Programme specification

1. Overview/ factual information

Programme/award title(s)	BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies (top-up)
Teaching Institution	University Centre Peterborough (UCP)
Awarding Institution	The Open University (OU)
Date of first OU validation	October 2021
Date of latest OU (re)validation	N/A
Next revalidation	2026
Credit points for the award	120 Credits
UCAS Code	X320
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 Teachers' Standards Early Childhood Graduate Practitioner Competencies
Professional/statutory recognition	N/A
For apprenticeships fully or partially integrated Assessment.	N/A
Mode(s) of Study (PT, FT, DL, Mix of DL & Face-to-Face) Apprenticeship	FT, PT
Duration of the programme for each mode of study	1 year (FT), 2 years (PT)
Dual accreditation (if applicable)	N/A
Date of production/revision of this specification	Aug 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 s/he takes 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's 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
- Encourage a systematic, creative and flexible approach to solving complex educational and development problems.
- 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 fields of early years and education.
- To instil a lifelong passion for education for all.
- 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 including graduate teacher training pathways
- To provide the students with a secure knowledge base that will enable them to develop within their chosen career pathway.
- 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 develop autonomous and reflective early years education practitioners.
- To promote development of transferable skills to apply to a range of graduate careers and fields.
- To promote inter-agency knowledge and working practices across the early years sector.

2.2 Relationship to other programmes and awards

The BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies programme sits within the Education faculty at University Centre Peterborough. This top-up degree has been specifically designed to support progression from FD Early Childhood Studies.

The faculty recognises the importance of students understanding the full educational environment of all contexts, and so the BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies (top-up) programme shares one 30 credit module with the BA (Hons) Primary Education Studies (top-up) programme, 'Individual Needs and Educational Psychology'.

The programme is designed to provide clear progression to a range of early years careers as well as postgraduate study and initial teacher training options (in early years and wider educational settings and age ranges).

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.

N/A

2.4 List of all exit awards

BA (Ord) Early Childhood Studies on completion of 60 credits at Level 6.

3. Programme structure and learning outcomes

Programme Structure – Level 6 - Full time					
Compulsory modules	Credit points	Optional modules	Credit points	Is module compensatable?	Semester runs in
Leadership and Management in the Early Years	15			Yes	Y1 S2
Families, Communities and Partnership Working	15			Yes	Y1 S2
Individual Needs and Educational Psychology	30			No	Y1 S1
Undergraduate Research Project in Early Childhood	30			No	Y1 S1+2
Advanced Professional Practice: The Early Years	30			No	Y1 S1+2
Programme Structure – Level 6 – Part time					
Compulsory modules	Credit points	Optional modules	Credit points	Is module compensatable?	Semester runs in
Leadership and Management in the Early Years	15			Yes	Y2 S2
Families, Communities and Partnership Working	15			Yes	Y2 S2
Individual Needs and Educational Psychology	30			No	Y1 S1
Undergraduate Research Project in Early Childhood	30			No	Y2 S1+2
Advanced Professional Practice: The Early Years	30			No	Y1 S1+2

Intended learning outcomes at Level 6 are listed below:

Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 6	
3A. Knowledge and understanding	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
A1 Evidence knowledge of a range of research paradigms, research methods and measurement techniques relative to children and childhood. A2 Demonstrate understanding of the significance of the cultural, historical and contemporary features of various policies, institutions and agencies in regard to policy and provision for babies and young children, families and communities A3 Evidence knowledge and understanding of specialised areas of practice within the Early Years. A4 Evidence knowledge of principles of 'outstanding' practice and evaluate the role of evidence-based practice.	A diverse and dynamic range of teaching and learning strategies are utilised to meet the knowledge-based learning outcomes of level 6. These include: - traditional methods of lectures supported with seminars but also practical reflection, class discussions, online and ICT resources, case studies and a range of flipped-classroom activities. Students will have the opportunity to explore and evaluate key educational theories and tools, building on their current and past professional experience in order to reflect on the application of these to contemporary settings. Teaching and learning approaches in early childhood studies enable students to take a more critical stance to the theories, findings and approaches of the subject as they come to recognise the contested nature of its concepts and practices A broad range of assessment methods are utilised at this level to assess knowledge and understanding. These include Portfolios, Oral Presentations, Reports, Case Studies, Research Projects, Discussion Boards, Questioning, Peer Reviews, Critical Reflections and in addition, online quizzes will be utilised in formative assessment to check academic progress.

3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
B1 Initiate, design, conduct and report an empirically based early childhood research project, under appropriate supervision B2 Analyse and evaluate educational, developmental, and early years theories and approaches B3 Evaluate how theory and pedagogical principles can be applied to practice in early years settings through critically exploring contemporary debates and practice. B4 Evaluate and synthesise a diverse range of sources to support evidence-based practice.	A broad range of teaching and learning strategies are utilised to meet the intellectual, learning outcomes of this level. Intellectual qualities are developed mainly through lectures, seminars, tutorials, coursework, assignments, professional reflective exercises and projects. Pedagogy is understood as incorporating both upbringing and creative approaches to working with children; therefore, it will include debates around curricular development, play and learning Assessment focuses on the coursework submissions, class / online discussions and presentations. Assessment strategies offer students clear guidance with reference to future development. Self-reflection and peer evaluation constitute an important part of formative assessment.

3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
C1 Evidence awareness of ethical principles and demonstrate this in relation to personal study and research. C2 Develop practice skills in relation to partnership and collaborative working with parents, caregivers, communities and agencies. C3 Demonstrate the ability to lead, support and work collaboratively with others in the early childhood context. C4 Articulate knowledge and understanding and evidence practical skills that underpin effective practice in early years contexts.	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 traditional lecture and seminar approaches to use of professional experience to discuss reflective opportunities and evidence-informed practice Testing of the knowledge base is principally through coursework assignments, reports and reflective portfolio. Assessment strategies offer students clear guidance with reference to future developments. Self-reflection and peer evaluation constitute an important part of formative assessment.

3D. Key/transferable skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
D1 Employ critically reflective learning to explore own approach to practice. D2 Communicate accurately and clearly, through academic writing and orally, for a range of purposes D3 Retrieve, organise and synthesise arguments, opinions and qualitative and quantitative data, and present findings and conclusions in a variety of formats D4 Articulate ideas and research findings using a range of communication methods.	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 traditional lecture and seminar approaches to use of professional experience to discuss reflective opportunities and evidence-informed practice Testing of the knowledge base is principally through coursework assignments, reports and reflective portfolio. Assessment strategies offer students clear guidance with reference to future developments. Self-reflection and peer evaluation constitute an important part of formative assessment.

BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies awarded on completion of Level 6

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

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 evidence in their 'advanced professional practice: the early years' module in which they will develop a portfolio of practice evidence. They will be assessed on site by the university and by their workplace mentor. Pedagogical and professional knowledge is required in order to create, manage, and assess diverse environments conducive to learning and setting high expectations.

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, Level 6 focusing on autonomy and academic enquiry as well as preparation for postgraduate employment and study.

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 have ensured 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, a new Employer and Community Consultative Group was established in March 2019. The group, which has evolved from the HE Steering Group, will provide 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 within an early years or primary education setting.   - A confirmed placement of a minimum of 40 days per academic year, including identification of a workplace mentor.   - Successful completion of a 240 credit level 5 qualification, FD equivalent   - GCSE English language and mathematics at a minimum of grade C or grade 4 or equivalent   - 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.

University Centre Peterborough has 25 years' experience of delivering Higher Education courses. All members of the education and early years delivery team are appropriately qualified for 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 primary education 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 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, HE 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 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. In addition, module evaluation surveys are undertaken per semester, however 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 constantly adapted to student feedback, if appropriate.

11. Changes made to the programme since last (re)validation
Not applicable.

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															
		A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	B4	C1	C2	C3	C4	D1	D2	D3	D4
6	Leadership & Management in the Early Years		✔	✔			✔	✔				✔	✔	✔			
	Families, Communities and Partnership Working			✔				✔	✔		✔	✔			✔		
	Individual Needs and Educational Psychology		✔				✔						✔		✔		
	Undergraduate Research Project in Early Childhood	✔				✔			✔	✔			✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
	Advanced Professional Practice: The Early Years		✔		✔		✔	✔			✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔