

## Programme specification



MA Education: Early Childhood

<i>Faculty:</i>	Education and Theology
<i>Entry from:</i>	September 2016
<i>Awarding Institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Teaching Institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Delivery Location:</i>	York St John University
<i>Programme/s Accredited by:</i>	N/A
<i>Exit Awards:</i>	Postgraduate Diploma in Education Postgraduate Certificate in Education
<i>UCAS Code / GTTR / Other:</i>	N/A
<i>Joint Honours Combinations:</i>	N/A
<i>QAA Benchmark Group(s):</i>	QAA framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (2008) QAA Master's degree characteristics (2010)
<i>Mode/s of Study:</i>	MA part-time for 3 years MA full-time for 12-18 months
<i>Language of Study:</i>	English

### Introduction and Special Features

The world of education and specifically Early Childhood education is one of constant change, with new discoveries and developments such as how the brain works and how we learn, the influence of digital technology, policy reforms and pedagogical research into teaching and learning during Early Childhood. Change and development can be exciting, frustrating or just confusing at times. This postgraduate programme offers you an exciting opportunity to engage with current issues and thinking about Early Childhood education, to take a step back, reflect and make sense of all this. It is important to be aware that the MA Education programmes are not discrete programmes however each offers distinctive features relating to the individual specialism, in this instance Early Childhood. Whilst distinctiveness is primarily derived from the focus of the Dissertation or Major/Project in the final year, you will have opportunity to apply generic content to your work in or study of Early Childhood as part of a local study.

Some changes are of **global** significance, for example the impact of technology on learning, sustainability and knowledge innovation. This MA course offers you the opportunity to think about globalisation and its effects on Early Childhood education systems and processes.

You will be aware too of current debates, policy changes and trends at a **national** level influenced by specific social, political and ideological trends. Examples might include closing the attainment gap for disadvantaged children, the use of social media, student engagement, partnership working and

greater integration or adult education and training. The course offers opportunities to engage with these too.

You may have a particular interest in an issue or topic which could have developed from your study on one of the modules or it may be something related to your current role or future career ambitions. The course allows you to include this by selecting a '**local**' Independent Study where you can focus on your special interest.

Whilst studying on this course you will develop the skills and abilities needed for Master's level study and this is built into the programme. We therefore include taught elements and tutor support to enable you to enhance your critical reading, writing and thinking skills so that you will learn to probe and explore assumptions underlying policy and practice relating to Early Childhood rather than accept things unquestioningly.

On some modules there is scope for negotiation with the module tutor about the assessment type you choose, so that you can align the assignments to your individual circumstances. For example, you might choose to write a funding bid, a proposal for a small-scale investigation, a report or a patchwork text or another agreed assessment type. Your final study for the MA Education: Early Childhood award is your Dissertation or Major Project. This is where you engage in a substantial study of a topic that is of interest and importance to you and relevant to an educational context.

This course has many exciting and attractive aspects. It engages with current issues and debates in education and specifically Early Childhood, it draws on the research interests and expertise of our experienced tutor team and it allows you scope to follow particular interests. You will receive feedback from the tutors to support your learning and progress and your Academic Tutor will help you in periodically reviewing your engagement and progress and your study plans.

The tutor team is committed to providing excellent opportunities for you to develop your knowledge and understanding and enjoyment of your studies on this course. The 'Global, National and Local' structure is a distinctive and attractive aspect, designed to accommodate the study of wider cross-disciplinary issues and concerns relevant to education and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and also to your own special interests.

## Admissions Criteria

You must meet the University's general entry criteria for [postgraduate](#) study.

A student without traditional qualifications may be eligible for entry on the basis of [Accredited Prior \(Experiential\) Learning \(APL/APEL\)](#). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing. York St John University offers advanced standing into the MA Education through the recognition of up to 60 relevant M-level credits. Therefore a student registering for the MA with 60 PGCE M-level credits or 60 Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PCAP) credits will have a further 120 M level credits to complete to obtain the Master's award. They will be ineligible for the Postgraduate Diploma as this cannot be awarded where credit has been imported because it is only 'new' credits that are recognised at incremental exit points. [These credits would provide exemption from two modules from the 'Global, National, Local' module choices.](#)

Students with the NPQH or other National College award can apply for admission to the MA Education. They can apply for admission when the NPQH has been successfully completed and this can be put forward to be considered for Accredited Prior Learning (APL). Typically the requirement is

that evidence of successful completion (e.g. the award certificate or transcript) is provided on application, with the support of a piece of reflective writing on the learning from your National College study. Further guidance is provided on the format and structure for the commentary from the Programme team.

Alternatively, it is possible to apply to begin the MA Education whilst studying concurrently on the National College award. When the National College award has been successfully completed a student can apply for credit exemption. As in the scenario described above, such an application is supported by a piece of reflective writing and is dependent upon evidence of successful completion in the form of the award certificate or transcript. This concurrent route offers the opportunity for complementary study; for example the knowledge and understanding associated with the Methods of Enquiry module will be valuable to your National College studies.

If your first language is not English, you will need to take an IELTS test or an equivalent qualification accepted by the University (see <https://www.yorksj.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/>).

If you do not have traditional qualifications you may be eligible for entry on the basis of [Accredited Prior \(Experiential\) Learning \(APL/APEL\)](#). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing through recognition of up to 60 relevant M level credits. These credits would provide exemption from two of the 'Global, National and Local' modules. .

## Programme Aims

The programme aims to provide opportunities for students to:

1. Cultivate in-depth advanced knowledge and understanding of education which is informed by current practice, scholarship and research of global, national and 'local' significance;
  2. Develop in-depth knowledge of a specialist area;
  3. Engage in intellectually rigorous ways with current policy issues and developments in the field of study;
  4. Add value to and impact on professional practice for those studying in the context of continuing professional development in an employment setting;
- ;
5. Achieve a range of appropriate generic abilities and skills including the use of initiative, problem-solving, reflecting critically, learning independently and communicating effectively with colleagues and a wider audience in a variety of media;
  6. Develop curiosity, the skills of enquiry, advanced scholarship and research to enable future progression in academic study at a higher level such as PhD or professional doctorate.

## Programme Learning Outcomes

Level M / FHEQ L7

Students will be able to:

1. Critically evaluate current research in the field;
2. Demonstrate a systematic and extensive understanding and advanced knowledge, much of which is at the forefront of the discipline or field of study or area of professional practice;
3. Demonstrate originality in their application of that knowledge;
4. Use evidence to examine critically the relationship between educational theory and practice;
5. Distinguish between and appraise different ideological and theoretical positions within education;
6. Communicate effectively to a high level in a variety of formats for different audiences, deal with complex issues, make sound judgements, be self-directed;
7. Successfully complete an extended independent study on Early Childhood.

## **Programme Structure**

You will register on the MA Education: Early Childhood at the point of entry to the programme. The MA in Education: Early Childhood will be based on 180 credits, equivalent to 1800 hours of study at M level (Level 7 of the Qualifications and Credit Framework). Taught delivery will be linked to the University semesters.

Part-time students normally study two modules each year in the first two years attending two weekend sessions per module and the dissertation study is the final component in the third year.

Full-time and International students normally complete the course in three semesters by studying two modules in semester one, two modules in semester two and the dissertation study in semester three. The full-time/International model will be planned so that some study will integrate where possible with the part-time students. In this way international and EU/UK students will benefit from opportunities to study and socialise together both face-to-face and also through participating in the virtual learning community.

In terms of content, the MA Education: Early Childhood combines in-depth examination of education policy, theory and practice including global perspectives and critical reflection on personal and professional development and learning.

The full list of modules is set out below. All modules are at level 7. Two modules are chosen from the 'Global, National and Local' modules. Only one of MED005 and MED006 may be chosen. MED007 and MED008 are intended primarily for students on the research-engaged setting strand and only one of these two may be chosen. In choosing either of the modules MED007 or MED008 students should be aware that as these are 60 credit modules failure would mean that you would be unable to gain the award of MA.

Status of the module
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**C:** Compulsory; **CA:** Compulsory for award; **O:** Option

### Modules for the programme – MA Education: Early Childhood

Code	Credits	Level	Title	Part-time		Full-time		Status of the module		
				Year	Semester	Year	Semester	MA Education: Early	PG Dip Education	PG Cert Education
MED001	30	7	Developing Criticality	1	1	1	1	C	C	O
MED002	30	7	Methods of Enquiry	1	1 or 2	1	1	C	C	O
MED003	30	7	Global Perspectives on Education	2	1 or 2	1	2	O	O	O
MED004	30	7	Critical Contemporary Issues in Education in a National Context	2	1 or 2	1	2	O	O	O
MED005	30	7	Local Independent Study	2	1 or 2	1	2	O	O	O
MED006	30	7	Local Independent Project	2	1 or 2	1	2	O	O	O
MED007	60	7	Local Independent Study	2	1 & 2	1	2	O	O	O
MED008	60	7	Local Independent Project	2	1 & 2	1	2	O	O	O
MED011	60	7	Dissertation: Early Childhood	3	1 & 2	2	3	CA		
MED012	60	7	Major Project: Early Childhood	3	1 & 2	2	3	CA		

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## Teaching, Learning and Assessment

You will experience a range of teaching, learning and assessment strategies on this programme. The learning and the assessment strategies have relevance to the roles and interests of students, enabling students for whom it is appropriate to carry out practitioner research in their settings, whilst others may learn from published case studies. The learning and teaching strategies include lectures, master classes given by invited speakers, tutorials, seminars, workshops, and e-learning activities via the VLE. There will be particular emphasis on opportunities for you to engage in individual and group enquiry through which you will develop the skills of critical questioning, creative thinking and problem-solving. The research and scholarship of the course team will be drawn on to develop links between the course material and the research expertise and publications of the module tutors.

Course sessions include opportunities for immersion in productive and engaging learning through seminars, lectures and workshops as well as individual and group tutorials, keynote inputs and informal opportunities for socialisation.

You will experience a variety of assessment methods and the principle of 'negotiability' allows you some scope for negotiation in terms of the assessment types chosen so that each student can demonstrate the learning outcomes in ways most appropriate to them, whether they are based in a practice-setting or not. It is important to note that negotiation is of the means of assessment, not negotiation of the learning outcomes. The principle adhered to is that of 'authentic' assessment, which is understood as the design of assessment tasks that enable you to align the assessments to your individual circumstances, whether these are practice-based or without a practice context.

Formative opportunities are provided as 'rehearsal opportunities' where the environment is without the same risk factors for students as when engaging in the summative assessments. Formative opportunities may or may not involve assessment. All formative opportunities will provide feedback for students and will support your progress towards successful summative outcomes. You will receive formative feedback from tutors and peer feedback will be also be used to enable students to scaffold one another's learning.

There will be points during your studies on the programme when you will engage in negotiation of a piece of work with a module tutor where this forms part of study on a module. You will meet your Academic Tutor at induction and this may well take the form of a group tutorial to encourage peer support to develop at the start of the programme. The principle followed is that you will normally meet with your Academic Tutor at the end of each module after your marked work has been returned to you in order to reflect on the feedback and the mark and to feed forward to the next module. The Academic Tutor role will include 'signposting' students to other support services as appropriate and the Academic Tutor will liaise closely with the Head of Programme regarding any pastoral or academic issues or concerns about progress where these arise.

In addition to the traditional configuration of an MA programme (which focuses on developing the characteristics of Level 7 study, and undertaking a piece of independent research), the programme has three distinctive aspects introduced in MED001 during the first year (P/T) or first semester (F/T and International) and, from which students can choose two options in the second year or second semester:

*The distinctive 'Global, National, Local' structure within the MA programme:*

1. **Global focus.** You will learn from international research and practice and will engage with cross-disciplinary global issues and concerns, enabling you to develop a critical understanding of contemporary issues in Early Childhood education at a global level. You will evaluate the impact these factors have on current debates and trends in Early Childhood education.
2. **National focus.** This focus enables you to learn about critical contemporary issues in Early Childhood education at a national level. You will evaluate the impact of socio-political factors including legislation, educational policy and ideological shifts and will evaluate the impact on contemporary issues at a national level.
3. **Local focus.** The third element is focused on small(er)-scale issues of significance, and might include sector, organisational, or individually-based critical evaluation. This will be through the study of an area of **special interest**, facilitated by the Independent Study module. The Independent Study module provides an opportunity for you to broaden and/or deepen your knowledge and understanding of a subject relevant to your own development. The module comprises the *local* element of the distinctive 'Global, National, Local' structure. It is designed to support the exploration of issues of significance that are smaller in scale than those explored through either the *global* or *national* focus. The study on this module is negotiated between you and your tutor and the content and assessment strategies allow for an emergent rather than pre-planned approach.

You may choose a suitable configuration of two modules from the 'Global, National and Local' modules. Only one of MED005 and MED006 may be chosen. MED007 and MED008 are intended primarily for students on the research-engaged setting strand and only one of these two may be chosen. In choosing either of the modules MED007 or MED008 students should be aware that as these are 60 credit modules failure would mean that you would be unable to gain the award of MA.

### Progression and Graduation Requirements

The University's [general regulations for postgraduate awards](#) apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section.

In addition, the following programme-specific regulations apply in respect of progression and graduation:

- The Major Project or Dissertation module must be passed for the MA award.

### Internal and External Reference Points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University Mission Statement](#) [see page two]
- [Strategic Plan 2015-20](#) [see page four]
- [QAA subject benchmark statement](#)
- [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#)

### Further Information

Further information on the programme of study may be obtained from:

- Admissions entry profile (Admissions)
- Programme validation document (Registry – Academic Quality Support)
- Regulations (Registry – Academic Quality Support)
- Student programme handbook (faculty)
- Module handbooks (faculty)

*Date written / revised 31-03-15*

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**QSC PASP – April 2018 – amended sem for MED002**