence on Baby Friendly accredited courses but who do not have a teaching role. Appropriate and proportionate education and support for these key managers will be required. A

mechanism should also exist for ensuring the induction and education of new managers when they start work in the faculty.

The education should cover:

- The Baby Friendly standards (including the Achieving Sustainability standards) and the The Code and why they are important
- The value of human milk and the health outcomes associated with infant feeding and parent-infant relationships
- The local and UK context, including why infant feeding is such a contentious issue requiring special attention
- Understanding a university manager's role in protecting breastfeeding and early parent-infant relationship building, including for students and staff.

It is expected that this manager education will take around two hours. At assessment, we will look for an effective and proportionate training programme that meets the needs of all relevant managers.

#### The Guardian

A Baby Friendly Guardian should be identified. This will be a high level member of staff, for example the Head of Faculty, or other senior manager with faculty wide influence. The Guardian should agree to take responsibility for promoting, protecting and supporting the standards, including compliance with the The Code. It is expected that the Guardian will attend the manager education.

The role and responsibilities of the Guardian will include:

- Understanding the Baby Friendly standards and The Code
- An awareness of the cultural context within the UK, including why breastfeeding is a contentious issue and how it needs to be protected

- Being an advocate and spokesperson for the Baby Friendly Initiative at a senior level and externally as required
- Receiving relevant audits and progress reports as appropriate
- Looking for opportunities and threats to the Baby Friendly learning outcomes and communicating these to the lecturing team
- Being available to provide support to the lecturing team when required.

#### The Leadership team

The leadership team consists of those who have a responsibility for ensuring that the Baby Friendly learning outcomes are maintained and progressed. It is likely that the team will include the Baby Friendly project lead lecturer, a representative from clinical practice, the lead for education and the Guardian. Other lecturers or managers may also be included as appropriate.

The leadership team is responsible for:

- Establishing and sharing a clear vision
- Facilitating relevant learning for staff
- Monitoring, evaluation and action planning
- Providing a supportive environment for staff
- Narrowing the theory-practice gap, ensuring that students can translate the learning outcomes into clinical practice.

Periodic meetings of the leadership team would be expected in order for them

to review the monitoring results and plan appropriately for the maintenance and progression of the Baby Friendly standards.

#### The Code

Lecturers and students are frequently targeted by companies that come within the scope of the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (the Code). Teaching and learning materials, free educational events, sponsorship, grants, scholarships and awards are all offered in an attempt to create goodwill, brand awareness and access to students.

The Leadership team is encouraged to support departments, staff and students to understand the Code and the importance of protecting their programmes from harmful commercial interests. Actions to support this could include developing guidance on what this means in practice, for example key things to consider when looking for funding for a research project, or when deciding whether to attend or host an external study day.

More information on this can be found in our guide: Working with the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk
Substitutes: A Guide for Health Workers.

#### THEME 2: MONITORING

The following standard will need to be met in order to gain a Gold Award.

## CONSTRUCT ROBUST MONITORING PROCESSES THAT SUPPORT THE BABY FRIENDLY LEARNING OUTCOMES

## You will know that the department has met this standard when:

Mechanisms exist to ensure that:

- Baby Friendly audits are carried out regularly and according to need
- Audit results are analysed to identify gaps in teaching, learning and assessment
- Students' formative and summative assessments positively support the Baby Friendly learning outcomes
- Student evaluation includes feedback on how the Baby Friendly learning outcomes are taught
- Action plans are developed in response to findings
- Relevant data is routinely reported

to the leadership team and to Unicef UK.

#### We will assess this by:

#### Reviewing:

- Audit results, as well as the mechanisms by which audits are carried out and the results analysed
- Sample student assessments
- Examples of action plans to address challenges
- Student evaluations.

Interviewing the Baby Friendly project lead and relevant manager and asking them about the processes in place for audit and evaluation of the Baby Friendly learning outcomes.

#### **GUIDANCE**

## The Baby Friendly audit/self-assessment tool

The Baby Friendly audit tool is designed for lecturers to self-assess the effectiveness of their teaching. It is divided into themes so that relevant learning outcomes can be assessed quickly and easily as they are taught. The audit tool can also be used in its entirety to assess whether the course is meeting all the learning outcomes required to be accredited as Baby Friendly and for staff to self-assess their own knowledge and skills. Since its introduction, use of the audit tool has greatly improved results at Stage 2 assessments, as it has given lecturers a better understanding of the breadth and depth of knowledge required by the students and enabled them to adjust their teaching accordingly.

To support sustainability we are looking for there to be effective use of the audit tool, including a regular timetable for carrying out audits according to need and a mechanism for the results to be analysed and any gaps in learning identified.

#### Students' assessments

We would expect there to be regular reviews of the formative and summative assessment process to ensure that this positively supports student learning related to the Baby Friendly learning outcomes and that it remains up-to-date and relevant to practice. We would expect there to be comparisons made to the Baby Friendly audit results to help inform improvements in the student assessment process. For example, one university found that students did very well

overall when undertaking an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) which included supporting a mother to breastfeed, but less well when audited on their ability to support a mother with positioning and attaching her baby for breastfeeding. An analysis of the OSCE requirements revealed them to be broad and lacking in the essential detail which would enable the student to fully support a mother.

Consideration should also be given to the quality of practice-based assessment tools to ensure that these remain up-to-date and relevant. We would also expect there to be regular reviews of mentors' knowledge and skills in support of the students' formative and summative assessments in the clinical area. The Baby Friendly standards should be an agenda item on the Trust/university programme committee (or equivalent) where any relevant issues can be addressed.

#### Student evaluation

Student evaluations can provide valuable insights to support improvements in the way that the Baby Friendly learning

outcomes are taught and in how to improve the course overall. For example, in the past students have fed back that infant feeding is the only area where they felt confident in their practice, which may indicate a need for taking a Baby Friendly approach to other areas of the curriculum. Students have also fed back that there is too much breastfeeding in their course, which could indicate that the course is not presenting a holistic understanding of parents' experience, or that the teaching style is too emphatic, or that the course is failing to get across the importance of breastfeeding and students remain sceptical of its value or their role in supporting it.

#### **Action planning**

We will require action plans to address weaknesses in the programme identified by the monitoring process. These should include what improvements are to be made, how these will be accomplished, who is responsible, the proposed timeframe and resources required. The action plans will form part of the portfolio submitted to Unicef UK as evidence of continuing sustainability.



#### THEME 3: PROGRESSION

The following standard will need to be met in order to gain a Gold Award.

#### SUSTAIN AND DEVELOP THE BABY FRIENDLY INITIATIVE WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY

## You will know that the department has met this standard when:

- The university demonstrates innovation in order to enhance the teaching, learning and assessment related to the Baby Friendly learning outcomes
- The university demonstrates innovation in order to improve outcomes for students and staff.

#### We will assess this by:

#### Reviewing:

Examples of improvements related

- to the Baby Friendly standards made within the department, including the rationale, planning and implementation, monitoring and evaluation
- Examples of extending the Baby Friendly principles to other areas of the university.

Interviewing the Baby Friendly project lead lecturer and relevant managers about the examples provided including process, challenges and next steps.

#### **GUIDANCE**

Progression will look different in different universities depending on numerous factors, from the type of programme and size of cohorts, to the makeup of the faculty. However, if the leadership and monitoring standards have been effectively implemented, it should be possible to take a systematic approach that allows weaknesses, opportunities and threats to be identified and addressed and therefore progress to be made.

At assessment, we will be looking for examples of improvements that have positively impacted, or have the potential to impact, on student learning and, in turn, outcomes for babies, their mothers and families. We will use these examples to confirm that the leadership and monitoring standards are working in practice. This is an opportunity to showcase successful ideas and innovations, as well as what you have learnt from the process. In time, we envisage creating a central repository for information-sharing so that universities can learn from each other.

#### **Enhancing the accredited course**

We are looking for the university to continue enhancing the accredited programme even after the initial accreditation and the Gold Award. The aim should be to continually improve the students' depth of understanding, skills and confidence related to the Baby Friendly standards and to ensure that the programme continues to reflect the current evidence base.

Using the monitoring process described above to identify where the gaps are in the students' experience will help start the process of creating new learning opportunities to fill those gaps. This could include updating teaching sessions, but could also include improving the students' clinical experiences so that they are more confident in their practice. Examples include enabling students to spend time with specialist infant feeding midwives, or at breastfeeding support groups or clinics.

Ensuring that all students have enough placement allocation in areas where they

will see breastfeeding mothers should also be a priority. Some universities have developed their own breastfeeding support group/drop in centre for local mothers and university students/staff, both to support the local community and to provide their students with the experience they need.

Providing students with wider learning opportunities such as international placements and attendance at, or participation in, relevant conferences could also be considered.

#### **Progression within the department**

Ensuring that lecturing staff are kept up-to-date with developments related to the Baby Friendly standards is important for achieving sustainability. Considering the standards in other relevant work of the department could also support progression, for example when developing the selection processes for new students or when considering the research agenda etc.

## Progression within the wider university

Looking for opportunities to expand the Baby Friendly principles into the wider faculty or even the university as a whole could be considered. For example, Unicef UK is currently developing learning outcomes for allied health professionals who have contact with new mothers and babies, such as children's nurses, dieticians and pharmacists. Championing the inclusion of these learning outcomes into other relevant courses within the faculty could be considered.

Consideration could also be given to the needs of breastfeeding staff and students within the university and how these needs would be better met. This could include creating a university breastfeeding policy, providing rooms for feeding or expressing and awareness raising in the public areas (including restaurants and cafés) of the need to support breastfeeding.



# WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE GOLD AWARD IS ACHIEVED?

A portfolio will be kept by the university which will include the Baby Friendly annual audit results and other relevant data. It will record successes and challenges relating to Baby Friendly, including evidence of action planning and evaluation. Significant changes in management structures and personnel will also be reported. The portfolio will be submitted annually to Unicef UK.

Three years after the initial Gold accreditation, a re-validation meeting will take place with a Unicef UK Baby Friendly assessor to review the portfolio and the action taken to address any recommendations made at the re-assessment visit and/or Achieving Sustainability assessment. Following this meeting, further formal re-validation meetings will take place with a Baby Friendly assessor every three years. Re-assessment costs will be replaced with an annual licence fee which will represent a cost saving for the university overall.



#### **APPENDIX**

#### SUGGESTED LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR LECTURER EDUCATION

- Describe the role of Unicef, the Baby Friendly Initiative and the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (The Code) and how together they promote child rights and protect breastfeeding.
- Outline the Baby Friendly themes and learning outcomes for pre- and postregistration education programmes.
- Explore how birth, hospital and societal practice and influences can impact on breastfeeding success and early mother-infant attachment.
- Explain how breastfeeding impacts on the physical and emotional health of mothers and babies.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the key differences between human milk and formula milk and their significance for human health.
- Describe how stress in pregnancy can affect foetal development and discuss strategies to enable students help reduce this.
- Revisit the anatomy of the breast and the physiology of lactation and their relevance for supporting effective milk production and responsive mothering.
- 8. Demonstrate an understanding of the instinctive behaviours which take place in the immediate post birth period and how to help students support these.
- Recognise the importance for all mothers to keep their babies close and feed their babies responsively.

- 10. Describe the importance of love on a baby's brain development and the role oxytocin plays in this and consider ways to incorporate this within the programme.
- 11. Demonstrate an understanding of communication techniques to support confidence in students when supporting pregnant women and new mothers.
- 12. Recognise effective breastfeeding and explore ways to enable mothers to get off to a good start and maintain lactation if mother and baby are separated or if baby is reluctant to feed.
- 13. Demonstrate an understanding of how to enable students to identify, prevent and manage care for 'at risk' babies.
- 14. Identify critical times in the early postnatal period which could lead mothers to stop breastfeeding and enable students to consider strategies to prevent this.
- 15. Identify common breastfeeding challenges and explore ways in which students can help prevent and overcome these.
- 16. Demonstrate an understanding of how to incorporate learning outcomes throughout the wider education programme.
- 17. Consider approaches to assessment of student knowledge and skills and ensure fitness for practice at the end of the programme.

MUTES	





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