

# Early Childhood Studies

<b>Final award</b>	MA
<b>Intermediate awards available</b>	PGCert, PGDip
<b>UCAS code</b>	N/A
<b>Details of professional body accreditation</b>	N/A
<b>Relevant QAA Benchmark statements</b>	N/A
<b>Date specification last up-dated</b>	June 2012

## Profile

### The summary - programme advertising leaflet

#### Programme content

This programme enables students to develop an in-depth knowledge of Early Childhood Studies and to engage critically with issues and developments in the field, in order to enhance their own learning and professional development.

#### MA Early Childhood Studies at UEL

The MA in Early Childhood Studies provides:

- A modular credit based programme providing advanced study of Early Childhood theory and practice
- A focus on research in a specialist area in the field of Early Childhood Studies

#### Entry requirements

- An application form and references
- An honours degree at minimum 2:2 or equivalent in a relevant subject area. e.g. in Early Childhood Studies, Social Policy, Health Studies or related subject
- Overall IELTS of 6.5 or equivalent for students whose first language is not English or GCE 'O' level in English
- Evidence of ability to pursue study at Masters level e.g. sample of graduate level coursework
- \* Where an applicant does not meet the above requirements, consideration may be given to other recognised graduate equivalent status and/or professional experience

In the case of applicants whose first language is not English, then IELTS 6.5 (or equivalent) is required. International qualifications will be checked for appropriate matriculation to UK Higher Education postgraduate programmes.

Students that apply to enter stages of the programme may be admitted through normal Accreditation of Experiential Learning (AEL) or Accreditation of Certificated Learning (ACL) processes, or through an approved articulation agreement. Therefore 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.

### **Programme structure**

The programme is designed to allow full-time and part-time students to manage and plan a flexible timetable of study to suit their own personal and professional circumstances.

- To qualify for the award of MA students need to successfully complete 4 modules and a 14, 000 word Dissertation.

### **Learning environment**

The main modes of study are class contact and supported self-study. Class contact would include face-to-face lectures, discussion groups, workshops and seminars, with content delivery from a tutor. Modules which involve supported self-study are delivered through independent research and study by an individual or group of students, and negotiated with tutor support. All modules will require a certain amount of independent research and study that is carried out by the individual, which will feed into the module sessions.

### **Assessment**

- Each module assessment will be an assignment of 5,000 words or equivalent. Assignments are research based and must relate to the particular topic of study.
- Successful completion of the required modules.
- The final project will be a dissertation of 14,000 words, excluding references and bibliography.
- For the MA, successful completion of 4 modules and a 14, 000 word Dissertation

### **Relevance to work/profession**

All modules and the final dissertation contribute to an advanced study of a specialist area in Early Childhood Studies. Assignments and areas of research should generally relate to the individual's development plan in terms of his or her academic progression and professional development. There is an emphasis throughout the programme on the relevance and impact of theory and research on the Early Years curriculum and practice.

### **Dissertation/project work**

The final dissertation provides an opportunity for further development in a specific field of study. Students are required to collaborate with supervisor and colleagues, and engage with independent research in writing the final dissertation.

### **Added value**

The Cass School of Education also has an established Early Childhood Studies Undergraduate programme and an MA in Early Childhood Studies will allow academic progression for those who meet the criteria and wish to advance their study in the area.

### **Your future career**

The award and work undertaken can contribute to academic progression, professional development, and the development of subject specialism in the field.

### **How we support you**

Students are supported through personal, individual and module tutorials. All students will also be assigned a personal tutor who will support them throughout their study. For the final dissertation, students will be supported by a supervisor with the relevant specialist knowledge. The programme permits students to study flexibly, full-time or part-time. Students can accumulate credits over a period to suit their personal and professional circumstances.

### **Bonus factors**

The programme meets national and local needs in terms of the recent uptake of graduates, practitioners and other professionals who have already successfully completed the required coursework at graduate level and who wish to embark on an accredited Masters programme.

## **Outcomes**

### **Programme aims and learning outcomes**

#### **What is this programme designed to achieve?**

This programme is designed to give you the opportunity to:

- develop an advanced knowledge and understanding of Early Childhood Studies
- apply analysis, synthesis and evaluative skills to the research and study of Early Childhood Education settings
- extend and develop in-depth knowledge of a specialist area
- to prepare for and plan a piece of advanced research in the field of Early Childhood Studies

#### **What will you learn?**

The core characteristics of study at Masters level are summarised as:

- enhanced specialist knowledge
- critical analysis and synthesis of arguments
- advanced level critical reflection on the interrelationship between theory and practice
- self evaluation of skills of analysis, research and planning
- critical reflection on own learning

The learning outcomes are summarised as:

- comprehensive overview of existing and current developments in Early Childhood Studies
- critical evaluation of Early Years theory
- systematic gathering and use of research findings for structuring an argument

- taking and implementing decisions based on analysis and investigation
- enhanced interpersonal and collaborative skills
- facilitating own learning through independent study and research

## **Structure**

### **The programme structure**

#### **Introduction**

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:

- 0 - equivalent in standard to GCE 'A' level and is intended to prepare students for year one of an undergraduate degree programme
- 1 - equivalent in standard to the first year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 2 - equivalent in standard to the second year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 3 - equivalent in standard to the third year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- M - equivalent in standard to a Masters degree

#### **Credit rating**

The overall credit-rating of this programme is 180 for Masters, 60 for PGCert, 120 for PGDip

#### **Typical duration**

Typical duration of the programme is one year full-time.

#### **How the teaching year is divided**

The teaching year follows the school year and is divided into two semesters: Semester A and B. Reading weeks coincide with the school half term week. The planning and timing of modules and assignment work revolve around the semesters. Students are encouraged to undertake a maximum of two modules each semester.

#### **What you will study when**

All participants must complete a learning plan during the first few weeks of the programme. This will be done with the support of the personal tutor. The learning plan provides a mechanism for students to plan and manage the continuity and progression of their programme of study.

<b>Semester</b>	<b>UEL Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credit</b>	<b>Status</b>
Semester A	ETM723	Research Methodologies in Education and Professional Practice	30	Core compulsory
Semester A	EDM502	Advanced Study of Curricular Models in Diverse National and International Settings	30	Core compulsory
Semester B	EDM501	Current Issues in Early Childhood	30	Core compulsory
Semester B	EDM503	Policy Issues in Early Childhood: National and International Perspectives	30	Core compulsory
Summer Semester	EDM504	Dissertation	60	Core Compulsory

### **Requirements for gaining an award**

In order to gain a Postgraduate Certificate, you will need to obtain 60 credits at Level M.

In order to gain a Postgraduate Diploma, you will need to obtain 120 credits at Level M.

In order to obtain a Masters, you will need to obtain 180 credits at Level M. These credits will include a 60 credit level M core module of advanced independent research.

### **Masters Award Classification**

Where a student is eligible for an Masters award then the award classification is determined by calculating the arithmetic mean of all marks and applying the mark obtained as a percentage, with all decimal points rounded up to the nearest whole number, to the following classification

70% - 100% Distinction

60% - 69% Merit

50% - 59% Pass

0% - 49% Not passed

## **Assessment**

### **Teaching, learning and assessment**

#### **Teaching and learning**

Each module will be taught over one semester. The main modes of teaching will be through class contact, face-to-face lectures, discussion groups, seminars and supported self-study. Students will be expected to profile their knowledge and expertise, reflect on their own understanding and assess their needs in the field of the module. Students will be expected to read a wide range of indicative readings and recommended texts and to critically evaluate

discourses. At each seminar prepared materials will be presented for discussion by individuals or groups. Material for discussion will be closely related to the topic area and students' own research and experience. Group work and the sharing of experience will be encouraged. Students will be required to undertake private study independent research to support assignment work and to feed back into sessions. Students' research will be supplemented by lectures, tutorials and group discussions. All students will be required to undertake private study and to prepare an assignment for each module as a final assessment.

### **Assessment**

Assessment will be formative and summative, and will use a variety of evidence sources including presentations, assignments, and a final dissertation. A written assignment of 5,000 words will be required for each module, together with evidence of the achievement of enhanced research and self-study.

## **Quality**

### **How we assure the quality of this programme**

#### **Before this programme started**

Before the 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 for Masters programme;
- 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 the Quality and Standards Committee.

Once every six years an in-depth review of the whole field 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 the 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 UEL through an annual report that enables us to make improvements for the future.

### **Listening to the views of students**

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

- Module evaluations
- student representation on programme committees
- Feedback forms given to students to be used at any time

Students are notified of the action taken through:

- meetings with representative from external Early Years agencies
- Questionnaires to former students

### **Listening to the views of others**

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

List the methods that you use e.g.

- meetings with representative from external partnerships e.g. the local EYDCP

- Questionnaires to former students

## **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>
- The student handbook
- Module study guides
- UEL Manual of General Regulations <http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/>
- UEL Quality Manual <http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/>
- Regulations for the Academic Framework <http://www.uel.ac.uk/academicframework/>
- School web pages <http://www.uel.ac.uk/education/index.htm>