UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON

Course Specification

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Core Information

Awarding Body / Institution:	University of Wolverhampton		
School / Institute:	School of Education and Psychology		
Course Code(s):	CF023F31SW	Part-time	3 Years
Course Title:	Foundation Degree (Arts) Early Years Services at Sandwell College		
Hierarchy of Awards:	Foundation Degree (Arts) Early Years Services		
Language of Study:	English		
Date of DAG approval:	14/Sep/2026		
Last Review:			
Course Specification valid from:	2025/6		
Course Specification valid to:			

Academic Staff

Course Leader:	Mrs Faye Stanley
Head of Department:	

Course Information

Location of Delivery:	Sandwell College
Category of Partnership:	Franchised/Supported Delivery
Teaching Institution:	Sandwell College
Open / Closed Course:	This course is open to all suitably qualified candidates.

Entry Requirements:

Entry requirements are subject to regular review. The entry requirements applicable to a particular academic year will be published on the University website (and externally as appropriate e.g. UCAS

You must hold a Level 3 Childcare related qualification, for example, T Level Education and Early Years, NVQ Level 3 Diploma, NNEB, CACHE Level 3 Diploma in Childcare and Education, BTEC L3 National Diploma in Childcare and Education or Level 3 Early Years apprenticeship.

You must be able to provide a satisfactory employer reference evidencing that you have been employed or have experience for a minimum of one year working with children and families, or in a long term voluntary placement Please see the link below on how to apply https://www.wlv.ac.uk/apply/how-to-apply/

You must be able to supply the College you will be attending with an up to date Enhanced DBS Police Check

Distinctive Features of the Course:

The Foundation Degree in Early Years Services is designed to help you to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to succeed in your studies with the University of Wolverhampton at degree level. We value and promote your individual engagement, progression and success as all of our staff will recognise and celebrate your unique learning needs. The linking of theory to your own practice is integral throughout the degree and this will allow you to consider theory in relation to the implications for practice so you can evaluate and develop your practice. You will also develop the skills of critical reflection which will enable you to understand and analyse ethical principles, health and wellbeing, child protection and safeguarding, multi-agency working and how babies and young children learn. By drawing on different perspectives you will understand and analyse factors that shape childhood and babies and young children's lives. You will also have the freedom to shape your learning around your own interests and future goals, so your experience is personal to you. Therefore, supporting you to apply knowledge in real-world contexts and prepare you for diverse roles in early years and educational contexts.

The delivery of your teaching is interactive, blending seminars, workshops, and research-based learning with digital tools to support collaboration and accessibility. You will benefit from high quality teaching by lecturers and engage with current debates and diverse perspectives and policy developments about early childhood.

Your teaching team brings a wealth of research expertise and practical experience in education, which means you will learn from people who understand both the theory and the reality of educational practice. They will help you make clear connections between what you study in class and your work-based settings. This maybe through case studies, examples from their own work, or guidance on applying concepts to your own experiences. Our goal is to help you feel confident, supported, becoming an engaged, curious and independent learner and ready to achieve your best.

You will gain and apply your knowledge through real-world experience throughout the course and there is an adaptable, and reflexive emphasis on developing your practical, personal and professional attributes. As you progress through your degree you will have opportunities to develop your critical capabilities through the selection, analysis and combining of relevant perspectives, and be able to justify different positions on matters relating to early years services.

Educational Aims of the Course:

Intakes:

September

Major Source of Funding:

Office for Students (OFS)

Tuition Fees:

Tuition fees are reviewed on an annual basis. The fees applicable to a particular academic year will be published on the University website.

Year	Status	Mode	Amount
2021/2	H	Part Time	£4110.00
2022/3	H	Part Time	£4110.00
2023/4	H	Part Time	£4110.00
2024/5	H	Part Time	£4110.00
2025/6	H	Part Time	£4300.00
2026/7	H	Part Time	£

PSRB:

None

Course Structure:

September (Part-time)

Module	Title	Credits	Period	Type
4CF017	Safeguarding and Multi-Agency Perspectives	30	SEM1	Core
4CF022	Succeeding at University	30	SEM1	Core
4SN016	The Reflective Practitioner	30	SEM2	Core
4CF019	Play-Centred Pedagogy: Theory, Practice, and Professional Reflection	30	SEM2	Core

September (Part-time)

Module	Title	Credits	Period	Type
5CF018	Young Lives, Parenting and Families	30	SEM1	Core
5CF021	Children’s learning journeys: theory practice and professionalism	30	SEM1	Core
5ED018	Becoming a Researcher	30	SEM2	Core

September (Part-time)

Module	Title	Credits	Period	Type
5CF022	Becoming a Reflective Leader	30	SEM1	Core

Please note: Optional modules might not run every year, the course team will decide on an annual basis which options will be running, based on student demand and academic factors, to create the best learning experience.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Regulations Exemption:

Reference Points:

UK Quality Code for Higher Education

Qualifications and Credit Frameworks

Subject Benchmark Statements

University Policies and Regulations

Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK

Apprenticeship Standard

https://www.ecsdn.org/graduate-practitioner-compencies

Overview of Assessment:

Learning Outcomes	Modules
CERTHE01 Demonstrate knowledge of the underlying concepts, theories and principles associated with your area(s) of study. (Knowing)	4CF019 Play-Centred Pedagogy: Theory, Practice, and Professional Reflection 4CF022 Succeeding at University 4SN016 The Reflective Practitioner
CERTHE02 Evaluate, interpret and apply data, to develop ideas and discussion in your subject(s) of study. (Knowing)	4CF022 Succeeding at University
CERTHE03 Use different approaches to solving problems related to your area(s) of study (Doing)	4CF019 Play-Centred Pedagogy: Theory, Practice, and Professional Reflection 4CF022 Succeeding at University 4SN016 The Reflective Practitioner
CERTHE04 Communicate the results of your study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments (Doing)	4CF019 Play-Centred Pedagogy: Theory, Practice, and Professional Reflection 4SN016 The Reflective Practitioner
CERTHE05 Identify and undertake further training and develop new skills to support your learning (Being)	4CF019 Play-Centred Pedagogy: Theory, Practice, and Professional Reflection 4CF022 Succeeding at University 4SN016 The Reflective Practitioner
CERTHE06 Identify personal qualities and transferable skills necessary for further study and/or employment (Being)	4CF019 Play-Centred Pedagogy: Theory, Practice, and Professional Reflection 4CF022 Succeeding at University 4SN016 The Reflective Practitioner
FD01 Knowing (K1): Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the well-established principles of your area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed importance locally, nationally and globally when working with babies, young children, families, communities and other professionals.	5CF021 Children’s learning journeys: theory practice and professionalism 5CF022 Becoming a Reflective Leader
FD02 Knowing (K2): Evidence knowledge of the main methods of enquiry and the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems relative to early childhood	5CF021 Children’s learning journeys: theory practice and professionalism 5CF022 Becoming a Reflective Leader
FD03 Doing (D1): Identify the underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied and apply these to real world contemporary early childhood issues, challenges and policy	5CF022 Becoming a Reflective Leader
FD04 Doing (D2): Undertake critical analysis and evaluation of information, key theories, principles, and how these underpin different understanding of babies, young children and childhood.	5CF021 Children’s learning journeys: theory practice and professionalism
FD05 Being (B1): Engage in ongoing self-reflection of your own values about agency, give voice to and, where appropriate, act as an advocate for babies, young children, families and communities	5CF021 Children’s learning journeys: theory practice and professionalism 5CF022 Becoming a Reflective Leader
FD06 Being (B2): Effectively communicate information, arguments, and analysis in a variety of forms, including the use of contemporary digital technologies relating to the study of early childhood	5CF021 Children’s learning journeys: theory practice and professionalism 5CF022 Becoming a Reflective Leader

Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy/(Learning and Teaching):

The course is thoughtfully structured to build your confidence by introducing foundational concepts early on, using scaffolded learning that gradually progresses to more complex ideas and skills. Your learning will progress through a carefully sequenced curriculum that introduces core concepts and skills in manageable stages, allowing you to strengthen your academic and technical skills before tackling more advanced material. Regular opportunities for reflection and feedback will help you to consolidate learning and prepare for more advanced content. As you progress, you will encounter increasingly complex ideas and tasks, with support gradually reduced to encourage independence. This approach is reinforced through blended learning, where online resources, such as tutorials, quizzes, and discussion boards complement in-person sessions, enabling you to revisit key concepts at your own pace.

In-person and online activities are designed to complement each other, offering flexible and inclusive learning experiences through blended delivery—such as interactive seminars, digital forums, and multimedia resources that cater to different learning needs. You will be supported in developing confidence with both academic and digital fluency through embedded workshops, guided tasks, and access to tailored resources that prepare you for group work, research, and independent study. Professional and practice-based elements, including placements, and work-based learning, are integrated with academic content to ensure you can apply theory in real-world contexts, enhancing employability and reflective practice. The course also promotes digital fluency by embedding the ethical use of digital tools, AI, and data into learning activities, encouraging you to critically engage with technology as part of your academic and professional development.

Assessment Methods/Assessments:

There are a range of assessments designed to support your learning journey while helping you strengthen your critical thinking, analysis and reflective practice and progress. Assessment across the course is carefully designed to support learning through a balanced mix of formats—such as essays, presentations, portfolios, and practical tasks—ensuring a manageable workload and varied opportunities for you to demonstrate application of your knowledge. Formative tasks, and peer or tutor feedback are embedded to help you practise key skills and refine your work before final assessments. Formative tasks play a crucial role in supporting your learning by providing opportunities to practise, through collaborative learning, supporting emotional intelligence, resilience and self-awareness. Through engaging with formative work, you can strengthen academic skills, clarify expectations, and build resilience in tackling more complex challenges. Importantly, formative assessments create a low-pressure environment where your learning is prioritised over grading, encouraging you to become an engaged, curious learner committed to experimentation, critical thinking, and continuous progress throughout the course.

Your assessments are structured to develop intellectual capabilities like critical thinking, problem-solving, and evidence-based argument, often through research-based tasks and real-world scenarios. Inclusivity is a core principle in your course, with clear guidance, accessible formats, and support for different learning needs ensuring you can engage meaningfully. You are also encouraged to personalise your assessment experience by choosing topics or formats that align with your interests or career goals, and many assessments reflect professional practices, such as reflective reports and this helps support your academic learning with your future employment.

Further Information for Student:

You will have a personal tutor, who will act as a key point of contact throughout your studies, providing both pastoral and academic support through tutorials and target setting. Your tutor will help you navigate university systems, offer guidance on managing workload, and support your personal wellbeing and signposting additional resources when needed. Regular meetings ensure that any challenges are addressed promptly, and your progress is monitored in a supportive and proactive way. This relationship is designed to foster a sense of belonging, building emotional intelligence and self-awareness and ensure that you have consistent, personalised support throughout your learning journey.

Formative assessments are embedded in all of your modules to support you with opportunities to practice and strengthen your academic and technical skills in preparation for your final summative assessment. These assessments are accompanied by timely, constructive feedback that not only highlights strengths but also identifies areas for improvement, enabling you to build resilience, confidence and competence as you progress. We aim to ensure your assessment feedback is developmental, fostering continuous learning and reflection throughout your course.

Throughout your studies your work-based knowledge and skills will be built upon to develop your personal and professional development and future roles. You will have the opportunity to use your work-based experiences and complete tasks to accredit your learning in the workplace or use prior certificated learning at level 4 up to a maximum of 30 credits. This will shorten the time you spend studying for this degree. You will be thoroughly prepared through workshops, and guidance on the process and this will be built into your learning on your modules and your workplace experiences. This will also include structured reflection activities through reflective journals, and action planning helps you to evaluate your learning, connect theory to practice, and identify areas for future growth.

We are committed to hearing the voices of our students and your feedback plays an important role in shaping your course experience by providing insights into what is working well for you and where improvements are needed. We regularly gather feedback through early module evaluation, end of module evaluations and surveys, student forums through a collaborative approach. This allows us to identify any challenges for you and adapt teaching strategies, resources, and support. This ensures that your course remains responsive and inclusive to your learning needs, whether by clarifying content, or enhancing accessibility and engagement.

Currency:

The course is designed with flexibility and relevance in mind, allowing the breadth of content to be regularly updated to reflect current research, emerging theories, and contemporary issues within early childhood. You will engage with educational research through your use of academic literature, problem solving tasks, and opportunities to explore work conducted by University of Wolverhampton staff, fostering a strong foundation in research literacy and critical thinking. The curriculum encourages you to think creatively and critically about real-world challenges, including sustainability, enterprise, and social responsibility, through applied projects and problem-solving activities. The University’s Graduate Attributes, Global Citizen, Knowledgeable, Professional, and Digitally Fluent are embedded throughout the course, guiding your development as an adaptable, future-ready graduate. Interdisciplinary collaboration is promoted through cross-module themes and group work, while lifelong learning is supported by reflective practice, digital skill development, and opportunities to explore different professional contexts, helping you to prepare for the complexities of your future career. Academic content is regularly updated to reflect current research and emerging theories, helping you become a knowledgeable and critically engaged thinker. These attributes are reinforced through assessments, group work, and reflective practice, empowering you to adapt, innovate, and thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Personalisation Opportunities:

The Foundation Degree in Early Years Services provide an academic study of formal and informal contexts of childhood as well as a framework for understanding some aspects of the influences and factors that impact upon diverse perspectives of child development. You will gain a broad and balanced knowledge and understanding of the principal features of Early Childhood Studies and engage with diverse perspectives concerning the aims, values and nurturing to support the growth, health and development, of all babies, young children and their families. You will continuously strengthen your academic voice by exploring issues around recognising agency, inclusive practice and, where appropriate, act as an advocate for babies, young children, families and communities.

The Foundation Degree in Early Years Services academic voice and emotional intelligence in relation to being an ethical practitioner and how nationally and globally, a wide range of perspectives underpin different understanding of babies, young children and childhood. You will actively engage in investigating the philosophical, historical, psychological, educational sociological, health perspectives and how these are applied in a range of real-world contexts. In addition, this programme will offer a focus on babies, young children and childhood, including the importance of diverse perspectives such as the natural environment and sustainability to support their growth and development. You will develop personal and professional attributes to become an ethical, respectful, and a reflexive worker able to sensitively engage with babies and young children to encourage them to shape their own lives, often within constrained circumstances.

The course is designed with flexibility in assessments enabling you to tailor your learning to areas that are linked to your personal interests and career aspirations. For example, you can select essay topics, case studies, or research projects that draw on your own experiences or focus on issues that you are passionate about, therefore supporting you to become an engaged curious learner, through the role of play, the early years curricula or heathy eating in the early years. Modules that focus on up-to-date issues in early childhood and independent study opportunities further allow you to pursue specialist areas, ensuring that learning feels relevant, and engages you to be curious and engaged to your own individual goals.

Employability in the Curriculum/Employability and Professional Development:

The course actively supports you in exploring and preparing for diverse career pathways through integrated opportunities such as placements, and industry-linked assessment and projects that connect academic learning with real-world practice. You are guided to build a professional identity through reflective tasks, career-focused modules, and engagement with employers and practitioners. Professional standards and employer expectations and requirements are embedded into the curriculum, ensuring you understand and meet sector-specific benchmarks. Employability skills are developed through workshops, mock interviews, CV writing sessions, and networking events, alongside regular feedback and opportunities for self-assessment. You will receive academic and career guidance to make informed choices about modules or specialisms that align with your aspirations, helping you shape a clear and confident path toward your future professional goals.