

Programme Specification

ECS-2017: Early Childhood Studies

LU Foundation Degree in Arts awarded by Lancaster University (FHEQ Level 5)

LU Bachelor of Arts with Honours (Top-up) awarded by Lancaster University (FHEQ Level 6)

Status: Approved | Version: 1

Introduction

This programme specification provides a summary of the main features of the Early Childhood Studies programme and the learning outcomes that you as a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate on successful completion of the programme.

Further detailed information related to this programme and the College can be found in the following resources:

- Programme Handbook
- B&FC Student Handbook
- B&FC Admissions Policy
- Work based and placement learning handbook (for foundation degrees)
- Student guide to assessment and feedback

Key Programme Information

Programme Code	ECS-2017
Programme Title	Early Childhood Studies
Teaching Institution	Blackpool and The Fylde College
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) Accreditation	None
UCAS Code	Foundation Degree; TBC, Honours Degree: L590
Language of Study	English
Version	1
Approval Status	Approved
Approval Date	09 March 2017
JACS Code	L520: Child care
Programme Leader	Julie Quigley

Programme Awards

Award	Award Type	Level	Awarding Body
LU Foundation Degree in Arts	Foundation Degree (240 credits)	Level 5	Lancaster University
LU Bachelor of Arts with Honours (Top-up)	Honours Top-up Degree (120 credits)	Level 6	Lancaster University

Programme Overview

The Foundation Degree in Early Childhood Studies will develop your knowledge of the advanced theoretical principles and contemporary issues that underpin early years practice. It provides you with the opportunity to develop an understanding of the wider social, political and economic issues related to the care and development of young children and develop the skills and attributes needed to enter a leadership and management position. The programme of study has a mandatory requirement of employment or placement to ensure that you have the opportunity to trial theory and concepts learned in the classroom environment in practice.

The BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies provides the opportunity to critically engage with the underpinning theoretical principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage to support effective and current practice in the workplace. You will consider the importance of reflection and how this can make positive changes not only to the professional development of the individual child but also

the wider community. You will be provided with the opportunity to further develop their knowledge of communication theory to sustain change management within the sector further promoting collaboration between agencies. The mandatory requirement of employment or placement ensures that you have vocationally relevant skills that ensure currency of practice.

Admission Criteria

Foundation Degree Early Childhood Studies

A minimum of 48 UCAS points (previously 120) from relevant level 3 qualifications or A Levels. These will include:-

Level 3 Diploma in Early Years Education and Care (EYE)

Level 3 Diploma for the Early Years Workforce (EYE)

Level 3 Diploma for the Children's and Young People Workforce (Early Years Pathway)

Alternatively any other Level 3 qualification listed on the Early Years Qualifications List published by the Department of Education

Applicants who wish to join the programme from A Levels should be aware that these do not allow you to be counted into level 3 ratios within an early years setting.

You will also be required to be employed (paid/voluntary) in the early years sector from the start of the course and thereafter for a minimum of 195 hours per year (average 6 hours per week over 32 weeks). You will be required to supply a letter of support from your employer at enrolment.

BA Top up Early Childhood Studies

Only students who have studied the Foundation Degree Early Childhood Studies at Blackpool and The Fylde College and have achieved a minimum of a pass will be considered for this top-up course.

You will also be required to be employed (paid/voluntary) in the early years sector from the start of the course and thereafter for a minimum of 195 hours per year (average 6 hours per week over 32 weeks). You will be required to supply a letter of support from your employer at enrolment.

Career Options and Progression Opportunities

Foundation Degree Early Childhood Studies –

Several career pathways are available to students successfully completing the foundation degree including many in supervisory or senior roles in the early years sector. These include:-

- Senior Early Years Practitioner
- Room Leader
- Deputy Nursery Manager
- Children's Centre Lead Practitioner
- Family Support Worker
- Health Visitor Support Assistant
- Teaching Assistant (Up to Key Stage 2)
- Foundation Stage Teaching Assistant
- Childminder
- Council Development Worker

After successfully gaining the BA (Hons) Top Up at Level 6 the following career or progression opportunities are available

BA (Hons)Top Up Early Childhood Studies

- Children's Centre Manager
- Nursery Manager
- Hospital Playworker
- Senior Family Support Worker
- Progression onto Teacher Training for Early Years Teacher
- Progression onto Post Graduate Certificate in Education
- Progression onto Masters Level Qualifications

Programme Aims

Foundation Degree Early Childhood Studies:

- To develop digital and academic literacy skills in the production of a range of resources in a variety of communicative modes.
- To provide students with a variety of contexts in which to develop knowledge of reflective theory and apply this in practice.
- To provide students with the opportunity to explore the importance of the early years environment and the impact on learning and development.
- To provide the opportunity for the student to gain access to contemporary knowledge, skills and attributes directly relating to child development and wellbeing.
- To provide opportunities for students to appreciate the relationship between policy and practice and the impact on the sector.
- To develop an awareness of ethical safeguarding procedures and how these are implemented within the early years sector .

BA Hons Early Childhood Studies:

- To engage students with a dynamic interchange between theory, research and practice, and to foster an understanding of the changing nature of the psychological, socio-economic and developmental barriers to early childhood.
- To facilitate and encourage student acquisition of vocationally relevant qualifications for the planning of early years curricula.
- To progressively develop students cognitive, key, transferable and, where applicable, practical skills through multi-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary and progressive modular content that directly relates to a successful career in a wide variety of sector specific roles.
- To further promote research skills that enable students to make recommendations for changes to practice that will continue to support the development and learning opportunities for the young child.
- To further promote safeguarding procedures and acknowledge responsibility for leading and managing practice in collaboration with a range of multi disciplinary services.

Programme Learning Outcomes

Level 5

Upon successful completion of this level, students will be able to:

1. Discuss a range of philosophical, historical, psychological, sociological and health perspectives and how these underpin the wider concept of development from babies to young children.
2. Examine and apply multiple perspectives to early childhood issues, recognising that early childhood studies involve a range of research methods, theories and evidence.
3. Evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches in relation to the construction of childhood by different subjects, place and culture and apply these in a work context.
4. Promote collaborative working and evidence interpersonal skills and the capacity to plan, share goals and propose solutions in a practical context.
5. Explore the depth and strength of relationships with individual children, groups and the facilitation of building relationships with their peers
6. Apply digital and academic literacies to plan and manage continued personal and professional development.
7. Constructively critique, examine and evaluate the significance of the cultural, historical and contemporary features of various policies, institutions and agencies in regard to babies, young children and childhood.
8. Evaluate creative learning opportunities for play, curriculum and assessment taking into account young children's health and wellbeing.
15. Promote ethical safeguarding practices that follow and adhere to current legislative guidance.

Level 6

Upon successful completion of this level, students will be able to:

9. Critically examine leadership and management in the context of the early years sector and analyse the strategies required to lead, support and work collaboratively with others including parents, colleagues and other professionals.
10. Use research and inquiry skills to critically investigate early years practices in order to analyse data and draw considered conclusions and recommendations.
11. Produce critical arguments for improvements to multi-agency and multi-professional practices for babies and young children with particular emphasis on current safeguarding legislations
12. Critically examine societal inequalities and consider the impact on range of culturally diverse backgrounds and where appropriate act as an advocate for babies, young children, families and communities.
13. Critically analyse the ethics of studying babies and young children from a range of perspectives at a local, national and global level.
14. Critically evaluate the interrelationships between political, economic, cultural and ideological contexts in the lives of children and their families.

Programme Structure

Pathway	Module	Level	Credits	Coursework	Practical	Written Exam
Early Childhood Studies Stage 1: Year 1						
Stage exit award: LU Certificate of Higher Education						
(Awarded by Lancaster University)						
All	BFC401-S: Academic and Digital Literacy (Mandatory)	4	20	100%		
	ECS402: Children and Childhoods (Mandatory)	4	20	100%		
	ECS403: The Early Years Outdoor Environment (Mandatory)	4	20	100%		
	ECS404: Reflective Practice in the Early Years Sector (Mandatory)	4	20	50%	50%	
	ECS405: Safeguarding (Early Years) (Mandatory)	4	20	100%		
	ECS406: Inclusive Practice (Mandatory)	4	20	100%		
Early Childhood Studies Stage 2: Year 2						
Stage award: LU Foundation Degree in Arts						
(Awarded by Lancaster University)						
All	BFC501-S: Work Based and Placement Learning (Mandatory)	5	20	100%		
	ECS502: Communication and Partnerships (Mandatory)	5	20	100%		
	ECS503: Critical Issues in Early Child Development (Mandatory)	5	20	60%	40%	
	ECS504: Play, Learning and the Early Childhood Curriculum (Mandatory)	5	20	100%		
	ECS505: Research and Social Policy (Mandatory)	5	20	100%		
	ECS506: Professional Development (Mandatory)	5	20	100%		
Early Childhood Studies Stage 3: Year 3						
Stage award: LU Bachelor of Arts with Honours						
(Awarded by Lancaster University)						
All	ECS601: Dissertation (Mandatory)	6	40	100%		
	ECS602: Global Perspectives on the Curriculum (Mandatory)	6	20	75%		25%
	ECS603: Child Health and Wellbeing (Mandatory)	6	20	70%	30%	
	ECS604: Leadership and Management (Mandatory)	6	20	75%		25%
	ECS605: Special Support Strategies (Mandatory)	6	20	100%		

Course Options

You need to be aware that at present there are no planned optional modules on the Foundation Degree or the BA Hons Early Childhood Studies.

Study Workload

The expectations that the college has in relation to the amount of study time that you can expect would be as follows: Presently learners spend 8 hours (one day per week) on the Full time Foundation Degree and BA Hons programme and 4 hours per week (one evening) on the part-time Foundation Degree route. It is expected though that you will study independently to support the scheduled college hours for approximately an additional 15 hours per week, this is to engage in further reading, research and the completion of assessments.

Programme Delivery: Learning and Teaching

Whilst lectures, seminars and practical workshops feature strongly in the teaching and learning strategy, we will be making considerable use of alternative methods of delivery and study, particularly online options such as tutor and self-assessment revision tests and formative exercises, power-point and other software-based lecture material, learning portals and hyper-linked resource-materials. You may expect therefore to participate in a wide variety of learning activities including; live and online projects, presentations and discussion alongside more traditional modes of delivery.

Programme Delivery: Assessment

Assessment will include a variety of formal and informal, summative and formative techniques, all of which will be capable of independent verification.

Assessment methods will:

- Reflect and support the programme aims and learning outcomes.
- They will for example: reflect local application of national initiatives; offer the opportunity to reflect upon real work experience and practice, and encourage exploration of alternatives to received wisdom in the care and education of young children.
- Provide feedback to you and indicate ways in which to improve
- Contribute to the grading of coursework, module and final award

Programme Delivery: Work Based and Placement Learning

The programme both at foundation degree and honours level has a mandatory work based element that can be done through employment or by finding a placement in an appropriate setting. This enables you to take on appropriate role(s) within the workplace, giving you the opportunity to learn and apply the skills and knowledge that you have acquired as an integrated element of the programme.

It involves the development of higher-level learning within both the institution and the workplace. It facilitates a two-way process, where the learning in one environment is applied in the other. Work-based learning can be achieved through many forms, including full-time or part-time work, integrated work placements, and real work environments. Payment is not a defining characteristic of the work, and 'working' is in itself not sufficient. Work-based learning requires the identification and achievement of defined and related learning outcomes.

Programme Delivery: Graduate Skill Development

One of the aims of this programme is to develop practitioner's autonomy and continuing professional development, whilst at the same time offering support in working with families and other professionals. This aligns with the subject benchmark statements that engagement with practice is a key feature of approaches to teaching and learning in early childhood studies and there is, within this programme, the opportunity for you to plan for the curriculum assessment, evaluation and improvement of creative learning, which takes into account young children's health & wellbeing.

Independent learning makes up a significant proportion of time on each module on the programme and the team use a directed approach initially in level four, which progressively develops independence further in level 5. Very directed and guided individual tasks are provided at first on the VLE Moodle pages and then you are encouraged to develop your approach to independent learning structured in line with your assessments through constructive alignment (Biggs and Tang, 2007) for extension work and further research. It is through this varied approach to teaching and learning that you will be continually developing the core graduate skills required in the workplace.

It could also be argued that there have been significant changes in the way that the early years is run and managed over the last few years. Competition is now high as more and more private nurseries are emerging as demand grows therefore, future graduates need to be armed with a range of entrepreneurial and business skills to progress in their career choices. This intended programme of study aims to demonstrate currency of knowledge and a continued awareness for you to engage with digital literacies as part of the teaching and learning process.

Study Costs: Equipment Requirements

With regard to any equipment requirements for the programme, you are at this present time advised that you can access a range of resources via our Learning Resource Centre to use on site to assist you in your studies.

Study Costs: Additional Costs

A DBS is mandatory for the placement element of the programme, however the college is not compelled to pay for this so in some cases you may need to cover the cost of the DBS.

Related Courses

In the School of Society, Health and Childhood, we offer a suite of higher education programmes including:

- Foundation Degree: Working with Young People
- Foundation Degree: Professional Practice in Health and Social Care
- BA Hons top-up: Health and Social Care
- Foundation Degree: Teaching and Learning Support
- BA Hons top-up: Teaching and Learning Support
- Foundation Degree: Family Support & Wellbeing
- BA Hons top-up: Family Support and Wellbeing

Strategically the programme fits well with the overall curriculum offer for the School of Society, Health and Childhood. Foundation Degree: Professional Practice in Health and Social Care serves the needs of practitioners in a wide range of services, including care, health, learning disability, physical disability and mental health, across all age groups. The B.A. (Hons) Health and Social Care has three pathways, which address issues associated with children and young people, adults and substance misuse. Foundation Degree and B.A. (Hons) Teaching and Learning Support address the needs of those working in a school or other educational environments with children and adults from the age of 5 years.

Some of our level 6 students have in the past continued with their studies and moved onto the EYTS (Early Years Teacher Status) (Graduate Employment Based Route) at Cumbria. This remains the only reasonably local location where you may study this qualification. There is at present funding available for you to access with money from government funding streams.

There is also the possibility of studying a MA in Education at Edgehill University and at Manchester Metropolitan University you can study a MA in Early Childhood Studies.