Programme Specification for FdA Early Years (0-8)
and
FdA Early Years (0-8yrs) (Professional Practice)

This document applies to Academic Year 2020/21 onwards

1.	**Awarding Institution/Body**	University of Worcester
2.	**Teaching Institution**	• University of Worcester, Full-time and Part-time • Halesowen College, Full-time and Part-time • Herefordshire & Ludlow College, Full-time and Part-time • Heart of Worcestershire College (Redditch) Full-time and Part-time • Heart of Worcestershire College (Worcester) Full-time and Part-time
3.	**Programme Accredited By**	Sector-Endorsed Foundation Degrees in Early Years Professional Association (SEFDEY) For the FdA EY (0-8) (Professional Practice) award this is also accredited by: National College of Teaching and Learning (now DfE) Approved as Full and Relevant (on completion of practice requirements as outlined in Early Years Educator qualification) will allow students to be included in regulated setting ratios).
4.	**Final Award or Awards**	Foundation Degree (FdA)
5.	**Programme Title**	FdA Early Years (0-8 years) FdA Early Years (0-8yrs) (Professional Practice)
6.	**Pathways Available and/or Linked Honours Degree Progression Route/s**	Progression route: BA (Hons) Integrated Working with Children and Families Top Up See Section 20 for further information
7.	**Mode and/or Site of Delivery**	Standard taught programme delivered at UW and partner institutions Flexible and Distributed delivered online and at the University of Worcester
8.	**Mode of Attendance and Duration**	Standard delivery and Flexible and Distributed Part-time (3 years), Full-time (2 years)
9.	**UCAS Code**	FdA Early Years (0-8) X312 (Full-time) FdA Early Years (0-8) (Professional Practice) X313 (Full-time)
10.	**Subject Benchmark Statement and/or Professional Body Statement**	Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement (2020) Early Childhood Studies Subject Benchmark Statement (2019) Early Years Educator (2013) published by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (now the DfE)
11.	**Date of Programme Specification Preparation/ Revision**	September 2019 August 2020 – AQU amendments to Section 19. September 2020 benchmark statements amended, placement hours amended

12. Educational Aims of the Programme

The course is designed for those who want to work with and for children aged 0-8, and their families. There are two pathways within the degree; both have a strong educational focus for those who want to work within the education sector. The FdA Early Years (0-8yrs) (Professional Practice) pathway meets the requirements for

Early Years Educator (EYE) (including 385 hours of practice in an Ofsted registered setting), which grants full and relevant status for Ofsted registered settings. Students joining the course who have already met the requirements for EYE, will join the FdA Early Years (0-8) pathway.

The FdA in Early Years (0-8) provides an opportunity for experienced practitioners working in early years settings, and students progressing from level 3 qualifications, to gain a professional and academic qualification which is recognised nationally and locally within the sector. The programme combines academic rigour with practice-based experience to allow students to develop as reflective practitioners. It is a major route to a top-up honours degree and, following this, Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS) (for leaders of early years practice with children under 5 years of age), or progression onto PGCE. The aim of the programme is to play a significant role in the on-going development of the early years workforce and wider opportunities, nationally, regionally and locally.

The FdA in Early Years (0-8) aims to provide a child-centred approach and a framework for academic and professional skills development. Thinking skills, including the ability to reflect and analyse, are facilitated through the student's developing knowledge, understanding and experience in practice. The programme, which sits within a culture of inter-agency working, requires students to maintain high standards of care and education. Students are expected to develop their personal and professional dispositions within a framework that promotes inclusion and diversity. Students who gain the award of FdA Early Years (0-8) will have demonstrated intellectual abilities and key transferable attributes, descriptors of which are informed by the QAA Characteristics Statement for Foundation Degrees (2015) and QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Early Childhood Studies (2014). Students who gain the award of FdA Early Years (0-8) (Professional Practice) will have met the requirements for EYE (including 385 hours of placement which grants full and relevant status in early years, Ofsted registered settings).

As this degree sits within an arena which has seen many new directives over recent years, there is a need for the programme to remain current, flexible and responsive to these changes.

The programme aims to:

1. Develop the appropriate professional attributes, knowledge and understanding required for the care and education of children within national and international contexts;

2. Provide transformational educational experiences which enable students to integrate theory and practice, to meet the needs of children, families and the sector within recognised quality frameworks;

3. Develop contemporary and critical approaches to childhood which value the child's voice and protects their wellbeing;

4. Develop practitioners who are skilled in working with families and other professionals in a spirit of collaboration, to improve outcomes for children and families;

5. Develop students' identities as independent, ethical, reflective practitioners who are advocates for children, families and their communities;

6. Develop effective leadership skills, including building relationships, managing an inclusive environment and communicating effectively;

7. Embed key study skills including development as a practitioner researcher, providing a basis for progression towards graduate employment.

13. Intended Learning Outcomes and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Methods

Knowledge and Understanding

LO No.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Demonstrate detailed knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established theories and principles of early years care and education and the way in which those principles have developed.	FDEY2004 FDEY2005
2.	Discuss the interrelationships between political, economic, cultural and ideological contexts in the lives of children, their families and communities; recognise and challenge inequalities and where appropriate act as an advocate for them.	FDEY2002
3.	Use skills of observation and analysis in relation to babies and young children and be able to plan for, and implement, appropriate play-based activities and curriculum, and demonstrate ability to evaluate and improve learning opportunities that take into account young children's health, development and emotional wellbeing.	FDEY2001

Cognitive and Intellectual Skills		
4.	Employ academic skills, including the ability to engage in and reflect upon practice/ work-based enquiry and responding to diverse forms of course assessment.	FDEY2004 FDEY2005
5.	Demonstrate a sound knowledge of the main methods of enquiry into the subject, and an ability to analyse and evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in early years care and education, and apply these in an integrated work context.	FDEY2002 FDEY2003
6.	Demonstrate a critical understanding of the interrelationships between political, economic, cultural and ideological contexts in the lives of children, their families and communities; recognise challenge inequalities and where appropriate act as an advocate for them.	FDEY2001
7.	Employ independent learning and research skills to analyse, evaluate and challenge contemporary research, policy and literature in the sector.	FDEY2003

Skills and Capabilities Related to Employability		
8.	Implement skills learnt on the course within the workplace to develop and implement an inclusive curriculum that promotes the education and wellbeing of children in order to help them achieve, safeguard their welfare and promote equality.	FDEY2003
9.	Undertake further training, develop existing skills, and acquire new competences that will enable students to become aware of personal responsibility and professional codes of conduct.	FDEY2004 FDEY2005
10.	Lead, support and work collaboratively with others, demonstrating an understanding of working effectively in teams with parents, carers and other professionals.	FDEY2002 FDEY2003

Transferable/Key Skills		
11.	Apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, and the application of those principles in a work context.	FDEY2002
12.	Understand the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge in the field of early years care and education and in a work context.	FDEY2001
13.	Communicate information, arguments, and analysis, effectively in a variety of forms, to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively in an early years, inter-agency work context.	FDEY2002

14.	Develop qualities and demonstrate transferable skills necessary for employment and progression to other qualifications requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.	FDEY2004 FDEY2005

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Teaching staff in the Department for Children and Families are committed to continually improving the quality and standards of learning and teaching. Teaching and learning take place through a combination of face-to-face and blended learning sessions with tutors. An important aspect of this course is learning from others, and so there is significant emphasis on working in groups with other students who have different skills, backgrounds and experiences.

The FdA EY places emphasis on enabling students to develop the independent learning capabilities that will equip them for lifelong learning and future employment, as well as academic achievement. A mixture of independent study, teaching and academic support from Student Services and Library Services, and the Personal Academic Tutoring system enables students to reflect on progress. In addition, contact with Personal Academic Tutors is planned for four occasions in the first year and three occasions in each of the other years of a course. Full Time students complete the FdA in two years, Part Time students will take three years. Personal Academic Tutors and Module Tutors support students with the requirements and assessment of Practice Based Learning which is required for the practice-based element within the degree. The Department for Children & Families (DCF) academic tutoring policy can be found in the course handbook appendices. The Practice Based Learning Co-ordinator also monitors student experience and evaluation from settings in collaboration with Academic Tutors.

The programme assesses the ability to reflect and theorise practice thereby supporting professional development through academic study and practice-based learning. Competence in practice is assessed against current criteria for effective practice and evidenced through a portfolio of evidence. The course makes use of learning technologies, particularly Blackboard and PebblePad (e-portfolio). Further information on how the assessment methods at each level are mapped to modules is included in the Student Handbook. The Department for Children and Families' generic assessment criteria (developed from the University of Worcester criteria), apply to all modules. An annual conference is also held that brings all student cohorts together.

Formative and summative assessment strategies provide a variety of assessment types and opportunities for students to demonstrate their developing knowledge, critical thinking and professional development. Students are expected to be progressively more self-directed as the course progresses from level 4 to level 5.

A variety of formative learning activities are planned to enable all students to participate and develop their knowledge and understanding of module content. Formative assessments have direct correlation with the summative assessment to enable further support for students.

Work-Based Practice

Work-based learning is an embedded element of the course. It is a requirement that students are employed or volunteer, for a minimum of 770 hours, in an early years setting for the duration of the course. This is assessed within the Portfolio of Practice that forms part of FDEY1004/FDEY1005 and FDEY2004/FDEY2005.The Practice-based Learning Handbook contains detailed information and guidance. For students following the FdA Early Years (0-8) (Professional Practice) pathway, this enables students to meet the 385 hours of practice which is required to gain full and relevant status.

FdA Early Years Flexible and Distributed Learning (FDL)

The flexible route recognises the importance of accessing a delivery mode which meets the needs of the learner in relation to the expectations of Higher Education. A significant amount of study time will be online, in the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Blackboard which is designed to facilitate collaborative and independent

learning. In addition to face-to-face and practice-based learning experiences, this mode of study requires considerable commitment to on-going engagement with on-line learning opportunities.

ICT Competence Requirements

An audit of ICT skills is completed during the induction period. Students will be asked to review skills as they progress through the course and engage with online tutorials as they are introduced to other tools within the VLE.

There is time allocated within induction and the face-to-face session at UW to ensure all students are supported, regardless of their level of ICT skills, to become familiar with the online learning environment.

Teaching

Students are taught through a range of learning and teaching strategies which are used to engage students in the learning process and to support student achievement. These include:
- Tutor led information via lecture format
- Self-directed independent study
- On-line learning activities
- Group discussions
- Workshops – whole, small group, paired work and discussion
- Content analysis of relevant materials – audio visual and text based sources
- Peer learning group activities
- Use of visual, auditory and physical technologies and support mechanisms

It is a mandatory part of the course that students complete 385 hours of practice-based learning each year of the course.

For students registered on the FdA Early Years (0-8) (Professional Practice) pathway, placements undertaken in Ofsted registered settings must be within a 40-mile radius of the University of Worcester.

Level 4: 385 hours + level 5: 385 hours = 770 hours; For students on the FdA EY (0-8) (Professional Practice) pathway this meets the Full and Relevant Requirements of 385 hours at Level 5, allowing graduates to be included in ratios in an early years setting at the end the degree.

Contact Time

The indicative total study time for each module is **300** hours. Typically, each module is delivered over two semesters and requires attendance at:

- 24 weeks of 2-hour taught sessions and 1 hour tutor supported study, to include student Conference (held on a Saturday)

and
- two sessions per module delivered through directed study (one in each semester).

Taught sessions may include different forms of delivery such as tutorials, seminars, fieldwork, conferences or online learning.

Students studying through the Flexible and Distributed Learning mode of delivery will have 6 hours of contact time per module, delivered through 8 Saturday Workshops, and 18 hours of directed teaching delivered through 8 x Online Learning Activities (OLA) released throughout the year. It is expected that students will spend 21 hours per week (PT) and 28 hours per week (FT) on independent study linked to the OLAs and independent reading and research. In addition, each module will have 24 hours of tutor supported directed study throughout the year. Summer school activities support transition onto, and progression within, the degree.

Independent Self-Study

In addition to contact time, students are expected to undertake around 28 hours of personal self-study per week. Typically this will include self-directed and tutor led exercises/tasks designed to develop and extend skills in evaluation/reflection on personal professional development and study. Independent learning is supported by a range of excellent learning facilities, including the Hive and library resources, the virtual learning environment, and extensive electronic learning resources.

Teaching Staff

Students will be taught by a highly experienced teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the modules on the course. They all have extensive expertise and experience, as well as a passion for early years. All of the team are involved in current research and have achieved a higher education teaching qualification and are Associate Fellow, Fellows or Senior Fellows of the Higher Education Academy. Staff regularly publish the results of their research in national and international educational research journals, as well as produce books and book chapters. Staff also regularly publish and present on their research at national and international conferences

Assessment

The course provides opportunities to test understanding and learning informally through the completion of practice or 'formative' assignments. Each module has one or more formative assessments for which feedback is received but these do not count towards to overall module grade. Each module also has one, or two, 'summative' assessments. These are graded and count towards the overall module grade. Each type of assessment, both formative and summative, are supported by Assignment Briefs which clearly identify the task and the assessment criteria that are to be met on completion of the assignment. A comprehensive assessment criteria grid which has been developed by the team, based on the University's generic descriptors, is included in the feedback process for both formative and summative assessments. Assessment methods include a range of coursework assessments such as essays, reports, portfolios, presentations and a final year practice-based research project.

14. Assessment Strategy

A range of assessment strategies contribute to the assessment of the overall course learning outcomes and module learning outcomes. Formative and summative assessment strategies are constructively aligned and used to support personal and professional development, which underpins but also goes beyond the achievement of specific learning outcomes. Students will be assessed using a variety of methods including essays, workshops and presentations.

Formative feedback is provided through responses to academic and practice-based learning activities, including reflective journal entries. Interactive face-to-face and online learning and teaching approaches, including student evaluation of learning, provide further opportunity for timely formative activity. It is designed to encourage students to reflect and develop their responses and writing prior to summative assessment.

The form of summative assessment (for each module) is determined by its appropriateness in allowing the student to demonstrate they have understood and can meet the learning outcomes with potential for achievement across the full range of grades. Assessment strategies are embedded within the learning and teaching experience. Some forms of assessment require forms of representation that facilitate the assessment of theory in practice and incorporate practice-based study.

Assessment

- Includes both formative and summative elements;
- Is aligned with subject, course, module outcomes and learning and teaching methods;
- Includes different assessment points and split assessments within modules where this approach is deemed to be beneficial to the students' achievement of course and module learning outcomes;
- Provides opportunity for achievement of all grades;
- Uses a generic Grading Criteria that has been developed by the Department for Children and Families for use across the Department's undergraduate courses. This is adapted for each module;

- Provides opportunity for choice/negotiation where appropriate to the module content, learning outcomes and level of study;
- Includes a range of assessment methods that enable students to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes and the transferable skills inherent within them.

Assessment of Practice

Evidence from experience in practice is essential to all aspects of learning, teaching and assessment:

- This will stimulate individual and peer learning in modules and will be used by students as a source of data in assessments.
- Students complete a minimum of 770 hours in placement/setting over the duration of the course. These hours and competency in practice is assessed through a Practice Portfolio which is a requirement for the FdA Early Years award across both pathways.

Assessing Competence in Practice

Assessment of practice will be developed through an on-line portfolio which will sit within the assessment of FDEY1004 or FDEY1005 (Level 4), and FDEY 2004 or FDEY2005 (Level 5) and, as such, will form part of the assessment for this module. This will be developed as an electronic portfolio.

The portfolio for both pathways will include:

- Attendance records within placement;
- Feedback from Placement;
- Observation of Practice;
- Reflection on Practice

15. Programme Structures and Requirements

Award Map for a Foundation Degree

The programme learning outcomes shown in Section 13 describe the knowledge, understanding and skills that students will have demonstrated on achievement of their intended qualification award. Students who do not complete their full programme of study may qualify for an alternative award and the approved exit awards for this programme are listed in section 19 of this Programme Specification. For a Foundation Degree, exit awards are available at Level 4 (Certificate of Higher Education).

Requirements at Level 4 Full time

Level 4						
Module Code	**Module Title**	**Credits** (Number)	FdA Early **Status** Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	FdA Early) (Professional Practice) **Status** Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	**Pre-requisites** (Code of Module required)
FDEY 1001	The Developing Child	30	M	M	N/A
FDEY 1002	Health and Wellbeing	30	M	M	N/A
FDEY 1003	Playful Pedagogy	30	M	M	N/A
FDEY 1004	Introduction to Work-Based Learning	30	M	N/A	N/A

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)		M	N/A
FDEY 1005	Theory for the Early Years Foundation Graduate	30	N/A	M	N/A

Students must take the mandatory modules for the relevant pathway as indicated in the table above

Requirements at Level 5 Full time

Level 5					
Module Code	**Module Title**	**Credits** (Number)	FdA Early **Status** Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	FdA Early) (Professional Practice) **Status** Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	**Pre-requisites** (Code of Module required
FDEY 2001	Childhood, a Global Perspective	30	M	M	N/A
FDEY 2002	Policy into Practice	30	M	M	N/A
FDEY 2003	Safeguarding Children's Welfare in the Early Years and Integrating Our Work with Other Agencies	30	M	M	N/A
FDEY 2004	Small Scale Practice-Based Enquiry and Future Progression	30	M	N/A	N/A
FDEY 2005	Early Educator Small Scale Practice-Based Enquiry.	30	N/A	M	N/A

Students must take the mandatory modules for the relevant pathway as indicated in the table above.

Part-Time Students

The following tables set out the schedule of modules to be taken by students studying part-time. Students must complete 600 hours of practice over the duration of the course.

Requirements at Part time – Year 1

Level 4					
Module Code	**Module Title**	**Credits** (Number)	FdA Early **Status** Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	FdA Early) (Professional Practice) **Status** Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	**Pre-requisites** (Code of Module required)
FDEY 1001	The Developing Child	30	M	M	
FDEY 1002	Health and Wellbeing	30	M	M	
FDEY 1004	Introduction to Work-Based Learning	30	M	N/A	
FDEY 1005	Theory for Early Years Educator Foundation Graduate	30		M	

Requirements at Part time – Year 2

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	FdA Early **Status** Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	FdA Early) (Professional Practice) **Status** Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	Pre-requisites (Code of Module required)
Level 4					
FDEY 1003	Playful Pedagogy	30	M	M	
Level 5					
FDEY 2003	Safeguarding Children's Welfare in the Early Years and Integrating Our Work with Other Agencies	30	M	M	
FDEY 2004	Small Scale Practice-Based Enquiry and Future Progression	30	M	N/A	
FDEY 2005	Early Educator Small Scale Practice-Based Enquiry	30	N/A	M	

Requirements at Part time – Year 3

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	FdA Early **Status** Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	FdA Early) (Professional Practice) **Status** Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	Pre-requisites (Code of Module required)
Level 5					
FDEY 2001	Childhood, a Global Perspective	30	M	M	N/A
FDEY 2002	Policy into Practice	30	M	M	N/A

FdA Early Years Flexible and Distributed Learning (FDL)

Students studying flexibly will have the same requirements for completing the modules for FT and PT study.

Practice-Based Learning

Practice-based learning forms a significant proportion of the Foundation Degree, with practice-based learning incorporated into taught modules. Learning in practice is supported through a mixture of practice-based learning activities, face-to-face delivery, e- learning, directed tasks, a reflective diary and a reflective journal. Evidence from experience in practice is essential to all aspects of learning, teaching and assessment. It will be used to stimulate individual and peer learning in modules and as a source of data in assessments.

Practice-based Learning will usually take place in an OFSTED registered setting deemed good or outstanding. Consideration will be given to paid employees in settings which do not meet these requirements, or students whose placement is located outside of England; experience in different settings will be considered in these cases. If the OFSTED grade changes from good or outstanding after students have registered on the programme, they must notify the Course Leader so that extended experience in a different setting can be negotiated.

16. QAA and Professional Academic Standards and Quality

This award is located at Level 5 of the FHEQ.

The QAA Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement (2020), Early Childhood Studies Subject Benchmark Statement (2019), Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ 2008), SEFDEY Core work-based Learning Outcomes and the Early Years Educator standards (2017) have been used to develop this programme and will be the framework within which it is, subsequently, implemented and monitored.

The Characteristics Statement defining the distinctive features of Foundation Degrees within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ 2008) ensures that expectations placed on student performance are recorded in language appropriate to the levels on module outlines and that assessment of students' knowledge, understanding and skills is appropriate at individual centres and across the partnerships (e.g. through supporting moderation and standardisation). Feedback from external examiners facilitates on-going evaluation of the expectations placed on students and the extent of their attainment. The degree is endorsed by the [Sector-Endorsed Foundation Degrees in Early Years Professional Association (SEFDEY)](#) which means that quality is ensured through the validation process of the organisation.

Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement (2020)
https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/foundation-degree-characteristics-statement-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=6fc5ca81_10

Early Childhood Studies Subject Benchmark Statement (2019)
https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-early-childhood-studies.pdf

17. Support for Students

Students are supported by a Personal Academic Tutor, Module Tutors, Course Leaders, a Professional Partner in the setting and a Practice-Based Learning Tutor. A peer learning support system is integral to the course design and organisation. A student Practice-Based Learning Handbook provides relevant information and guidance.

Individual Support

A named Personal Academic Tutor will be available so that a learning relationship can be quickly established. Tutors are accessible by telephone, e-mail or in person by appointment.

Online and Distance Learning

Online learning and tutor support will be available through e-mail, Skype and the use of the Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment.

Curriculum Design

The programme has been designed to support student's achievement through an emphasis on reflective practice which supports personal and professional development, theorisation of practice and its impact on

quality improvement within early years settings. Competence in practice is developed and assessed throughout the course.

As students progress through the programme and gain confidence, the module content will require more independent learning. The learning outcomes of the programme reflect a student-centred approach enabling students from diverse but relevant educational backgrounds to build on previous learning and experience.

Student Conferences

Once a year, the Foundation Degree in Early Years community is able to meet at the University of Worcester and be part of a dynamic and growing national and international community. The conference is designed to provoke and extend students' thinking, whilst encouraging links to be made to the modules currently being undertaken at all levels. It allows attendees to be informed by other practitioners. Eminent speakers identified as leaders in the field of early years, reinforce our ethos of collaborative communities of practice. The conference also provides a forum for learning about progression and career opportunities.

Support is also provided by the Careers and Employability team at the university, and all students have access to a separate Blackboard Organisation: Department for Children and Families: Careers, Resources and Advice. Students are also supported in their transition to further studies (please see Section 22).

Study Skills

Study skills are identified and embedded within all modules.

Practice-Based Learning

Practice-based learning forms a significant proportion of the Foundation Degree and is incorporated into taught modules. It is supported through a mixture of face-to-face delivery, e- learning, directed tasks, a reflective diary and a reflective journal. Deadlines will be set for the completion of tasks and a portfolio of practice. Students have responsibility for organising their own time to meet deadlines.

Support in the Workplace

Practice based learning requires as much support as traditional learning. The structure consists of appropriate support from the setting through a designated Professional Partner. The Professional Partner will be a colleague within the student's setting. This person is someone with whom they can chat informally and from whom they can gain day-to-day advice and feedback. Further support will be available from the Course Leader, other tutors and where appropriate the Practice Based Learning Administrator.

Student Services and the Disability and Dyslexia Service can be accessed through the following links:

http://www.worcester.ac.uk/student-services/index.htm
http://www.worcester.ac.uk/student-services/disability-and-dyslexia.htm

18. Admissions

Admissions Policy

The course seeks to recruit students from a range of educational and experiential backgrounds, including those with significant experience of working in early years settings and those who are progressing from vocational or academic courses at college or school.

We welcome applicants who hold alternative qualifications/experiences different to those shown in this section who can demonstrate the ability to benefit from the course and show their potential to complete the course successfully.

Although recent preparatory study at an appropriate level (e.g. Access to HE Diploma) is recommended, students may be considered on the basis of prior evidenced professional/work experience and/or other

assessment procedures, and the assessment of personal suitability. University Admissions office staff will be able to offer information, advice and guidance on this process.

Students with relevant previous study at HND or degree level or extensive experience may be considered eligible for Recognition of Prior Learning. Entry may be possible to Year Two of the course, depending upon the qualifications or experience gained.

Entry Requirements

- Acceptable qualifications include a minimum of 1 A Level and maximum of 3 1/2 A Levels or an equivalent Level 3 qualification, for example the CACHE Diploma or EdExcel BTEC National Diploma in Children's Care, Learning and Development.
- Evidence of level 2 Literacy is required, for example key skills or functional skills at level 2 or GCSE English language at Grade C/4 or above. If applicants do not have evidence of Literacy at level 2, it will be necessary to complete a non-standard entry essay to demonstrate competence in written English.
- Current police clearance to work with young children (DBS check). Relevant forms will be sent by admissions on receipt of a firm acceptance of an offer of a place on the course.
- A testimony / reference that supports suitability for the course.

Practitioners who do not hold the qualifications outlined above will be considered on the basis of prior professional experience and related learning.

The current UCAS Tariff requirements for entry to this course are published in the prospectus and on the UW website https://www.worc.ac.uk/journey/a-z-of-courses.html.

Please access the web-sites for the FdA Early Years (0-8)/FdA Early Years (0-8) (Professional Practice) and FdA Early Years (0-8)/ FdA Early Years (0-8) (Professional Practice) Flexible and Distributed Learning here.

See Admissions Policy for other acceptable qualifications.
Pathway selection will be determined by student preference and or qualifications upon entry.

Students undertaking the **FdA EY (0-8) (Professional Practice**), must have passed, on entry to the course, a suitable level 2 literacy and numeracy qualifications to count towards the EYFS staff: child ratios and meet the 'Full and Relevant' requirements.

These are:

English
- functional skills qualification in English at level 2
- GCSE/International GCSE qualification in English language and/or literature to at least grade C (grade 4)
- key skills qualification in communication at level 2
- A level or AS level qualification in English language and/or English literature to at least grade E
- O Level qualification in English to at least grade C
- CSE grade 1 English (language)
  Also recognised Scottish, Northern Irish and Welsh equivalents.

Maths
- functional skills qualification in maths at level 2
- GCSE/International GCSE qualification in maths to at least grade C (grade 4)
- key skills qualification in application of number at level 2
- A level or AS level qualification in maths or pure maths and/or further maths to at least grade E
- O level qualification in maths to at least grade C
- CSE grade 1 maths

Also recognised Scottish, Northern Irish and Welsh equivalents.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Requirements

Current police clearance is required to work with young children (an enhanced DBS). Relevant forms will be sent by admissions on receipt of a firm acceptance of an offer of a place on the course.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Details of acceptable Level 3 qualifications, policy in relation to mature students or applicants with few or no formal qualifications can be found in the prospectus or on the University webpages. Information on eligibility for recognition of prior learning for the purposes of entry or advanced standing is also available from the University webpages or from the Registry Admissions Office (01905 855111).

Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at
http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm

Applicants who do not hold the above qualifications will be considered on the basis of prior professional experience and the criteria indicated above. Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.html.

Admissions Procedures

Full-time applicants apply through UCAS (Code X312)
Part-time applicants apply directly to University of Worcester (UW) (Part-time application form available on UW website).
Part-time applicants to Heart of Worcestershire College apply directly to the college

Admissions/Selection Criteria

The applicants must:

- commit to working with and for children aged 0-8 years for a minimum of 770 hours during the course;
- employment or volunteering in a child care setting is a compulsory requirement of the course;
- commit to engaging in independent study - 28 hours per week Full-Time study, and 21 hours per week Part-Time study; this is in addition to contact time
- commit to personal development as evidenced in different ways such as work experience, previous study, and/or training courses, portfolio of professional achievements, performance assessments, personal interests etc.;
- be suitable for working with young children;
- be suitable for working as part of a team within an early years setting;
- have literacy skills that will enable them to fulfil the requirements of the course.

Offers of places are usually made on the basis of the application and an interview with representatives from the course team. The application should address the above selection criteria.

The interview provides an opportunity for:

- applicants to fully understand the nature and requirements of the course and to be able to make an informed decision if offered a place on the programme;
- applicants to demonstrate their suitability for the course;
- the course team to gain further information in relation to the selection criteria (below) and to make an informed decision or identify further action or evidence as required;
- the course team to identify additional learning needs and relevant support required, which might include organising a placement or providing guidance on student support services.

Access to practice-based learning in an appropriate setting is a course requirement. Please refer to Section 15 for further details.

Flexible and Distributed Programme

To support successful engagement and achievement on the programme an audit of IT skills will be conducted during induction to identify strengths and weaknesses and how these can be supported.

See Section 20 of the Programme Specification for information regarding the admissions arrangements for progression to the linked Honours Degree(s)/Top-Up Degree(s).

19. Regulation of Assessment

The course operates under the University's <u>Taught Courses Regulatory Framework</u>

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- A student is required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- A student who submits course work late but within 7 days (one week) of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- A student who submits work later than 7 days (one week) will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

Retrieval of failure

- A student is entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
- Reassessment items that are passed are capped at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module); the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
- A student will be notified of the reassessment opportunities in the results notification issued via the secure student portal (SOLE). It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and comply with any reassessments.

Requirements for Progression

- A student will be permitted to progress from Level 4 to Level 5 if, by the time of the reassessment Board of Examiners, they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 4. Outstanding Level 4 credits must normally be studied in the following academic year.
- A student who, by the time of the reassessment Board of Examiners, has failed 90 credits or more (after exhausting all reassessment opportunities) during the academic year, will have their registration with the University terminated.

- If a student has not passed at least 90 credits by the reassessment Board of Examiners, the student is not permitted to progress to the next level and will be required to either complete outstanding

reassessment or retake the failed modules the following academic year. Students will be able to carry forward any passed modules.

This course is subject to the University's fitness to practice procedures

Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
Cert HE	In order to be eligible for the exit award of Certificate in Higher Education in the named subject/area of study, a student must have passed at least 120 credits in total including the mandatory modules for level 4 of the award as specified on the award map.
FdA Early Years (0-8)	In order to be eligible for the exit award of Foundation Degree EY a student must have passed 240 credits in total including 120 credits at Level 4 (mandatory modules FDEY1001, FDEY1002, FDEY1003 and FDEY1004) and 120 credits at Level 5 (mandatory modules FDEY2001, FDEY2002, FDEY2003 and FDEY2004). In addition, a student must have successfully completed at least 385 hours of placement in an Ofsted registered early years setting, and a total of 770 hours across the duration of the award.
FdA Early Years (0-8) (Professional Practice)	In order to be eligible for the exit award of Foundation Degree EY a student must have passed 240 credits in total including 120 credits at Level 4 (mandatory modules FDEY1001, FDEY1002, FDEY1003 and FDEY1005) and 120 credits at Level 5 (mandatory modules FDEY2001, FDEY2002, FDEY2003 and FDEY2005). In addition a student must hold recognised Level 2 qualifications in literacy and numeracy, and have successfully completed at least 385 hours of placement in an Ofsted registered early years setting with 'safe and competent practice' demonstrated. Overall, a total of 770 hours will have been completed across the duration of the award.

These awards are not classified.

20. Graduate Destinations, Employability and Links with Employers

The FdA in Early Years prepares students for employment but also provides opportunities for progression on to further study and qualifications. It provides opportunities for practice-based experience and learning and the development of relevant transferable skills and attributes which provide a strong foundation for a range of professional roles in the sector and beyond. The Student Conferences provide opportunities for students to receive advice on careers and progression and to benefit from participation within the wider community of practitioners and employers.

Graduate Destinations

The FdA in Early Years will support students in pursuing careers in areas such as:

- Leadership and management within early years settings e.g. as an Early Years Teacher or nursery manager;
- Local Authority Children's Services
- Social welfare / Social work;
- Family support work;
- Children's charities: e.g. Barnardos;
- Playwork;
- Early years education: teaching or teaching assistant;
- Day care provision Early Years Services

N.B. Further study may be necessary for some of these. Further advice is available during the course and from UW Careers Advisors.

Progression to Linked Honours Degree(s)/Top-Up Degree(s)

The Foundation Degree remains a sought-after qualification for those wishing to progress in the area of Early Years education and care. The identified progression route to an honours award is the BA (Hons) Top Up in Integrated Working with Children and Families. Other possibilities include: BA Early Childhood and Society, BA (Hons) Social Welfare, BA (Hons) Education Studies, BSc (Hons) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Top UP, Early Years Teacher and direct entry to year two of BA Hons Primary Education (QTS).

Due to the requirements for further progression e.g. Early Years Initial Teacher Training / Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) it is strongly recommended that students gain GCSEs in English, Mathematics and Science or equivalent whilst studying for their Foundation Degree. Advice on equivalency tests will be provided during the course.

Support for transition to the linked Honours Degree/Top-Up route is provided through:

- The FdA in Early Years curriculum design – aligned to the expectations of the progression route e.g. study skills, practitioner research and related skills and knowledge;
- The FdA in Early Years learning, teaching and assessment strategy which has been designed to support transition to honours level study e.g. independent and critical engagement
- The FdA in Early Years Partnership Team which provides a standardised and coherent approach to information and support for students (Refer to Section 17). In addition to progression being embedded within the provision students will be offered advice on choice of progression routes (and where relevant to the identified UW route), advice on subsequent module choices and Independent Study preparation;
- UW's Department for Children and Families standardisation across different levels supports the transition of students from different partner colleges to the UW BA (Hons) Top Up in Integrated Working with Children and Families.

Other progression routes include:
Early Years Teacher: applicants to the Undergraduate Practitioner Pathway require GCSE's in English Language and Mathematics and Science (in addition to a Level 5 qualification).

Student Employability

The course prepares students for employment through work-based learning opportunities, careers education, workshops, support for preparing applications, for interviews. Students also have the opportunity to participate in the Worcester Award which develops employability skills. Sector Endorsement through SEFDEY also ensures that students are able to be counted as qualified members of staff in registered Early Years settings.

Strong partnerships have been formed with the employment department who attend student conferences and induction. A separate organisation site, the Department for Children and Families: Careers Resources and Advice' is also available to students via Blackboard.

Students are equipped with the skills to work independently and in a team, communicate effectively, respond constructively to feedback, and produce a coherent and reasoned argument. The combination of theoretical and practical elements of the degree provide a framework to enhance graduate employability. The underpinning of the degree to the Early Childhood Benchmarks also enhances employability. Having the opportunity to be included in ratios after completing the associated requirements for Full and Relevant will also support student employability..

Employability support can also be gained from UW's careers service in the Pierson building or via their website http://www.worc.ac.uk/careers/index.htm.

Links with Employers

The FdA EY opens up opportunities for career progression for students who are already in employment, working voluntarily in the sector or progressing from Level 3 study. Employers are involved in the design of the course,

its on-going delivery and review. A Partnership Forum which includes representatives from Early Years LA Services across the region supports collaborative working with UW and FE providers.

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 associated course documentation e.g. course handbooks, module outlines and module specifications.