

Programme Specification BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies

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NOTE: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detail on the specific learning outcomes, indicative content and the teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found at www.bcu.ac.uk/elss, in the Module Specifications and in the Student Course Guide.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked within independent review processes undertaken by the Quality Assurance Agency.

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| Awarding Institution / Body: | Birmingham City University |
| Teaching Institution: Interim Awards and Final Award: | Faculty of Education, Law and Social Sciences BA (Honours) |
| Programme Title: | Early Childhood Education Studies |
| Main fields of Study: | Early Childhood Education |
| Modes of Study: | Three year degree: Full-time Top-up year: Full-time / Part-time |
| Language of Study: | English |
| UCAS Code: | Three year degree: X320 BA/ECS Top-up year: X310 BA/ECS |
| JACS Code: | |

Relevant subject benchmark statements and other external reference points used to inform programme outcomes:

QAA (2007): Subject Benchmark Statements for Early Childhood Studies
QAA (2011) UK Quality Code for Higher Education
Truss, L (2013)

Programme philosophy and aims

The BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies (BA ECS) course is designed to enable and equip students to become confident, competent and reflective practitioners in the early years field. It is important that, through a carefully constructed programme, students gain a depth of understanding about early childhood and the factors that impact on, and influence the lives of young children and their families. It is through building an understanding of how children develop and learn; the development of skills to work with families; an insight into the importance of multi agency working along with a knowledge of the theories that underpin work with young children, and how these translate into practice that students will be prepared for professional work with young children.

Additionally, the programme provides opportunity to develop key employability skills valued by employers; skills of team work, independent work, presentation, role play and an ability to articulate effectively in a variety of contexts.

However, the programme goes beyond preparing students for the early years workforce ; it is our belief that students should explore wider issues regarding the holistic nature of early childhood studies, including health and well-being of young children. The programme ensures that the students acquire and strengthen transferable academic skills which will establish them as reflective, critical and analytical graduates who are prepared to access and contribute to scholarly discourses in the early years field.

Research and major Government reforms have had a significant impact on the future of the early years workforce and have informed the development of the new programme. Up until January 2013, there was the policy to have an appropriately qualified graduate with Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) in every Early Years setting in order to improve the quality of the early years experience. From September 2013, this will evolve into a new qualification: Early Years Specialist Teacher, which embraces the EYPS skills and knowledge whilst further raising the status of the early years specialists who work with 0-5 age range.

The 0-5 age range, and particularly 0-3 age range, is a growth area: a well qualified workforce has been identified as key to raising the quality standards of early years provision for the 0-5 age group and is a government priority. Quality early years provision is now recognised as being crucial in the first five, most formative years of a child's life, when the foundation for their future development and learning is laid. This recognition demands that the early years work force is equipped to meet the holistic needs of young children. Research, informing government initiatives, shows that this would be addressed by a degree programme tailored to provide the underpinning knowledge, skills and understanding of early childhood required by an emerging graduate led workforce. The BA ECS degree programme is tailored to prepare students for the employment market by ensuring that foundations, for entering graduate professions in the early years field, are laid. For many, this will be as a route into the teaching profession; whether into primary school teaching; the new early years specialist teacher; or to take advantage of a range of opportunities to work with families and support agencies.

The aims of the programme are to:

- enable students to become confident, well-educated and reflective early years practitioners with the skills to respond to developments in the field of early childhood studies;
- develop student's intellectual capabilities specifically related to early childhood;
- enable the development of critical reasoning and analytical skills in relation to philosophical, sociological, historical, cultural, and psychological concepts within the context of early childhood;
- equip students with skills, knowledge and understanding of how theory relating to child development and learning influences and informs current early years provision;
- incorporate theoretical principles and knowledge of leadership, working with other professionals; working with families to meet needs of young children;
- prepare students for their professional development and post graduate career choices.

Intended learning outcomes and the means by which they are achieved and demonstrated:**Learning Outcomes**

1. Identify and reflect on how young children develop and learn, and be able to articulate the theoretical concepts which underpin and influence decisions regarding provision for young children and their families; from which students can formulate and articulate their own personal, professional philosophy.
2. Be cognisant with, and evaluate factors that affect and impact on children and their families within today's multi-cultural society;
3. Appraise and analyse contemporary early years issues both nationally and internationally.
4. Recognise and demonstrate skills required to work both independently and as part of a team in a personal and professional context; valuing the work of other professionals in the early years field.

Learning teaching, and assessment methods used**Learning /teaching**

- Study skills and academic skills support
- Tutor input
- Tutor directed tasks
- Seminars
- Independent research /reading
- Group work
- Workshops
- MOODLE tasks
- Interactive technology
- Tutorial support

Assessment through:

- Formative assessment providing peer/tutor feedback- identified in each module
- Reflective journals: online
- E-portfolios – discussed on a regular basis throughout the year: professional and personal development
- Essays:
- Presentations: group with individual rationales.
- Poster presentations
- Digital presentation,
- Mahara portfolio
- Seminar presentations
- Case Studies: analysis of given case studies
- Analysed child observations
- Illustrated report
- Research proposal; with focus on ethical approach
- A piece of research

Feedback:

Assessments will be submitted online, and feedback will be:

- through the annotation of work;
- through marking criteria grids
- written feedback on 'cover' sheets

Students will be expected to set personal targets from feedback

Placement:

In Years 1 and 2 students will undertake placements with a range of providers in which they will have the opportunity to explore how theory translates into practice. This will contribute to the programme aims and intended learning outcomes.

There is no placement in Year 3, although students have the opportunity to carry out a piece of primary research in an early years context.

Programme structure and requirements, levels, modules, credits and awards

The structure of the course, the modules, levels and credit values, and the awards which can be gained are shown in the diagram below.

BA ECS: Course Structure**Level 4:**

| Module Number | Module Title | Credits |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Principle module | Introducing Professional Practice | 45 |
| Core 1 | Introduction to Child Development | 30 |
| Core 2 | Children's Play | 30 |
| Specific: options | a) the Child's Learning Environment | 15 |
| | b) Principles of Inclusion | |
| | c) Children and Childhood | |
| Award: Cert HE | | 120 credits |

Level 5:

| Module Number | Module Title | Credits |
|----------------------|---|--------------------|
| Principle module | Developing Professional Practice | 45 |
| Core 1 | Further Child Development | 15 |
| Core 2 | Safeguarding Children | 15 |
| Core 3 | Researching Early Childhood | 30 |
| Specific: options | a) The Child as a Creative Learner | 15 |
| | b) Developing Inclusion through Communication | |
| | c) Children and their Families | |
| Award: Dip HE | | 120 credits |

Level 6:

| Module Number | Module Title | Credits |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Principle module | Researching professional Practice | 45 |
| Core 1 | Managing Transitions | 15 |
| Core 2 | Contemporary Perspectives of Childhood | 30 |
| Core 3 | Towards Employment | 15 |
| Specific: options | a) International Perspectives of Children's Learning | 15 |
| | b) Politics of Inclusion | |
| | c) Children and their Worlds | |
| Award: BA Honours | | 120 credits |

Support for Learning including Personal Development Planning (PDP)

Students are encouraged to identify and, with guidance, to reflect on their own learning needs and are offered the following support as appropriate to meet those needs:

In each year students will maintain an e-portfolio which will, at increasing levels, form the basis of evidence of their own personal and professional development. This will be reflective and relate to academic progress, placement opportunities and issues arising through the course programme.

The BA ECS course operates a personal tutor scheme and students will be assigned a personal tutor at the start of the course who will oversee their Faculty-based work, placement reviews and provide pastoral support and guidance. Students will have an entitlement to a 30 minute meeting with their PDT, during each term during Reflection weeks, to evaluate progress on the course and set action points for future development. Decisions will be recorded in a personal tutorial record. Personal tutors will be available at other times by appointment and through email.

Each year of the course is overseen by a year tutor who supports the Course Director in the academic development and pastoral welfare of students.

The Faculty has adopted a Learning Agreement which is discussed with students at the start of the course and which they will be asked to sign.

Where appropriate, students will be guided and advised to access central University support resources as detailed in the Student Course Guide.

There is a wealth of resources provided by the University's Library, including books, journals and digital resources. The librarians are increasing the amount of electronically held texts, to ensure currency.

All students will be able to access Moodle, the University's e-learning system, in order to receive support on-line, information about module and course developments and module-specific resources.

There are open access computer rooms on site, which are fully networked and have a range of software, internet and e-mail facilities. All students receive their University email address at enrolment which enables them to communicate electronically with tutors and administrative staff.

Equal Opportunities Policy:

The course operates within the Faculty's Equal Opportunities policy and a copy of the Equal Opportunities Statement is included in the Student Course Guide. The admissions policy to the course is guided by SENDA legislation and candidates are encouraged to discuss any individual needs they may have. The course team, supported by appropriate university departments and other agencies, strive to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all applicants and entrants to the course.

Criteria for admission

Candidates must satisfy the general admission requirements of the programme.

The current admission requirements can be found under the 'Entry Requirements' tab of the web page for this course.

Methods for evaluation and enhancement of quality and standards including listening and responding to views of students

Committees:

- Board of Studies
- Examination Board
- Faculty Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee
- Learning and Teaching Committee
- Student Experience Committee
- Faculty Board
- Senate

Mechanisms for review and evaluation:

- Individual module evaluation by students, staff and, where appropriate, stakeholders
- Feedback from placement providers;
- Annual review of modules by module leaders
- Annual course evaluation reports and action plans
- Annual monitoring process
- Appraisal of teaching
- Individual performance reviews of staff
- External examiners' comments and formal reports
- Student representatives' feedback to Boards of Studies
- Consideration of the reports of Boards of Studies by the Learning and Teaching Committee
- Approval and review and re-approval events
- National Student Survey
- Student Experience Survey
- Course Development Day