

Early Years Education (QTS)

BA (Hons)

This course develops creative professionals able to teach effectively in a range of Early Years and Key Stage 1 (KS1) contexts.

Course content

The course supports teacher trainees in developing the skills, knowledge and understanding required to demonstrate the professional standards for teaching three-to-seven-year-olds required by Department for Education Teaching Agency (TA). On successful completion, graduates are recommended for and awarded Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

The course is structured to promote academic rigour, skilled practice, independence and flexibility. The emphasis of the course reflects the Early Years approach to practice and the KS1 school-based curriculum. The balance of the taught programme is between promoting trainees' own professional subject knowledge and encouraging its application through teaching in Early Years settings and KS1 classrooms. All subject study is closely linked with practice-based work.

Stage one

Trainees engage in Early Years core studies (English, Mathematics, Science and ICT) in the three to eight age range, Early Years Foundation Studies, Professional Studies and Advanced Early Years Education as a specialism.

Stage two

Trainees continue their stage one studies and also complete an integrated programme (including Religious Education) around how young children learn.

Stage three

Early Years core studies, Professional Studies and Advanced Early Years Education are studied in greater depth. Trainees select either EYFS or KS1 for their qualifying school experience. There is also a focus upon preparing for transition to their first post.



Ofsted
Outstanding
2009|2010

Course level

Undergraduate

Modes of study

Full time

UCAS or UKPASS details

UCAS code: X101

UCAS description: BA/EYEQTS

Length of study

Three years

School

School of Education

Location

Park Campus

Course contact

study@northampton.ac.uk

Avenue Campus

St George's Avenue
Northampton
NN2 6JD

Park Campus

Boughton Green Road
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Special course features

- Highest award from Ofsted (Grade 1)
- Category A provider status awarded by the Teaching Agency (TA)
- Among the highest newly qualified teacher (NQT) employment ratings nationally
- Praised by the Teaching Agency and the National Strategies Team for our teaching of Phonics
- Double Green - rated outstanding, with teaching of English and mathematics

Typical modules

- Early Years Core Studies
- Early Years Curriculum
- Issues in Early Years Education and Care
- Observing Children

Types of assessment

All elements of the course are assessed by coursework. In addition, elements of core subject knowledge are assessed in the first year by tests or examinations. Coursework assumes a variety of forms and includes essays, group presentations, exhibitions, displays, lesson plans and a final year dissertation. Practical teaching, including planning and assessment, is also assessed on a pass/fail basis throughout the course.

The following modules of the programme are studied:

- Professional Studies
- School Experience
- Core Subjects (Mathematics / English / Science / ICT)
- Foundation Subjects and RE are studied in the first two years
- Subject Specialism (Advanced Early Years

Education)

Entry requirements

In addition to standard entry requirements, applicants must have GCSE grade C (a higher grade is preferable) in English Language, Mathematics and Science on application. A typical offer would be between 320 UCAS tariff points; however applications are welcomed with non-standard qualifications and we are committed to widening participation and undertake positive action to support applicants from under-represented groups.

Applicants must have prior experience in a UK maintained Early Years context. Successful applicants have to attend an interview. CRB checks and broader disclosures are required.

Important update for applicants

QTS Skills Tests

There is a number of changes to the skill tests which have come into effect from the Department for Education (DfE).

If you are thinking of applying for an Initial Teacher Training (ITT) programme which starts from September 2013, you will be required to have passed the DfE's skills tests in numeracy and literacy before you start the course.

You will be expected to pass both tests before attending an interview, however you will not be eligible to [register and book the skills tests](#) until after you have submitted an application for an ITT programme.

Application notes

For general application information please see our [how to apply](#) page.

Interview arrangements

Our interviews usually take place on selected Wednesdays anytime from December to June. For those travelling by car, parking is available (although this can be busy at peak periods). You are welcome to bring a family member or friend to the campus. Campus tours are provided by our own students so you will have an opportunity to ask specific questions about student life and the course.

Everyone meets together for registration and a general talk from the Admissions team. We cover items such as student

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life, our links to schools and the course content.

After a brief introduction about the course content, a short mathematics test and literacy task is completed.

You will then be interviewed in groups. Individuals are asked to give a short presentation (which will have been set by us and prepared by applicants in the days before the interview). You will bring an object or artifact to discuss how it can support young children learning. This is an opportunity to show some understanding of your Early Years subject knowledge, possibly linking this with ideas of how this might apply to young children in school. This typically takes place informally around a table consisting of a small group of applicants.

Finally we engage you in a group activity about your experiences of school and the vital skills of an Early Years teacher. We are not looking for people who know everything about early education, and we are certainly not going to fire questions at you. At this stage we want to know that you have developing skills of communication and a basic appreciation of school life.

The whole interview process is over in a few hours. Our review of the session enables a collective view of your potential. If you fall short on any one item this does not automatically rule you out. The admissions team enter the decision on the UCAS tracking system followed by an official notification by letter.

Work placement opportunities

The School Experience (Early Years) provides students with an opportunity to enhance the taught sessions they have within the University. Early Years settings are carefully selected and their staff work as mentors in partnership with students and University tutors to enable student teachers' learning to develop in both Key Stage 1 and the Foundation Stage.

Stage one students are placed in schools and early years' settings throughout the year for a total period of just under eight weeks. Students need to work in Key Stage 1 and the foundation stage. It is important that the general nature of the course with its three to seven age-range is not overlooked. Experience is divided between a variety of placements, where students are in school on a regular one day a week basis, and block placements.

A typical Early Years School Experience in the first stage:

Autumn term introductory placement. Two week block placement (ten days)

Spring term main placement. Serial days (four days)

Summer term main placement. Block attachment (24 days)

Total school-based days: 38

In the autumn and spring terms there are short placements, while in the summer term placement extends to four weeks. This first stage is critical in promoting students from the status of inexperienced apprentices to autonomous practitioners assuming the responsibilities of the setting for much of the day. All students will be given the opportunity during this placement to observe teaching and learning in a culturally and linguistically diverse context.

In terms of student development and professional competence, the focus of stage one school-based work is lesson planning and preparation for diversity, relationships with children and professional commitment. University core subjects and knowledge of young children and their impact in the classroom application will be developed in parallel with these professional skills.

The pattern of school experience has been planned to ensure that students will be in contact with settings throughout the year. Teaching is a highly complex activity in which the required knowledge, understanding and skills are most appropriately acquired cumulatively. The structure of School Experience in stage one enables students to familiarise themselves quickly with the organisational routines, resources and curriculum delivery associated with both Early Years and Key Stage 1.

At the start of both placements students will be collecting information about the context in which they are working through observation and enquiry. They will supervise groups of children who are working under the teacher's planning. As they progress through the year they will undertake directed tasks that will involve the planning and teaching of lessons. From the outset students can establish their professional status with the whole class by reading stories and taking the register. By the summer term block practice it is anticipated that students will be assuming more class management responsibility so that for the final three weeks they assume their class teacher's responsibility for approximately 70% of the day.

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