Early Childhood Studies (On Line Learning)

Final award: BA Honours
Intermediate awards available: Cert HE, Dip HE, BA
Mode of Delivery: Distance / On Line Learning
UCAS code: N/A
Details of professional body accreditation: N/A
Relevant QAA Benchmark statements: Early Childhood Studies
UEL Academic School: Cass School of Education and Communities
Date specification last up-dated: July 2014

Alternative locations for studying this programme: This programme is available at UEL only

The summary - UCAS programme profile

BANNER BOX:

Early Childhood Studies is the study of early childhood in context. The BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies programme provides a critical, comprehensive and interdisciplinary preparation for multi-professional work in the early childhood sector.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

240 UCAS Tariff Points

In relevant subjects; relevant subjects are normally considered to be Social Sciences, and Humanities, although applicants with subjects outside these disciplines or who do not meet the tariff points may be admitted if they have 3 years relevant work experience. If they are entering from school or college the basic entry requirement is usually a minimum of two A2 subjects, (or equivalent e.g. Baccalaureate, Irish Highers, GNVQ or BTEC awards) and at least a grade C in GCSE English Language, or equivalent.

In the case of applicants whose first language is not English, then IELTS 5.5 with a minimum of 5.5 in all components (or equivalent) is required. International qualifications will be checked for appropriate matriculation to UK Higher Education undergraduate programmes.

Students may be admitted through normal Accreditation of Experiential Learning (AEL) or Accreditation of Certificated Learning (ACL) processes, or through an approved articulation agreement. Such applicants must be able to demonstrate and evidence that they have the required learning outcomes as listed in the modules for which they are seeking exemption.

Direct entry to Level 5 - This is dependent on previous professional or academic qualifications at diploma in HE or degree level in related subject specialism.
Technical requirements

To participate in the programme you need:

1. Regular access to a PC or Mac capable of running standard MS Office software (or equivalent) for producing word-processed documents, spreadsheets and presentations. Your PC must be capable of running the required plug-ins for the Virtual Learning Environment (Adobe Flash player, Adobe PDF Viewer, Apple Quicktime).
2. Reliable internet access; at least a 56K modem connection, but broadband is highly recommended. For each module that you take, you will be expected to spend approximately 3-6 hours online per week, participating in discussions and accessing resources.
3. The latest version of your chosen Internet browser. We recommend and support Mozilla Firefox 1.5+, Microsoft Internet Explorer 7+ and Apple Safari 3+.
4. A valid and reliable email address.
5. Access to a printer is recommended.
6. Speakers or earphones are also recommended as some modules will offer recordings of lectures. These are not essential but you may find this a convenient way of learning.

At UEL we are committed to working together to build a learning community founded on equality of opportunity - a learning community which celebrates the rich diversity of our student and staff populations. Discriminatory behaviour has no place in our community and will not be tolerated. Within a spirit of respecting difference, our equality and diversity policies promise fair treatment and equality of opportunity for all. In pursuing this aim, we want people applying for a place at UEL to feel valued and know that the process and experience will be transparent and fair and no one will be refused access on the grounds of any protected characteristic stated in the Equality Act 2010

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

What is Early Childhood Studies?

Early Childhood Studies is the study of early childhood in context. It should enable students to develop insights and understandings relating to how children and childhood are understood from a range of academic and professional perspectives and to understand the philosophies, beliefs and attitudes that inform them. The interdisciplinary nature of the degree takes account of the ecology of children’s lives, in studying the complexities of family life and of children’s development from conception onwards, thus signifying the importance of both the intricate and interactive continuum of growth and development and the significance of early childhood across cultures and societies.

Early Childhood Studies at UEL

Key features of this programme include:

- A flexible credit based programme leading towards an honours degree.
- No compulsory requirement to attend classes
- The freedom to continue working while pursuing your studies.
- Available full-time and part-time.
• Academic support from a subject specialist tutor
• Help and guidance from our Programme Leader and tutors
• An opportunity for students from a wide range of countries and varied educational contexts to interact and exchange ideas.

Programme structure

The BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies can be taken full or part-time.

Learning environment

The programme is delivered through distance learning supported by our VLE; Moodle which runs under UEL Direct. Each module has a site in Moodle structured around a sequence of weekly topics. Each topic contains a lecture, typically a series of slides and accompanying audio recording, supported by guidance on key learning outcomes, self-assessment questions, and links to core and additional readings and other resources. This provides clear structuring and signposting to establish a context for learning and encourages deep learning. The self-assessment questions help students to evaluate their progress and their understanding and there are also formative assessments to practice skills and consolidate learning before undertaking summative assessments. There is access to our online student community and to discussion forums to foster communication with other students to discuss and resolve issues related to their studies. In addition, the module tutor will use this facility to address any common academic issues, and to contact students where necessary. It is essential therefore that you have easy and regular access to the Internet and reliable email.

The teaching and learning methods used are designed to promote a constructive and critical reflection on a range of theoretical, practical and research issues. Teaching is concerned with identification of a wide range of issues and perspectives which students are encouraged to relate to their own knowledge, experience and actual or future working contexts. Teaching and learning will draw on the experiences, knowledge and professional backgrounds of participants, encouraging a critical reflection.

We expect that students will take responsibility for the way they learn, as they will need to sustain self-motivation as they will be working at a distance. Throughout the programme, students will be undertaking independent learning and research, including individual reading, preparation of assignments and completion of assessed programme work. The programme makes extensive use of our VLE which is used in a number of ways such as facilitating the online discussions described above, providing access to online resources and submitting assignments.

We will encourage students to take some responsibility for helping others to learn, through sharing experiences and learning with the group using moodle, and thus allowing for new and emerging knowledge to be integrated.

Learning resources include IT facilities, including software specialised for psychology, access to electronic databases and specialist library facilities.

Assessment
All modules are assessed using various methods, which are chosen as the most appropriate to demonstrate the learning outcomes for each module. Some modules are assessed by means of coursework only, and some by a combination of both examination (either seen or unseen) and coursework. Coursework can take such forms as essays, reports, class presentations, learning journals and book reviews. Regular formative assessment tasks will provide the opportunity for you to monitor your own understanding and engagement, prior to the final assessment activity.

**Work experience/placement opportunities**

Fieldwork offers students the opportunity not only to widen their experiences, but also to reflect on their practice and the practice of others. During the degree programme there will be several opportunities to observe within fieldwork settings. There may also be the opportunity for students to undertake some of their studies abroad.

**Project work**

At Level six students are expected to carry out an empirical research project on a topic relevant to the field of Early Childhood Studies, this is a core module (ED6007). Students are supported through tutorial and seminar sessions throughout the module thus developing research skills, which are valuable in both understanding, and evaluating published research and empowering students to become researchers themselves.

In addition, students are involved in a number of collaborative projects throughout the degree which benefit them by developing project management, time management and interpersonal team work skills.

**Added value**

Early Childhood Studies is an interesting multi-disciplinary field of study providing wide options in employment and postgraduate study. Prepared for a range of professions and occupations, our recent graduates have obtained employment in a diverse selection of fields.

**IS THIS THE PROGRAMME FOR ME?**

**If you are interested in learning more about children and childhood**

You will be given the opportunity to gain knowledge and understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of Early Childhood Studies and of the structural, institutional, personal and cultural systems and ideas which affect the experience and construction of childhood.

**If you enjoy working with others in a challenging environment**

The students who undertake the degree in Early Childhood Studies come from a variety of educational, cultural and occupational backgrounds – some more traditional than others. It is this rich diversity of age and experience which enhances the debate and discussion. We welcome all students who demonstrate their interest in and their enthusiasm for this subject. Applicants who do not have the required academic or vocational qualifications can undertake an access to higher education programme.
If you want to do Early Childhood Studies, but are not sure about what career you would like

The holistic nature of this degree programme enables you to pursue your particular areas of interest within a structure which is cohesive.

Your future career

The holistic approach to Early Childhood in the programme prepares students to undertake several postgraduate programmes through which professional qualifications, such as primary teaching or social work, could be attained. In addition to these professional programmes Early Childhood Studies graduates have found employment with Local Authorities, Health Authorities, Charities, Housing Associations, and Day Nurseries. Jobs have included Childcare Project Managers, Family Support Workers, Nursery Officers, Play Co-ordinators, Out of School Project Managers, Residential Care Workers, Classroom/education Assistants, Learning Mentors, Researchers, Disability Co-ordinators, Sure Start Project Workers, and Early Years Officers within the local early years partnership.

Students interested in further studies have undertaken a Masters Degree Programme.

How we support you

On enrolment, you will be provided with introductory materials on the use of the UEL Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

The induction week of the module study guide includes most of the information that you require regarding VLE access, the other facilities available to you, and the various sources of support. Your module leader/tutor will contact you at the beginning of each module to provide basic information and check if you have any questions. The module leader/tutor will post a welcome message for you on the VLE advising you where and how to start your study, how you can contact your tutor, and how to find other information about the module including assessments.

During your studies, you will be supported by our team of module leaders and tutors who will offer academic support, guidance and encouragement. Our administrators can offer support on module registration, examination arrangements, payment, and other general queries.

The programme fully implements our Skills Curriculum, which will provide you with additional support in your study habits and in being an effective distance learner.

We also provide useful advice and information on our VLE.

Programme aims and learning outcomes

What is this programme designed to achieve?

This programme is designed to give you the opportunity to:

- Gain knowledge, understanding and a critical appreciation of early childhood studies;
• Understand the development, needs and experience of young children, and the services which support them;
• Achieve a foundation for employment, professional and further academic study in the early years domain;
• Become a skilful and adaptable graduate.
• Be part of University of East London’s commitment to widening access to higher education

What will you learn?

Knowledge

• demonstrate knowledge and understanding and practical skills relevant to academic study and professional practice in early childhood settings
• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of the study of early childhood and of the structural, institutional, personal and cultural systems and ideas which affect the experience and construction of childhood
• demonstrate knowledge and understanding about physical and intellectual development in early childhood and early childhood provision and organisations

Thinking skills

• analyse practical and theoretical situations, in the context of child development and childhood, and synthesise solutions showing original and creative thought
• plan, manage and reflect on their own learning and progression in acquiring graduate attributes appropriate for entry to teacher training or other early childhood careers

Subject-Based Practical skills

• communicate appropriately and effectively in a range of modes and media
• relate appropriate theory to early childhood practice
• demonstrate understanding of research methodology by applying this knowledge to undertake a small-scale research project

Skills for life and work (general skills)

• demonstrate autonomy, self-reliance, teamwork and leadership.
• develop transferable graduate skills in communication and interpersonal relationships

The programme structure

Introduction

At University of East London all programmes are credit-rated to help you to understand the amount and level of study that is needed.

One credit is equal to 10 hours of directed study time (this includes everything you do e.g. lecture, seminar and private study).

Credits are assigned to one of 5 levels:
• 3 - equivalent in standard to GCE 'A' level and is intended to prepare students for level four of an undergraduate degree programme
• 4 - equivalent in standard to the first year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
• 5 - equivalent in standard to the second year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
• 6 - equivalent in standard to the third year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
• 7 - equivalent in standard to a Masters degree

Credit rating

The overall credit-rating of this programme is 360 credits.

Typical duration

The expected duration of this programme is three years when attended in full-time mode or up to eight years in part-time mode. It is possible to move from a full-time mode of study to a part-time mode of study and vice-versa, to accommodate any external factors such as financial constraints or domestic commitments. Many of our students make use of this flexibility and this may impact on the overall duration of their study period.

How the teaching year is divided

The teaching year begins in September and ends in June, all modules run for 24 weeks and thus a student normally registers for 4 modules in one year in a full-time attendance mode of study or, up to 3 modules in one year in a part-time attendance mode of study.

What you will study when

This programme is part of a modular degree scheme. A student registered in a full-time attendance mode will take four 30-credit modules per year. An honours degree student will complete four modules at level 4, four at level 5 and four at level 6.

Modules are defined as:

Core - Must be taken

Option - Select from a range of identified module within the field

University Wide Option - Select from a wide range of UEL wide options across the University of East London

The following are the core and optional requirements for this programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Module Code</th>
<th>New Module Title</th>
<th>Credit</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ED4034</td>
<td>Pedagogy: Supporting Development in the Early Years</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Core</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ED4009</td>
<td>Perspectives of Early Childhood Development</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Core</td>
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<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Credits</td>
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<td>ED4010</td>
<td>Children in their Social Contexts</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ED4012</td>
<td>Children with Additional Needs and Children’s Health</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Core</td>
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<tr>
<td>ED5013</td>
<td>Issues and Controversies in Early Childhood Development</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>ED5004</td>
<td>Observing, Documenting and Researching with Children, Families and Practitioners</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>ED5016</td>
<td>Social Policy for Children and Families</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Core</td>
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<td>ED5005</td>
<td>Advocating for Children: National and international Contexts</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>ED6007</td>
<td>Early Childhood Research Dissertation</td>
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<td>Core</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ED6016</td>
<td>Leading and Managing Partnerships in the Early Years</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Core</td>
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<td>ED6014</td>
<td>Children, Culture and Globalisation</td>
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<td>Core</td>
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<td>ED6008</td>
<td>Multimodal Learning in Early Childhood</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Core</td>
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</table>

**Requirements for gaining an award**

In order to gain an Associate Certificate you will need to obtain a minimum if 20 credits at level four or higher.

In order to gain a Certificate of Higher Education you will need to obtain 120 credits at level four or higher.

In order to gain a Diploma of Higher Education you will need to obtain at least 240 credits including a minimum of 120 credits at level four or higher and 120 credits at level five or higher.

In order to gain an ordinary degree you will need to obtain a minimum of 300 credits including:

- A minimum of 120 credits at level four or higher
- A minimum of 120 credits at level five or higher
- A minimum of 60 credits at level six or higher

In order to gain an honours degree you will need to obtain 360 credits including:

- A minimum of 120 credits at level four higher
- A minimum of 120 credits at level five or higher
- A minimum of 120 credits at level six or higher

**Degree Classification**

Where a student is eligible for an Honours degree, and has gained a minimum of 240 UEL credits at level 5 or level 6 on the programme, including a minimum of 120 UEL credits at level 6, the award classification is determined by calculating:
The arithmetic mean of the best 90 credits at level 6 \( \times 0.8 \) + The arithmetic mean of the next best 90 credits at levels 5 and/or 6 \( \times 0.2 \) 

and applying the mark obtained as a percentage, with all decimals points rounded up to the nearest whole number, to the following classification:

- 70% - 100% First Class Honours
- 60% - 69% Second Class Honours, First Division
- 50% - 59% Second Class Honours, Second Division
- 40% - 49% Third Class Honours
- 0% - 39% Not passed

### Teaching, learning and assessment

#### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning strategies within the Early Childhood Studies programme expect students to be active learners. Strategies vary depending upon the type of module and the learning outcomes for the module.

**Knowledge is developed through**

- Guided reading of on-line materials and textbooks
- On-line discussions with tutors and other students
- Guided self-assessment activities

**Thinking skills are developed through**

- Reflective activities with feedback
- Guided reading
- Online discussions and activities

**Practical skills are developed through**

- IT activities with feedback
- Research skills-based activities with feedback
- Supervised project work

**Skills for life and work (general skills) are developed through**

- The demands of the study medium (i.e. distance learning)
- Planning activities with feedback
- Course work assignments & feedback
- Project work

#### Assessment

For each module there are a number of assignments, always linked to learning outcomes. The assignments may take a variety of forms but what is important is that the evidence (the actual
work written or something recorded from presentations) is carefully graded, according to agreed criteria, moderated to make sure that the marking is fair and then presented to an Assessment Board. Although strategies usually assess more than one skill, it may be helpful to give examples of how each skill can be assessed.

Knowledge is assessed by

- Programme work assignments
- Examinations
- Self reflective assignments

Thinking skills are assessed by

- Programme work assignments
- Examinations
- Self reflective assignments

Practical skills are assessed by

- Practical reports
- IT exercises
- Project work

Skills for life and work (general skills) are assessed by

- Project work
- Successful completion of assignments
- Personal development plans and students’ own reflection

How we assure the quality of this programme

Before this programme started

Before this programme started, the following was checked:

- there would be enough qualified staff to teach the programme;
- adequate resources would be in place;
- the overall aims and objectives were appropriate;
- the content of the programme met national benchmark requirements;
- the programme met any professional/statutory body requirements;
• the proposal met other internal quality criteria covering a range of issues such as admissions policy, teaching, learning and assessment strategy and student support mechanisms.

This is done through a process of programme approval which involves consulting academic experts including some subject specialists from other institutions.

**How we monitor the quality of this programme**

The quality of this programme is monitored each year through evaluating:

- external examiner reports (considering quality and standards);
- statistical information (considering issues such as the pass rate);
- student feedback.

Drawing on this and other information, programme teams undertake the annual Review and Enhancement Process which is co-ordinated at School level and includes student participation. The process is monitored by University of East London’s Quality Standing Committee.

Once every six years University of East London undertakes an in-depth review of the whole field. This is undertaken by a panel that includes at least two external subject specialists. The panel considers documents, looks at student work, speaks to current and former students and speaks to staff before drawing its conclusions. The result is a report highlighting good practice and identifying areas where action is needed.

**The role of the programme committee**

This programme has a programme committee comprising all relevant teaching staff, student representatives and others who make a contribution towards the effective operation of the programme (e.g. library/technician staff). The committee has responsibilities for the quality of the programme. It provides input into the operation of the Review and Enhancement Process and proposes changes to improve quality. The programme committee plays a critical role in University of East London’s quality assurance procedures.

**The role of external examiners**

The standard of this programme is monitored by at least one external examiner. External examiners have two primary responsibilities:

- To ensure the standard of the programme;
- To ensure that justice is done to individual students.

External examiners fulfil these responsibilities in a variety of ways including:

- Approving exam papers/assignments;
- Attending assessment boards;
- Reviewing samples of student work and moderating marks;
- Ensuring that regulations are followed;
• Providing feedback to University of East London through an annual report that enables us to make improvements for the future.

**Listening to the views of students**

The following methods for gaining student feedback are used on this programme:

• Module evaluations
• Moodle Student forum
• Student representation on the Programme Committees (meeting twice a year)
• Student/Staff consultative committee

Students are notified of the action taken through:

• Individual responses to students as required
• circulating the minutes of the programme and field committees
• providing details on the Early Childhood and Education field notice boards
• providing details on the Early Childhood Studies notice board

**Listening to the views of others**

The following methods are used for gaining the views of other interested parties:

• Annual student satisfaction questionnaire
• Questionnaires to former students
• Placement settings
• Placements Visiting Tutor
• Local Further Education Colleges, through Link Tutor
• Training Officer – Local Early Years Partnership

**Further Information**

**Where you can find further information**

Further information about this programme is available from:

• The UEL web site [http://www.uel.ac.uk](http://www.uel.ac.uk)
• The student handbook
• Module study guides
• UEL Manual of General Regulations [http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/](http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/)
• UEL Quality Manual [http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/](http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/)
• Regulations for the Academic Framework [http://www.uel.ac.uk/academicframework/](http://www.uel.ac.uk/academicframework/)
• School web pages [http://www.uel.ac.uk/education/index.htm](http://www.uel.ac.uk/education/index.htm)
• [Current External examiners](http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/)
• External examiner reports (available from UEL virtual learning environment – Moodle)
• Click here to download word version