

# BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies

## Programme Specification

### **Primary Purpose:**

Course management, monitoring and quality assurance.

### **Secondary Purpose:**

Detailed information for students, staff and employers. Current students should refer to the related Course Handbook for further detail.

### **Disclaimer:**

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information given in this Programme Specification and believes it to be correct. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification but reserve the right to change the content, timetabling and administration of the course whilst maintaining equivalent academic standards and quality.

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# **Programme Specification**

## **1. Named Awards**

BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies

## **2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)**

C2143S

To view units and course structures please visit [www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch](http://www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch) and enter the 'C' code above to find the correct course.

## **3. Awarding Body**

University of Portsmouth

## **4. Teaching Institution**

University of Portsmouth

## **5. Accrediting Body**

## **6. QAA Benchmark Groups**

Early Childhood Studies 2010

## **7. Document Control Information**

July 2016

## **8. Effective Session**

2016-17

## **9. Author**

Joy Chalke

## **10. Faculty**

Humanities and Social Studies

## **11. Department**

School of Education and Childhood Studies

## **12. Educational Aims**

### **The programme aims to:**

#### **Develop students' abilities to:**

- Understand key aspects of an interdisciplinary area
- Apply appropriate techniques of analysis to the subject area
- Research topics and devise and sustain arguments related to the subject area
- Discuss current limits of knowledge in the subject area
- Communicate information in a manner appropriate to the subject and intended audience

- Work within a framework that demonstrates an understanding of ethical principles and children's rights
- Complete an extended piece of independent enquiry in the subject area
- Take responsibility for their own learning in a single honours degree programme
- Show initiative and be able to make and justify decisions
- Interrogate a variety of learning media to develop knowledge
- Be self-reflective

**Provide:**

- An understanding of childhood and children in ecological context
- A challenging and stimulating study environment
- Flexibility in teaching to embrace a rapidly changing field of study
- Opportunities for work related learning to meet requirements for Early Years Educator
- Opportunities for developing a range of skills and knowledge to develop employability potential in subject area.
- For Students who meet the entry requirements the opportunity to obtain Early Years Teacher ITT

### 13. Reference Points

- University of Portsmouth Curricula Framework Document
- The scholarship and research expertise of academic members of staff
- QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- National Qualifications Framework
- Occupational Standards
- Previous Common Core of Skills and Knowledge ( Every Child Matters) (now archived by DFE)
- QAA benchmark Early Childhood Studies
- NCTL guidance for Early Years Educator Qualifications (2014)
- NCTL Early Years Initial Teacher Training Programme (2014)

### 14. Learning Outcomes

#### A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

1. A range of classical contemporary educational, psychological and sociological theories and concepts related to children and childhood ( QAA subject benchmark 7.6 , 7.8)
2. Underlying values and principles including ethical issues relevant to the study of children and families (QAA subject benchmark 7.7)
3. Key concepts used to understand human needs and social welfare e.g. equality, poverty (QAA subject benchmark 7.7)
4. Social nature of the relationship between individuals, groups and social institutions (QAA subject benchmark 7.7 , 7.8)
5. Interdisciplinary approach to working with children and families (QAA subject benchmark 7.8)
6. Key legislation and its historical and contemporary impact on the child and family (QAA subject benchmark 7.7)
7. Contemporary activities and organisation of main institutions of the UK welfare and education system (QAA subject benchmark 7.8)
8. Societal and organisational structures related to children and families (QAA subject benchmark 7.8)
9. Knowledge and understanding of pedagogical approach (QAA subject benchmark 7.8)
10. Different contexts in which learning can take place and the range of roles of participants in the learning process (QAA subject benchmark 7.10)
11. The strengths and weaknesses of the range of research methods required for study and research relative to children and childhood (QAA subject benchmark 7.8)
12. International differences in the concept of child and childhood (QAA subject benchmark 7.6)
13. Study Skills strategies to enhance and understand that of others. (QAA subject benchmark 7.10)

## Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

- Lectures are used to set out the major theories, concepts, issues and evidence to meet Learning Outcomes.
- Seminars, workshops, poster presentations, group and individual projects enable students to advance their knowledge and understanding in a more interactive environment
- Tutorials provide individual support with regard to specific learning needs
- Guided study enables students to make use of a range of learning materials and resources and together with Web based activities promotes independent study
- The final year dissertation enables a deeper level of study in a chosen area

## Assessment

Assessment is a crucial component of student learning. It is necessary to monitor student progress in both knowledge and skills, motivate learning, provide feedback and grade students; assessment reflects progression within the programme and enables students to demonstrate a wide range of ability and skill. Early opportunities for formative feedback are given through study skills plus units to help students in transition to HE.

The assessment methods used on the programme are varied:

- Individually assessed coursework takes the form of essays, seminar journals, individual projects and reports, work based portfolio, article reviews, poster presentations, assessed seminars, and the dissertation
- Group-based course work assessments and presentations
- Use of VLE, for quizzes, discussions, posters and peer moderation.

## **B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to:**

1. Appreciate the complexity and diversity of social situations (QAA subject benchmark 7.8)
2. Gather, retrieve and synthesise information (QAA subject benchmark 7.10)
3. Make reasoned arguments (QAA subject benchmark 7.10)
4. Analyse and question concepts, theories and issues in systematic way (QAA subject benchmark 7.10)
5. Understand the significance and limitations of theory and research (QAA subject benchmark 7.10)
6. Review and evaluate evidence and texts (QAA subject benchmark 7.10)
7. Reflect on own value systems (QAA subject benchmark 7.10)
8. Accommodate new principles and understanding (QAA subject benchmark 7.10)

## Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

The teaching and learning of cognitive skills will develop alongside the teaching and learning of knowledge and understanding. More specifically development will be through discursive activities including those in formal seminar groups, through e-mail and with tutors and VLE activities.

## Assessment

- Assessment feedback addresses coherence and structure of argument as well as specific subjects knowledge
- The range of assessments outlined in section A develops students' cognitive skills in a variety of contexts and situations. For example a presentation to a group will rely on planned limited responses whereas the dissertation demands an extended period of research, reflection and evaluation
- Marking criteria for assessment are designed to address a range of intellectual skills, and give students clear guidance on expectations.

### **C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills, able to:**

1. Be sensitive to the values and interests of others and embrace an anti-bias curriculum (QAA subject benchmark 7.8)
2. Analyse and interpret a range of theories and research in the area of child development (QAA subject benchmark 7.8)
3. Understand the ethical implication of studying children and their families (QAA subject benchmark 7.8)
4. Construct an effective social research proposal (s) (QAA subject benchmark 7.8)
5. Plan for, lead, assess and evaluate children's learning opportunities across the EYFS (DfE 2012) (QAA subject benchmark 7.8, 7.9)
6. Work collaboratively to meet the needs of children and families (QAA subject benchmark 7.9, 7.10)
7. Meet children's needs and promote their health, welfare and safety (QAA subject benchmark 7.9)

### Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

- Substantive issues are taught and further knowledge in relation to these is developed through independent reading, seminar discussion and work based placement
- The practical application of theory and analysis is developed through seminars, workshop discussions and work based placements

### Assessment

- Year 2 provides an assessed work based placement opportunity
- The ability to apply practical, professional and subject specific skills will be met through the range of assessment strategies utilised over the three years of study in core and optional units

### **D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills, able to:**

1. Communicate in a variety of contexts and models
2. Interpret to a range of primary and secondary sources of data including numerical sources.
3. Use ICT appropriately in a range of context
4. Demonstrate skills of time planning and management
5. Work as a member of a group
6. Present material in a variety of formats for different purposes
7. Undertake independent study and take responsibility for own critical review
8. Present a range of theoretical positions and offer point of view
9. Undertake problem solving activities
10. Show evidence of self reflection as a tool for future learning

### Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

- The development of transferable skills is an important aspect of teaching and learning of all core and optional units
- At level 4 learning, study and web-based skills are developed through a specific programme. These include time management, note-taking, group work, library and web-based skills, essay planning and writing, referencing and IT skills including using google docs and Turn it in
- At level 5 career awareness and job application skills are developed in the context of a programme delivered by academic staff and members of the University Careers Service. Options extend opportunities for developing employability skills
- At level 6 students draw upon and further develop a range of transferable skills in the production of a dissertation. These include information retrieval skills, time planning and project management skills and the effective presentation of an extended piece of written work. These are introduced in a specifically tailored programme
- There has been consideration of the Core Employability skills (UoP Curricula framework) throughout the whole course

## Assessment

- At all levels these skills are integrated in the LOs and assessment opportunities
- At level 4 this will be through the Developing Professional Perspectives and Diversity and Inclusion Units
- At level 5 this will be through personal tutorials linked to the Professionals Involvement with Children and Young People unit
- At level 6 the dissertation will be the assessed artefact

## 15. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

- ECS is offered as a single full time (3year) pathway
- One credit is equivalent to ten hours of learning. Each level comprises of a minimum of a 120 credits. Units are offered as 20 credits, with the final year dissertation being 40 credits
- 360 credits are required to achieve the degree. Standard University rules apply. The regulations must be consulted for a full description of exit awards

## 16. Employability Statement

This degree offers many curricula and co-curricula opportunities that will improve the employability skills of students. It is intended that this is explicitly communicated to students at all levels in order that they can be pro-active in collating a useful career entry profile throughout the three years of the degree. This will be achieved in the following way:

### Curriculum

- Units will give students the opportunity to manage a range of tasks, manage others, manage information and manage themselves and their learning
- Personal Development Planning and the personal tutorials system will support the student through the three years and ensure they are preparing effectively for their future.
- Opportunities to identify skills acquisition in relation to the skills and knowledge for the children and young people's workforce will be embedded in the degree, but specifically targeted in the level 4 Unit Developing Professional Perspectives.
- Where practical, units will contain aspects of work related learning, to allow students the opportunity to employ theoretical and philosophical ideas to work related tasks in preparation for employment.

**Employability skills** will be delivered (and assessed where applicable) throughout the curriculum. We will provide structured support to enable students to develop their employability skills from L4 to L6. Core units at each level will include most of the academic and employability skills that are listed in Annex 5 of the 2012 Curriculum Framework. In addition, there will be relevant work-related units in the curriculum, such as , Just Playing? and Promoting Early Learning. **Career management skills** specifically (as a subset of employability skills) will be embedded throughout the curriculum:

At a basic level (L4), the management of self, learning, tasks, the communication of information, and the development of interpersonal skills will be embedded in Equality and Diversity This unit will help students 'learn how to learn' as part of studying the discipline of a subject area. Additionally, students will be introduced to basic career management skills (self-awareness, professional development planning, CV development etc) in order to get them thinking about their existing skills and career plans.

At L5, we will continue with developing Career Management skills during Induction Week. There will be plenary sessions for students on the further development of career management skills and this will be backed up by interactive online exercises and website resources related to the subject area. We will develop an interactive, online Employability Hub – building on the current online resources that we already have.

At L6, as part of Induction Week, personal tutorials and PDP, we will provide further guidance and activities for students (as part of what are currently termed 'Pathfinder Exercises'). This will be linked to individual research/project skills related to the core 40 credit dissertation/project and group research/project skills in core units.

For both L5 and L6 students we also will run a series of Faculty-wide careers events with employers from a range of relevant employment sectors during the year (including a Faculty Alumni Day).

All these activities will be supported by the Personal Tutor system and **Professional Development Planning**.

We will also provide opportunities for students to engage in work-related learning through active learning and the application of skills in work-related environments. This will consist of an understanding of working environments and the impact of globalisation on career goals. This will take place through simulated work-related activities in one or more core units and in the unit U28323 Professional Practice in Early Childhood Education and Care. Additionally, there is the opportunity for students to take an optional sandwich year.

Finally, we are committed to providing opportunities for students to study a **language** as part of preparing students for the global labour market and as part of our commitment to internationalisation.

## 17. Support for Student Learning

- The Course is managed by a Course Leader.
- Extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course.
- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance.
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing, counselling etc.
- Academic Skills Unit (ASK)
- The SECS Learning Support Tutor.
- The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC).
- Excellent library facilities.
- The University of Portsmouth has consistently been awarded an excellent rating for student support and guidance in a number of Quality Assurance Agency inspections.
- Student course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations etc.
- Feedback is provided for all assessments.
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) for all awards.

## 18. Admissions Criteria

### A. Academic Admissions Criteria

- A/AS levels – 240-300 points to include 3x6 and/or 12 unit awards
- Professional qualifications and experience are considered positively
- Access students are welcomed
- Other qualifications e.g. Equivalent to the above
- Mature students and International students are welcome
- If appropriate, prior learning may be assessed and accredited
- DBS checks will be undertaken for all students
- If students wish to use their degree for Early Years Educator they must have GCSE Grade C or above in English and Maths

### B. Disability

The University makes no distinction in its admissions policy with regard to disability and will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments in order to make it possible for students to study at Portsmouth on a course of their choice.

## 19. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

### A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation

- Course Leader's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Head of Department's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.



- Unit and Course Level student feedback considered at Board of Studies.
- Unit Assessment Board consideration of student performance for each programme.
- Annual Standards and Quality Reports to Board of Studies, including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports.
- Periodic Programme Review.
- Student Representatives and Student/Staff Consultative Committees.
- National Student Survey.
- Staff Performance and Development Review.
- Peer Review and Development Framework.
- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee.

### **B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Unit Co-ordinators for unit content and delivery.
- Course Leader for day-to-day running of course.
- Board of Studies with overall responsibilities for operation and content of course.
- Head of Department.
- Associate Dean (Academic).
- Associate Dean (Students).
- Quality Assurance Committee.
- Unit, Award and Progression Board of Examiners.

### **C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback**

- Student Representation on Board of Studies.
- Student Staff Consultative Committees with student chair.
- Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires.
- University participates in external student surveys, eg National Student Survey (NSS), and International Student Barometer (ISB).

### **D. Staff Development Priorities**

- Academic staff undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support and guidance.
- Annual staff performance and development reviews match development to needs.
- Managers undertake a variety of management development programmes.
- All academic staff encouraged to seek Higher Education Academy membership.
- Academic staff new to teaching required to undertake APEX - Academic Professional Excellence Framework .
- Support Staff are encouraged to attend short courses in areas such as minute taking, and specific IT packages.

## **20. Assessment Strategy**

All assessments are considered to enable some level of knowledge and understanding. Certain assessments lend themselves more readily to the development of cognitive (intellectual or thinking) skills, practical skills and transferable (graduate and employability) skills. Consideration of this has been given at each level with an acknowledgement that there is a rising expectation of the development of these skills.

The assessment approaches for the core units in Level 4 include essays, reports, on-line discussions, web-based activities, individual and group presentations,. These have been selected in order to introduce students to the broadest range of assessment experiences so that these can be developed and consolidated in subsequent levels.

- Essay and report writing provide opportunities to manage tasks and their own learning by identifying key features and planning a course of action, which is completed independently. This will develop sound knowledge and comprehension skills

- The group tasks (some assessed formatively and some assessed summatively) provide opportunities to work collaboratively, respect others views and to provide and receive constructive criticism. Additionally they develop practical and creative skills and imaginative and original ways of communicating with a range of audiences
- The individual presentations provide the opportunity to develop the confidence, planning and skills in effective oral communication
- The on-line discussion introduces students at the earliest point to the e-learning and e-assessment culture that is an integral part of the programme

The assessment approaches at level 5 include:

- Extended written pieces e.g. essay, report, case studies, provide opportunities to develop intellectual skills of evaluation, application of knowledge and analysis
- Assessment of work based practice through U23828 Professional Practice In Early Childhood
- E-learning activities across the units develop the skills initiated at level 4
- Optional units provide a range of assessment opportunities and allow students to develop and demonstrate skills in evaluating own experiences with regard to culture, employment and the acquisition of coaching skills, developing further research skills

The assessment at level 6 includes:

- The Dissertation develops skills of self management of a sustained, substantial piece of written work including skills of analysis and enquiry, synthesis of information
- Option units at this level will include assessment opportunities to further develop skills of synthesis, analysis and evaluation of a range of complementary themes

## 21. Assessment Regulations

Standard university rules apply (see [Assessment and Regulations](#)).

## 22. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:

- oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards;
- approve unit assessment strategy;
- sample assessment artefacts;
- present report to Unit Assessment Boards.

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) who will:

- oversee and attend Award/Progression Boards;
- scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of assessment;
- ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a level comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere in the United Kingdom.

## 23. Indicators of Standards and Quality

### A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition

N/A

### B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

Periodic Review was conducted in March 2015 and confirmed the 'fitness of purpose' of the curriculum and the effectiveness of its annual monitoring and review processes.

### C. Quality Assurance Agency

QAA Higher Education Review, March 2015, judgements about standards and quality meet UK expectations (for full report see [Higher Education Review of the University of Portsmouth, March 2015\[1\]](#)).

[1] [www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf)

## **D. Others**

Members of course team have won a University Excellence Award for Teaching & Learning. The course leader is a senior fellow of the HEA.

## **24. Other Sources of Information**

Other sources of information may be found in

- Course Approval Document.
- Student Handbook.
- University of Portsmouth Curricula Framework.
- University of Portsmouth Undergraduate Prospectus.
- Assessment Regulations.
- University of Portsmouth (<http://www.port.ac.uk/>) and (<http://www.port.ac.uk/secs>) website.