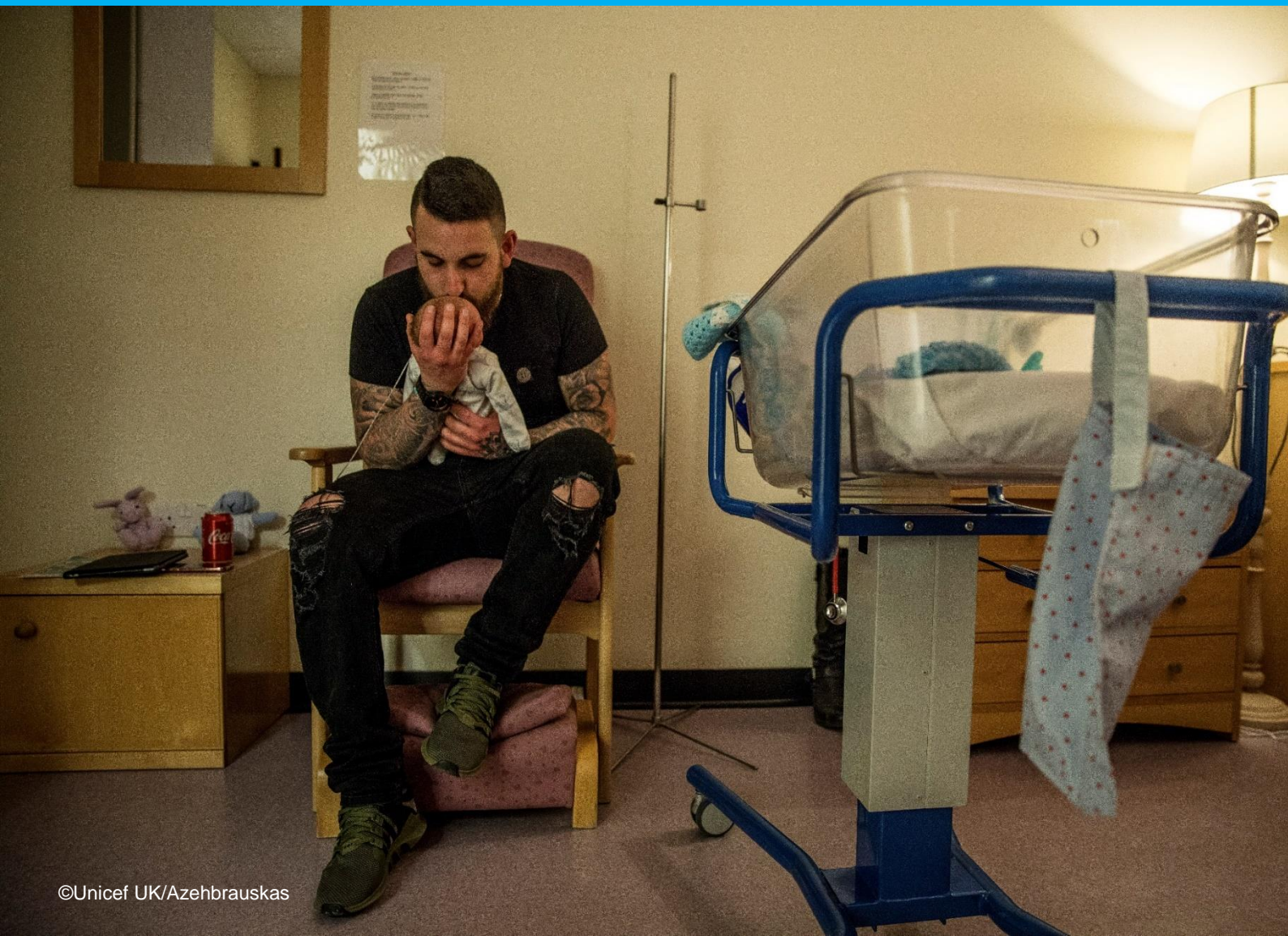




THE BABY  
FRIENDLY  
INITIATIVE



# UNICEF UK BABY FRIENDLY INITIATIVE UNIVERSITY STANDARDS



Our university standards for pre-registration Midwifery courses help ensure that newly qualified midwives have the strong foundation of knowledge and skills needed to support families.

## STANDARD 1: WRITTEN COMMITMENT

Standard 1 involves the university programme making a written commitment to adhere to the Baby Friendly standards, confirmed by a Head of Department or equivalent.

## STANDARD 2: KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Standard 2 is the heart of the university standards – ensuring that all students are equipped with the knowledge and skills to implement the Baby Friendly learning outcomes in the relevant clinical setting. This learning is based on the following themes:

- Have an understanding of breastfeeding
- Enable mothers to breastfeed
- Support close and loving relationships
- Be able to manage the challenges
- Promote positive communication.

## STANDARD 3: THE CODE

Standard 3 requires that teaching is provided without involvement, sponsorship or promotional materials from companies covered by the [International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes](#) – so as to ensure that students access only scientific and factual information about infant feeding, free from commercial interests.





# Implementing the Unicef UK Baby Friendly standards in universities

Pre-registration education programmes must ensure that students who have completed the programme are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to practice in accordance with Baby Friendly standards as newly qualified health professionals. In order for this to happen it is advisable that the key learning outcomes and topic areas have been mapped to the curriculum.

## Learning outcomes and topic areas

Theme 1 Understanding breastfeeding	
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<p>By the end of the course students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have sufficient knowledge of anatomy of the breast and physiology of lactation to enable them to support mothers to successfully establish and maintain breastfeeding</li> <li>2. Appreciate the importance of human milk and breastfeeding on the health and wellbeing outcomes of mothers, babies and the wider family.</li> </ol>
<b>Topics to include</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Anatomy of the breast and changes in pregnancy</li> <li>▪ Physiology of lactation and hormonal influences on both milk production and instinctive mothering behaviour</li> <li>▪ The role of the feedback inhibitor of lactation (FIL)</li> <li>▪ Foetal glucose homeostasis and counter-regulation</li> <li>▪ Breastfeeding and public health; for the mother and baby, as well as the societal, environmental and economic impact</li> <li>▪ The role that breastfeeding and human milk play in improving the health and wellbeing outcomes of infants, their mothers and the wider family</li> <li>▪ Constituents of colostrum and breastmilk, including protective and developmental factors, and epigenetics and the microbiome</li> <li>▪ Constituent differences between breastmilk and infant formula</li> <li>▪ Applying theory to practice; implications for current midwifery practice.</li> </ul>

Theme 2	Enabling mothers to breastfeed
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<p>By the end of the course students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Have an understanding of infant feeding culture and political influences within the UK and the various influences and constraints which impact on women's infant feeding decisions</li> <li>4. Be able to apply their knowledge and understanding of the physiology of lactation to support women to get breastfeeding off to a good start</li> <li>5. Be able to apply their knowledge of physiology and the principle of reciprocity to support mothers to keep their babies close to respond to their cues for feeding and comfort</li> <li>6. Have the knowledge and skills to support mothers and babies to continue to breastfeed for as long as they wish.</li> </ol>
<b>Topics to include</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Overview of breastfeeding and what has influenced changing breastfeeding rates in the UK and worldwide</li> <li>▪ Importance of skin-to-skin contact to support a good start to breastfeeding and mothering (for all mothers irrespective of feeding type) and how to facilitate this within practice</li> <li>▪ Responsive breastfeeding and how mothers and babies develop a reciprocal relationship when they remain close (to include feeding and comfort cues)</li> <li>▪ How a baby breastfeeds – understanding principles and mechanisms of attachment and positioning for effective feeding</li> <li>▪ How to support mothers and babies as they 'learn' to breastfeed including an understanding of instinctive behaviour</li> <li>▪ Recognising effective breastfeeding; assessing milk production and milk transfer</li> <li>▪ Supporting breastfeeding mothers to maximise the amount of breastmilk their baby receives when they choose to partially breastfeed</li> <li>▪ For mothers who are formula feeding, know how and where to access independent information on infant formula</li> <li>▪ Support parents who are bottle feeding to minimise the risks, to make up feeds safely and understand how to sterilise equipment.</li> </ul>

<b>Theme 3 Close and loving relationships</b>	
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<p>By the end of the course students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Develop an understanding of the importance of secure mother-infant attachment and the impact this has on their health and emotional wellbeing</li> <li>8. Be able to apply their knowledge of attachment theory to promote and encourage close and loving relationships between mothers and babies.</li> </ol>
<b>Topics to include</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Overview of infant brain development and importance of love and nurture to ensure optimal outcomes</li> <li>▪ Role of oxytocin in supporting healthy brain development.</li> <li>▪ Building a mother's self confidence in her ability to feed and care for her infant</li> <li>▪ Supporting parents to bottle feed responsively, pacing the feeds (in cases where bottle feeding is being undertaken).</li> </ul>

<b>Theme 4 Managing the challenges</b>	
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<p>By the end of the course students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Be able to apply their knowledge of the physiology of lactation and infant feeding to support effective management of challenges which may arise at any time during breastfeeding</li> <li>10. Have an understanding of the special circumstances which can affect lactation and breastfeeding, (e.g. when mother and baby are separated including preterm and sick infants) and be able to support mothers to overcome the challenges</li> <li>11. Draw on their knowledge and understanding of the wider social, cultural and political influences which undermine breastfeeding, to promote, support and protect breastfeeding within their sphere of practice.</li> </ol>
<b>Topics to include</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Overview of common breastfeeding challenges for both mother and baby e.g. sore nipples, engorgement, mastitis, thrush, insufficient milk supply, hypoglycaemia, jaundice etc.</li> <li>▪ Expression of breastmilk to include hand and pump expression technique</li> <li>▪ Initiating and sustaining lactation when mother and baby are separated including sick and preterm infants</li> <li>▪ Supporting parents to stay with and care for their baby in transitional and neonatal care</li> <li>▪ Supporting breastfeeding when the mother is diabetic</li> <li>▪ Role of support groups / voluntary organisations</li> <li>▪ Situations when breastfeeding is not recommended</li> <li>▪ The International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes and how it impacts on a student's own sphere of practice</li> <li>▪ Protecting breastfeeding; exploring the politics of breastfeeding that impact on practice and care of women</li> <li>▪ Maximising human milk feeding and breastfeeding where breastfeeding may be compromised.</li> </ul>

Theme 5	Communication
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<p>By the end of the course students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Have an understanding of the principles of effective communication and current thinking around public health promotion strategies and approaches</li> <li>13. Be able to apply their knowledge of effective communication to initiate sensitive, mother centred conversations with pregnant women and new mothers</li> <li>14. Have the knowledge and skills to access the evidence that underpins infant feeding practice and know how to keep up to date (e.g. e-alerts, research summaries etc.).</li> </ul>
<b>Topics to include</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Debrief of students' own personal breastfeeding stories</li> <li>▪ Effective communication skills; theory and practice</li> <li>▪ Importance of listening for effective communication</li> <li>▪ Importance of compassion, sensitivity and kindness</li> <li>▪ Public health theory and practice; supporting women to make informed decisions, creating an environment when behaviour change is possible</li> <li>▪ Mother centred care; theory and practice</li> <li>▪ Communicating with care and compassion</li> <li>▪ Skills development to support midwives to facilitate conversations with pregnant women and new mothers</li> <li>▪ Skills to support families where English is not the first language</li> <li>▪ Particular skills required for providing 'telephone' support</li> <li>▪ Working with others in a multidisciplinary environment to support infant feeding.</li> </ul>

The University standards should be read in conjunction with the Unicef UK [Maternity and Neonatal standards](#).

Maternity standards enable staff to:

- Support pregnant women to recognise the importance of breastfeeding and early relationships for the health and wellbeing of their baby
- Support all mothers and babies to initiate a close relationship and feeding soon after birth
- Enable mothers to get breastfeeding off to a good start
- Support mothers to make informed decisions regarding the introduction of food or fluids other than breastmilk
- Support parents to have a close and loving relationship with their baby.

Neonatal standards enable staff to:

- Support parents to have a close and loving relationship with their baby
- Enable babies to receive breastmilk and to breastfeed when possible
- Value parents as partners in care.