

# Diploma in Women's Health



**Faculty Overview  
2021**

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## 1. General Information

iheed and the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland are developing a new Diploma in Women's Health which aims to improve the standard of obstetric and gynaecological care provided by family doctors working in the community and to provide a strong foundation of clinical knowledge and patient management for nurses / midwives and for doctors at the outset of specialist training in obstetrics and gynaecology.

The curriculum and content of the programme is overseen by a Programme Board comprising various stakeholders from the RCPI, iheed and independent experts in obstetrics & gynaecology.

Accreditation for the programme is provided by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland.

**RCPI Programme Director**      Professor Mary Higgins

### **Programme Board**

The Programme Board is responsible for the academic oversight of the programme. This function is essential to guide the development of the Programme, ensuring that the latest treatment strategies and innovative research are included in the curriculum. The Programme Board is also responsible for quality assurance of education processes for delivery and assessment of students.

## 2. Minimum intended programme learning outcomes (MIPLOs)

The curriculum is designed to provide a comprehensive introduction to the breadth and depth of issues in women's health and an appreciation of how the discipline of Obstetrics and Gynaecology functions between primary, secondary and tertiary care.

By the end of the Programme, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate expertise in the management of pre-pregnancy, antenatal, intrapartum and postnatal care of obstetric patients with low levels of complexity
- Have recognition of moderate and high levels of complexity in pre-pregnancy, antenatal, intrapartum and postnatal care of obstetric patients, acknowledging own clinical limitations and when referral to specialist care is required
- Demonstrate diagnostic and therapeutic skills for the delivery of ethical and effective obstetric and gynaecological healthcare to women
- Establish therapeutic relationships with women using effective and sensitive communication skills
- Demonstrate understanding of the relevant social and cultural issues that impact upon the provision of healthcare to women

## 3. Entry Criteria

The programme is aimed at doctors working in primary care and those in early stages of hospital specialisation. It also caters for nurses and midwives involved in women's health. As such, participants should be qualified doctors, nurses or midwives, registered with their respective professional body and engaging in clinical practice for the duration of the programme.

The programme will be conducted online and solely in English. Participants are required to be proficient in English and to have access to a laptop with a microphone, speakers, webcam, and reasonable broadband coverage.

#### 4. Programme Content and Structure

The programme is six months in duration and will cover a wide range of topics in obstetrics and gynaecology over 22 learning weeks.

The programme is provided through a delivery model which blends self-directed learning with tutor-led team-based learning.

Throughout the programme students will engage in:

- Weekly online synchronous tutorials
- Tutor-moderated discussion forums
- Interactive case studies
- Reflective exercises
- Online examinations

Some of the benefits of this approach over traditional classroom-based programmes are:

- Ongoing monitoring of individual student engagement
- Student: tutor interaction
- Accessibility of content at a time and pace that suits each learner
- Frequent individualised feedback points during each programme
- Data analytics to drive programme improvement.
- Highly scalable, secure, and robust delivery

## 4.1. Module Learning Outcomes & Topics

### Module 1: Obstetrics 1

Section	Topics	Learning Outcomes
1	History taking, examination and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate the ability to take a focused, respectful yet thorough history from an Obstetric or Gynaecology patient</li> <li>• Demonstrate the ability to perform a focused, respectful yet thorough Obstetrics or Gynaecological examination (within the limits of intimate examination)</li> <li>• Apply communication strategies (including ISBAR) to demonstrate clear communication with other members of the O&amp;G and wider multidisciplinary team</li> <li>• Apply communication strategies to demonstrate clear and respectful communication with patients and their families including demonstrating choice, shared decision making and evidence based medical advice</li> <li>• Be able to evaluate the role of the multi-disciplinary team in obstetrics and gynaecology.</li> </ul>
2	Physiology and Embryology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate application of physiological changes of pregnancy to common complications of pregnancy</li> <li>• Show how embryological development can be demonstrated in the first trimester ultrasound</li> <li>• Summarise how disorders of embryological development can result in congenital abnormalities, postnatal complications or pregnancy loss</li> </ul>
3	Anatomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply anatomical knowledge to basic surgical procedures (e.g., caesarean, hysterectomy, episiotomy) and to common issues of pregnancy and postnatal care (e.g. physiological hydronephrosis, VTE risk higher in left leg)</li> </ul>
4	Drugs in Pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate how use of medications at different stages of pregnancy may have different teratogenic effects</li> <li>• Summarise safety risks in pregnancy</li> <li>• Compare different options for vaccines (e.g. live, attenuated) in pregnancy and postnatal period and risk benefit ratios of influenza, pertussis and COVID* vaccines (*within limitations of constantly changing data)</li> </ul>

## Module 2: Obstetrics 2

Section	Topics	Learning Outcomes
5	Early Pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarize and defend management of common early pregnancy presentations to the General Practitioner / Early Pregnancy Assessment / Emergency Department including early pregnancy bleeding and pain</li> <li>• Show appreciation of holistic care in management of families affected with miscarriage, Molar or ectopic pregnancy</li> <li>• Compare and contrast management of termination of pregnancy within the community or hospital during the first trimester. Demonstrate application of ethical and moral issues of first trimester termination of pregnancy care</li> <li>• Compare different first trimester genetic screening methods and demonstrate an ability to counsel patients and families</li> </ul>
6	Routine Antenatal Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of the first (booking) visit including showing the importance of risk factor assessment</li> <li>• Summarize the options for routine antenatal care. Demonstrate an appreciation of options for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Screening for fetal anomalies (including the anatomy scan),</li> <li>○ Screening for Gestational diabetes (GDM),</li> <li>○ Rhesus screening (including Anti D) and</li> <li>○ Venous thrombus embolism risk assessment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Apply knowledge of physiological changes of pregnancy, anatomical changes and antenatal care to common presentations to the emergency department including reduced fetal movements or antepartum hemorrhage.</li> </ul>
7	Antenatal complications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply knowledge of physiological and anatomical changes to explain increased risk of antenatal complications</li> <li>• Summarise, argue and discuss management of antenatal complications to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pregnancy induced hypertension (PIH),</li> <li>○ Pre-eclampsia (PET),</li> <li>○ Obstetric Cholestasis (OC),</li> <li>○ Urinary tract infections including pyelonephritis,</li> <li>○ Venous thromboembolism (VTE)</li> <li>○ Fetal growth restriction (both intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR) and small for gestational age (SGA)).</li> <li>○ Sepsis</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

8	High risk/maternal medicine care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarise generic management of women with pre-pregnancy medical conditions that can affect pregnancy (“Maternal Medicine”), including pre-conceptual care</li> <li>• Apply generic Maternal Medicine management to clinical scenarios</li> </ul>
9	Labour and Birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of maternal and fetal anatomy and physiology specific to labour and birth</li> <li>• Compare different modes of birth and argue advantages and disadvantages of each</li> <li>• Apply the Robson Ten Group system to different clinical scenarios</li> </ul>
10	Postnatal Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply postnatal anatomical and physiological changes to demonstrate understanding of postnatal physical and mental health complications</li> <li>• Summarise holistic management strategies for postnatal care in both community and hospital care</li> </ul>

## Module 3 Gynaecology 1

Section	Topics	Learning Outcomes
1	Disorders of menstruation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the normal physiology of menstruation and menstrual cycle</li> <li>• Understand the pathophysiology of disorders in menstruation</li> <li>• Demonstrate a knowledge of conservative and surgical treatments of menstrual irregularities</li> </ul>
2	Contraception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of current methods of contraception and their mechanisms of action</li> <li>• Understand the success rates and complications of current contraception</li> <li>• Demonstrate ability to select appropriate method for each patient</li> <li>• Be able to identify medical eligibility criteria and support the patient in making their contraception choice including emergency contraception</li> </ul>
3	Sexually Transmitted Infection, Vaginal discharge, Human Immunodeficiency Virus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of the clinical presentation of women with Sexually Transmitted Infections</li> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of necessary investigations and treatment of women with vaginal STI and vaginal discharge</li> <li>• Explain modern retroviral treatment for HIV and monitoring of disease</li> </ul>
4	HRT & menopause	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be able to explain the physiology of the peri-menopause axis, understanding the symptoms and changes that occur both in the short and long-term</li> <li>• Explain the risks and benefits of Hormone Replacement Therapy</li> <li>• Describe the symptoms of and explain management of perimenopause</li> <li>• Discuss the development, diagnosis and management of premature ovarian insufficiency</li> </ul>



## Module 4 Gynaecology 2

Section	Topics	Learning Outcomes
5	Benign gynaecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate a knowledge of common gynaecological masses and their presentations</li> <li>• Discuss the investigations to differentiate between benign and malignant masses</li> <li>• Be able to explain the surgical and non-surgical treatments available to patients with benign masses</li> </ul>
6	Infertility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the pathophysiology and psychology of the infertile couple</li> <li>• Explain the pathways for investigating male and female infertility, including primary and secondary infertility</li> <li>• Outline the modern treatments available to assist the infertile couple</li> <li>• Discuss global issues related to fertility</li> </ul>
7	Incontinence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be able to obtain a good incontinence history to differentiate causes of same</li> <li>• Explain the investigations of women with urinary incontinence</li> <li>• Discuss conservative, medical and surgical treatments to treat incontinence</li> </ul>
8	Prolapse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the different causes of vaginal and apical prolapse</li> <li>• Describe how to examine and assess a woman with utero-vaginal prolapse</li> <li>• Explain how to counsel a woman with prolapse on the conservative and surgical options available</li> </ul>
9	Cervical and Endometrial cancers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the clinical presentations of women with uterine and cervical malignancies</li> <li>• Describe the investigation of both malignancies and the role of screening</li> <li>• Evaluate both colposcopy and oncological treatments for uterine/cervical malignancies</li> </ul>
10	Ovarian and vulval cancers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be able to describe clinical presentations of ovarian and vulval malignancies</li> <li>• Discuss the investigations required to detect disease and assess staging of malignancy</li> <li>• Describe current surgical and allied oncological treatments of both malignancies</li> </ul>

## 5. Teaching and Learning Strategy

The approach to teaching and learning adopted for the Women's Health programme considers a variety of different learner environments and recognises that the participants will be mature learners. It values peer-to-peer learning, the experience from each participant's clinical practice and the sharing of such experiences. Within each topic, the material is presented in a variety of styles, designed to appeal to all types of learners.

### 5.1 Self-directed Problem-Based / Case-Based Learning

Under the guidance of clinical tutors, participants will study online using a combination of practical content and case-based learning. Additional thought-provoking case studies with appropriate reading lists are designed to stimulate reflection of the learning points and how they might be applied to the participant's own practice.

### 5.2 Online Tutorials / Seminars

Tutor-led video conference sessions will be held weekly throughout the programme, focusing on topics introduced in the online material and explored in the Discussion Forum. The online tutorial format will vary and may involve discussion around case studies, videos from Key Opinion Leaders and multidisciplinary meetings. These will be facilitated through the online learning environment.

### 5.3 Discussion Forums

Participants' knowledge and skills will be enhanced through their contribution to the online discussion forum under the guidance of a group tutor. These discussions are designed to provide a clinical context to help participants apply acquired knowledge and to keep them engaged and motivated throughout the programme.

## 6. Assessment Strategy

As an introductory knowledge-based programme, the focus of assessment will be to ensure acquisition of knowledge and the ability to form differential diagnoses, and articulate appropriate steps in patient management as set out in the learning outcomes.

To successfully complete the programme, participants will be required to successfully complete an online examination at the end of modules 2 and 4 and demonstrate practical acquisition of key communication skills through the submission of a skills portfolio.

Assessments & Weighting	Communication Skills	Exam
Obstetrics 1	Formative	
Obstetrics 2	10%	40%
Gynaecology 1	10%	
Gynaecology 2		40%

To ensure consistency between delivery and assessment, exam processes will be reviewed to the Programme Board's satisfaction to ensure:

- learning objectives are clear and specific, are aligned with teaching activities and the examination question.
- candidates receive detailed instructions and guidelines for the examination.
- candidates receive a comprehensive marking guide.
- there is consistency in grading and among groups / cohorts.
- questions have high discrimination scores.
- appropriate feedback is provided to students in a timely fashion.

### Examination Format

Each examination will comprise Single Best Answer and Key Feature Problem questions and represent even coverage of all modules. Questions will be drawn from an extensive pre-approved question bank ensuring comparable assessment of topics between students. The examination will be conducted online and supervised by iheed through their remote proctoring solution to ensure appropriate rigour and security procedures are in place to maintain the integrity of the examination process.

### Communication Skills Portfolio

The skills portfolio will afford students the opportunity to demonstrate the practical or skills-based learnings from the programme. This will take the form of a video submission where the participant carries out a mock patient scenario to assess communication skills.

### Passing Requirements

The passing requirement for each assessment is 50% and no compensation between assessments is allowed.

Students are permitted two attempts at each assessment which consist of a main and repeat attempt.

Students who do not successfully complete an assessment within the permissible number of attempts and who are not afforded concessionary attempts by the Royal College of Physicians will be removed from the programme.

Upon successful completion of all assessments and ratification of results, students will be awarded a Diploma in Women's Health from the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland.

No interim award will be given for partial completion of the programme.

## 7. The role of the Tutor

At the heart of the programme is the tutoring team, made up of an international group of obstetricians, gynaecologists, and family doctors with a special interest in women’s health.

Tutors are fully supported by the iheed Academic Affairs Department and the Programme Leader / Director.

Tutors will generally deliver both modules in either obstetrics or gynaecology to a student group, though some tutors may elect to deliver in more than one area, or to deliver the same module to multiple groups.

### Part A – Student Experience

1. Weekly online tutorials
  - Conduct a 1-hour live online tutorial during each week of the programme block, facilitating debate and discussion with learners on the week’s topic.
  - Ensure the overall structure and format of your tutorial is aligned to the learning outcomes and adds real-life context to clinical content.
2. Discussion Forum
  - Moderate and provide guidance on weekly asynchronous online discussion forums on selected topics. These discussions are designed to provide a clinical context to help students apply acquired knowledge and explore new knowledge through their referenced discussion forum posts.

### Part B – Programme Assessment

Programme assessment comprises two exams at the end of modules 2 and 4. The majority of questions will be Single Best Answer, and automatically graded. However, a minority of free-text answers may also feature and require manual correction.

1. Tutors may be asked to grade submissions of free text questions for their group.
2. Tutors will grade the skills portfolio submissions
3. Be available if requested to attend programme committee meetings via video-conference.

### Effort / Duration:

The effort involved in tutoring a module centres around the delivery of a module is:

Activity	Duration / Frequency	Frequency	Schedule	Module total
Facilitate online tutorial	1 hour (+ preparation)	Weekly	Fixed weekly time agreed to suit student and tutor	4 or 6 hours
Moderate Discussion Forum	1 hour (3x 20 mins at own convenience)	Weekly	At own convenience	4 or 6 hours
Correct Assessments	4 hours (video submissions + exam)	Once at end of module	At own convenience	4 hours