

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1	<b>Awarding institution/body:</b> University of Worcester
2	<b>Teaching institution:</b> University of Worcester and Partner Institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Birmingham Metropolitan College (formerly Sutton Coldfield College)</b></li> <li>• <b>Bournville College, Birmingham</b></li> <li>• <b>Halesowen College</b></li> </ul>
3	<b>Programme accredited by:</b> Sector Endorsed by Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) to 2011
4	<b>Final award:</b> Foundation Degree (FdA)
5	<b>Programme title:</b> Sector Endorsed FdA in Early Childhood
6	<b>Pathways available:</b> n/a
7	<b>Mode and/or site of delivery:</b> Standard taught programme delivered at partner institutions
8	<b>Mode of attendance:</b> Part-time and full-time
9	<b>UCAS Code:</b> X311 (full time)
10	<b>Subject Benchmark statement:</b> Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark Statement (2004). Early Childhood Studies Subject Benchmark Statement (2007) <b>Sector requirements:</b> National Occupational Standards, Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce (2005)
11	<b>Date of Programme Specification preparation/revision:</b> July 2010
1	<b>Educational aims of the programme</b>  <p>The academic content relates to the education, health, welfare and development of children aged 0-8 years within the context of their families, community, society and culture. The subject draws on different disciplines and professional backgrounds to reflect the complexity of young children's lives and the holistic nature of their development.</p> <p>The programme aims to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide students with the opportunity to build on existing knowledge and experience and to further develop specific knowledge, skills and values relevant to the context of early years</li> <li>2. Provide opportunities for students to develop key skills to prepare for further study and/or employment and lifelong learning</li> <li>3. Develop students' understanding and application of the core values underpinning care practice</li> <li>4. Promote critical reflection and reflective practice</li> <li>5. Critically engage students in the social, cultural, moral, legal and political context of early years</li> <li>6. Develop an analytical and critical approach to problem solving</li> <li>7. Enable students to assess, plan, implement and make sound judgements in care delivery in accordance with the core values of early years</li> <li>8. Develop students' interpersonal and communication skills and enable students to identify, use and communicate relevant information effectively</li> <li>9. Further develop skills and strategies necessary for partnership working with a range of service users, services, professionals and groups across the early years sectors</li> <li>10. Provide a suitable basis for progression to Early Years Professional, a BA (Hons) Programme or QTS via and appropriate ITT programme.</li> <li>11. Develop student's self-awareness and reflection including the ability to evaluate their effect on others within the environment in which they work.</li> </ol>

## **2 Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods**

### **Intended Learning Outcomes:**

On completion of the course, the student will be able to

1. Demonstrate and critically reflect on the knowledge and skills necessary to work effectively with children in the early years context
2. Critically analyse relevant theoretical frameworks and concepts and critically apply these to early years in a variety of contexts
3. Understand the importance of effectively caring for and working with children
4. Plan and implement appropriate educational activities
5. Develop reflective practice to improve knowledge and skills for early years within work environments
6. Understand the importance of difference and diversity and demonstrate anti-discriminatory and inclusive practice
7. Recognise and reflect on the rights and promote the interests, dignity and independence of children whilst protecting them from danger or harm
8. Establish and maintain trust and confidence of children, parents and fellow professionals
9. Demonstrate accountability for the quality of their work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving their knowledge and skills while working within the parameters of their role
10. Understand the importance of working in collaboration and partnership with others across a range of different early years contexts
11. Locate and evaluate evidence and research and apply to practice in the early years
12. Communicate effectively through a range of media and in a range of contexts
13. Develop key skills for lifelong learning
14. Understand and reflect upon their values and practice in a range of work settings.

### **Learning and teaching methods**

Students on this programme will experience a wide variety of learning and teaching activities designed to meet different learner styles and to facilitate development of both subject specific knowledge and skills and transferable knowledge and key skills

As consistent with the UW Learning and Teaching Strategy Sept 2005 the childcare team are committed to “excellence in inclusive learning and teaching” and to providing “higher education learning opportunities accessible to all in a genuinely open and supportive environment” and to providing “inspiring models of equal and progressive educational practice...and clear social values which ensure that individuals are treated with dignity and respect”.

Learning is enhanced by the use of a range of assessment strategies that enable students to develop academic and best practice knowledge and skills and facilitate the application of this knowledge to practice. These strategies are used to engage students in the learning process and to support students in their assignments. These include:

- Whole group lectures
- Presentations – group and individual
- Tutorials
- Directed study
- Professional learning
- Independent study

- Work-based learning

A broad range of formative and summative assessment strategies is used in the programme to support the development of knowledge and understanding and student study skills.

Assessments may include:

- Essay
- Reflective journal
- Displays
- Reports
- Presentations
- Research Project

### **3 Assessment Strategy**

The programme's assessment strategy has been considered within the context of UW's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, Assessment Policy, Curriculum Design Policy and Quality Standards for Work-based and Placement Learning.

The programme assesses the ability to critically reflect and link theory and practice rather than operational practice, thereby supporting professional development through academic study and practice/ work-based learning.

A range of assessment strategies contribute to the assessment of the overall course learning outcomes and module learning outcomes. Formative and summative assessment strategies are used to support personal and professional development, which underpins but also goes beyond the achievement of specific learning outcomes.

Formative assessment is provided through responses to academic and work-based directed tasks including professional development profile tasks and reflective journal entries. Interactive learning and teaching approaches including student evaluation of learning, provides further opportunity for timely formative assessment.

The form of summative assessment (for each module) is determined by its appropriateness in allowing the student to demonstrate they have understood and can meet the learning outcomes with potential for achievement across the full range of grades. Some forms of assessment require forms of representation that facilitate the assessment of theory linked to practice and incorporate work-based study.

Assessments:

- Are a maximum of 4,000 words
- Include formative and summative elements
- Are aligned with subject, course, module outcomes and learning and teaching methods
- Summatively assess all module learning outcomes
- Include different assessment points and split assessments within modules where this approach is deemed to be beneficial to the students achievement of course and module learning outcomes
- Provide opportunity for achievement of all grades
- Provide opportunity for choice/negotiation where appropriate to the module content, learning outcomes and level of study
- Include a range of assessment methods that enable students to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes and the transferable skills inherent within them

Further information on how the assessment methods at each level are mapped to modules is included in the Student Handbook.

The Early Childhood generic assessment criteria (developed from UW's Undergraduate assessment criteria) apply to all modules.

Module learning outcomes are explicitly stated in module programmes, and are relevant to the appropriate level of study as identified in QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ 2008) and provide the focus for the assessment of student achievement. Module outlines identify the learning outcomes being assessed for each summative assessment task.

#### **4 Programme structures and requirements**

The course is modular and is designed to be studied, full time, over a minimum of two years and up to a maximum of 5 years, which will enable a student to follow a part time model by joining the full time group for specific modules or a part time model if available.

Modules in the FDEC at Level 4 and Level 5 attract 15 credits each, with the exception of the work-based module at Level 5 which is a double module worth 30 credits.

To gain the award for Foundation Degree, students must achieve 120 credits at Level 4 (7 mandatory taught modules and 1 mandatory work-based module) and 120 credits at Level 5 (6 mandatory taught modules and 1 double mandatory work-based module).

As part of the module achievement, students must demonstrate competence to Level 4 in the principal key skills relevant to this subject area: Communication, Working with Others, Improving Own Learning and Performance and Problem Solving. In addition, students will demonstrate competence in the remaining key Skills to a minimum of Level 2: IT and Application of Number.

Students who successfully achieve the requirements for the course will be awarded the Foundation Degree in Early Childhood .

<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credit Value</b>	<b>Module Status</b>
<b>Level 4</b>			
ECST1901	Introduction to Study Skills for EC	15	Mandatory
ECST1902	Professional Practice (Work-Based Learning)	15	Mandatory
ECST1903	Children' s Development and Learning Through Play	15	Mandatory
ECST1904	Safeguarding Children	15	Mandatory
ECST1905	Introduction to Research Methods	15	Mandatory
ECST1906	Managing Behaviour	15	Mandatory
ECST1907	Encouraging Curiosity Through Investigation	15	Mandatory
ECST1908	Foundations to Communication	15	Mandatory

#### **Requirements at level 4**

*Students must take the modules listed above. Students must successfully complete 120 credits in total at level 4.*

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value	Module Status
<b>Level 5</b>			
ECST2090 1	Work-Based Research Project (Double Module)	30	Mandatory
ECST2902	Inclusivity in the Early Years	15	Mandatory
ECST2903	Working with Children and Families – Integrated Services	15	Mandatory
ECST2904	Planning and Management of Children’s Learning	15	Mandatory
ECST2905	Social Policy and Legislation	15	Mandatory
ECST2906	Managing People in the Early Years	15	Mandatory
ECST2907	Interpersonal and Communication Skills and Working Collaboratively	15	Mandatory

### Requirements at level 5

*Students must take the modules listed above. Students must successfully complete 120 credits in total at level 5.*

### Practice-based learning

Part-time students are required to be in employment or working voluntarily in an early years setting for at least one day (7 hours) per week (in order to fulfil the requirements of Sector Endorsement <http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/foundation-degrees/sector-endorsement/wwyp-se-criteria> ). This setting will usually be OFSTED registered.

Full-time students are required to be in placement in a relevant work-based environment to achieve the required experience, and achieve the learning outcomes for modules ECST1902 and ECST2901 for a minimum of 2 days per week (i.e.12 hours minimum) and three block placements of five days each, in each year. This work experience also provides valuable practice experience to use in reflective learning in other modules and in personal development planning.

### 5 QAA Academic Infrastructure

The QAA Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark Statement (2004), Early Childhood Studies Subject Benchmark Statement (2007), Section 9: Work-based and placement learning (2007) and Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ 2008) have been used as a framework within which this programme has been developed, and within which it will be implemented and monitored.

The qualification benchmark statements defining the distinctive features of the foundation degree within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ 2008) ensures that expectations placed on student performance are recorded in language appropriate to the levels on module outlines and that assessment of knowledge, understanding and skills of students is appropriate at individual centres and across the partnership i.e. supporting moderation and standardisation. Feedback from external examiners facilitates ongoing evaluation of the expectations placed on students and the extent of their attainment.

Specific Sector requirements (for CWDC Sector Endorsed FdA’s) are embedded within the aims and learning outcomes and include the National Occupational Standards and Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children’s Workforce (2005). CWDC’s ‘Core criteria across the children’s

workforce' for Sector Endorsement are addressed following initial application through annual reports.

## **6 Support for students**

Students will be issued with a comprehensive student handbook and a handbook for practice based learning. An electronic version of these documents will be available on partner college Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) , training for which will be provided during the first weeks of the course.

*UW and Partner Colleges provide other support through:*

- An Induction Programme at the beginning of each academic year for new entrants
- A briefing for employers and mentors.
- *Student representatives*

*Student Services:*

- *Careers*
- *Learning Resources inc Library, Media and IT (supported by visits to UW and visits to partner colleges by ILS staff)*
- *Student union, Sports & Leisure facilities*
- *Equal Opportunities Centre at UW*

### **Individual support**

A named academic (personal) tutor will be available so that a learning relationship can quickly be established. Personal tutors are accessible by telephone, e-mail or in person by appointment.

### **Online and distance learning**

Blended learning and online tutor support will be available through e-mail and the use of VLE's.

Use of the partner college and university's VLE for students will allow enable contact with tutors and peers. Students will be eligible to join the Students' Union at UW and their partner college. Information and Learning Support Services will be available to students at both the partner college and UW. This includes Student Support Services which provide Equal Opportunities, Careers guidance, Counselling, Programme Advisors.

### **Study skills**

Study skills are introduced within a module at the beginning of the programme and developed in other modules throughout the programme.

### **Practice/ work-based learning**

Practice/ work-based learning forms approximately 50% of the Foundation Degree, with practice based learning incorporated into taught modules and dedicated practice/ work-based modules. Personal Development Planning (PDP) will be encouraged through selected module activities and assessments and supported by personal tutors through tutorials and by the Professional Critical Friend in work-based learning. Specific knowledge and skills for PDP will be introduced in ECST1901 and further developed in the work-based modules. Students are required to develop a profile in which they will record and reflect on their personal development through learning activities and specific assignments in modules and through the use of a reflective learning journal. Critical reflection and application of theory to practice will be an essential component of all modules.

Students will be encouraged to identify their own learning and development needs and develop action plans to meet their individual needs.

### **Support in the workplace / on placement**

Practice/ work-based learning requires as much support as traditional learning. Work-based learning will be supported by the Professional Critical Friend in placement and the Practice Mentor at the partner College. The support will consist of meeting and discussions as well as assessment of performance. The role of the Practice Mentor is also to support the student in placement.

### **Peer Group Support.**

Learning groups will be established with a central membership of peers and will meet for informal but regular discussions based on personal and professional development. Learning groups will also be utilised within module group work where appropriate.

## **7 Admissions policy, criteria and procedures**

### Admissions policy for the course

The course seeks to recruit students from a range of educational and experiential backgrounds, including those with significant experience of working in early years settings and those who are progressing from vocational or academic courses at College or school. A lack of formal qualifications is not necessarily a barrier to joining the course if you have relevant experience and commitment to learning.

The course is committed to widening participation, and welcomes applications from males, black and ethnic minority groups and those with disabilities, who are currently under-represented. University and College equal opportunity policies apply in relation to course admissions processes and selection criteria.

We welcome applicants who hold alternative qualifications/experience different to those shown in this section who can demonstrate the ability to benefit from the course and show their potential to complete the course successfully. Although recent preparatory study at an appropriate level (e.g. an Access to HE Diploma) is recommended, students may be considered on the basis of prior evidenced professional/work experience and/or other assessment procedures, and the assessment of personal suitability. University Admissions office staff will be able to offer information, advice and guidance on this process.

The part-time course is aimed at people who are already employed or working voluntarily in an early years setting for at least 7 hours per week.

The full-time courses is aimed at people who are progressing from level 3 study or those who may not have relevant qualifications or previous experience in an early years context who are looking to develop practice experience and achieve a relevant qualification.

### Entry Requirements

4 GCSEs (including English Language) at Grade C or above plus a minimum of 1 A Level and maximum of 3 1/2 A Levels or equivalent Level 3 qualifications.

Details of acceptable level 3 qualifications, policy in relation to mature students or applicants with few or no formal qualifications can be found in the prospectus or on the University web pages. Information on eligibility for accreditation of prior learning for the purposes of entry or advanced standing is also available from the University web pages or from the Registry Admissions Office

(01905 855111).

Applicants for the part-time programme route who do not hold the above qualifications will be considered on the basis of prior professional experience and the criteria indicated above.

Part-time students need:

- evidence of appropriate support from their setting
- a testimony that supports the students commitment and suitability for the course

All students need:

- current police clearance to work with young children (Enhanced CRB)

Further information or guidance is available from Registry Admissions Office (01905 855111) or from <http://www.worc.ac.uk/courses/howtoapply/476.html>

### Admissions procedures

Full-time applicants apply through UCAS (Code X312)

Part-time applicants\* apply directly to University of Worcester (UW) (Part-time application form available on UW website)

\*Part-time Applicants to North East Worcestershire (NEW) College apply directly to the college

All applicants for the part-time programme route who are working an Early Years setting will be required to provide:

- a statement of support from their current employer / voluntary placement to provide the time, opportunity and provision of support for work-based requirements and release to attend college, where appropriate, including identification of a Professional Partner within the setting.
- a testimony/reference from an appropriate professional.

All applicants will be required to provide:

- evidence of current police clearance to work with young children (Enhanced CRB)

Full-time students will be assisted in finding placements.

Students are required to let the programme know if there are any changes in their employment and are responsible for ensuring they continue to be cleared by the police to work with young children throughout their course of study.

### Admissions/selection criteria

Offers of places are usually made on the basis of the application and interview.

The criteria for selection of applicants are:

- Literacy skills which will enable them to fulfil the requirements of the course as evidenced by qualifications and/or other appropriate written evidence \*
- Commitment to personal development as evidenced through work experience, previous study, and/or training courses, conferences attended; portfolio of professional achievements, performance assessments, personal interests etc
- Ability to work at Level 4 and learn from previous experience in working with children

\*Students who do not possess Grade C or above in GCSE English Language will be

given the task of producing an extended piece of writing.

### **Accreditation of Prior Learning**

Students with relevant previous study at HND or degree level or extensive experience may be considered eligible for Accreditation of Prior Learning.

Entry may be possible to Year Two of the course, depending upon the qualifications or experience gained. Credit can also be given for individual modules in the part-time programme.

## **19. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning**

The course is monitored at a local level by student evaluation of modules and student representation at course committees. Each institution writes its own Annual Evaluation Report; these are then collated to develop an overall course Report at UW. The support from link tutors and regular cross-moderation and standardisation events for the whole course team ensure quality and standards are consistent across partner institutions. This process is further strengthened by external examiners who verify work and marks across the institutions. Tutors at partner institutions are registered lecturers of UW, which supports and offers opportunities for staff development and scholarly activity. Conference days at UW provide further opportunity for CPD, collaborative working and peer assessment. Regular partnership team meetings are essential to the delivery and development of the programme. UW's Partnership Management team oversee Quality Assurance and Enhancement as well as the ongoing communication and delivery of the programme.

## **20. Regulation of assessment**

### **Requirements to pass modules**

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Some modules have attendance requirements (delete if this does not apply).
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

### **Submission of assessment items**

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who fail to submit an item of assessment lose their right to reassessment in that module, and will be required to retake the module.
- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations see URF.

### **Retrieval of failure**

- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade, unless the failure was due to non-attendance or non-submission.
- Reassessment items that are passed are graded at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module).

### Requirements for Progression

- Students at Level 4 may be permitted to progress to Level 5 when they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 4.
- Students at Level 5 may be permitted to progress to Level 6 when they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 5.
  - *A student who fails 90 credits or more due to non-submission will be required to withdraw from the University.*
- Students who pass less than 90 credits but have submitted all items of assessment will be required to retake modules.

### Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
CertHE	120 credits at Level 4 or higher
Foundation Degree FdA/FdSc	120 credits at Level 4 and 120 credits at Level 5

These awards are not classified.

Institute-level Assessment Boards review and confirm results for modules, and the Board of Examiners considers students' mark profiles to make decisions about progression, awards and degree classifications as appropriate.

### Indicators of quality and standards

External examiners reports confirm that standards are appropriate for study at Level 4/5 and are in line with Foundation Degrees elsewhere. Some of the external examiners' comments include that:

- *There are positive relationships and there is strong partnership management across the collaborative provision*
- *The Early Years Foundation Degree is an excellent example of a work-based degree*

An increasing number of students are progressing on to UW's BA (Hons) in Integrated Early Childhood Studies Top-up or Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) Long Extended Pathway, which have also received praiseworthy reports from external examiners.

The Foundation Degree continues to receive sector endorsement from CWDC because of its high levels of employer engagement and its relevance to community development. The Foundation Degree remains a sought after qualification for those wishing to progress in the area of Early Years education and care.

In the most recent National Students' Survey our department received 4.5 out of 5, with strengths in personal development, teaching, organisation and management.

In November 2005, the University was audited by the Quality Assurance Agency. The audit confirmed confidence in the University's management of the quality of its academic programmes and the standards of its awards. The QAA particularly commended the University's supportive ethos and range of departmental and central services provided to students and staff in support of its mission to deliver an excellent inclusive higher education. The University will be next audited in 2011.

UW is accredited as Investors in People (2008, <http://www.worc.ac.uk/personnel/706.htm>).

## Career Opportunities & Links with Employers

The FdA EY opens up opportunities for career progression for students who are already in employment, working voluntarily in the sector or progressing from Level 3 study. Employers are involved in the design of the course, its on-going delivery and review. A Partnership Forum which includes representatives from Early years LA Services across the region supports collaborative working with UW and FE providers.

Following further study the Sector Endorsed [FdA in Early Years](#) will enable students to pursue careers in areas such as the following:

- *Social Care*
- *Children's charities: eg Barnardos*
- *Nursery management, Pre-schools and Playwork*
- *Early years education, teaching assistant*
- *Day Care*
- *School Welfare Services*
- *Early Years Services*
- *Careers information is available at <http://www.worc.ac.uk/careers/>.*

Progression routes include: Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) (Long Extended Pathway), third year of an honours degree course including BA(Hons) Integrated Early Childhood Studies, BA(Hons) Social Welfare, BA(Hons) Education Studies leading on to EYPS (Full, Short or Validation pathways).

Applicants to the Early Years Professional Status Long Extended Pathway require GCSE's in English Language and Mathematics at the point of validation (in addition to a Level 5 qualification). All other pathways require GCSE's in English Language and Mathematics at the point of validation, in addition to a non honours degree.

Applicants for a PGCE Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) course or the Graduate Teacher Programme (QTS) require a good honours degree and GCSE's in English Language, Mathematics and Science.

Further information is available at <http://www.worc.ac.uk/departments/8792.html>

**Please note:** This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module study guides and course student handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.