

BA (Hons) Childhood Practice

Information for Employers

From the 1 December 2011, on re-registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), all Lead Practitioners of a day care of children service will be required to hold or be working towards a Degree level qualification in Childhood Practice. This includes Lead Practitioners of nurseries, crèches, playgroups and out of school care. The BA (Hons) Childhood Practice award enhances professionalism and leadership skills. Evidence shows that the best experience for children come from the best qualified staff, including where the Lead Practitioner has a degree level award. Having a highly qualified and high-quality workforce will ensure we make a real difference to the outcomes for Scotland's children and their families. At UHI, the degree is delivered through supported on-line learning and teaching, it can therefore be accessed at anytime and anywhere throughout Scotland. Students' study routes are based on the academic credit UHI can award for their previous qualifications.

We hope the information contained here offers employers an insight to what students study as part of the BA. Working in partnership with students, we encourage employers to 'celebrate' their achievements. For example, when students successfully complete a module or the BA, this could be shared with the setting's service users.

Course Aims

1. Promote confidence in students' capabilities as learners by helping them to develop a critical and reflexive approach to their own workplace practice, and to the ideologies, policies, purposes and practices of children's services nationally and internationally, in order to take appropriate responsibility for the development of quality practice
2. Extend knowledge and deeper understanding of all aspects of children's development and learning to improve working practices and promote children's well being
3. Develop knowledge of a range of frameworks for development and learning to inform the selection, provision and evaluation of educational and care experiences for children thus enabling application of theory to practice

4. Extend the awareness of the context of childhood and the social policy agenda to contribute to policy and practice for working collaboratively with children, families and communities.
5. Develop students' understanding of professionalism, and leadership roles and strategies for professional and multi-professional teams working in early learning and childcare settings, and to support students' engagement in the leadership of workplace practice, assisting their organisation to develop and implement policies.

Programme Structure

The BA (Hons) Childhood Practice is centred on active and collaborative learning experiences via supported on-line learning. Through UHI's virtual learning environment (VLE), you will benefit from a variety of creative and interactive pedagogic approaches that facilitate connections between theory, policy, legislation and work-based practice. The development of knowledge, understanding, and the practical application of this is a central feature of the Degree.

Knowledge and practical competence are intrinsically linked but opportunity to assess them will be divided between activities that relate to theory, policy and practice and work-based experiences that demonstrate your capacity to practically apply your developing knowledge and understanding. Creativity, innovation, reflexivity, and critical analysis form the basis of the modes of assessment, using a range of formative and summative tools. Students are supported by an initial mandatory face-to-face induction which helps to:

- Foster connections between students and staff
- Promote long-term student achievement and retention
- Introduce students to online learning and teaching and UHI's the VLE.

Students also have access to a six week online longitudinal induction programme and are offered regular 'check in's', using a blended approach.

SSSC Codes of Practice

BA (Hons) Childhood Practice is a work-based qualification and as such, once successfully completed, students are eligible to register with SSSC as a Manager/Lead Practitioner. In

registering with SSSC students are expected to adhere to their Codes of Practice (SSSC 2016).

The Codes of Practice is a list of statements that describe the standards of professional conduct and practice required. The intention is to confirm the standards required and ensure that students know what standards of conduct employers, colleagues, service users, carers and the public expect of them. The Codes are intended to reflect existing good practice and it is anticipated that workers and employers will recognise in the Codes the shared standards to which they already aspire.

In total there are 6 Statements of professional conduct and practice required (SSSC 2016):

1. You must protect and promote the rights and the interests of people who use services and carers.
2. You must create and maintain the trust and confidence of people who use services and carers.
3. You must promote the independence of people who use services while protecting them, as far as possible, from danger and harm.
4. You must respect the rights of people who use services, while striving to make sure that their behaviour does not harm themselves or other people.
5. You must uphold public trust and confidence in social services.
6. You must be accountable for the quality of your work and will take responsibility for maintaining and improving your knowledge and skills.

Throughout the BA programme, students are expected to reflect upon the meaning of these statements regarding their conduct as a professional practitioner.

Support for Students

There is a wide range of support available to all students throughout their time at UHI, whether it be academic, pastoral or technical. Every UHI student is assigned a Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) who is based at your enrolling College. Students will also be supported by Module Tutors and the Programme Leader.

Delivery Model

The Degree is studied on a part-time basis, completing three 20 credit modules in each academic year (September - June). The maximum number of modules students are able to complete in a year is four. UHI has two semesters: Semester 1: September - December and Semester 2: January - June. If students are completing three modules, this means they will carry two running at the same time in a semester. We recommend 10-12 hours/week per module; this means students would need to commit around 20 hours/week when carrying two in the same semester.

As noted above, students' study route will be based on the amount of credit awarded for their previous qualifications. This means there will be an element of uniqueness to each route. Outlined below are the modules offered at each level of the BA. Entry point to the BA and modules completed by each student will depend on the credit they are awarded for their previous qualifications. It can take between 2-5 years to complete the BA and another 2 for honours.

Level 7: Modules completed is based on credit from previous qualifications	
Semester 1	Semester 2
Introduction to Early Childhood Practice and Philosophy	Sociology of the Family Nature of Health

Level 8	
Semester 1	Semester 2
Collaboration and Reflection in Childhood Practice (Core)	Assuring Quality in Childhood Practice Settings (Core) Options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Enquiring Student (Mandatory Option) • UElective (discuss with your PAT)

Level 8	
Semester 1	Semester 2
Developing Leadership Capacity in Childhood Practice (Core) Options (one from the list of following options): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play and Childhood • Providing Curriculum for Life • Care and Control • Recognising and Challenging Discrimination and Disadvantage • Health Psychology • Working in Partnership 	Practitioner Research in Childhood Practice (Core)

Level 9 BA: All level 9 modules are core	
Semester 1	Semester 2
Contemporary Issues in Childhood Practice	Leading Change in Childhood Practice Promoting Children's Rights and Inclusion in Childhood Practice

Level 9 BA	
Semester 1	Semester 2
Developing a Childhood Practice Work based Project Coordination, Partnership & Integration in Childhood Practice	Leading a Childhood Practice Work Based Project

Level 10 Honours: Completion of this level not required for SSSC registration	
Semester 1	Semester 2
Comparative Childcare: A European Perspective (Core) Professional Reflection (Core)	Option (one from the list of following options): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal and Professional Reflection • Disability and Society • Globalized View of Childcare • The UNCRC: Investigating Exploitation, Youth Justice and Education in relation to Children's Rights • Psychopathology: Mental health and well-being

Level 10 Honours	
Semester 1	Semester 2
Dissertation: BA (Hons) Childhood Practice (Core) Option (one from the list of following options): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child and Adolescent Mental Health • Food and Behaviour • Comparative Health Studies • Developmental Disorders • Every Child's Right to be Heard UX210003 • Insiders and Outsiders UL310804 	Dissertation: BA (Hons) Childhood Practice (Core)

Module Summaries

Level 7

Introduction to Early Childhood Philosophy and Practice

Students will begin by examining the concept of an early childhood philosophy. Within this they will consider what is meant by an early year's pedagogical model and related 'whole child concept'. This will involve the student exploring what is meant by the following terms: 'child-centred', 'developmentally appropriate' and 'inclusive'. They will also consider the effects of the 'hidden curriculum' on the development of the young child.

The influences of historical perspectives as well as the more contemporary ideas will be explored. Consideration will also be given to the development of a number of early childhood curriculum programmes and initiatives such as High/scope and Reggio Emilia.

The aims and objectives of current early childhood curriculum frameworks for 0-3, 3-18 will be investigated from the perspectives of both the learner and practitioner.

Sociology of the Family

The module aims to provide an introduction to sociological concepts and issues through a focus on the Family and broader connecting issues.

Aims

- To provide an introduction to the most influential of sociological theories through the medium of family.
- To facilitate understanding of sociological factors affecting patterns of family life, role and structure.
- To provide opportunity to explore current issues and debates concerning the modern family.
- To develop understanding of the relationship between social policy and societal members.

Nature of Health

The module presents health as an arena for debate. It aims to introduce students to a range of health accounts to show the pluralism of these in today's society. Each dimension of the bio-psycho-social approach is examined individually and in relation to other dimensions to support a growing understanding of the necessity for an holistic and multidisciplinary response to health issues across the age range, for individuals, families and communities.

Particular focus on health inequalities and social determinants of health support a broad understanding of the scope of the subject and this is further developed through an overview of relevant Scottish/ UK health policy.

In addition, the module develops generic study skills through extensive developmental feedback on formative written tasks using health theory as the basis of such work. It aims to develop the ability to locate, collect, interpret, evaluate and use information to develop a coherent argument and to write in the appropriate style. As a result it develops academic confidence and facilitates progression by the use of highly supportive teaching methods.

Level 8

Practitioner Research in Childhood Practice

This module will introduce students to the concept of practitioner research and the basic elements of qualitative research design contextualised within Childhood Practice. Students will further explore the value of Action Research and its role in promoting reflective Childhood Practitioners.

Students will identify an issue for development within their workplace setting, conduct a concise literature review and outline an appropriate and considered qualitative research design proposal to address this issue.

Assuring Quality in Childhood Practice

This module is designed to enable students to develop a critical understanding of Quality Improvement issues in Childhood Practice with reference to their own workplace setting. It will focus on current theories of play underpinning 'best practice' and provision in both the Early Years and Playwork sectors and enable students to evaluate the leadership responsibilities, policies and Quality Assurance mechanisms within their own Childhood practice setting, enhancing their professional confidence and competence to work towards enacting leadership there.

Developing Leadership Capacity in Childhood Practice

The module introduces students to both theoretical and skill based issues related to leadership and management in childhood practice. The study material examines a range of theoretical approaches to leadership and management and gives students the opportunity to reflect on their own practice in the context of their own workplace setting.

Collaboration and Reflection in Childhood Practice

This module will provide students with the opportunity to consider issues related to the role of the professional within a childhood practice context. This will include an exploration of the nature of collaboration and integrated working, an examination of current legislative and policy frameworks relevant to childhood practice and an investigation of related theoretical perspectives. Students will then contextualise these to a professional issue in their own practice and demonstrate their application of knowledge and skills within their own workplace.

Mandatory Option: The Enquiring Student

The aim of this module is to develop students' critical thinking, critical inquiry and critical analysis skills. The module will introduce key theoretical approaches to knowledge, including epistemology, experiential knowledge, historical knowledge, sociological (constructivism), anthropological (cultural relativism) and empirical knowledge. Under empirical knowledge, students will be introduced to a variety of research method approaches. By the end of the module, students will be able to identify, select and source appropriate literature for evidencing an argument. In addition, they will be able to assess and interpret information as well as demonstrate an awareness of key concepts such as bias, ethics, validity, reliability and credibility in the construction of an argument. Students will also be able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of an argument including demonstrating an ability to reflect and evaluate their own work.

Level 9

Promoting Children's Rights and Inclusion in Childhood Practice

The module will explore issues of children's inclusion and participation, in a context of the relationship between the rights and responsibilities of children, parents and the state. It will build on the significance of the UNCRC and its expression within the current Scottish legislative and policy frameworks. Key issues will be the role of managers and childhood workers in promoting inclusion, participation, non-discriminatory practice, child safety and the ethos of all children achieving their potential. Ethical issues and dilemmas relating to the module themes will be explored.

Contemporary Issues in Childhood Practice

Students will be encouraged to design a set of guidelines for analysing new ideas against key principles. A particular focus will be on play and active learning in the context of birth to 3; a Curriculum for Excellence 3 - 18; and in the Playwork context. Specific topics will

be updated on an annual basis according to new developments in policy, innovations in practice, research on children as learners and thinkers, and on European and worldwide perspectives. Students will be encouraged to consider potential leadership roles in relation to these and other issues that may arise.

Leading Change in Childhood Practice

The module will introduce students to theories of organisation and management and adopt a problem-based approach to exploring the management of human, physical and financial resources within a Childhood Practice Setting. Students will analyse and investigate case studies of policy and practice development and explore the knowledge; skills and strategies required for effective leadership. Students will identify an aspect of workplace development requiring a policy statement or documentation and, by developing this, will identify the underpinning knowledge and professional actions required and the implications of this for their own professional development and workplace practice.

Coordination, Partnership and Integration in Childhood Practice

The module will provide a structured and guided analysis of international, UK-wide and Scottish policy, research and practice paradigms on services for children and families. Students will critically analyse underpinning theories and research documents on social policy, social capital, ecological systems, child development, and relevant national and local policy documents including leadership issues and management strategies, directly relevant to students own workplace, to promote collaborative and non-discriminatory practice.

Developing a Childhood Practice Workplace Project

Adopting an enquiry led and evidence-based approach to professional development and professional practice are recognised as key features of personal and organisational change. Reflection and professional action need to be underpinned by evidence derived from research, from professional enquiry and from personal experience. Planning and implementing an effective workplace development requires consideration of key purposes, desired outcomes, key processes and an effective action plan. This module will provide a structured approach to developing a plan for a workplace project which will be undertaken and implemented in the subsequent module “Managing a Workplace Project”.

Leading a Childhood Practice Workplace Project

Upon successful completion of “Developing a Workplace Project”, this module involves students undertaking an enquiry led project within a relevant workplace environment. The research dimension of the workplace project should examine the nature of evidence, generate worthwhile questions, critically research key issues and seek answers of relevance to their own workplace context. Implementing the project, gathering evidence of effectiveness, analysing and evaluating the evidence and reflecting on the outcomes provides an opportunity for students to synthesise the key knowledge and skills developed over the whole of their degree studies together with their professional abilities to manage a project in practice. The process of undertaking the project should benefit their ability to critically review evidence from published research and other projects and to seek links to their own professional context. Students are supported throughout the research project.

Level 10 (only need Level 9 to register with SSSC)

Comparative Childcare: A European Perspective

CCCEP offers an introduction to measurements of children’s welfare and patterns of service support across Europe. Building on student familiarity with UK childcare practices, CCCEP focuses on national interpretations of childcare and on policies, services and other formal and informal arrangements for childcare provision and delivery in different cultural settings.

Professional Reflection and Personal and Professional Reflection

The purpose of these modules is to further prepare candidates for either professional practice in their chosen field or post graduate vocational training.

Dissertation

The aim of the dissertation module is to provide the student with the opportunity to undertake a substantial research project. The dissertation is an independent research exercise, supported by a dissertation supervisor.

The student must select a topic for the research drawn from the broad area of his/her course and this selection/topic must be approved by the Dissertation Committee. While every effort will be made to support the student's topic choice, the decision is dependent on the ability of the programme team to provide a suitable supervisor.