

Foundation Degree in Early Years Development and Learning-Berkshire College of Agriculture
UCAS code: X310

For students entering Part 1 in 2010/1

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	
Faculty:	Social Sciences Faculty
Programme length:	2 years
Date of specification:	02/Nov/2010
Programme Director:	Teresa Wilson
Programme Advisor:	
Board of Studies:	
Accreditation:	CWDC Sector Endorsement

Summary of programme aims

The Foundation Degree (FD) provides a model of vocational higher education based on close collaboration between employers and providers of higher education. The course will furnish candidates with the knowledge, skills and understanding to progress in their chosen career within related childcare or education. Many students will become Early Years Professionals or Higher Level Teachers Assistants as a result of this programme. It provides an appropriate base for progression to honours and QTS, if required.

The aims of the FD are to develop:

- the knowledge and critical understanding of child care and learning principles and the way in which these have developed
- the ability to apply underlying concepts and principles to the work context and to argue their effectiveness
- a knowledge of the main methods of enquiry and to use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information
- an ability to critically evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches and to apply these to the work context
- an understanding of how limited personal knowledge can influence analyses and interpretations
- effective synthesis and communication of information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- a desire to improve knowledge, skills and understanding throughout students' professional lives

Transferable skills

During the course of their studies at Reading, all students will be expected to enhance their academic and personal transferable skills in line with the University's Strategy for Learning and Teaching. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to develop such skills, in particular relating to communication, interpersonal skills, learning skills, numeracy, self-management, use of IT and problem-solving and will have been encouraged to further develop and enhance the full set of skills through a variety of opportunities available outside their curriculum.

There are a number of generic transferable skills that all students are expected to have developed by the end of their degree programme. In following this programme, students will have the opportunity to enhance their skills relating to career management, communication (both written and oral), information handling, numeracy, problem solving, team working and use of information technology.

Students will be able to:

- communicate ideas, principles and theories, arguments and analysis effectively in speech and writing, using visual and ICT media as tools where appropriate, to specific and non specific audiences
- demonstrate appropriate critical thinking skills, including the ability to:
- identify and summarise the main points in an argument
- present and develop an argument, drawing upon appropriate evidence, literature and theory
- analyse and synthesise research, theories and ideas from multiple sources
- examine issues from a range of professional and theoretical perspectives
- produce critical and evaluative responses to the content of the learning outcomes
- use ICT to support their own and children's development and learning
- work within a team and individually to complete relevant and agreed projects or tasks
- solve theoretical and practical problems that occur in the work place
- improve their own performance through critical self reflection, the implementation of evidence-based practice and continual professional development activities.

Programme content

Part 1 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

ED1FLD	How Children Learn and Develop 1	20	4
ED1FLC	The Legal Context	20	4
ED1FSC	The Social Context	20	4
ED1FPE	Promoting a Positive Environment	20	4
ED1FRR	Reflective Practice	20	4

Optional modules:

* ED1FSF	Supporting Foundation Stage Practice	20	4
ED1FST	How teaching assistants support learning and development	20	4

* Students studying at both Bracknell and Wokingham and BCA are normally required to take this option. Please consult the Programme Director to see if other options are feasible

Part 2 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

ED2FLD	How Children Learn and Develop 2	20	5
ED2FIS	Issues of Inclusion and Special Needs	20	5
ED2FRM	Research Methods for Developing Professional Practice	20	5
ED2FSK	Extending subject knowledge and expertise in Information and Communication Technology	10	5
ED2FRP	Reflective Practice in Learning and Development	20	5

Optional modules:

* ED2FFL	Communication, Language, Literacy and Creative Development in the Foundation Stage	10	5
* ED2FMF	Problem solving and reasoning in the Early Years Foundation Stage	10	5
* ED2FFK	Knowledge and Understanding of the World in the Foundation Stage	10	5
ED2FPL	Progress in Communication, Language, Literacy and Creativity	10	5
ED2FPM	Progress in Mathematics	10	5
ED2FPS	Progress in Science	10	5

* Students studying at both Bracknell and Wokingham and BCA are normally required to take these options. Please consult the Programme Director to see if other options are feasible.

Progression requirements

In order to pass the Foundation degree overall, students must Pass Part 1 and obtain an average of at least 40% in Part 2, and a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits in both parts.

In order to have satisfactorily completed the Part 1 of the degree a student shall normally be required to achieve an overall average in 120 credits taken in Part 1 of the pass mark and a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits.

Summary of teaching and assessment

For the foundation degree the focus on skills and their application in the workplace, underpinned by academic knowledge and understanding, is critical. Work-based learning is central to the degree and students undertaking the course will need to be working in education or a child care setting.

Teaching is organised in modules that typically involve lectures, work-based learning and practical work. Teaching will be delivered by colleges, in conjunction with employers, using a mixture of face to face teaching, web-based and distance learning methods, self-directed studies, project work and problem-based learning. Students will take a combination of core and optional modules over 2 years. The optional modules enable students to specialise in an age range. These optional modules are pre-selected for them and, normally, students will be expected to follow the route offered by their College. In order to obtain sector-endorsement, they must work with children in early years settings or schools.

The assessment of the FD will be based on University approved assessments that will include a mixture of assignments. These will include formative assessments to feed into summative assessments, in-class exams, essays, evaluations of practice and other formats.

In line with the nature of Foundation Degrees, assignments require students to link theory to practice in the work place. It is expected that descriptions and evaluations of practice will include references to relevant literature.

Work-based learning will provide an essential contribution to achievement of the outcomes.

The employer will provide appropriate mentoring in conjunction with the college. This will include supported work-based assessment (WBA) that will contribute to the formal assessment of some modules, particularly within the options. The Institute of Education has experience in using mentors in the work-place.

Admission requirements

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:

Grade C or better in English in GCSE (if EY Sector-Endorsement required)

Level 2 NQF in Maths (prefer Grade C or better GCSE)

At least 2 years experience of working in an institution within the sector, such as Early Years, Childcare, Playwork, TA or LSA. (Students will normally require 5 years in order to apply for HLTA status assessment.)

Provision of a suitable reference on request.

NQF level 3 qualification in a work related area. Equivalent qualifications are acceptable. Those students who do not hold a level 3 qualification may discuss APEL (Accredited of Prior Experiential Learning) procedures with their intended institution of study.

Admissions Tutor: Era Singh (BCA)

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers, and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@il) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and the Student Services Directorate. The Student Services Directorate is housed in the Carrington Building and includes the Careers Advisory Service, the Disability Advisory Service, Accommodation Advisory Team, Student Financial Support, Counselling and Study Advisors. Student Services has a Helpdesk available for enquiries made in person or online (www.risisweb.reading.ac.uk), or by calling the central enquiry number on (0118) 378 5555. Students can get key information and guidance from the team of Helpdesk Advisers, or make an appointment with a specialist adviser; Student Services also offer drop-in sessions on everything from accommodation to finance. The Carrington Building is open between 8:30 and 17:30 Monday to Thursday (17:00 Friday and during vacation periods). Further information can be found in the Student website (www.reading.ac.uk/student).

All students on this FD will be members of the University of Reading and able to use the facilities of the University. The University is currently reviewing the provision of learning resources for collaborative programmes and awaits its decision.

All of the college members have facilities that will be available to the FD students. This will include access to computers and a library. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, Careers Advisors, Disability Advisors, Study Advisors, Mentors in the work place and the Students' Union.

Career prospects

The expectation is that the majority of candidates successfully completing the course will continue to work in their settings or schools.

Progression to honours is possible through following a BA (Hons) Childhood and Youth Studies at the Open University or a BA (Children's Development and Learning) at University of Reading. The course will also provide an invaluable grounding for those candidates who wish to work in other educational fields, such as education officers for museums and theatres.

Students working in PVI settings can, alternatively, gain further credits towards a full honours degree by following the long pathway to Early Years Professional Status (EYPS). Alternatively, they can gain their honours degree and then follow a shorter route to EYPS.

The FD provides a suitable basis for progression to QTS after honours or through an appropriate Registered Teacher Programme (RTP). Acceptance on such a programme will depend upon the candidate holding appropriate qualifications, as set down by the TDA and is subject to further interview.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

This programme offers substantial work-based experience in schools or care settings and there will be opportunities to visit other placements. The programme assumes that students are working at least .5 in an educational or care setting. Most modules rely upon students applying theory to their practice and undertaking tasks related to college inputs.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

- the age-related expectations of children
- the aims, content and pedagogy of work based learning
- play, care and education value and belief
- systems, including those relating to anti-discriminatory practice and equality
- of opportunity
- the statutory frameworks and legal definitions relevant to their role.
- significant current and emerging theories and principles related to factors that can affect the way children learn and develop
- the cyclical process of planning, development, implementation and evaluation of provision
- difference and diversity, recognising individual needs whilst developing tolerance and understanding of others
- the potential effect of personal attitudes, values and behaviour on work with children,
- parents and colleagues and other inter-professional relationships
- how ICT can be used to advance their own and children's development and learning
- a range of appropriate strategies to establish a purposeful environment and to promote good behaviour.
- how to acquire further knowledge, to contribute

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Acquisition of knowledge is promoted across the programme through lectures, tutorials, seminars, workshops, case studies, role-play exercises, IT-based exercises, guest lectures, work-based assignments and through individual consultation with academic staff, mentors and personal tutors. The core modules from Part 1 focus on developing students' understanding of the general principles of supporting children. E.g. ED1FLD covers children's development 0-11 and the impact on learning. The optional module for Part 1 extends this and applies it to the selected route, such as ED1FSF for 0-5 year olds.

Part 2 provides students with a significant range of choice, enabling them to deepen their understanding of a particular age range, context or subject area, according to their interests and career plans. For example, by selecting ED2FFL, ED2FMF and ED2FFK, a student will gain significant knowledge and understanding of the needs of EYFS children across a wide range of curriculum areas. These packages provide opportunities for self-directed learning through problem solving and the examination of work-based problems.

Assessment

Feedback is initially given through formative

effectively and with confidence to the work in which they are involved

assessed work. Most knowledge is tested through a combination of coursework and assessment of practice in work-based settings. There are a number of timed assessments in class.

A range of assessment methods is used, including essays, group projects, presentations, use of reflective diaries, portfolios of evidence of practice, tutorial and seminar papers and reports.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills - *able to*:

- access and review literature to underpin evidence-based practice
- use literature within extended written projects, case studies, reports and self-reflective studies
- assimilate, evaluate and analyse information
- critically reflect upon observations and first hand experience of the environment and practice in relation to work with children, parents and colleagues from within the organization and from other organizations
- identify key issues
- deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively
- make informed judgements
- understand the complex matrix of factors that affect the process of teaching and learning
- have high expectations of all children, respecting their social, cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic backgrounds and committed to raising their achievement.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The programme is designed to progressively develop students' intellectual skills and to enable them to progress to an honours route, if they wish. In Part 1 the aim is to develop a range of fundamental skills to help students make the transition from work to university study. ED1FRR provides a range of outcomes that are reinforced through other modules. These skills are developed through lectures, tutorials, seminars, workshops, case studies, role-play exercises, IT-based exercises, visits to settings, guest lectures, work-based assignments, and through individual consultation with academic staff, colleagues at work, mentors and personal tutors.

Students are involved in reflective evaluations of work-based activities with colleagues, tutors and mentors. They assimilate, evaluate and analyse observations and practice. Students contribute to presentations, written reports and assignments and lead seminars.

In Part 2, each student undertakes a supervised, work-based piece of research, building upon Part 1 achievements.

Assessment

Feedback is initially given through formative assessed work. Intellectual skills are tested through a combination of coursework and assessment of practice in work-based settings. There are a number of timed assessments in class.

A range of assessment methods is used in Part 1 and again in Part 2, including essays, group projects, presentations, use of reflective diaries, portfolios of evidence of practice, tutorial and seminar papers and reports.

C. Practical skills - *able to*:

- design, implement, monitor and assess effective activities which support the individual development and learning of children and which meet the statutory and regulatory requirements, in consultation with other professionals where necessary
- promote and support the inclusion of all, recognising and responding effectively to equal opportunities issues as they arise,

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Practical skills are developed through linking theory to work placements. This is supported by a mixture of lectures, tutorials, seminars, workshops, case studies, role-play exercises, IT-based exercises, guest lectures, work-based assignments and through individual consultation with academic staff, mentors and personal tutors

The aim of Part 1 is to develop, in stages, a range of fundamental skills to help students to improve their

- including challenging stereotyped views, bullying or harassment, following relevant policies and procedures
- manage, organise and evaluate their own time, resources, records and information
- to support decision making
- build and maintain successful relationships
- improve their own practice, including through observation, evaluation and discussion with colleagues
- interest and motivate children to progress
- select and prepare resources and activities that meet the diversity of children's needs and interests and support inclusion.
- contribute to the planning of opportunities for children to develop and learn in a range of contexts
- a monitor children's' responses to activities and modify approach accordingly
- monitor children's participation and progress, giving constructive support
- maintain and analyse records of progress.
- communicate effectively and sensitively with children to support them
- use effective behaviour management strategies
- organise and manage safely the activities, the physical space and resources
- use common ICT tools

D. Transferable skills - able to:

- communicate ideas, principles and theories, arguments and analysis effectively in speech and writing, using visual and ICT media as tools where appropriate, to specific and non specific audiences;
- demonstrate appropriate critical thinking skills, including the ability to:
- Identify and summarise the main points in an argument;
- Present and develop an argument, drawing upon appropriate evidence, literature and theory;
- Analyse and synthesise research, theories and ideas from multiple sources
- Examine issues from a range of professional and theoretical perspectives;
- Produce critical and evaluative responses to planned outcomes
- use ICT to support their own development, and the learning and development of children;
- work within a team and individually to complete a relevant and agreed project or task
- solve theoretical and practical problems that occur
- improve their own performance through critical

work - based practice and to move to reflective practice. For example, ED1FPE encourages students to consider the range of practical skills that promote a positive environment.

The options in Part 2 apply and extend the skills developed in the option in Part 1 and in other modules into more specialised contexts. For example, ED1FSF looks at general support for children under 5, whereas ED2FFL develops the practical skills of supporting children' communication. In Part 2, the research based project focus on those skills related to the student's choice of specialist package and so develops the appropriate practical skills.

Many modules require students to prepare resources to support their practice and guide students to write in plain English.

All students attend sessions on career development and effective applications.

Trainees are encouraged to visit other settings for observation and evaluation.

Assessment

Students are assessed through a combination of coursework and assessment of practice in work-based settings. Students are assessed in relation to their chosen route and receive formal assessment of their practice through a system of mentoring. Assessment methods, including essays, group projects, presentations, reports, use of reflective diaries, timed assessments, portfolios of evidence of practice, tutorial and seminar papers, all relate theory to practice.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The teaching and acquisition of these transferable skills is firmly embedded in the programme. As a work-based degree, there is particular emphasis on the acquisition and personal development of a wide range of transferable skills.

For example, communication skills are taught in ED1FRR, but are also considered in ED1FPE, ED1FLD and ED1FSC and these are also deployed in the group presentations, individual reports and work - based experiences.

A care and education culture permeates the programme fed by module content and the intended learning outcomes, staff (and student) links with practice, lectures by visiting practitioners, visits to other settings and the analysis of video material.

The use of ICT is embedded throughout the programme, although there is particular emphasis in the inputs of ED1FRR and ED2FSK.

Oral presentations, team work and career planning are included in modules and in meetings with a personal tutor.

Time management and use of library resources are essential for effective completion of a degree whilst working; advice is given in pre-programme

self reflection, the implementation of evidence-based practice and continued professional development activities.

- demonstrate and promote the positive
- values, attitudes and behaviour they expect

documentation, induction week and EDIFRR.

The programme's strategy on career management incorporates the use Careers Advisory Services incorporating a taught session and / or on-line learning material There is a timetable to prepare students for progression to honours, EYPS, QTS and / or career development.

Assessment

As a result of this 'pervasive' approach to transferable skills, students' performance is assessed across the full range of skills throughout the programme on a module-by-module basis through coursework when feedback is provided.

Written feedback from mentors and tutors and some written assignments and reports reflect these skills.

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 he/she 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 the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance process or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.