

Programme Specification

1. Overview / Factual Information

Programme/award title(s)	FD Early Childhood Studies
Teaching institution	University Centre Peterborough (UCP)
Awarding institution	The Open University (OU)
Date of first OU validation	November 2020
Date of latest OU (re)validation	N/A
Next revalidation	2026
Credit points for the award	240
UCAS Code	LX53
HECoS Code	100457
LDCS Code (FE Colleges)	
Programme start date and cycle of starts if appropriate.	September 2022
Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)	Early Childhood Studies
Other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes. For apprenticeships, the standard or framework against which it will be delivered.	Early Years Educator Criteria Early Childhood Graduate Competencies Criteria Early Years Teachers' Standards
Professional / statutory recognition	DfE - Level 3 Early Years Educator
For apprenticeships fully or partially integrated assessment.	N/A
Mode(s) of Study (PT, FT, DL, Mix of DL & Face-to-Face) Apprenticeship	FT
Duration of the programme for each mode of study	2 years
Dual accreditation (if applicable)	N/A
Date of production/revision of this specification	August 2021

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 they take 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 student module guide(s) and the student handbook.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the university and may be verified by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

2.1 Educational aims and objectives

- To provide a comprehensive programme of study, based on QAA benchmarks and professional body standards in the field of Early Childhood Studies.
- To provide students with the necessary practical and academic skills to enable them to progress or further their career in the early years' sector.
- To develop graduate students who are skilled to meet the local and national labour market needs in the field of early years.
- To graduate students with independence of mind and developed critical faculties to enable them to participate fully in civic life.
- To promote access to further progression within Higher Education, research and professional development.
- To support students in developing a range of transferable skills and competencies needed to interact with interdisciplinary fields of practice, and the wider environment.
- To encourage a systematic, creative and flexible approach to solving complex social problems.
- To develop autonomous and reflective Early Childhood Studies' practitioners.
- To instil a lifelong passion for working with children in the early years.

2.2 Relationship to other programmes and awards

The FD Early Childhood Studies programme sits within the Education faculty at University Centre Peterborough which concentrates upon education of children aged birth-11, through focus upon the pathways of early years and primary education.

The faculty recognises the importance of students understanding the full educational pathway of young children, and so the FD Early Childhood Studies' programme shares some interdisciplinary core modules with the FD Primary Education programme.

The programme is also designed to provide clear progression to the BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies (top-up) degree.

2.3 For Foundation Degrees, please list where the 60-credit work-related learning takes place. For apprenticeships an articulation of how the work based learning and academic content are organised with the award.

Work-related learning is embedded within the two following modules:
Level 4 Academic and Professional Practice 1: The Early Years
Level 5 Academic and Professional Practice 2: The Early Years

2.4 List of all exit awards

Certificate of Higher Education upon successful completion of a minimum of 120 credits at Level 4

3. Programme structure and learning outcomes

Programme Structure – Level 4

Compulsory modules	Credit points	Optional modules	Credit points	Is module compensatable?	Semester runs in
Introduction to the EYFS and National Curriculum	15	None		Yes	Sem 1
Planning and Assessing Early Learning Opportunities	30		No	Sem 1	
Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing	15		Yes	Sem 2	
Child Development and Learning	30		No	Sem 2	
Academic and Professional Practice 1: The Early Years	30		No	Sem 1 & 2	

Intended learning outcomes at level 4 are listed below:

<u>Learning Outcomes – Level 4</u>	
3a. Knowledge and understanding	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy / assessment methods
<p>A1 Know and understand relevant curriculum frameworks and how to apply them in practice.</p> <p>A2 Evidence knowledge and understanding of pedagogical approaches for working with children.</p> <p>A3 Demonstrate knowledge of issues in relation to rights, diversity, equity and inclusion in relation to working with children, families and communities.</p>	<p>A diverse and dynamic range of teaching and learning strategies are utilised to meet the knowledge-based learning outcomes of this level. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional methods of lectures supported with seminars but also great emphasis is placed upon practical workshops, class discussions, interactive IT resources, case studies and a range of flipped classroom activities. • Fundamental to learning is the opportunity to embed knowledge in practice settings. <p>A broad range of assessment methods are utilised at this level to assess knowledge and understanding. These include summative essays, practice portfolios and oral presentations. To aid formative assessment, discussion boards, critical reflections and quizzes will be utilised to check understanding and academic progress.</p>

3b. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p>B1 Reason clearly, understand the role of evidence and make critical judgements about arguments relating to the subject.</p> <p>B2 Reflect upon a range of perspectives, including historical, political, sociological and economical, and consider how these underpin different understandings of babies, young children and childhood.</p> <p>B3 Analyse and constructively critique theories, practice and research in the areas of child development and learning.</p>	<p>A broad range of teaching and learning strategies are utilised to develop students' cognitive skills at this level. Intellectual qualities are developed mainly through lectures, seminars and tutorials, where thinking, reflection and analytical skills are encouraged to be developed.</p> <p>Assessment of these skills summatively is supported through requests for students to demonstrate analytical skills in their assignments.</p> <p>Formative assessment strategies offer students clear guidance with reference to future development of cognitive skills. Self-reflection and peer evaluation constitute an important part of formative assessment.</p>

3c. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy / assessment methods
<p>C1 Have a well-developed ability to plan and implement play and the curriculum, assessment, evaluation and improvement of learning opportunities.</p>	<p>A diverse and dynamic range of teaching and learning strategies are employed to meet the practical and professional learning outcomes of this level. These include seminar approaches and practical activities that are both lecturer-led and student-led.</p> <p>Assessment methods used to assess practical and professional skills are based fundamentally on observation of the student. This is done by observation in practice by the workplace mentor and practice tutor, and in class by the lecturer, when role play opportunities are used to aid students to simulate environments.</p>
<p>C2 Use developed skills of assessment including observation and analysis, to plan for, and evaluate the development and learning of babies and young children.</p>	
<p>C3 Demonstrate self-awareness and knowledge of anti-discriminatory practice, inequality, and the importance of valuing individuals and promoting social justice and well-being in practice.</p>	

3d. Key / transferable skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy / assessment methods
D1 Have the ability to write for different purposes, which include; persuasion, explanation, description, evaluation and summary.	<p>A diverse and dynamic range of teaching and learning strategies will be utilised to meet the key / transferable learning outcomes of this course. Students will be encouraged to adopt a collaborative cross-disciplinary approach to learning with students across the education faculty and be supported to access university-wide learning opportunities on transferable skills.</p> <p>A broad range of assessment methods will be utilised in this course to assess transferable skills. These include assessment tasks that align more closely with the kinds of tasks that students will be expected to perform in the workplace like reports, presentations and practical activities. Self-reflection and peer evaluation constitute an important part of formative assessment, with the aim of promoting self-development opportunities.</p>
D2 Interpret and use numerical and other forms of data, critically and securely.	
D3 Demonstrate the ability to work sensitively and effectively in groups and teams.	

Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) upon successful completion of a minimum of 120 credits at Level 4

Programme Structure - Level 5 Full-Time

Compulsory modules	Credit points	Optional modules	Credit points	Is module compensatable?	Semester runs in
Literacy and Mathematics in the Early Years	15	None		Yes	Sem 1
International Perspectives of Childhood Education and Care	30		No	Sem 1	
Inequality and Disadvantage in Early Education	15		Yes	Sem 2	
Safeguarding Children and Young People	30		No	Sem 2	
Academic and Professional Practice 2: The Early Years	30		No	Sem 1 & 2	

Intended learning outcomes at level 5 are listed below:

<u>Learning Outcomes – Level 5</u>	
3a. Knowledge and understanding	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy / assessment methods
<p>A4 Evidence detailed knowledge of specialised areas of practice within the Early Years.</p> <p>A5 Analyse the importance and relevance of legislative and statutory guidance to professional practice in the Early Years.</p> <p>A6 Demonstrate systematic knowledge and critical understanding of babies and young children and childhood nationally and globally.</p>	<p>A diverse and dynamic range of teaching and learning strategies are utilised to meet the knowledge-based learning outcomes of this level. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional methods of lectures supported with seminars, but also great emphasis is placed upon practical workshops, class discussions, interactive IT resources, case studies and a range of flipped-classroom activities. • Fundamental to learning is the opportunity to embed knowledge in practice settings. <p>A broad range of assessment methods are utilised at this level to assess knowledge and understanding. These include summative essays, practice portfolios and oral presentations. To aid formative assessment, discussion boards, critical reflections and quizzes will be utilised to check understanding and academic progress.</p>

3b. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy / assessment methods
<p>B4 Be able to adopt multiple perspectives in relation to early childhood and related subjects.</p> <p>B5 Have a well-developed knowledge and awareness of the skills needed for different pedagogical approaches.</p> <p>B6 Present a wide range of theoretical positions and offer and justify a well-informed point of view.</p>	<p>A broad range of teaching and learning strategies are utilised to develop students' cognitive skills at this level. Intellectual qualities are developed mainly through lectures, seminars, tutorials, where thinking, reflection and analytical skills are encouraged to be developed.</p> <p>Assessment of these skills through summative assessment is supported through requests for students to demonstrate analytical skills in their assignments.</p> <p>Formative assessment strategies offer students clear guidance with reference to future development of cognitive skills. Self-reflection and peer evaluation constitute an important part of formative assessment.</p>

3c. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy / assessment methods
<p>C4 Have well-developed knowledge and ability to plan and implement strategies to meet and promote children's health, well-being, protection and safety, and the conditions which enable them to flourish.</p>	<p>A diverse and dynamic range of teaching and learning strategies are employed to meet the practical and professional learning outcomes of this level. These include seminar approaches and practical activities that are both lecturer-led and student-led.</p> <p>Assessment methods used to assess practical and professional skills are based fundamentally on observation of the student. This is done by observation in practice by the workplace mentor and practice tutor and in class by the lecturer, when role play opportunities are used to aid students to simulate environments.</p>
<p>C5 Take account of babies' and young children's health and well-being and their individual circumstances when planning and delivering activities.</p>	
<p>C6 Using real world contexts, apply to practice academic and theoretical understandings of taught concepts.</p>	

3d. Key / transferable skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy / assessment methods
<p>D4 Communicate ideas effectively and fluently orally and visually to converse, debate, persuade and challenge the ideas of others.</p> <p>D5 Have critical insight and confidence when both leading and working collaboratively with others.</p> <p>D6 Demonstrate autonomy to undertake self-directed study in order to meet desired objectives.</p>	<p>A diverse and dynamic range of teaching and learning strategies will be utilised to meet the key / transferable learning outcomes of this course. Students will be encouraged to adopt a collaborative cross-disciplinary approach to learning with students across the education faculty and be supported to access university-wide learning opportunities on transferable skills.</p> <p>A broad range of assessment methods will be utilised in this course to assess transferable skills. These include assessment tasks that align more closely with the kinds of tasks that students will be expected to perform in the workplace like reports, presentations and practical activities. Self-reflection and peer evaluation constitute an important part of formative assessment, with the aim of promoting self-development opportunities.</p>

4. Distinctive features of the programme structure

Where applicable, this section provides details on distinctive features such as:

- Where in the structure above a professional / placement year fits in and how it may affect progression.
- Any restrictions regarding the availability of elective modules.
- Where in the programme structure students must make a choice of pathway / route.

Additional considerations for apprenticeships:

- How the delivery of the academic award fits in with the wider apprenticeship.
- The integration of the 'on the job' and 'off the job' training.
- How the academic award fits within the assessment of the apprenticeship.

Students on the programme will all study the same core modules. No optional modules are available. Alongside the programme, students will be in an early years' placement setting for a minimum of 40 days per academic year. This will be required to be evidenced in their 'Academic and Professional Practice' modules in which they will develop a portfolio of practice evidence. They will be assessed on site by the university practice tutor and by their workplace mentor.

The modules within this programme have been aligned to the level 3 Early Years Educator criteria and Early Years Teachers Standards specifically, to greater support progression opportunities into early years teaching practice. It is also the intention to apply to embed the Early Childhood Graduate Practitioner Competencies across the foundation degree and top-up degree, as a new member of the Early Childhood Studies Degree Network (ECSDN).

5. Support for students and their learning.

While studying at UCP, students are provided with both academic and pastoral support through a variety of mechanisms. Regular tutorial sessions are built into all programmes delivered at UCP to provide students with the opportunity to access weekly additional support from their tutor. These sessions provide both group and one-to-one contact. Each tutorial scheme has learning partnership as its core theme, with the level 4 tutorial scheme focussing on preparing to study and academic skills whilst level 5 focuses upon developing skills, career progression and autonomy. As this is a foundation degree programme, it is acknowledged that not all students will choose to progress to a top-up programme and so wider progression opportunities are also covered within this academic year.

To support our student-centred approach, tutors have an open office policy and will facilitate one-to-one sessions outside of tutorial time to most appropriately support students. The Higher Education Managers also host a daily student surgery so that concerns can be addressed promptly.

UCP also offers an additional Study Excellence programme which students can access if further support is required in developing more generic academic and employability skills. A series of optional lunch-time sessions covers issues such as developing academic writing techniques, undertaking effective academic research to support dissertations, and forming coherent and well-structured arguments.

UCP also offers additional English as an Additional Language (EAL) lunchtime sessions for students who need extra help to articulate their ideas effectively. In common with Study Excellence, these sessions are available to any student who wishes to improve their grades; not just those at the lower end of the grade profile. Statistical analysis has evidenced that students who habitually use UCP's EAL support from the start of their studies achieve a higher classification than those who decline the support.

Following a successful trial within the BA (Hons) Psychosocial Studies course, UCP has adopted an approach to offer peer support to students via a Vertical Mentoring Scheme. It was initially identified that mature students were less likely to participate in extracurricular activities due to external commitments, yet extracurricular activities enhance student experience and performance. The Vertical Mentoring Scheme was established to try to improve mature student engagement. Initially, level 6 students mentored level 4 students over lunch times. They were fully trained to scaffold support and provide effective mentoring. Subsequently, alumni mentors took over this role and provided help and guidance to levels 4, 5 and 6. Qualitative feedback revealed improved engagement in activities on and off campus. Statistical analysis of grade profiles and NSS satisfaction highlighted substantial improvements. Due to its success, the scheme is being introduced into a variety of other undergraduate courses and has been formally recognised as an area of focus within the UCP Teaching and Student Outcomes Strategy.

A dedicated Student Support Team ensures that there is easy access to a variety of services which can support students throughout their studies at UCP. The Student Support Officer and Student Advisor ensure that the evolving needs of students in academic, pastoral and professional contexts can be supported. The team, working closely with the Student Officer, provides information and guidance on issues surrounding employability (explained further below), mental health, mitigations and extensions, and financial management, via a range of activities from one to one advice sessions to large scale organised events. Issues surrounding the support of students are carefully considered at a number of institutional committee meetings, with updates and statistical reporting (on elements such as correlations in late submissions, number of extensions etc.) being consistently provided at Student Engagement Learning and Teaching Committee and Academic Board.

To further enhance the institution's interaction with local industry representatives, an Employer and Community Consultative Group was established in March 2019. The group, which evolved from the HE Steering Group, provides crucial input into how the curriculum will develop to ensure that UCP is producing employment-ready students, in subjects with recognised skills gaps in the local and regional economy. Initially chaired by the Chair of the UCP Council, the guidance provided by the group will be heard directly by the senior

authority at UCP, ensuring that the voice of employers is carefully considered when planning new courses or initiatives.

6. Criteria for admission

- A minimum of 400 hours pre-entry work experience working with children aged birth-11.
- A confirmed placement in an Early Years setting of a minimum of 40 days per academic year, including identification of a workplace mentor.
- 48 UCAS Points.
- GCSE English language at a minimum of grade C or grade 4.
- GCSE Maths at a minimum of grade C or grade 4, or level 2 functional skills/key skills in Maths.
- If English is not the first language, an IELTS score of 6.0 or above is required, or an equivalent English Language qualification.

Admission to the programme is also possible for mature students without formal qualifications but with equivalent professional experience. This is called Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning and it is demonstrated through the production of a portfolio of your experiential learning. Full details are available at the following link;

<https://www.ucp.ac.uk/policies/>

7. Language of study

English

8. Information about non-OU standard assessment regulations (including PSRB requirements)

N/a

9. For apprenticeships in England End Point Assessment (EPA).

N/a

10. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning.

UCP has 25 years' experience of delivering Higher Education courses. All members of the delivery team are appropriately qualified at the level they will be teaching. In addition to this they have many years of previous professional experience in their specialist fields and some continue to be actively engaged in the sector. All members of the team engage in regular CPD opportunities.

Each member of staff has consistently been graded in observations as good or better by the UCP or Peterborough College quality department over the last 5 years. The department performs annual inspections for all subjects and also offers personal developmental coaches to improve and maintain teaching and learning standards. In addition, Higher Education Managers at UCP conduct quality walk-ins during each semester to ensure consistent quality of provision.

When a module is delivered across two campuses there will be an identified Module Leader. This will ensure quality assurance processes are robust and any issues identified by the External Examiner can be managed effectively. The identified Module Leader will then convey any updates changes to any other delivery staff linked / responsible for the same module at the other campus.

The Module Leader will ensure marking and feedback is of the same standard by the internal moderation processes. The Module Leader will share creation of learning resources etc with the other tutor delivering the same module at the other campus and they will collectively write assessments which will be the same across campuses. There may be a separate VLE page due to timetabling etc. Library resources are purchased for all on the programme so this will ensure consistency of the student experience. The course team will also have regular planning meetings and ensure that any issues, training needs, quality matters and student feedback is responded to in a timely and documented manner. This will be closely monitored by the Academic Office and HE Managers. Student feedback is also monitored via our committee structures.

Staff development is available at UCP colleges at least three times a year and staff actively take part in training events (e.g. ethics, scholarly writing and use of new technologies). Each new member of staff at UCP undergoes training and induction by the HE Managers. HE Staff also participate in Learning Teaching and Assessment meetings once a month to share good practice.

UCP has a Learning and Teaching lead for Higher Education to oversee the training needs of staff and to mentor and support applications for Higher Education Academy fellowship. All of the team attend the annual UCP HE Learning and Teaching Conference which focuses on developing pedagogical skills.

Module evaluation surveys are undertaken each semester, which provide the team with evaluative feedback from students. However, in addition to this the team regularly ask for student feedback on modules in class, via the student rep and at Student Engagement, Learning and Teaching meetings. This way modules can be continuously adapted to student feedback, if appropriate.

11. Changes made to the programme since last (re)validation

Annexe 1 - Curriculum Map

This table indicates which study units assume responsibility for delivering (shaded) and assessing (✓) particular programme learning outcomes.

Level	Study module / unit	Programme Outcomes											
		A 1	A 2	A 3	B 1	B 2	B 3	C 1	C 2	C 3	D 1	D 2	D 3
4	Introduction to the EYFS and National Curriculum	✓				✓				✓	✓		
	Planning and Assessing Early Learning Opportunities	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓		✓
	Children's Mental Health and Well-being.			✓			✓			✓	✓	✓	
	Child Development and Learning		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	
	Academic and Professional Practice 1: The Early Years	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓

		Programme Outcomes											
Level	Study module/unit	A4	A5	A6	B4	B5	B6	C4	C5	C6	D4	D5	D6
5	Literacy and Mathematics in the Early Years	✓				✓			✓			✓	
	International Perspectives of Childhood Education and Care	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓
	Safeguarding Children and Young People		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓
	Inequality and Disadvantage in Early Education		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓
	Academic and Professional Practice 2: The Early Years	✓			✓				✓	✓	✓		✓