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1. **Course Development Panel**

Dr Elaine Dietsch  
Ms Pam Shackleton  
Associate Professor Ann Bonner

2. **Contact Person**

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Email: edietsch@csu.edu.au

3. **Introduction**

This scoping document will outline the planning that has gone into the proposed Master of Midwifery (MMid) course and it will report the findings of a feasibility study conducted to analyse the need and demand for a MMid course offered by Charles Sturt University (CSU). Evidence from the feasibility study will demonstrate that there is an urgent need and significant demand for the course. The proposed MMid is in the interests of women (especially those living in rural and remote Australia); registered midwives wishing to undertake further study; maternity unit partners and as another example of CSU’s commitment to Regional Engagement. Consideration has been given to the utilisation of existing resources to ensure that the MMid is sustainable and no new subject will need to be developed. The evolving midwifery professional context and how the MMid program will enhance that professional evolution will be discussed. Articulation of the proposed MMid course with discipline, school, faculty and university 2007-2011 Strategic plans will be attended. Finally specific course details and structure will be presented.

4. **Curriculum Planning Phase**

The proposed MMid course has undergone the following steps during the Curriculum planning phase:

**4.1 Determining what is important to pregnant women**

The Curriculum planning commenced in late 2006 with an analysis which focused on the needs of women living in rural and remote areas who use maternity services. Increasingly, media reports were highlighting the closure of rural maternity services and as a consequence, the CSU Midwifery Research Team sought funding for a research project from the NSW Nurses and Midwives Board (NMB) which explored the impact of these closures on women (Dietsch et al, 2008).

Findings clearly indicate that healthy pregnant women in rural and remote areas wish to give birth to their babies as close as possible to their homes and with a
midwife who is known to them. In order to achieve this, the closure of rural maternity services must be stopped and already closed services require reopening. In addition, there needs to be an increase in the rural registered midwife workforce and these midwives require sufficient preparation to:

- work to their full scope of practice;
- take lead roles in the midwifery profession and in multidisciplinary maternity service teams; and
- educate pre-registration midwifery students in rural maternity units.

Registered midwives require opportunities to study at Masters’ level to enable them to take lead roles in the midwifery profession and multidisciplinary maternity service teams if maternity units are to remain open or reopen in many rural areas. Evidence from the Dietsch et al (2008) study demonstrates that this is inherently important to women.

4.2 Student request and projected enrolments in the MMid

Postgraduate Diploma of Midwifery (PGDM) students are encouraged to be lifelong learners and over 20% of PGDM graduates have inquired about studying Midwifery at Masters’ level at CSU. To date there has not been a course offered so CSU graduates have undertaken MMid at other universities such as the University of Technology, Sydney and Newcastle University.

Over 60 potential students have provided their contact details with the request that they be contacted when the MMid course is approved. It is highly unlikely that all 60 students would enrol in the first year of MMid offering. It is anticipated that projected enrolment numbers would gradually increase over time as the table to follow suggests:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Student enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>10 FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>12 FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>15 FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>19 FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>25 FTE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 Determining area health services and maternity units’ requirements in order to stay open

Surveys of maternity unit managers, hospital and area health services managers were undertaken to canvas possible strategies to increase numbers of registered midwives working in rural areas and the feasibility of both pre-registration and post-registration midwifery courses at CSU. Industry identified the following advantages that are relevant to the proposed MMid program:

- MMid students being able to continue living and working in their rural home environments while undertaking Master’s level study;
- opportunities for rural registered midwives to feel better prepared to
participate in the clinical education and preparation of the 'next generation' midwives;
- continuation and enhancement of partnership opportunities between industry and CSU;
- Opportunities for registered midwives to prepare for leadership / management roles in woman-led midwifery service models; and
- potential to prepare for doctoral level study.

4.4 Assessing university support

Professor Elaine Duffy, Head of School reported very strong in-principle support at the School, Faculty and University levels of the continued expansion of the Postgraduate Diploma of Midwifery (PGDM), and the introduction of additional midwifery courses such as the Master of Midwifery.

4.5 Midwifery External Advisory Committee (EAC)

The MEAC meet on 23 June 2009 to discuss this scoping document in conjunction with the PG Diploma of Midwifery. Appendix 2 contains details of the MEAC membership. The outcome was strong endorsement (100%) for the introduction of a MMid at CSU.

5. Analysis of Need

Data from the curriculum planning phase, research project findings (Dietsch et al. 2008) and student and industry partner survey results provide evidence of the need for the introduction of a MMid course.

Models of caseload midwifery are increasingly being introduced in Australia, including rural areas. Currently, PGDM graduates are prepared for caseload midwifery practice but have, however, limited midwifery experience. Concurrently, existing RMs often have significant years of midwifery practice but have few post-registration qualifications and are not familiar with the advances in midwifery and its evolving professional trajectory. It is essential that experienced RMs are educationally prepared for evolving models of midwifery care to ensure equity in career opportunities for them and for more balanced skill mix in the midwifery workforce.

The MMid is designed to enable graduates to advance along a self-selected career pathway with opportunities to study management, education and/or research at Master’s level. Master’s level preparation of RMs will better support them to provide supervision and clinical education to student midwives at a level commensurate with tertiary requirements.

CSU has for many years offered Masters degrees in multiple professions. A MMid would provide similar status and recognition for the midwifery profession at CSU. Furthermore, it will increase the research profile and culture of midwifery at CSU by providing a cohort of graduates prepared to enrol in Higher Degree Research courses, including the Doctor of Health Science.
5.1 Need for a MMid delivered by distance education

DE study mode enables students to remain close to their home communities in rural and remote Australia to continue with their midwifery studies. Only an increased workforce of registered midwives prepared to work to their full scope of practice and prepare student midwives to do the same, will halt the closure of rural maternity units and the resultant negative impact on women, infants, families and communities.

6. Demand

The demand for studying midwifery at CSU by DE continues to increase and this is due to two main factors. First, the excellent reputation CSU has in providing quality DE programs and, second, the equally excellent reputation of CSU as a provider of optimum midwifery education. Demand for the MMid course is especially evident but not limited to rural and remote students studying at a distance. 70\% of current PGDM students are employed and live in rural areas; all are studying by DE. CSU is widely known for its provision of high quality DE courses and has developed multiple strategies to ensure students are well supported by innovative teaching and learning technologies.

The level of support for DE students from rural and remote areas is reflected in the 2008 PGDM course exit survey which indicated that:

- 83\% of students believed the DE mode of study best suited their needs; and
- 100\% of students believed they were well supported by the midwifery academics.

In addition a short survey was disseminated on CSU midwifery student forum sites; to 2009 CSU PGDM graduates who graduated with Distinction and to midwifery facilitators currently supervising PGDM students. The survey sought responses to the following questions:

1. Level of interest in undertaking a Master of Midwifery degree at CSU.
2. Whether the Master of Midwifery degree should contain elective subject options in research, education or management.
3. The weaknesses/disadvantages and the strengths/advantages of studying midwifery at CSU (this question was deliberately broad as it was also used to inform current course reviews as well as future course proposals).
4. Opportunities were provided for additional comments and for anonymous submission of the survey.

6.1 Synopsis of the survey findings demonstrating the demand for the course

Of the 101 completed surveys, 94\% (94) were interested in studying a Master of Midwifery at CSU and 6\% (7) were not interested. There was high interest in the elective streams with approximately 50\% of respondents indicated education subjects, 30\% management, and 20\% research subjects. Strengths/advantages
and weaknesses/disadvantages, and other comments made by respondents are provided in Appendix 1.

Since the survey, the Federal Government Budget proposed access to the Medicare (MBS) and Pharmaceutical Benefits Schemes (PBS) for eligible midwives. Once legislation is passed and regulations permit midwifery prescribing a fourth strand would be added to the MMid course, midwifery practice, which would include midwifery prescribing. However, this strand is not part of the current proposal due to legislative and regulatory restrictions.

7. **Resources Required for Course Implementation**

The MMid capitalises on existing resources at CSU. Additional resource requirements are limited as:

- there are no new subjects required to be written.
- there are no infrastructural or physical resources required.
- the library is already able to meet the needs of an additional 25 FTE postgraduate midwifery students per annum.
- subject and course coordinators managing elective subjects have expressed their support, enthusiasm and affirmation for the MMid program and its implications for their subjects.

Due to the capitalisation of existing resources, there would only be a small increased demand for resources provided by:

- Library
- Student Services
- Indigenous student services
- Services for students who are from a Culturally and linguistically diverse background
- Students experiencing difficulties (academic, physical, personal)
- Information technology services, support and training
- Online learning support
- CSU Interact learning environment
- Educational and administrative infrastructure

Minimal additional support would be required by Student Services and Student

As this course will be full-fee paying and offered via DE (with no compulsory residential requirements), it is anticipated that the additional revenue will offset the small increased burden on existing human and other resources.

**Academic Resources**

The proposed MMid course requires minimal additional academic resources as it will utilise existing CSU subjects (Level 4 and 5 MID, HLT and HSM subjects), and will be coordinated by the Postgraduate Diploma of Midwifery course coordinator. There will be a small increase academic workload for
subject coordinators who have universally affirmed their willingness and enthusiasm to have MMid students enrolled in their subjects.

The proposed MMid course acknowledges the support and advice provided by Mr Ron Kerr (Course Coordinator of PG Clinical Education) and Mr John Rae (Acting Course Coordinator of HSM elective subjects).

8. Professional Context

The results of the CSU Midwifery team research project (Dietsch et al. 2008), was used to inform the CSU response to the Commonwealth Government’s, *Improving Maternity Services in Australia: A Discussion Paper from the Australian Government in late 2008*. Recommendations from the Commonwealth Government’s, *Improving Maternity Services in Australia* have since been funded by the May 2009 Federal Budget, including:

- mothers to receive Medicare rebates for midwifery care;
- access to PBS for midwives;
- national collaborative maternity care guidelines;
- increased access at state level to birth centres;
- indemnity for midwives;
- measures to enhance the access of rural and remote women to maternity care as close as possible to their home community;
- a national telephone support service for pregnant women and mothers of newborns.

Associate Professor Hannah Dahlen said in an Australian College of Midwives Media Release (13.5.09),

*These reforms will together make it much easier for women living anywhere in Australia – from the middle of our largest cities to remote communities - to access continuity of care by a known midwife. They will also be vital in helping to close the gap on disadvantage for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers and babies in partnership with Indigenous people themselves. This is not about substituting doctors with midwives. Obstetricians will, of course, continue to have a vital role in maternity care. Midwives providing continuity of care collaborate with obstetricians and allied health professionals throughout the episode of care, in response to the individual needs of each woman and her baby.*

*These reforms pave the way for tens of thousands of women and their families to benefit from continuity of midwifery care while maintaining Australia’s solid record of safety for mothers and babies. The confidence the government has expressed in midwives through these major reforms will be embraced by the profession around Australia.*
As the above media release indicates, never before has there been a more conducive professional context to introduce a Master of Midwifery program to CSU.

Midwifery enrolments at CSU are currently limited to the one course – the Postgraduate Diploma of Midwifery (PGDM). Enrolment numbers in this course have continued to increase every year to the point where CSU is now one of the leading universities in Australia in relation to the numbers of graduating registered midwives.

Universities with far fewer pre-registration midwifery graduates than CSU offer a Master of Midwifery course. While several other universities offer a MMid course (see table 1), CSU has established itself as a centre of excellence in midwifery via distance education. This reputation plus the increasing demand for Master of Midwifery places, demonstrates CSU will be offering a course that will be in demand by potential students and well respected by the midwifery profession.

### Table 1: Current Master of Midwifery Courses

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Curtin University</td>
<td><a href="http://www.handbook.curtin.edu.au/courses/15/151504.html">URL</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edith Cowan University</td>
<td><a href="http://www.snmpm.ecu.edu.au/courses/midwifery/MasterMidwifery.php">URL</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flinders University</td>
<td><a href="http://www.flinders.edu.au/courses/postgrad/mmid/">URL</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griffith University</td>
<td>[URL](<a href="http://www17.griffith.edu.au/cis/p_cat/admission.asp?ProgCode=5230">http://www17.griffith.edu.au/cis/p_cat/admission.asp?ProgCode=5230</a> &amp;Type=overview)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monash University</td>
<td><a href="http://www.monash.edu.au/study/coursefinder/course/3565/">URL</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Newcastle</td>
<td><a href="http://google.newcastle.edu.au/search?q=Master%20of%20Midwifery">URL</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Southern Queensland</td>
<td><a href="http://www.usq.edu.au/handbook/current/sci/MMID.html">URL</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of the Sunshine Coast</td>
<td><a href="http://www.usc.edu.au/Students/Handbook/Postgrad/OnCampus/Science/NU720/">URL</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Sydney</td>
<td><a href="http://www.usyd.edu.au/courses/?detail=1&amp;course_sef_id=Master_of_Midwifery_357">URL</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Wollongong</td>
<td><a href="http://www.uow.edu.au/handbook/yr2009/pg/health/H09006770.html">URL</a> (pre-registration midwifery course)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(pre-registration midwifery course)
9. **Strategic Plans – University, Faculty, School and Midwifery**

The MMid program articulates well with the 2007–2011 Vision, Values, Mission and Strategic Plan of the:

- Charles Sturt University
- Faculty of Science
- School of Nursing and Midwifery
- Midwifery Discipline

The **Midwifery Discipline Vision**, Values, Mission and Strategic Plans articulate with those of the School of Nursing and Midwifery, the Faculty of Science and the University Vision, Values, Mission and Strategic Plan. The outworking of this articulation is summarised below.

**CSU Vision** is for a National university of excellence in the education for the professions, strategic and applied research and flexible delivery or learning and teaching. Responses from the MMid feasibility study (see Appendix 1) demonstrate that midwifery at CSU is already established as a:

- centre for excellence in midwifery education
- discipline engaged in strategic and applied research
- course renowned for its flexibility of learning and teaching for the midwifery profession.

CSU **Values** intellectual independence and freedom of inquiry; the discovery, refinement, preservation and dissemination of knowledge; engagement with professions and communities through responsiveness, partnerships and inclusiveness; social justice including ethical practice and global citizenship; economic, social and environmental sustainability, including the responsible stewardship of resources, and its staff and students, their well-being and development. While all CSU values are reflected in the values of the Midwifery discipline at CSU, the second value is particularly pertinent to the proposed MMid course. The MMid has been considered following extensive engagement with the midwifery profession, childbearing women living in rural and remote areas and in consultation with midwives in our partnering maternity units.

The Midwifery **Mission** is linked with the University Mission as the MMid course seeks to provide a distinctive educational course for the midwifery professions that prepare students for leadership roles in the profession. This will be facilitated by the proven quality provision of flexible learning and teaching which is informed by strategic and applied research attended by the midwifery research team. The proposed MMid process and outcome has the potential to enhance communities, which includes those in rural and regional Australia and Indigenous Australians. The midwifery profession, maternity service industry and midwifery students for whom we provide research and education, and national and international institutions, scholars and researchers with whom our staff and students are linked including those in Australia, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Canada also have the potential to be directly and indirectly enhanced through the MMid course.
The 2007–2011 CSU Strategic Plan states in the key objectives, that as an innovative national leader in Australia, CSU is committed to providing distinctive educational programs for the professions that prepare students for work and citizenship and which:

- are recognised by, and developed in collaboration with, the professions, particularly through practicum placements;
- are accessible to students who have the capacity for university study;
- foster ethical practice;
- promote international understanding including opportunities for international;
- exchange; and
- maintain high levels of satisfaction among graduates, employers and the University’s communities.

The proposed MMid program has been developed in collaboration with the midwifery profession, especially those midwives in partnering maternity units. The Distance Education mode of learning and teaching will make it accessible to students who have the capacity to study at Masters’ level but find it difficult to access a university. It is anticipated that the current high level of satisfaction among midwifery graduates in the PGDM course will also be reflected in graduates from the proposed MMid course.

The 2007–2011 CSU Strategic Plan also states that academics will conduct strategic and applied research of an international standard which:

- creates new knowledge;
- is applied for the benefit of our communities;
- is responsive to emerging opportunities and challenges;
- enhances collaboration with industry;
- develops partnerships with professions, communities and other researchers;
- facilitates opportunities for linkages with learning and teaching; and
- focuses on agricultural sustainability, applied philosophy and public ethics, public and contextual theology, complex systems and professional practice.

Graduates of the proposed MMid course are likely to feed into the Doctor of Health Science program as indicated by the interest in graduates in the PGDM program to enrol in the proposed MMid program (Appendix 1). The research culture of CSU midwifery is continuing to develop following the outcomes of the Dietsch et al. (2008) study. It is envisaged the students and graduates of the proposed MMid course would further enhance the research agenda for midwifery at CSU.

The Strategic Plan states that CSU will continue to continue to lead in the quality provision of flexible delivery of learning and teaching which:
is supported by well-researched curriculum and teaching methodologies;
uses research and technology to be flexible and responsive to student needs and feedback;
provides shared learning spaces and teaching experiences for students on and off campus; and
builds communities of learning especially amongst dispersed students.

The proposed MMid course builds on the existing midwifery PGDM program which is supported by well-researched curriculum and teaching methodologies and uses research and technology to be flexible and responsive to student needs and feedback. In this instance, the MMid course itself has been developed in response to women’s, students’ and industry’s needs and feedback.

The Strategic Plan predicts that CSU will continue to build institutional strength, reputation and sustainability by:

- adhering to the concept of ‘One University’;
- creating a culture that is responsive to organisational change and renewal;
- aligning institutional values, planning and performance through commitment;
- to quality and continual improvement;
- ensuring ethical and effective governance practices and the responsible stewardship of resources;
- forming collaborative networks and alliances with other institutions; and
- attracting, retaining and developing committed, high quality staff and empowering them within a positive work environment.

The proposed MMid program builds on the institutional strengths and reputations of CSU in general and midwifery in particular to provide quality Masters’ level of education for registered midwives. This reputation is evidenced in the responses to the midwifery survey (Appendix 1).

9.1 Midwifery Strategic Plan 2007–2011

The proposed Master of Midwifery course was flagged in the Midwifery Strategic Plan as a key performance indicator. It is envisioned as one strategy to enable the following key Midwifery key objectives which are linked to university objectives to be met:

1. to maintain strong linkages with partnership hospitals and the profession;
2. to maintain and develop new midwifery programs that are accessible to eligible students; and
3. to support all midwifery programs with well-researched curriculum and teaching methodologies.
10. Guiding Principles

The guiding principles for the proposed MMid course at CSU are based on the values framed by CSU, the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) and the Australian College of Midwives (ACM). The program will be coordinated and all core subjects taught within the CSU School of Nursing and Midwifery which has adopted a primary health care framework to inform and shape curricula. This is in response to the present and future challenges facing registered midwives, especially those working in regional, rural and remote Australia with its shift to primary health care as a preferred integrated model of service delivery for inland and Indigenous communities, community based models of care and workforce sustainability.

The philosophical underpinnings of the course are described in depth in the PGDM Curriculum documents and are related to:

- woman-centred care
- midwifery practice based on best available, current evidence
- primary health care
- social justice
- rural focus
- Indigenous culture and health
- midwives working to their full scope of practice.

11. Course Structure

The proposed MMid course is a 96 point program, with all subjects being at levels 4 and 5. It will be studied in the Distance Education mode, usually over a period of three years part-time. Students have the option of studying electives from a number of strands and having the generic Master of Midwifery on their testamur on completion. To ensure academic currency, the course must be completed in a maximum of 6 years.

Only registered midwives (RM) are eligible to enrol in the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RM with a graduate diploma/ postgraduate diploma of midwifery</th>
<th>RM without a graduate diploma/ postgraduate diploma of midwifery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MID440 Midwifery Practice: 24 points</td>
<td>MID440 Midwifery Practice: 24 points credit, or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID441 Midwifery Studies: 8 points</td>
<td>Certified lactation consultant: 24 points credit, and / or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID442 Midwifery Studies 2: 8 points</td>
<td>12/12+ as nominated midwifery facilitator with a partnering unit in the PGDM program: 8 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID452 Issues in Midwifery: 8 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID524 Midwifery Evidence, Connections and Complementary Therapies: 8 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID525 Midwifery Models: 8 points</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


Students select 4 /5 of the following MID subjects

MID441 Midwifery Studies: 8 points
MID442 Midwifery Studies 2: 8 points
MID452 Issues in Midwifery: 8 points
MID524 Midwifery Evidence, Connections and Complementary Therapies: 8 points
MID525 Midwifery Models: 8 points
MID subjects to total 32 points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>64 points credit toward the MMid award</th>
<th>Maximum 48 points credit toward the MMid award</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students select 4 /5 of the following MID subjects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID441 Midwifery Studies: 8 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID442 Midwifery Studies 2: 8 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID452 Issues in Midwifery: 8 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID524 Midwifery Evidence, Connections and Complementary Therapies: 8 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID525 Midwifery Models: 8 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MASTER LEVEL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>16 points compulsory</th>
<th>16 points compulsory</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HLT505 Research Methods in Health Science A</td>
<td>HLT505 Research Methods in Health Science A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLT506 Health Master’s Proposal</td>
<td>HLT506 Health Master’s Proposal</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>16 points electives (see below)</th>
<th>24 points elective (see below)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total 96 points</td>
<td>Total 96 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The student may elect to complete a 5th MID subject if they have not studied it previously. Other elective subjects are currently allocated to three streams – research (by coursework), health management and health education.

Health education strand include the following existing subjects:

HLT402 Learning in the health context
HLT403 Clinical teaching techniques
HLT404 Clinical education planning
HLT405 Issues in clinical education

Health management strand include the following existing subjects:

COM506 Communication in organisations
HLT511 Clinical judgment and decision making
HRM512 Values and conflict in organisations
HSM401 Perspectives on health care systems
HSM402 Human resources management
HSM404 Management in health services
HSM408 Current issues in health service management
HSM409 Epidemiology and public health
HSM510 Health Planning
HSM512 Evaluating health services
MGT540 Management of Change

One other elective subject with a research by coursework focus includes HLT508 Health Masters’ Project (16)
Should a student wish the nomenclature, ‘education’ or ‘management’ to be added to their Master of Midwifery Testamur (similar to existing Master of Nursing), then a minimum of 32 points from within that strand must be completed. Students would therefore need to forgo some credit for recognition of prior learning.

A fourth strand, Midwifery Practice will be developed once the necessary legislation is passed and professional regulations are in place to govern midwifery prescribing. By necessity, this strand does not form part of this present proposal.

12. Conclusion

This Scoping Paper documents the desirability, need, demand and sustainability of the proposed Master of Midwifery course as developed by Dr Elaine Dietsch, Ms Pam Shackleton and A/Professor Ann Bonner. It is to be presented to Professor Elaine Duffy and the Postgraduate Courses Committee for consideration. If approved at this level it will be submitted to the School Board prior to submission to the Dean of the Faculty of Science for signing off. It will then be presented to the University Course Planning Committee for approval prior to the Course Approval document being set up on CASIMS. It is anticipated that the first students will enrol in the program in 201130.

References

Appendix 1: Comments from Survey Respondents

**Perceived weaknesses or disadvantages of enrolling in a MMid at CSU:**

**Cost:**
- Cost
- Cost involved???
- Will we get financial assistance to pay for it?

**Distance/Distance Education:**
- Distance from tertiary hospitals may deter people
- DE mode with no residential limits opportunities for face-to-face interaction / teaching etc.
- External/distance education does not suit all types of learners
- I prefer to have lots of face-face contact with my supervisors – difficult with external education!
- Distance x 2
- Distance to uni, therefore unable to access library facilities etc
- Probably distance might be considered a disadvantage by some. Sometimes being able to access people face to face is preferred. However, I know excellent support is provided via a variety of other means.
- UTS/Sydney uni have very good reputations and for someone based in Sydney, local is good

**Isolation/lack of support:**
- The isolation from other students.
- Lack of belonging to a group
- Limited ability to debrief with fellow students /lecturers face to face about experiences
- Lack of support if individual not self motivated

**Time:**
- Time off work
- Time restraints there never seemed to be enough hours in the day.
- Time poor
- Time involved and fitting in with family and work

**University:**
- As I have already done a degree/diploma through CSU as I think a varied education/uni is regarded as positive in the eyes of employers/educators therefore I would possibly consider a different uni?
- Fear of ‘unknown’ or ‘new’ course, may prefer to attend a university that has an established Masters course in place
- ‘new’ Masters degree
- No Prof or ASPRO of Midwifery at CSU
- Possible as it would be the first time the masters degree held would be the pilot course?
- No RPL for hospital based training
- Not well known in metropolitan areas outside NSW

Miscellaneous comments:
- For me personally I don’t believe there is any disadvantage
- I do not believe there are any weaknesses or disadvantages. I have done my nursing degree and diploma in midwifery through CSU and I could not fault CSU at all. I believe that the support and guidance that you receive from lecturers and students alike is invaluable.
- The strengths FAR outweigh the minor weaknesses.
- Unable to think of any weaknesses – I had such a positive experience
- ?Track record in research important
- Will the masters be able to articulate to PhD
- Elaine, I really can’t think of any others – you were so very supportive
- No examinations to assess your understanding

Perceived strengths or advantages of enrolling in a MMid at CSU:

Course related:
- Midwifery at CSU was overall an excellent course. I loved it!!
- Choice of management, education or research stream would make it an attractive opportunity for midwives as this allows for professional development into one of these streams. Not all midwives in the clinical area are interested in completing a PhD and the choice would enable further recognition from a clinical perspective with the education stream and management if the midwife should chose to develop management skills.
- Course content is entirely relevant.
- Learning Packages sent out by CSU are easy to follow & read
- Quality programs.
- RPL
- Course / subject structure
- Ease of communication with lecturers/excellent notes
- No examinations! X 3
- Fantastic learning materials especially incredibly insightful and well selected readings.
- enjoyable course content
- Able to study while working
- Students come out with a high quality and knowledge of education, that’s got to be an advantage
- Excellent approach to learning – simple, easy to follow courses
- The format sounds like it will meet my needs
- Anticipate course being ‘thorough’ and well planned
- Good reputation
- Self directed learning
CSU midwifery academics / staff:
- Helpful educators and support staff
- Staff were supportive, acknowledgeable, and realistic.
- Familiarity with the lecturers
- Easy accessibility to staff and resources
- Friendly supportive staff.
- Staff are very knowledgeable and always at hand to help
- Elaine Dietsch and all the other wonderful staff, but especially Elaine
- The lecturers especially Dr. Elaine Dietsch and Pam Shackleton. Their experience and support truly MAKE midwifery at CSU
- Experienced educators with research background
- Caring & knowledgeable lecturers
- Personalised interaction with staff
- Great academic staff
- Supportive staff, who are passionate about midwifery
- Run the student midwifery program
- Always contactable and available to assist with enquiries
- Understanding of work loads and offering extensions
- Good support from lecturers
- Being able to contact lectures and prompt reply when messages left
- Highly motivated teaching staff
- Good reputation
- Those running the courses have excellent experience and knowledge
- Easy access to staff
- Very knowledgeable educators
- Easy access by phone / email to course coordinator
- Great support
- The support given from yourself
- Mentorship academically important
- I have heard of CSU midwifery and some contact therefore I have confidence in the uni
- Educators very approachable and understanding toward study assignments and workload
- Staff availability to assist you where you lack understanding
- Comfortable, caring, competent and professional teaching – just fantastic! Wouldn’t go anywhere else

Distance/Distance education:
- Ease of distance ED
- Well set up for distance education.
- Distance education would be an advantage for rural people for whom regular attendance at a University would be difficult, or even impossible.
- Distance education x 7
- Distance mode and the flexibility that goes with it.
- Convenience of distance education with work
- Studying externally meant we are able to continue working in our local area, and earning money working in a maternity ward. This also means we are more likely to stay in our local area.
Focus on rural education
DE mode with no residential makes this course accessible to busy working midwives, especially in rural areas where access to study leave is limited.
No residential schools x 2
Easy accessible
Close to home

Flexibility:
- Flexibility, study in own time at own pace
- Self paced
- Flexible with course material
- Autonomy
- Flexible learning
- Options of research, education or management streams
- The course allows the students to tailor their learning to a reasonable extent to the areas they are most interested in

Midwifery related:
- Woman-centered care
- The ‘woman centred’ / birth as a normal life event approach to midwifery
- Teaches a real midwifery model of care as opposed to medical.
- Prepares midwives for “case load” type care.
- Also emphasizing the benefits of midwifery lead care.
- Well respected in the field of midwifery

Resources:
- Excellent services available online
- Library services very accessible x 2
- The wonderful printed and on line resources.
- Access via the library to on line journals and databases.
- Online services available
- My.csu
- The forums are great. Even though I did not often post things on the forum, I often read others posts and I found these a great way for students to communicate and keep in touch with what others are learning and going through.
- Great resources
- The online forums are excellent and easily accessible
- Forum has been an invaluable tool
- Ease of submitting assignments on line (wonder if assignments could be returned the same way
- Greater online services and ability to access library and other resources
- Access to CSU library, Bathurst

Rural focus:
- Relating midwifery to rural and urban areas, not just metropolitan
- Could help encourage skilled midwives to work in country areas
- Location
Local area

Support:

- The IT support for distance ED is a major bonus
- The library & midwifery staff are very supportive!!
- There is plenty of support/encouragement
- Excellent support available online
- Supportive environment
- Support from faculty
- Have established communication supports
- The ability to communicate with other students and lecturers on the on line forum.
- Support from lecturers & fellow students
- Good support through the process especially from Elaine D.
- Great support x 3
- Great telephone advise by actually liaising with the coordinator or lecturers
- Good support and feedback from lecturers.
- Very supportive environment for students and staff
- Excellent support from Course coordinator.
- Great support from lecturers x 2
- Supporting me well with my student midwifery
- Very supportive learning environment
- Able to meet students individual needs
- Lots of educational support, even for the slow learner!

University:

- I have done all my university studies at csu
- Having already study there, good reputation
- The university is very well set up with the ability to download materials from the library or website and borrow texts by mail and distance learning saves a lot of time driving to lectures plus allows more rurally based students to access education
- Rural university
- Fantastic DE resources and processes
- CSU great background in distance education
- Already being familiar with CSU
- I am alumnus
- Opportunity to study in a rural area, the only other places I am aware of that offer a M Mid are in Sydney and Wollongong. These courses have residential schools attached which make it difficult for those who need to travel and accommodation for the period.
- CSU has a very strong postgraduate midwifery course which is well respected among the clinical field. This would make it an attractive university to complete a Master of Midwifery
- It is in my home locality
- CSU’s reputation for conducting excellent courses
- Local
- I live near Wagga csu
• CSU based in the country so country people do not need to leave families.
• Smaller class sizes
• Have studied through CSU before and loved it
• Established and proven distance education programs
• Good reputation

Other comments to assist MMid midwifery planning at CSU:

• I think it would be a valuable option, especially if it can carry on from knowledge and skills learnt in midwifery diploma. It would be a natural progression which many more midwives would consider. Would it have to include a research project?
• Would be great progress (MMid at CSU)
• Good luck with organising the Masters, if I was to do it, I would certainly do it at CSU.
• An excellent idea! I know many of our rural students who have completed the Post Grad Dip. in Midwifery would be very interested.
• Needs to be well organized
• Promotes woman-centred care
• Research needs to be a core subject to promote the profession
• Introductory session – residential – on all aspects of the course; familiarize oneself with the University/staff/library/expectations (already in place for Post Grad Dip – but may be helpful for Masters)
• Reputation for producing competent and focused midwifery graduates
• A preliminary session on honing research skills (helpful revision for Masters students).
• Yes – a chair of rural midwifery!
• We need a DE BMid for rural Australia
• Would suggest that CSU also considers extensions of midwifery on other campuses
• I am currently doing my student midwifery but one day would certainly be interested in a doing a masters
• Every midwife that graduates is a reflection in part of the commitment and dedication of the midwifery faculty at CSU. The most important thing that I learnt was not ‘woman centred’ as rhetoric bandied around in theoretical terms, all the while delivering care which serves the need of the institution first, it was the practical application, of what being ‘woman centred’ really means in practice in every interaction, communication, intervention (or non-intervention) and approach. I am proud to say that is a bandwagon I am firmly and proudly implanted on and share liberally with others I come into contact with in the course of my working day, whether that is student midwives, medical students, residents and O&G registrars.
• Offering choices is a great idea. Masters via research or coursework would make it more appealing to many more people. This flexibility allows us to explore our needs from a Masters degree. Also, midwives have different wants in terms of careers and offering, management, research, education, or simply furthering knowledge makes this course unique from others I have researched. Being a rural university, CSU offers opportunities to rural midwives unique to their wants and needs. Perhaps you could add a rural midwifery strain – unique
to those women practicing in isolated communities. I know of a few midwives that would be very interested in practicing in those isolated areas and could use their experiences and the experiences gained through this type of course to make a real difference. Particularly with the new portfolio and provider numbers coming in, more than ever, we need strong independent-minded well trained midwives. Sounds like a fabulous course.

- I am enjoying this opportunity to learn and grow so much I would embrace the idea to take it to masters level in 2011 and beyond.
- Please make it family friendly – i.e. part time options
- For country students the ability to study via distance education is imperative if they are to further their education and career/professional goals., without having to travel long distances to do so. As midwives working shifts, or caseload, the ability to study flexible is necessary too. This alone however is not enough. A distance program is only as good as its materials; resources; and educators and other supports. CSU certainly excels in this area and I would most definitely welcome the opportunity to be able to study midwifery at a masters level thru distance mode at CSU.
- I would like to see streams (at masters levels) both clinical and research areas to suit all midwives too. The prospect of no exams is most appealing as I for one find such things quite daunting and not necessarily a true indicator of ones strengths and weakness.
- I am open to a residential school for those who may like some face to face and to allow students to meet and bond etc and for added support.
- My only concern would be keeping the cost of such a course at a manageable level, to permit as many midwives who so desire to be able to undertake such studies without incurring large debt.
- Very organized programme,
- evidence based practice used
- Optional electives i.e. child and family health, women’s health, lactation consultancy etc if possible
- Doctors should be made to do this course as well.
- I have had a lot of interest amongst the CMEs and midwives here at [place] with this proposed masters program and have sent them copies to RSVP to you.
- 1. Some questions though that midwives are asking (like me) who are hospital trained but have NSW College of Nursing certificates, IBCLC etc – what credits would they receive? Would they need to submit transcripts to review content? 2. What would be the assignment load over how many semesters? 3. Any ideas of semester costs 4. Would this be course work or research degree, or option to commence course work and change to research later? I thought it might be useful to perhaps arrange for teleconference one afternoon with the CMEs and yourself to answer some of the questions? What do you think?
- Elaine I am actually interested in studying an honors’/ PhD pathway for research purposes I think…rather soon...
- Very exciting and would be beneficial especially meeting the needs of rural midwives working in Australia
- What about MMid initial registration?
- Would it be course work or thesis?
- It would be the most fantastic opportunity to study Masters of Midwifery through CSU as I am aware of the needs and requirements and believe it is a
fantastic place to enhance my education and wouldn’t consider going through another university – only CSU will be considered

- Absolutely can’t wait for it to start!
- I hope I am first on the mailing list for the Masters – exceptionally eager!!!
- I have found previous distance education with the CSU to be an excellent experience due to the ease of communicating with the individuals teaching the subject. I would strongly suggest presenting information to anyone interested in the degree, as other universities offering distance education do not offer it with the ease that one finds at CSU.
Appendix 2: Midwifery External Advisory Committee Membership

- Ms Bev Murray (Indigenous midwife, GSAHS)
- Ms Anna Kettle (Professional Officer, Nursing & Midwifery Board, NSW)
- Ms Joy Dickinson (Midwifery Unit Manager, Wagga Wagga Base Hospital)
- Ms Tanya Martin (Aboriginal Maternal Infant Program, Dubbo)
- Ms Robin Skewes (Midwifery Consultant, NEHS)
- A/Prof Hannah Dahlen (NSW Midwifery Association)
- Ms Aleta Kennedy (Consumer representative)
- Ms Karen Tackats (Midwifery facilitator)
- Ms Annette Vaarzon Morel (current midwifery student)
- Ms Sandra Forde (Assistant Director of Nursing, Wagga Wagga Base Hospital)
- Ms Carlie Davis (CSU graduate PG Dip Midwifery)
- Ms Raylene Hare (Midwifery facilitator – interstate representative)
- Ms Joanne Gray (Academic representative – UTS)
- Ms Amanda Gear (Clinical Midwifery Consultant, GSAHS)
- Ms Diane Deer (Calvary John James Hospital, Canberra – Private hospitals representative)
- Professor Elaine Duffy (Head of School, CSU)
- Dr Elaine Dietsch (Midwifery Course Coordinator, CSU)
- Mrs Pam Shackleton (Academic CSU)
- Mr Jasten Phiri (Academic CSU)