Early Childhood (Combined)
Programme Specification from the Faculty of Education
Version: 2015/6.1
Last updated: August 2016
Programme Specification for Early Childhood (Combined)

**KEY INFORMATION**

| Study mode(s) and period of registration | Full-time or part-time  
|                                         | Minimum 3 years maximum 6 years (full-time)  
|                                         | Minimum 4 years maximum 10 years (part-time)  
| Frequency of Intake | Annually in September  
| Awarding body | Liverpool Hope University  
| Teaching location(s) | Hope Park or Creative Campus or NOH location  
| Final award(s), including any interim awards | Early Childhood Major in combination with another major, leading to an award of BA Combined Early Childhood and XXX; Diploma HE (240 credits, achieved by successfully completing two full years of study); Certificate HE (120 credits, achieved by successfully completing one full year of study)  
| Relationship with Subject Benchmark Statement | The benchmark for Early Childhood (the national expectations of what a good degree in this subject should contain) has been fully used in the development of this provision.  
| FHEQ level(s) | 4, 5, 6 (first, second and third year at University)  
| Date of initial validation | March 2013 in present form, although the subject has been taught at Hope for many years.  
| Date of first intake | September 2013  
| Date of last Review (if applicable) |  
| Additional Costs to Students (Estimate) | N/A  
| Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB)(s) (if applicable) with date/outcome of last PSRB approval | N/A  

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**PROGRAMME AIMS:**

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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Knowledge and understanding of the ecology of childhood</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>An ability to make strong links between theory and practice with young children and their families</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>An ability to critically evaluate different pedagogical approaches</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Knowledge and understanding of the relationships between various disciplines when studying young children and their families</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>The knowledge and understanding of the global perspectives and issues relating to children and families and the ability to recognise professional expertise of the disciplines who work with them</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>The ability to engage in inquiry and contribute to the growing knowledge base in Early Childhood Major</td>
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**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**CORE: By the end of this year all students will be able to:**

| Year One | L1.1) Critically reflect on the relationship between theory and their own perspectives on practice |
| Year Two | L2.1) Compare and analyse international provision for young children’s learning |
| Year Three | L3.1) Critically understand the complex relations and operations of an interdisciplinary children’s workforce |

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<td>L1.2) Reflect on and evaluate different historical and contemporary constructs of childhood</td>
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<td>L2.2) Reflect upon a range of historical, pedagogical, psychological and philosophical approaches to young children’s learning</td>
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<td>L3.2) Know and have a critical understanding of the global, historical and social development of policy, legislation, provision and practice in the Early Childhood sector</td>
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<td>L1.3) Demonstrate theoretical knowledge and understanding of play as an effective approach to learning and development</td>
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<td>L3.3) Critically understand the role of professional expertise in society and the role of critically reflective practice</td>
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<td>L1.4) Demonstrate an understanding of ethical issues involved in working and researching with young children</td>
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<td>L2.3) Demonstrate a philosophical and pedagogical approach to supporting health and well-being for young children and their families</td>
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<td>L3.4) Conduct and report on their own research project</td>
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<td>L2.4) Become familiar with and pilot research methods used in early childhood, knowing their limitations</td>
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### Curriculum Diagram: (see note below on delivery for information about lectures, seminars and tutorials)

#### Year One: Foundations in Early Childhood 60 credits

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<th>Shared Lectures on Core Curriculum:</th>
<th>Foundations Seminars 33%:</th>
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<td>3 x 1 Hour Lectures per Week</td>
<td>The first seminar will be formatively assessed. Formative assessment is about attachment theory.</td>
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<td>The second seminar is informed by the content of the first one.</td>
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**Seminar 1:** Constructs of childhood and the pioneers

- **Seminar 2:** Play and space
- **Seminars 3%:** The use of observations for planning provision and for research purposes will be studied and practised. Knowledge of ethical issues for practice and for research will be developed. Case studies will support this. Various templates for observations will be introduced and their relative merits examined.

**Tutorials:** in Groups of 10.
- Study/research skills are included here.

#### Year Two: Explorations in children’s learning, development and wellbeing  60 credits

The lectures will be planned to develop across the whole year; there will be no identifiable sections or phases. Lectures will sometimes inform one seminar or the other. However, many lectures could relate to either seminar. There will be lectures on international provision for young children which will inform both seminars. This enables students to examine learning theory as an entity but may also make connections between issues of health and well-being and learning. The examination will incorporate both these seminar aspects and include international perspectives on childhood provision.

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<th>Shared Lectures on Core Curriculum:</th>
<th>Explorations Seminars 50%:</th>
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| 2 x 1 Hour Lectures per Week       | Seminar 1: Learning theory
This seminar will be theoretical and will examine journal articles. It will involve interactive activities encouraging students to debate and critically examine others’ research on learning. |
|                                    | Seminar 2: Wellbeing and social and intellectual development.
This seminar will make the links between learning theory, research and practice beyond settings, including cultural, historical and international influences. |
|                                    | Tutorials: in groups of 15-20
Tutorials will use YouTube clips and journal articles and debating activities to support understanding of research and to improve critical reflection |

#### Year Three: Advanced Studies in Early Childhood (Major) 60

| Shared Lectures on Core Curriculum: | |
|------------------------------------| 2 x 1 Hour Lectures per week. |
|                                    | There will be two x 1hour lectures per week. These are continual throughout the year. Generally the first part of the year will be related to Seminar 1 content and the second part to Seminar 2. However, content from the first half also informs seminar 2. For example, a lecture on international policy in the first term will inform the study of family issues in the UK discussed in seminar two. |

**Seminar 1:** Policy and legislation
- **Seminar 2:** Child and family Issues
- **Research into high profile case studies on social issues will support the discussion in this seminar**

**Tutorials:** in small groups.
- The groups will be determined by the chosen research focus of each student.

### Delivery of Learning and Teaching

Many different forms of teaching and learning strategies are employed including workshops, lectures, individual tutorials, small group tutorials, seminars, the use of the University’s Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) ‘Moodle’, guided reading activities, independent study, online forum discussion groups, distance learning, individual project supervision, research projects and opportunities to reflect on practice. Seminars and tutorials are planned to be both challenging and supportive. They are linked to the lecture themes of the term and focus on topics and case studies in a targeted way supporting the development of reflective
argument and supporting preparation for assessment. Workshops help to develop students’ confidence in collaborating, contributing and presenting.

Delivery is three-fold, lectures, seminars and tutorials, and all students are expected to attend all sessions. In lectures all students are together, and core content is presented. Seminars consist of smaller groups, normally no more than 20, where students work through the material more fully, and students may be grouped according to chosen aspect of learning for their assessments. The seminars make the link between lectures and assessment activities, and support for assessment will be through the seminar. Seminars also provide interactive experiences that encourage critical debate, examine research projects and challenge concepts. These activities will provide the knowledge, skills and awareness of ethical issues that will support the tutorials, which are in smaller groups again, and which will be more focused on research and methodology.

The University’s Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), Moodle is used as a platform to promote students’ collaborative learning. It will be used as a place for students to access all learning materials but even more importantly as a medium to create an online learning community.

The normal pattern of teaching is that for each Major lectures provide three hours of contact time in the first year, and two in subsequent years; seminars provide two hours per week, and tutorials one hour, in all years. In addition tutors are available every week at designated times for one-to-one discussions.

Assessment
In Early Childhood, at all levels, assessment and feedback arrangements are founded on the University’s expectations of holistic and scaffolded (i.e, building up) assessment practices. These include:

- Providing both formative and summative assessment opportunities
- The provision of constructive feedback which allows students to close the gap between current and desired performance
- The use of peer and self-assessment where appropriate
- Developing an understanding of assessment criteria in students
- Fostering an awareness in students of their own learning progress and providing opportunities for development planning

The assessment strategy is driven by a desire to promote rigorous, academic study. A variety of assessment methods are employed including essays, examinations, posters, and reflective journals. These assignments will draw from a wide range of educational contexts including both formal and informal settings and are designed to encourage and enhance the development of generic and discipline specific skills, as identified above. Assessment criteria are explicit and help to build up skills, knowledge and understanding. Longer pieces of writing are supported by interim formative feedback.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Development of Key Generic (transferable) and Subject-specific skills for each level.

At the end of Year One (Level C) students will normally have developed the following

Key Transferable Skills:
- Confidence in presenting own thoughts with and to others
- Knowledge of how to consider unfamiliar concepts and problems
- The ability to reflect on course content and their own learning
- Develop critical argument
• Awareness of contextual and interpersonal factors when working in teams
• Independent learning

Key Subject Specific Skills
• The ability to articulate their own Early Childhood philosophy to others
• The ability to critically reflect on own values, beliefs and understanding in relation to Early Childhood
• An understanding and appreciation of the values, beliefs and understanding in relation to Early Childhood of others
• An ability to analyse and constructively critique theories and research
• An ability to pose questions about research and practice in early childhood
• The ability to promote children’s health and wellbeing

At the end of Year Two (Level I) students will normally have developed the following

Key Transferable Skills
• Ability to communicate ideas and views on research to others
• Critical thinking and analysis
• Independent learning and self-motivation
• Preparedness to reflect on and evaluate their own learning
• Collaborative communication
• Be sensitive to others, debate, negotiate, persuade and challenge collaboratively

Key Subject Specific Skills
• To articulate their own philosophy relating to how children learn and develop to others
• To know how and why to take action in the interest of a child’s well being
• To critically reflect on own practice and beliefs
• Analyse and evaluate competing positions in relation to the way children develop and learn

By graduation students will normally have developed the following:

Key Transferable Skills
• Communicate ideas and research findings effectively, clearly and fluently in writing and orally
• Critical thinking and analysis
• Problem solving by clarifying and probing questions, considering alternative and innovative solutions
• Preparedness to reflect on and evaluate their learning
• Communication skills (written and oral)
• Have considerable critical insight and confidence in leading and working collaboratively with others

Key Subject Specific Skills
• To have a high level ability to reason clearly, understand the role of evidence and make critical judgements about arguments relating to the area of Early Childhood
• To adapt their own practice to suit the individual needs of children and according to different cultures
• To critically reflect on own practice and that of others in the children’s workforce
• To be able to critically reflect on philosophical, historical, psychological, sociological, cultural, health, welfare, legal, political and economic perspectives and how these impact on people’s understanding of children, childhood and families
• To have a well-developed ability to critically explore the links between ethics, politics, culture and ideology in children’s lives

SPECIAL FEATURES

• Early Childhood Major provides breadth of knowledge and understanding in the field of young children and families. Its interdisciplinary nature and possible application too many curriculum areas, makes it a suitable major for students who are interested in young children, and wish to choose an additional subject to fulfil their interests.
• There are many aspects of work with children and families that graduates could pursue, depending on their combined study and interests. Examples include social therapy, music therapy, mental health, family support work, charity, local authority work, child and family health, special educational needs and advocacy.

INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM DESIGN

The Early Childhood curriculum is fully compliant with the Liverpool Hope University Equality Scheme. The Faculty has considerable previous experience of enabling students with disability, including physical limitations, to integrate fully with their cohorts in all elements of the curriculum, both practical and theoretical.

The team recognises that ‘an inclusive curriculum is one where all students’ entitlement to access and participate in a course is anticipated, acknowledged and taken into account’ (Higher Education Academy, Inclusive curriculum design in higher education, 2011, p. 7). It seeks to reflect the following principles, as enunciated by the HEA:

- Anticipatory: Adopting an anticipatory approach reduces the need for reactive and individualised responses that can arise when inclusive issues have not been considered at the design phase;
- Flexible: it is open, versatile and responsive to an evolving student population, and to changes in circumstances that may require adaptations to accommodate student availability;
- Accountable: it encourages staff and students to be responsible for the progress they have made against equality objectives and actions agreed;
- Collaborative: it builds on partnership between students, colleagues and other stakeholders including professional bodies, sector bodies, international partners and employers to enrich the curriculum content and relevance;
This translates into this provision as follows:

- Anticipatory: students are encouraged to think about maintaining a quality experience in the classroom as a way of widening the interests and aspirations of all students. In this regard the student voice is heard and acted upon through a number of mechanisms. These include:
  - Staff-Student Liaison Committee meetings, the minutes of which are laid before the departmental meeting;
  - Monthly meetings between class representatives and the Head of Department;
  - Student feedback, notably in the small group sessions;
  - Student representation in the wider framework of Faculty and University Boards and Committees
- Flexibility: Members of the teaching team – often with the support of colleagues in Student Development and Well Being as well as Student Administration - make every effort, within the framework of University regulations and processes, to meet with individual student needs responsively, creatively and fairly. This approach includes meeting with students in difficulty outside of office hours or, subject to due process, setting alternative assessment forms;
- Accountability: The teaching team and students share a responsibility to uphold inclusivity and fairness for everyone. Through the structure of small teaching groups, in particular, potentially harmful or hurtful behaviour is intercepted and positive relations fostered;
- Collaborative: To ensure enhanced opportunities for students, the teaching team fosters collaborative relations with a range of professional bodies.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS
- [http://www.hope.ac.uk/undergraduate/howtoapply/entryrequirements](http://www.hope.ac.uk/undergraduate/howtoapply/entryrequirements) gives full details.
- In certain circumstances the University also permits study that students have already carried out at University level to be taken into account – see [http://www.hope.ac.uk/aboutus/governance/academicquality/accreditationofpriorlearning/](http://www.hope.ac.uk/aboutus/governance/academicquality/accreditationofpriorlearning/)

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<th>This specification last updated:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Updated by:</td>
<td>Dr Alex Owen</td>
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