1. **Do I have to be both a registered nurse and midwife to undertake this program?**

   Yes, you must hold current registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) as both a Nurse and a Midwife in Australia.

2. **Do I have to have practised as a nurse and a midwife?**

   Applicants need to have post registration experience as both a Registered Nurse and a Registered Midwife prior to commencing Maternal and Child Health (MCH) nursing studies. This consolidated experience is the base that MCH studies build upon. A minimum of 12 months EFT experience in each of nursing and midwifery is required.

3. **How do I find the program overview?**

   The Program overview including:
   - Study modes,
   - Fees, and
   - Electives and Program Structure
   is available on the RMIT website:
   [https://www.rmit.edu.au/study-with-us/levels-of-study/postgraduate-study/graduate-diplomas/gd159](https://www.rmit.edu.au/study-with-us/levels-of-study/postgraduate-study/graduate-diplomas/gd159)

   The details of individual courses undertaken to complete the program can found by clicking on the blue “view Plan” button under **Electives and Program Structure**. Scroll down until you see the courses for Year One and click on the red underlined Course Title to see the details for that course.

   This outlines the description of each course in the Program.

4. **What is the cost of the program?**

   The cost of studies depends on the type of university enrolment you are offered: A Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP), or a Full Fee Place. There are generally fewer CSP places available for postgraduate studies compared to undergraduate studies.

   **Commonwealth Supported Places (CSPs)** are available on a competitive basis according to government funding. A CSP is a type of university enrolment where the total cost of your study is split into two parts. The Government pays one part - this is a subsidy, and you pay the other part - this is called your student contribution. In 2018 the cost to students awarded a CSP was approx $6,566 for a standard full time year of study. A Commonwealth Government initiative HECS-HELP is also available to help CSP students pay their fees. Information about HECS and HELP can be found at:

   2019 CSP fees are not yet available but can be confirmed on the RMIT website once released, or by contacting RMIT Connect on [https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/contact-and-help/connect](https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/contact-and-help/connect)
Full fee paying places are also available. In 2018 the total cost was $20,160 for a standard full time year of study for the full 8 course program. (Part time study is the same cost, spread over 2 years.). The 2019 full fee cost will be available soon but can be checked as above.

Fees are paid on a semester by semester basis as you progress through the course.

A Commonwealth Government initiative, FEE-HELP, is available for all fee-paying students. There are several forms of fee help available – see “HELP paying my fees’ at the following link: http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/helppayingmyfees

5. How is this program delivered?

The program is offered full time (FT) over one year but can also be completed part time (PT) over two years. Courses in the program are offered by a combination of face to face, online and intensive modes.

Some courses have early start intensives. Learning is promoted by several strategies including lectures, tutorials, workshops, online packages, group work, class demonstrations, laboratory sessions, simulation sessions and self-directed learning.

Face-to-face (F2F) courses are offered in full day study mode to reduce the need to travel to and from campus and full time students generally only need to attend one day per week on average. There are 6 weeks where students need to attend classes twice per week; this is when students are undertaking NURS2185 Family Partnership workshops. There is some subject choice flexibility for part time students to minimise this.

There is a summer semester course, NURS2182 Health Promotion and Early Parenting, which runs as a flexible intensive course during January.

**See Table 1 on item 7 for Course Structure and Delivery Mode.

6. Can I apply for credit or RPL for previous postgraduate studies?

Yes! The Graduate Diploma in Child and Family Health Nursing is a 96 credit point program. There are 8 courses each worth 12 credit points. Students may apply for credit for equivalent courses they have already completed at a postgraduate level within the past 5 years (specialty courses) or 10 years (non-specialty courses). To be eligible to receive an RMIT University award (ie Grad Dip), at least 50 per cent must be completed at RMIT University.

Applications for credit are individually assessed by the Program Coordinator and Course Coordinators. Notification of the outcome of this assessment is sent by the Central University Administrative Office in writing. External courses that may possibly be recognised for credit in 2019 include: Research studies, Mental Health, and Infant Mental Health. Students are encouraged to discuss these and other potential credits with the Program Co-ordinator prior to enrolment.

When can I apply for Credit? How is this done? You may apply for credit once you have enrolled in the program. Please forward a copy of your certified transcript and course description/study guide and the appropriate completed RMIT application form. It is recommended that enrolled students apply for credit early so that the CSP places allocated to the university can best be utilised.

Application for Credit: https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/student-essentials/enrolment/apply-for-credit

When can I apply for RPL? How is this done? You may also apply for recognition of prior learning (RPL) once you have enrolled in the program. Please forward a copy of your certified transcript and course description/study guide or other education completed and the appropriate completed RMIT application form. Your application should also include documentation of how you have met the Course Learning Outcomes of the course for which you are applying for RPL, and relevant professional practice. This must be linked to an existing RMIT course at Graduate Diploma level or higher. It is recommended that enrolled students apply for RPL early so that the CSP places allocated to the university can best be utilised.

Application for Credit/RPL: https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/student-essentials/enrolment/apply-for-credit

There is an additional form required for RPL applications. Contact the Program Coordinator for information about an application for RPL and this additional form.
### 7. Table 1: Course Structure and Delivery Mode

**Delivery mode legend:**  
F2F = Face to Face,  
DE = Online

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Delivery Mode</th>
<th>Total days on Campus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core Courses</strong></td>
<td>Complete the following Seven (7) Core Courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Summer (Jan 2019) | NURS2182 Health Promotion & Early Parenting (Intensive course) | 2 days x F2F Workshops = 12 hrs  
24 hours DE | 2 + DE |
| Semester 1      | NURS1170 Family & Community Studies         | *Early Start  
3 day Intensive F2F 3rd week of Feb (TBC), then  
3 days of classes across semester 1 | 6 |
| Semester 1      | NURS1023 Child & Family Health Assessment   | *Early Start  
3 day Intensive F2F 4th week of Feb (TBC), then  
3 days of classes across semester 1 | 6 |
| Semester 1      | NURS2181 Child & Family Nutrition           | 3 days x F2F Workshop = 15 hrs  
21 hours DE | 3 + DE |
| Semester 1      | NURS2185 Working in Partnership with Families | 6 days of F2F workshops  
(Usually one day per week for 6 weeks). | 6 |
| End Sem 1       | NURS1023 & NURS2181 Exam : Assessment for each of these courses includes a 2 hour written examination | 4 |
| Semester 2      | NURS1019 Child & Family Nursing in the Community | *Early Start  
2 day F2F Intensive mid-July (TBC), then  
4 days of classes across semester 2 | 6 |
| Semester 2      | NURS2183 MCH Clinical Practice              | 3 F2F Clinical Workshops (3 hours each)  
3 F2F Clinical Debriefing sessions of 1 hr each | 3 (shorter days) |
| End Sem 2       | NURS1019 Exam x 2 hours | 2 |
| **Electives**   | Select One (1) Elective from the list below  |                                                                               |                      |
| Semester 1      | Context of Mental Health Nursing            | 12 x 3 hrs on campus, but also  
36 hrs available | F2F or DE |
| Semester 1      | Foundations of Mental Health Nursing Partnerships | 12 x 3 hrs on campus, but also  
36 hrs available on line | F2F or DE |
| Semester 1      | Therapeutic Initiatives in Mental Health     | 12 x 3 hrs on campus, but also  
36 hrs available on line | F2F or DE |
| Semester 2      | NURS2184 Parent Infant Mental Health *Recommended | 4 days of classes across semester  
12 hours online, (including tutorial sessions) | 4 + DE |
| Semester 2      | PUB1080 Health Inquiry Critique (Research course) | 12 x 3 hrs on campus, but also  
36 hrs available on line | F2F or DE |
8. How do I apply for the Graduate Diploma of Child & Family Health Nursing program?

Since this is a postgraduate program, applications are submitted directly online on the RMIT website from early August each year. Applicants need to register before creating an online application. The link for postgraduate study applications (called Apply Direct) is: www.rmit.edu.au/programs/apply/direct.

Once you are registered you can log in at any time to check the progress of your application. Successful applicants are encouraged to discuss their enrolment with the Program Coordinator prior to enrolling to optimise the sequence of studies as some courses have prerequisites.

9. When do applications close?

Applications for the Jan 2019 intake close early November 2018. Applications received after this date may be considered if places are still available. However you have a better chance of being offered a Clinical and CSP place (subject to availability) if you apply earlier.

10. When will I know if my application has been successful?

Successful applicants will be notified late November / early December. Please enrol promptly so you can receive information about submitting clinical preferences and details for early starting courses. Orientation will be arranged for early December 2018 in readiness for the summer course which is run in January 2019.

11. When do classes start?

The single summer semester course begins early Jan and is run in intensive mode. Semester 1 and 2 courses run from mid Feb to late October.

12. Are scholarships available?

Yes! Scholarships have been provided in the past by several organisations. The Department of Education and Training (DET) offer a number of scholarships to registered nurses and midwives to study MCH nursing, each valued at up to $10,000. Scholarships for 2019 study have been proposed but have not yet been announced. In previous years they have opened in Sept and closed mid October for studies the following year. For information visit the Municipal Association of Victoria website as detailed below.

Some councils offer annual scholarships to registered nurses and midwives going on to study MCH nursing. Preference may be given to applicants living in the local area, but not necessarily. For more information about scholarships, contact your local council MCH Coordinator. Scholarships are often advertised on councils’ employment pages. These scholarships range from $2,000 to around $4,000.


RMIT University scholarship site is: http://www1.rmit.edu.au/scholarships/pgcoursework#Health_medical

Scholarships are also offered by the College of Nursing Australia: https://www.acn.edu.au/scholarships
Details of scholarships available so far are listed in the table below.

See Table 2: Scholarship details to date (next page)
Table 2: Scholarship details to date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provider</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Further Details &amp; Contact</th>
<th>Amount &amp; Closing Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Victorian Department of Education and Training     | Maternal and Child Health Scholarships    | https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/profdev/Pages/scholarships.aspx | Up to $10,000  
Closing date approx 15 Oct 2018, TBA. |
| Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)            | Various Council Scholarships              | Check on MAV website for MCH Scholarships                                                | Variable                               |
| Nurses’ Memorial Centre                            | 1. Vivian Bullwinkel Award                | The Nurses’ Memorial Centre website:                                                     | Up to $10,000  
31st August 2018                        |
|                                                   | 2. Betty Jeffrey Award                     | http://www.nursesmemorialcentre.org.au/scholarships/                                     | Up to $5,000  
31st August 2018                       |
|                                                   | 3. Indigenous Scholarship                 |                                                                                          | Up to $5,000  
31st August 2018                       |
21 Sept 2018                            |
|                                                   | 5. Aboriginal Practice Enhancement Grant  | For Aboriginal Nurses & Midwives https://www.nbvll.com.au/nbvll-grants                  | Up to $10,000  
21 Sept 2018                            |
|                                                   | 6. Rural or Regional Practice Enhancement Grants | For Rural or Regional Nurses & Midwives https://www.nbvll.com.au/nbvll-grants             | Up to $5,000  
21 Sept 2018                            |
| Australian Nurses & Midwifery Federation           | 7. Elizabeth Hulme Grant for ANMF SIG members | For ANMF SIG or SIG Member_for application forms for all grants visit:                    | $3,000  
21 September 2018                       |
|                                                   |                                           | anmfvic.asn.au/recognition or email Trish O’Hara: tohara@anmfvic.asn.au or phone 9275 9333. |                                         |

13. Is there a clinical component? And if so, where do I complete this?

Yes, the clinical component is very important and a really interesting and useful way to integrate theory and practice. You are required to achieve specific MCH competencies and complete a **minimum 300 hours clinical practice**. This experience is linked to the NURS1023 and NURS2183 courses across semesters 1 and 2. These clinical hours are undertaken at a variety of clinical agencies; however the majority of these hours are spent in the universal MCH Service.

14. How are the Community Placements/Visits organised?

Placements for community visits will be facilitated by the university for groups of students (%approx 10 days, mostly intermittent days in semester one%). For example: Victorian Children’s Court, Early Intervention, Early Parenting Centres, MCH Line, Settling Day Stay.

Most of your clinical hours can usually be obtained in your local area and organised at a time to suit both yourself and the agency, but this does depend on the availability of placements which can be limited. Other community placements include visits / observations at Childcare, Kindergarten, Breastfeeding Day Stay, the Enhanced MCH service and a Specialty placement.
Note for Regional and Rural Applicants:

The required Melbourne clinical placements are the Victorian Children’s Court (4 hours), MCH Line (4 hours) and Early Parenting Centres (3 days). This is because these services are not available outside of Melbourne. Most other community visits/placements can usually be arranged locally. You will be asked to assist in identifying local placements. However, if these are not available you will be required to travel to an agency where they are available.

15. How is the MCH Service Placement organised?

You will need to arrange placement for your clinical experience with your local MCH Service (approx total 30 days or 6 weeks).

Applicants are encouraged to consider where they would like to complete their specific MCH experience. For most applicants this will be a local municipality. It is important that applicants understand that Councils provide clinical experience to students as a service to the profession, and to facilitate and support the development of new MCH nurse graduates. Councils receive no payment for this role.

Municipalities have different capacities to accept students for placement, for a variety of reasons, including the number of MCH Nurses available to act as preceptors and other projects underway in the municipality or MCH service.

Visit the Municipal Association of Victoria website and download the MCH Applicant Information Pack available there for those interested in MCH studies. This gives step by step details of applying for a clinical place.

- Download the Expression of Interest form for MCH applicants.
- Complete this form and forward it with your Curriculum vitae to the MCH Coordinator of the Municipality you would like to approach about possible clinical placement.
- Submit your application via email or mail.

New Process for Expressing Interest (EOI) in a MCH Clinical Place.

From August 2018 MCH Coordinators will hold Expressions of Interest in MCH clinical places and review them collectively at two key times – Mid Sept and Early October. Some municipalities will review the Expressions of Interest and CV only and some may conduct face to face or phone interviews, according to their preference. Each Council will have an individual style.

When will I hear if I have a clinical place? & What if I am unsuccessful?

Applicants will be advised if they have been successful in their expression of interest for a clinical place approximately early October and mid-November. Applicants who are not successful can apply to further Councils in the final round of Expressions of Interest in a Clinical Place. Applicants are requested to only apply for a maximum of 3 Councils with an Expressions of Interest.

How is the Clinical placement structured?

When you obtain a clinical place the amount of clinical time you will require in MCH practice will be: approx 30 days clinical experience between April to Oct, which equates to 6 weeks placement. This is completed in the current year for full time students. Part time RMIT students complete their clinical in the 2nd or final year of their studies, (for 2019 applicants this would be 2020).

Some Councils will require you to do blocks of placement, others will be satisfied with a mixture of single and multiple days. Students are advised to generally complete 2-4 days of placement per week to optimise learning. All students are required to complete a consolidating block as the end of their placement.

Always be very professional and respectful when you approach Councils or other clinical agencies.

What do I do once I have a Clinical place?

When you have been advised in writing that a Council will offer you a provisional clinical place (subject to you also enrolling in the MCH program at RMIT university), forward a copy of your confirmation to RMIT so this can be added to your university application. Your application cannot proceed without a confirmed MCH clinical place as this is a core component required to complete the program.

Beginning MCH studies requires both a university offer and enrolment and also confirmation of a provisional clinical place to undertake MCH clinical experience.
RMIT University MCH Clinical Requirements  Aug 1, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Load</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Year 1 hours</th>
<th>Year 2 hours</th>
<th>Period for MCH Clinical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RMIT</td>
<td>Full time</td>
<td>1 (March to May)</td>
<td>70 - 80</td>
<td></td>
<td>April to early Oct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 (Mid July – early Oct)</td>
<td>140 - 150</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part Time</td>
<td>1 (March to May)</td>
<td></td>
<td>70- 80</td>
<td></td>
<td>April to early Oct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 (Mid July – early Oct)</td>
<td></td>
<td>140- 150</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the above MCH Clinical Experience students complete an additional 10 days of Community Visits and Placements. These were detailed in item 14.

The community visits begin in March, and MCH clinical experience begins from April.
Students are required to complete some prerequisite activities prior to beginning clinical placement.

16. Why should I choose RMIT to study MCH Nursing?

- The Child and Family Nursing postgraduate program has a contemporary curriculum informed by research and consultation with MCH practitioners across Victoria.
- It is taught by a team of experienced practising MCH nurses.
- It contains a balance of face to face and online courses.
- Our summer course spreads the study load over the year and reduces the study load in the final semester.
- The specialist Working in Partnership with Families course provides foundation Family Partnership Model training and certificate of completion. This course is well regarded by MCH nurse employers.
- The Child and Family Nutrition course equips the new MCH nurse with skills in lactation and breastfeeding, formula feeding, and infant, toddler, pre-schooler and family nutrition.
- The Parent Infant Mental Health elective offers an opportunity to extend study in this critical area.
  This course includes a practical component of infant observation.

18. If I need more information, who do I contact?

You can contact the Program Co-ordinator, Child & Family Health Nursing, RMIT University:

Dr Leanne Sheeran, RN, RM, MCHN,
BAppSci (Mid), Grad Dip MCH, MN, MA (Women’s Studies), PhD

Email: leanne.sheeran@rmit.edu.au or Tel: 9925 7445

Caution: Information can be subject to change and will be confirmed when classes commence. Please check the RMIT University website or contact the Program Coordinator if you have any questions.