

Professional Diploma in **Obstetrics & Gynaecology**

Online



CURRICULUM



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1. General Information

The Professional Diploma in Obstetrics & Gynaecology 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 stakeholders from the RCPI, partner organization iheed and independent experts in obstetrics & gynaecology.

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

RCPI Programme Lead Professor Mary Higgins

iheed Programme Lead Dr Mairead O’Riordan

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 learners.

2. Minimum intended programme learning outcomes (MIPOs)

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

On completion of the programme learners will be able to:

1. Demonstrate diagnostic and therapeutic skills for the delivery of ethical and effective obstetric and gynaecological healthcare to women
2. Demonstrate proficiency in the management of obstetric and gynaecological patients with low levels of complexity
3. Recognise moderate and high levels of complexity in obstetric and gynaecological patients, acknowledging own clinical scope of practice and when referral to specialist care is required
4. Develop appropriate and sensitive communication skills to establish effective therapeutic relationships with women
5. Recognise the relevant social and cultural issues that impact the provision of healthcare to women and demonstrate appropriate clinical decision making relevant to the context of the individual patient
6. Evaluate the application of human factors principles to the clinical practice environment of obstetrics and gynaecology

3. Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes

Module 1: Obstetrics

On completion of this module, learners will be able to:

- Demonstrate confidence and ability in the areas of history taking and examination, including appropriate communication skills, relevant to obstetric care
- Recognise issues relating to physiology, embryology, and anatomy in pregnant women
- Demonstrate appropriate clinical decision making in areas of obstetric care from early pregnancy, routine antenatal care, labour and birth and post-natal care
- Apply knowledge of physiology and embryology to describe the management of antenatal complications
- Recognise scope of own professional capability and when consultation with, or referral to, more senior colleagues is required.

Module 2: Gynaecology

On completion of this module, learners will be able to:

- Demonstrate confidence and ability in patient consultation, including appropriate communication skills, relevant to gynaecological care
- Assess and evaluate appropriate options in the management of contraception
- Explain the pathophysiology and management of common gynaecologic problems, including disorders of menstruation, infertility, sexually transmitted diseases, prolapse and incontinence
- Demonstrate effective management of menopausal symptoms and issues, including the role of hormone replacement therapy
- Assess techniques for the detection and management of gynaecological malignancies
- Recognise scope of own professional capability and when consultation with, or referral to, more senior colleagues is required.

Module 3: Human Factors

On completion of this module, learners will be able to:

- Evaluate key principles of human factors and the influence of person, place and space on care processes and clinical outcomes
- Describe how a systems approach to understanding error can have a direct influence on the development of a safety culture in healthcare
- Recognise and explain how human behaviour, patient involvement and the external environment can influence patient safety as applied to clinical practice
- Assess the impact of working environment, tool and equipment design on professional performance and patient outcomes
- Outline how work process design, teamwork and communication can contribute to patient safety and harm

Apply practical human factors tools and techniques to optimise healthcare systems for safety.

4. 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 obstetrics & gynaecology. 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.

5. Programme Content and Structure

The programme will cover a wide range of topics in obstetrics and gynaecology over 29 learning weeks and is provided through a delivery model which blends self-directed learning with tutor-led team-based learning.

Throughout the programme learners 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 learner engagement
- Learner: 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

Module 1: Obstetrics

SECTION	TOPIC	LEARNING OUTCOMES
1	History taking, examination and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the ability to take a focused, respectful yet thorough history from an Obstetric or Gynaecology patient • Demonstrate the ability to perform a focused, respectful yet thorough Obstetrics or Gynaecological examination (within the limits of intimate examination) • Apply communication strategies (including ISBAR) to demonstrate clear communication with other members of the O&G and wider multidisciplinary team • 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 • Be able to evaluate the role of the multi-disciplinary team in obstetrics and gynaecology.
2	Physiology and Embryology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate application of physiological changes of pregnancy to common complications of pregnancy • Show how embryological development can be demonstrated in the first trimester ultrasound • Summarise how disorders of embryological development can result in congenital abnormalities, postnatal complications or pregnancy loss
3	Anatomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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)
4	Drugs in Pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate how use of medications at different stages of pregnancy may have different teratogenic effects • Summarise safety risks in pregnancy • 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)
5	Early Pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize and defend management of common early pregnancy presentations to the General Practitioner / Early Pregnancy Assessment / Emergency Department including early pregnancy bleeding and pain • Show appreciation of holistic care in management of families affected with miscarriage, Molar or ectopic pregnancy • 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 • Compare different first trimester genetic screening methods and demonstrate an ability to counsel patients and families

Module 1: Obstetrics

SECTION	TOPIC	LEARNING OUTCOMES
6	Routine Antenatal Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of the first (booking) visit including showing the importance of risk factor assessment • Summarize the options for routine antenatal care. Demonstrate an appreciation of options for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Screening for fetal anomalies (including the anatomy scan), › Screening for Gestational diabetes (GDM), › Rhesus screening (including Anti D) and › Venous thrombus embolism risk assessment. • 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.
7	Antenatal complications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply knowledge of physiological and anatomical changes to explain increased risk of antenatal complications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Summarise, argue and discuss management of antenatal complications to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Pregnancy induced hypertension (PIH), › Pre-eclampsia (PET), › Obstetric Cholestasis (OC), › Urinary tract infections including pyelonephritis, › Venous thromboembolism (VTE) › Fetal growth restriction (both intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR) and small for gestational age (SGA). › Sepsis
8	High risk/maternal medicine care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarise generic management of women with pre-pregnancy medical conditions that can affect pregnancy ("Maternal Medicine"), including pre-conceptual care • Apply generic Maternal Medicine management to clinical scenarios
9	Labour and Birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of maternal and fetal anatomy and physiology specific to labour and birth • Compare different modes of birth and argue advantages and disadvantages of each • Apply the Robson Ten Group system to different clinical scenarios
10	Postnatal Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply postnatal anatomical and physiological changes to demonstrate understanding of postnatal physical and mental health complications • Summarise holistic management strategies for postnatal care in both community and hospital care

Module 2: Gynaecology

SECTION	TOPIC	LEARNING OUTCOMES
1	Disorders of menstruation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the normal physiology of menstruation and menstrual cycle • Understand the pathophysiology of disorders in menstruation • Demonstrate a knowledge of conservative and surgical treatments of menstrual irregularities
2	Contraception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of current methods of contraception and their mechanisms of action • Understand the success rates and complications of current contraception • Demonstrate ability to select appropriate method for each patient • Be able to identify medical eligibility criteria and support the patient in making their contraception choice including emergency contraception
3	Sexually Transmitted Infection, Vaginal discharge, Human Immunodeficiency Virus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of the clinical presentation of women with Sexually Transmitted Infections • Demonstrate an understanding of necessary investigations and treatment of women with vaginal STI and vaginal discharge • Explain modern retroviral treatment for HIV and monitoring of disease
4	HRT & menopause	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Explain the risks and benefits of Hormone Replacement Therapy • Describe the symptoms of and explain management of perimenopause • Discuss the development, diagnosis and management of premature ovarian insufficiency
5	Benign gynaecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a knowledge of common gynaecological masses and their presentations • Discuss the investigations to differentiate between benign and malignant masses • Be able to explain the surgical and non-surgical treatments available to patients with benign masses

Module 2: Gynaecology

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

Module 3: Human Factors in Obstetrics & Gynaecology

SECTION	TOPIC	LEARNING OUTCOMES
1	Introduction to Systems Thinking and Human Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the area of human factors • Describe core theories of human factors • Determine the key components that make healthcare a complex adaptive system (based on personal and professional experience)
2	Patient Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguish human factors as an approach to reduce avoidable harm in healthcare to enhance resilience and improve patient safety • Examine 'error' framing in healthcare from a human factors perspective • Apply a human factors approach to understanding and learning from a patient safety incident
3	Person (Professional) Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the roles that professional preparation, behaviour and culture play as part of the system of care • Evaluate decision making strategies in healthcare • Explain how stress and fatigue can affect human performance, and how these challenges can be mitigated
4	Work System Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline core principles of design thinking and practice • Examine key features of tool and equipment design for safety in healthcare • Review key features of environmental design for safety in healthcare
5	Patient Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine and illustrate by example the key components of person-centred care • Analyse the interactions and impact of the patient and family on care processes and care environments • Describe how patients can be involved in co-designing and co-producing improvements in patient safety at an individual and organisational level, including benefits and challenges

Module 3: Human Factors in Obstetrics & Gynaecology

SECTION	TOPIC	LEARNING OUTCOMES
6	Work Process Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpret the key aspects of communication in clinical practice, considering structured communication tools and situational awareness • Identify and review key relationship and teamwork skills for optimising care, including strategies for conflict management • Explain how interruptions, distractions and incivility can impact on task performance
7	Measurement, Adaptation and Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply practical human factors models (such as SEIPs and Pace) to understand and improve work systems and clinical outcomes • Assess the barriers and facilitators within the social network of the work environment • Determine the measurable impacts of people, environments, tools and tasks on patient outcomes • Outline the key components High Reliability Organisations
8	External Environment Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the positive and negative influences of hierarchy within the work environment • Evaluate the role of regulation and accreditation in human factors at work • Evaluate the management of non-compliance in practice • Summarise how culture at work influences team performance and patient outcomes

6. Teaching and Learning Strategy

The approach to teaching and learning adopted for the Obstetrics & Gynaecology 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.

6.1 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.

6.2 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.

6.3 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.

7. 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 1 and 2 and demonstrate practical acquisition of key communication skills through the submission of a skills portfolios in Modules 1 and 2. Module 3 requires the preparation of a report on human factors in the learner's clinical setting.

ASSESSMENTS & WEIGHTING	COMMUNICATION SKILLS	EXAM	WRITTEN REPORT
Obstetrics	Formative	100%	
Gynaecology	20%	80%	
Human Factors in Obstetrics & Gynaecology			100%

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 learners 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 learners. 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 learners 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.

Written Report

The written report will ask learners to consider a human factors issue relevant to their clinical setting and prepare a report in respect of same.

Passing Requirements

The passing requirement for each assessment is set by the Programme Board. No compensation between assessments is allowed.

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

Learners 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. In such cases, subsequent re-enrolment onto the Programme is not permitted.

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

Who is iheed?

iheed is leading the way in delivering high-quality **online medical education**. Built by doctors and healthcare professionals, we have **over 30,000 users** across the globe, and believe that effective, accessible medical education is the key to providing better health outcomes worldwide. **iheed** is a division of Cambridge Education Group.

Since 1952, Cambridge Education Group has been delivering the highest quality academic programmes, providing a valuable stepping-stone for thousands of students to progress onto the world's leading universities and maximise their career opportunities.

Any questions?

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