



Course Specification

Basic Course Information		
1	Awarding Institution	Nottingham Trent University
2	Faculty/Campus	Faculty of Early Years and Science / City Hub
3	Final Award	Foundation Degree in Arts in Early Years Studies
4	Course Title	FdA Early Years Studies
5	Modes of Study	Part-Time
6	Normal Duration	3 years
7	UCAS code	Not Applicable

8 Overview and general educational aims of the course

The FdA Early Years Studies is designed as a work-based learning course which is integrated with academic study to provide you with the knowledge and understanding required to adopt the role of a senior practitioner in your work place. It has been designed to meet the educational and training needs of early years practitioners in the private, independent or state maintained sector. Early years practitioners may be employed in Day Nurseries, School Foundation Units, as nannies or childminders, family support workers, crèche assistants in voluntary or local authority settings. A Foundation degree in Early Years Studies may also form a basis of knowledge from which you could pursue other careers related to working with young children, for example a play therapist, counsellor, social worker or play scheme leader. Some of these careers will require further specialist study.

It will provide you with 240 HE points and is offered on a part time basis for 4 hours per week. The course is pertinent to the sector and draws on your experiences of working in the Early Years, exploring your experiences through the lens of theory, policy, research and wider reading. The course will enable you to continue working in your professional Early Years role whilst undertaking a higher-level qualification. On completion of the foundation degree you may choose to complete further study to obtain a further 120 points at level 6 and a full undergraduate degree. At this point you may choose to pursue Early Years Teacher Status in one of the two following ways:

- Graduate entry – typically a year of full-time study, with a £7,000 grant to cover course fees– there are also bursaries of up to £5,000 for graduates with a first-class degree, £4,000 for graduates with a 2:1, and £2,000 for graduates with a 2:2
- graduate employment-based – a one-year part-time route for graduates working in an early year setting who need further training to demonstrate the Teachers' Standards (Early Years). Funding of £14,000 is available, this covers course fees of up to £7,000. The remaining £7,000 is a contribution to the costs incurred by your employer, for example supply cover or salary enhancement

Your own professional practice will be integrated within each of the modules covered. Your experiences will be critical to the teaching and learning in each module and will provide the background to the more formal academic learning that you undertake.

The staff team are professionals who have had a wide range of experience working with young children and their families in a range of contexts. Assessing students in a variety of settings brings currency to their teaching. This is further supported by accessing CPD events provided by the partner university, other universities and the Education and Training Federation. The staff team also follow various research institutes via social media and share knowledge regularly during staff meetings. All staff teaching on the foundation degree read academic texts related to their subject.

The course aims are

- To provide you with the skills, knowledge and understanding to take on the role of a senior practitioner.
- To provide you with the skills required to study at a higher academic level, including reflection, analysis, evaluation and application of these skills.

- To provide knowledge and understanding of the Early Years sector with an emphasis on policy and practice.
- Provide you with a progression route to further study, eg, to obtain Early Years Teacher status or gain BA (Hons) Education and then Qualified Teacher Status or pursue further study in an associated area.

9 Course Outcomes/Course Outcomes

Course outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of your course if you take advantage of the opportunities for learning that we provide.

The Course Outcomes have been developed in line with the QAA's Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement (A) and the Subject Benchmark Statement for Education (2019) (5) Subject Benchmark Statement for Early Childhood Studies (2022)(5) also been informed by the graduate competencies of Early Childhood Studies Degree Network (2020 (1))B

Knowledge and understanding. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- 1.Examine and discuss the relationships between political, economic, cultural and ideological contexts locally, nationally and globally in the lives of children families and communities (B).
- 2.Understand and apply relevant research methods and evaluate theories, practice and research in the areas of development and well-being. (B)
- 3.Demonstrate and apply knowledge to practice that promote and impede holistic development and long-term outcomes. (B)
- 4.Apply relevant concepts and principles to a range of unfamiliar professional situations to solve problems. (A) (B)
5. Debate the impact and limitations of own experience and knowledge on current practice. (A)(B)
- 6 Provide detailed analysis of various supportive teaching pedagogies which take account of diverse learner needs (A) (B)

Skills, qualities and attributes. By the end of the course students should be able to:

- 1.Select and apply a range of established primary and secondary research techniques within a range of contexts related to working with children, their families and other professionals and critically evaluate their relevance. (A) (B).
2. Effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis (A) (B).
- 3.Synthesise evidence-based writing, practice and reflection, that critically self-assesses your own learning progress, development and achievement (A) (B).
- 4.Critique relevant theories, concepts, values and principles effectively and ethically within your work role and the wider context linking to practice (B).
- 5.Using own pedagogical values analyses current opportunities for personal and professional development in the field or Education and/or Early Years (B).

6. Plan for play based /learning activities based on an individual's needs by implementing curriculum requirements and considering the child's health and emotional well-being (B)

Notes: (A) indicates those outcomes having specific reference to the QAA Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement (Feb 2020). (B) QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Education (2019) (5) Subject Benchmark Statement for Early Childhood Studies(2022)(5)

10 Teaching and Learning Methods

The course has been designed to integrate your academic study and work related learning. Your professional practice will provide a starting point from which each module will be taught. These experiences will be critical to the teaching and learning in each module, providing the background to the academic, formal learning in college and your private study. They will also particularly help you develop the skills, qualities and other attributes necessary to complete the learning outcomes of the course.

Your professional practice will be expected to be at least 15 hours per week. In this practice you will be supported by a placement mentor, who will support your practical activities and learning. Your mentor will be invited to meet the teaching team and find out about the modules you will be covering. A letter outlining the modules for the coming year will also be provided at the start of each year. Your mentor will be invited to fill out a reflection on some aspects of your assessment from a practical skills point of view. This will be a short reflection guided by questions – it will not contribute directly to the assessment but will be an opportunity for you to discuss your development and progress with your mentor. You are also required to have a meeting with your mentor at least once per semester so you can keep them informed of your progress and updated on your current research.

Whilst in College your teaching and learning will be in the form of lectures, group seminars, discussion and investigative group sessions. Visiting speakers will also be invited to complement the delivery in some modules. An important aspect of all these sessions is that they will directly relate to your practice; the involvement of the whole group sharing good practice and ideas through peer discussion and presentations will be valued. You will also gain deeper knowledge and understanding of your subject area which will in turn support your practical work, so addressing the course learning outcomes.

Some of the modules taught will require research, planning and or evaluation of situations or activities in your professional setting. This information will usually then provide a basis for your assignment work. Other modules assess your understanding of the wider context in relation to the subject being explored.

It is an expectation that students are developing their knowledge and expertise of AI tools through classroom delivery and short courses available to students through the college intranet.

Assessment Methods

A proportion of your assessment is directly related to your professional practice where you will be expected to undertake specific tasks and then present information in the required format. Other modules will examine the sector more widely and your overall knowledge will be assessed in the required format.

The course uses a variety of assessment methods to ensure that you adequately cover each of the learning outcomes. These methods have been designed to incorporate a range of learning styles and approaches. Your assessment at level 4 will be guided and monitored by module tutors to ensure your skills and knowledge around academic study are sound, ready for more independent, analytical demonstrations of your knowledge at level 5, which in turn prepare you for future study at level 6.

At Level 4 you will be required to

- Research current initiatives and report on them (EYC401)
- Reflect and improve an area of own practice (EYC402)
- To evaluate a range of supportive learning strategies (EYS401)
- Examine and report on a historical case of child abuse (EYC403)
- To present a proposal of how you can change an aspect or develop an aspect of practice by adopting a different approach at a local, national or international level. (EYS402)
- A 20 -minute presentation about a chronic childhood condition, children's health or wellbeing. (EYS403)

At Level 5 you will be required to :

To work in partnership with parents on a project that aims to enhance children's learning (EYC501)

Write a report evaluating learning strategies for individual needs (EYC502)

Research behaviour strategies and evaluate them (EYC503)

Produce and present an academic presentation (EYS504)

Plan a small-scale research project, reflect on your findings (EYS503)

The Level 5 assessments are designed to enable you to become a more independent learner. You will be expected to undertake self-directed study to complete the assessments whilst applying the skills and knowledge base you have learned from Level 4 of the course.

Throughout the final year you will undertake a small scale research project within the context of leadership and management. This will introduce you to underpinning skills and knowledge for further study, including ethical requirements and developing critical thinking skills

Oral feedback from the module leader, during tutorial time, will support you during the preparation of your assignment work. You are also encouraged to make appointments outside of class time, or contact tutors via e mail or telephone. Module tutorials will provide another opportunity for you to receive feedback and support. A written record will be produced that you may refer to for future support. Written feedback will be given on completion of each assignment.

Aspects of each module will assess your knowledge and understanding and the skills, qualities and attributes needed to complete the outcomes of the course. Owing to the

specialist nature of the area of work involved in the education and management of children, you will be required to fulfil all criteria for award of the Foundation Degree Early Years Studies and no compensation will be considered.

The modules at level 4 are rated at 20 credits each. Level 5 modules are also 20 credits each with the exception of EYC505 which is a 40 credit module and runs throughout your final year of study.

Your placement employer/mentor is not directly involved in the assessment of the course. However, a record of meetings with your mentor will be expected to be found in your professional portfolio and their input on your planning and execution of an activity in EYS403 will be sought.

Throughout all assessments clear guidance on how AI is used will be discussed with students and they will need to provide reference to this use for each assessment in line with the college procedures and policies.

12 Course structure and curriculum

The course is delivered on a part-time basis over three years. You will be expected to attend College for four hours of taught sessions for fifteen weeks each semester. The academic year is split into two semesters.

This taught aspect of the course is complemented by your professional/work based contact of at least 15 hours per week in an early years setting. Each module is designed to support your professional practice and develop your skills and experiences, thereby enabling you to become a more competent practitioner. The modules have been carefully selected to complement and support your growing appreciation of the knowledge and skills needed to work at this level in higher education and your developing professional practice.

Students who only successfully complete Level 4 of the course will be eligible for a Higher Certificate in Early Years Studies (120 credit points). Students successfully completing all required Level 4 and Level 5 modules will obtain a Foundation Degree (240 credit points).

Course Modules, Credits and Delivery

Year One

Semester 1	Semester 2
EYC401 (20 cp) Study Skills and Current Initiatives Level 4	EYC402 (20 cp) The Developing Practitioner Level 4
EYC403 (20cp) Safeguarding Children Level 4	EYS'401 (20cp) How Children Learn Level 4
In addition, students will receive individual/group development activity to include tutorials and study skills programmes	

Year Two

Semester 3	Semester 4
EYS402 (20 cp) Learning through the Curriculum Level 4	EYC501 (20cp) Partnership Working with Children Level 5
EYS403 (20 cp) Children's Care ,Health and Well-being Level 4	EYC502 (20cp) Inclusive Practice Level 5

Year Three

Semester 5	Semester 6
EYC503 (20 cp) Understanding and Supporting Behaviour in a Learning Environment Level 5	EYS 503 (20cp) Contemporary Issues and Perspectives in Education
EYC505 (40 cp) Managing Research in an Educational Context Level 5	

When calculating the award classification Level 4 modules EYC401, EYC402, EYS401 and EYC403 delivered in year 1 will be excluded. The final overall grade will be determined by considering 20% of Level 4 module grades EYS402, EYS403 and 80% of Level 5 module grades EYC501, EYC502, EYC503, EYS503 and EYC505.

13 Admission to the course

This Foundation Degree is for practitioners working at present in a diverse range of Early Years settings with children aged 0 to 5 years 11 months.

Admission is subject to satisfactory interview, when your attitude to further study, knowledge of the sector and communication skills will be formally assessed.

The following are the requirements that you will need to meet for admission to the course. You will need to:

- a) Have successfully completed, to Pass level, a Level 3 Childcare course which would include: BTEC National Diploma in Early Years, NCFE CACHE Diploma in Childcare and Education, T-Level or NNEB (equivalent to 48 UCAS tariff points); or relevant NVQ Level 3 **and**
- b) Be able to work at least 15 hours per week in a paid capacity for the whole duration of the programme, **and**
- c) Be able to supply a statement of support and commitment from your employer/mentor to support the fact that you will be able to meet the full range of roles and responsibilities required from the course, in your workplace, **and**
- d) Hold GCSEs, Grade C/4 or above, in English and Maths, or have an equivalent literacy or numeracy qualification at Level 2*. Note: If you wish in the future to obtain Qualified Teacher Status you will need GCSEs in English and Maths and Science at grade C/4. In addition for progression to the BA (Hons) Education Policy and Practice you will require English and Maths GCSE grade C/4.

* International applicants who do not hold GCSE grade C/4 or equivalent will require an IELTS score of at least 5.5, with no component less than 5.0, in addition to the other standard entry criteria.

Recognition of Prior Learning will be available for applicants who have substantial experience in the sector and are able to provide evidence of their previous attainment of specific learning outcomes. Guidance will be taken from NTU's Quality Handbook relating to recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), which includes specific guidance on RPL for admission with advanced standing. Additionally, guidance on the definitions and boundaries, policies and procedures will be taken from the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter B6: Assessment of students with prior certificated learning and prior experiential learning (October 2013). Any RPL decisions will be formally reported to the Examination Board.

Prior to your commencement on the course an agreement will be drawn up between the College, yourself, your employer and mentor. This contract will be designed to ensure that you, the student, are adequately supported by your employer and mentor. This will take the form of being able to attend college sessions weekly, being supported to carry out tasks required by the course and have time to meet with the mentor at least once per semester. It is also an acknowledgement from the College that they will support the mentor in their role.

Support for learning

You will undergo a planned programme of induction activities, which include induction to the College and the course. This will include activities such as induction to the library, team-building activities and specific course induction.

It is anticipated that you will access the on-going tutorial support from module leaders, which is a feature of the course. These individual module leaders will provide academic support for specific modules, providing informal and formal feedback on your progress.

On-line support via email and the course Interact page on the College website will be available to you. It is also anticipated that peer support will be an important feature of the group, as you will be encouraged to participate in informal situations to engage with each other.

A student counselling support service is available for all students.

In addition to the above your work-based mentor will have an important role in ensuring you are supported adequately in your workplace. Mentors will be invited to annually to meetings in College where they, in turn, will receive advice and training in their role.

Delivery of the course takes place in an area dedicated to the delivery of courses related to Early Years and Education at the City Hub Campus.

Learning resources to sustain this course will be available for your use. They will include: specialist equipment, use of on-line computer facilities and further IT facilities in the campus library; a range of recommended texts in the Library and access to journals from external sources.

Each module will have a module specification. This will identify the learning outcomes, the method of learning and teaching, the assessment structure and weighting and the learning resources that you might use. A module booklet containing the module specification, assessment details, scheme of work and learning resources will support each module.

Following all formative and summative assessments, targeted feedback will be provided to help you further develop your skills.

15 Graduate destinations/employability

The Foundation Degree Early Years Studies has been developed to meet the current education and training needs of Early Years Practitioners who work in private, independent and state maintained settings. However the knowledge required could form the basis of future study or employability in a number of other roles working with children and their families.

It has been designed in conjunction with Local Authority representatives to ensure it meets the demands of the sector. Input is sought yearly from employers of current students and the students themselves to ensure currency and coverage of focus areas within the sector.

This part-time course will enable you to continue working in your professional role, while at the same time having the opportunity to undertake a higher level qualification helping you to help address the need for practitioners with increased qualifications.

The course offers a route to further study, e.g., to obtain Early Years Teacher status or gain a BA (Hons) in Education and then potentially Qualified Teacher Status. This course provides a guaranteed progression route to the BA (Hons) in Education: Policy and Practice, level 6, top up degree at Nottingham Trent University

Applicants would be expected to be employed within an educational setting at the time of studying and for the duration of the course.

The role of the Early Years Teacher (EYT) is recognised at graduate level. At present there are currently few graduates employed in these settings consequently there are many opportunities available for practitioners who gain a Foundation degree in Early Years Studies to become an EYT and presently this is government funded for practitioners with a Foundation degree in the following ways:

- Graduate entry – typically a year of full-time study, with a £7,000 grant to cover course fees – there are also bursaries of up to £5,000 for graduates with a first class degree, £4,000 for graduates with a 2:1, and £2,000 for graduates with a 2:2
- Graduate employment-based – a one-year part-time route for graduates working in an early years setting who need further training to demonstrate the Teachers' Standards (Early Years). Funding of £14,000 is available, this covers course fees of up to £7,000. The remaining £7,000 is a contribution to the costs incurred by your employer, for example supply cover or salary enhancement.

16 Course standards and quality

The Course Leader will monitor and review feedback from you, as a current student, on the induction process and delivery of each module. You will also be provided with detailed oral and written feedback on all work that is assessed.

An External Examiner will monitor and assess the standards and quality of the course and submit an annual report to NTU. An NTU Academic Liaison Tutor will also monitor and report on the standards and quality of the programme on behalf of the validating institution.

The course team will produce an annual course health check and development plan.

The views of mentors, employers and professional bodies will be sought to maintain course currency, standards and quality.

17 Assessment regulations

This course is subject to the College's HE Assessment Policy, which can be found in the Handbook for Higher Education Students, a copy of which will be made available to you at induction.

18 Additional Information

Collaborative partner and validating institution Nottingham Trent University

Course referenced to national QAA Benchmark Statements: Subject Benchmark Statement for Early Childhood Studies (2022); Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement (2020); Subject Benchmark Statements for Education (2019).

Programme recognised by: N/A

Date implemented: September 2025

Any additional information: The FdA Supporting Teaching and Learning course and FdA Early Years Studies course are delivered together by the Early Years Faculty.