

Programme Specification

BA (Hons) Birth and Beyond Educator

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	NCT
3.	Programme accredited by	N/A
4.	Final award	BA (Hons)
5.	Programme title	BA (Hons) Birth and Beyond Educator
6.	Pathways available	Cert HE Birth and Beyond Practitioner 120 credits + FdA Advanced Birth and Beyond Practitioner 120 credits + Level 6 modules 120 credits
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	Course delivered from September to July including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tutorials (held at regional locations around the UK) ○ Module-Specific Study Days and Workshops (held at one of 8 regional locations around the UK, and including some residential events) ○ Distance learning (including use of some e-learning) at home/place of study of student
8.	Mode of attendance	Part-time – all daytime Majority of Tutorials and Study Days are held on weekdays, though weekends may be available at limited locations
9.	UCAS Code	N/A
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	Higher education qualification at Level 6 as specified in the QAA Framework for HE Qualifications .
11.	Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision	June 2012 August and November 2014 (Regulations)

12. Educational aims of the programme

This programme allows students to ‘top up’ their Foundation Degree Advanced Birth and Beyond Practitioner to the BA (Hons) Birth and Beyond Educator. NCT Advanced Birth and Beyond Practitioners are enabled to develop the skills needed to extend their ability to work with and support adults in their learning and development. By focussing on key elements such as assessment, adult learning and curriculum design, students develop the capabilities needed to ‘train the trainers’.

The BA (Hons) Birth and Beyond Educator is a necessary qualification for all those wishing to apply for a role as an NCT Tutor, whilst the ‘Reflecting on Assessment Practice’ module is a pre-requisite for applying for an NCT Assessor role.

The programme also provides a pathway for those wishing to progress to further postgraduate work and research in related fields.

The aims of the programme are to:

1. Develop a coherent and detailed knowledge base around the theories relating to supporting and assessing adult learning, and an ability to translate this understanding into working effectively with students and parents around the transition to parenthood.
2. Develop practitioners who will be able to work as NCT Assessors and Tutors in a person-centred manner that respects an individual's beliefs and needs, values experience and fulfils NCT's vision and purpose.
3. Ensure a uniform excellence in assessment practice within NCT which will contribute to a high standard of quality assurance.
4. Encourage students to further develop their skills of reflective practice, of critical analysis, of problem-solving, and of group facilitation skills to enable them to work effectively with a diverse and evolving group of NCT practitioners and students.
5. Develop a critical awareness and understanding of research relevant to the work of NCT, an ability to contribute to any debate around the research underpinning the delivery of maternity and early parenting services, and an ability to apply research in practice.
6. Provide a rewarding and transformational learning experience which ensures the development of a range of transferable academic and practical skills to the appropriate level.
7. Encourage scholarship with respect to teaching and learning in Higher Education, and also in relation to supporting parents in the transition to parenthood, enabling enhanced career progression and management.
8. Encourage engagement with policy, strategy and quality considerations that impinge on practitioners' work.

13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

Learning Outcomes for the BA (Hons) Birth and Beyond Educator

On successful completion of the course students will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding:

1. Demonstrate a critical understanding and knowledge of the issues affecting assessment, and how it can be used effectively to ensure both quality assurance and supportive learning.

2. Identify a range of ways in which to promote adult learning both through appropriate curriculum design, and through a critical evaluation of the skills that adults need to develop in order to become self-directed learners.
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Cognitive and intellectual skills:

3. Manage their own learning using research appropriately, and using reflection, evaluation of strengths and weaknesses, and self and task management to meet set objectives.
 4. Critically analyse and evaluate data, concepts and theories, and to then synthesise varied and diverse ideas into a coherent whole.
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Practical skills relevant to employment:

5. Identify and implement a range of appropriate assessment strategies supported by critical analysis of models of assessment practice.
 6. Apply a range of effective skills to support adult learners in higher education; identifying through critical evaluation, strategies for supporting the learning needs of students with diverse socio-cultural, economic and educational backgrounds.
 7. Effectively design and utilise appropriate curricula whilst demonstrating an ability to both critically evaluate the outcomes, and an understanding of the relevant strategy, policy and quality issues.
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Transferable/key skills:

8. Consistently demonstrate a range of strategies for working effectively with adult learners in a holistic and experiential manner.
9. Utilise appropriate and effective communication and interpersonal skills, and make decisions in complex circumstances.
10. Assume personal responsibility for practice, learning and continuing professional development, undertaking further training where necessary to develop existing skills and develop new competencies.

Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:

This programme is delivered using a blended learning approach which includes an element of work-based learning, allowing theory and practice to be integrated. NCT BA (Hons) tutors model the approach taken by NCT Tutors and Assessors when working with students.

Examples of learning and teaching methods:

- Induction day provides an introduction to both the course and to the NCT roles of tutor and assessor
- Interactive study days and some residential workshops which include information giving, discussion, small group work
- Tutorials including facilitated discussions, presentations and interactive sessions
- Experience of NCT practice in relevant roles of assessor and tutor (work-based learning)
- One-to-one sessions with tutors
- Observation of NCT HE teaching sessions, assessment days and tutorials
- Time with a tutor mentor who is working on Level 4 or 5 modules
- Contact with tutor and other students in tutorial group via e-group, e-mail, Skype, telephone or an online learning platform (Blackboard)
- On-line and e-learning including use of Blackboard, Pebblepad and specific on-line learning packages
- Attendance at NCT conferences and forum
- Involvement with local NCT branches
- Self-directed study

Examples of assessments:

Skills based:

- Assessment of NCT practitioner or student (work-based assessment)
- Reflection on 'shadowing' tutor assessment of student's written work
- Facilitated discussion and interactive session
- Presentation
- Facilitate a section of a level 4 tutorial

Content based:

Essay; report; review and feedback; handout; independent study

14. Assessment Strategy

Assessment is aligned with the [University's Assessment Policy](#) and is seen as a means to:

- Assess whether students have met the specified learning outcomes to the required level
- Allow students to demonstrate practical and academic progress and achievement
- Provide a supportive structure to allow students to learn from feedback
- Increase and motivate learning towards learning outcomes

Both summative and formative assessments are used. Formative assessment is seen as playing important role in student learning and development, providing students with regular feedback on their progress. It is aligned to summative assessment and can increase student confidence in achieving the Modular Learning Outcomes.

A broad range of assessment strategies are used which are student-centred and help develop the skills needed for both higher education and future employment.

Assessments combine both traditional and innovative assignments.

Assessment had been considered across all modules to ensure a positive learning experience for students which allows for:

- A range (and in places a choice) of assessment strategies to suit different students' learning needs
- An ability to build on skills learnt from previous assessments.

Each assessment is outlined in the module specifications which are in the course handbook and logbook, the latter also provides students with more comprehensive guidelines. The guidelines contain explicit assessment criteria, aligned to module learning outcomes, and indicate what students need to do to complete the assessment successfully.

The assessments are marked using criteria based on UW grade descriptors. Specific grids have been developed for each type of assignment to ensure that students and tutors have a clear understanding of what needs to be covered.

15. Programme structures and requirements

Award map showing level 6 modules required to 'top up' the Foundation Degree Advanced Birth and Beyond Practitioner to attain BA (Hons) Birth and Beyond Educator

LEVEL 6			
Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)
NCTC 3101	Reflecting on Assessment Practice	30	M
NCTC 3102	Adult Learning	30	M
NCTC 3103	Curriculum Design: Evolution, Development and Management	30	M
NCTC 3104	Independent Study (NCT Specialism)	30	M

Requirements at level 6

Students are able to 'top-up' their Foundation Degree Advanced Birth and Beyond Practitioner. If they successfully complete 120 credits at Level 6 they will be awarded the BA (Hons) Degree.

Students will also be expected to:

- [Become a member](#) of NCT
- Attend the induction day and residential events
- [Become actively involved](#) with their local NCT branch

This programme is only available as a part-time course, this is allow for the time needed to develop the person-centred skills required to become an NCT Tutor.

Circumstances under which modules may not run or only run in limited areas

If, in a given academic year, there are too few applicants for any particular module, then that module will not run. However, NCT will make every effort to run modules wherever possible, and it may be the case that with reduced numbers of applicants the modules will be run, but with the study days only being offered at a few specified locations.

Programme structure for BA (Hons) Birth and Beyond Practitioner

Year 1

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug
Reflecting on Assessment Practice (30 credits)	Start				End							
Adult Learning (30 credits)	Start			End		Start				End		

On completion of Reflection on Assessment Practice NCTC3101 practitioners may apply for a role as an NCT Assessor.

Year 2

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug
Curriculum Design (30 credits)	Start			End	End							
Independent Study (30 credits)	Start					Start				End		

16. QAA and Professional Academic Standards and Quality

The intended Learning Outcomes of this programme are commensurate with a higher education qualification at Level 6 as specified in the [QAA Framework for HE Qualifications](#).

17. Support for students

Student support is a key element of the programme and is provided through a range of sources at both NCT and the University of Worcester

BA tutors

The NCT tutor system is an important part of ensuring that every student receives the individual support that will allow them to progress academically and personally. BA

Tutors combine an academic and pastoral role – facilitating workshops, study days and tutorials to fulfil the academic aspect of the programme, but also providing one-to-one support through tutorials, face-to-face contact, e-mail and telephone.

Personal Academic Tutor and Academic Support Tutor

All students have access to the NCT's Academic Support Tutor for assistance with study skills. Each student will also be assigned a Personal Academic Tutor to provide a consistent point of contact throughout their time on the course. The Personal Academic Tutor will support students' academic development, provide pastoral support and give guidance and support on how to manage their time in relation to the differing module formats and submission dates.

BA mentors

Students are also supported through specific modules by BA Mentors who are tutors on Level 4 or 5 modules. The students will be able to observe or shadow these tutors and will be given time to discuss and reflect on what they have observed.

Course handbook

The Course Handbook contains detailed information on not only the modules (with guidance on how to approach and complete the module), but also the management and requirements of the programme. Additional information supporting their practice as NCT Birth and Beyond Practitioners is also included.

Course logbook

The Course Logbook contains additional information about the NCT roles associated with the qualification, the Student Charter and the Learning Agreement; it is a 'live document' designed to be used as a reflective logbook and diary.

Induction day

An induction programme provides students with the opportunity to be introduced to:

- The principles of learning and teaching in higher education
- Study skills
- Information and learning systems at the University of Worcester and at NCT (including library services, Blackboard and Pebblepad)
- Student support services at the University of Worcester [information and learning services](#)

Work-based learning – support for role as an NCT assessor

Students will be provided with clear guidance on the mock assessments that they undertake during the Reflecting on Assessment Practice module. This will be in the form of written NCT guidelines, and as a one-to-one preparatory session with their Tutor. Students will be expected to reflect on and record the work they do as a student NCT Practitioner.

Babble/MIDIRS/NCT library

Students will have access to the learning and research support on NCT Group sites, these sites will also provide information and support for them in their role as a practitioner.

Study skill support

Students are able to access the University's learning support both [online](#) and through study skills advice sheets

Student forum and e-groups

NCT students are supported by membership of a student forum and of student e-groups – many specific issues, queries and problems are addressed through these channels.

Disability and dyslexia

NCT (disability discrimination policy and equal opportunities policy) and the university (equal opportunity policy statement) promote equality in relation to race, disability, gender, age and sexual orientation.

The disability service within the university provides specialist academic support, making recommendations for reasonable adjustments to teaching and assessment based on individual need. The NCT disability tutor provides additional support.

18. Admissions

Admissions Policy

NCT seeks to recruit students who

1. have an interest in supporting adult learning
2. are committed to the values and ethos of NCT
3. have the capacity to benefit from study at higher education level

Admissions tutors work to identify applicants who can demonstrate their potential to succeed at this level.

NCT is committed to widening participation in line with the 2020 Strategy and to recruiting a diverse student cohort which is representative of the areas and groups in which they will subsequently work.

Entry requirements

Students entering the programme need to have completed either:

the Foundation Degree Advanced Birth and Beyond Practitioner:

<http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/FDAdvancedBirthandBeyondPractitioner.pdf>

or

the Diploma of Higher Education (Antenatal Education, Breastfeeding Counselling or Postnatal Group Facilitation).

All students must have obtained Excellent Practitioner status with the NCT in their specialism

Students must [be a member of NCT](#) to study on this course.

Admissions procedures

All applicants are considered on an individual basis

All applicants [apply](#) directly to NCT.

Visit NCT's [website](#) for information on assistance with fees.

Admissions/selection criteria

In addition to the qualification requirements the application form also includes the need for a written reflective piece on the applicant's experience of assessment. Where a decision cannot be made on the basis of the application form an interview may be required.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Details of acceptable level 3 qualifications, policy in relation to mature students or applicants with few or no formal qualifications can be found in the prospectus or on the University webpages. Information on eligibility for recognition of prior learning for the purposes of entry or advanced standing is also available from the University webpages or from the Registry Admissions Office (01905 855111).

Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm>

19. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

A range of strategies is used to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality and standards of teaching and learning

1. Mid and end of module evaluations by students
2. Annual NCT student questionnaire in addition to National Survey (NSS)
3. Review by Course Management Committee in conjunction with NCT Academic Board
4. Evaluation and Feedback from students studying for Cert HE and FDA with NCT
5. Peer observation of teachers and tutors
6. On-going staff CPD and scholarship
7. Regular staff meetings
8. External Examiner Reports.
9. These culminate in an annual Evaluation Report and NCT Annual Education Report

20. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's Taught Courses Regulatory Framework

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- All modules have attendance requirements.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations see Taught Courses Regulatory Framework
<http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/TaughtCoursesRegulatoryFramework.pdf>.

Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade, unless the failure was due to non-attendance.
- Reassessment items that are passed are graded at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module).

Requirements for Progression

- Students at Level 4 may be permitted to progress to Level 5 when they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 4.
- Students at Level 5 may be permitted to progress to Level 6 when they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 5.
- A student who fails 90 credits or more due to non-submission will be required to withdraw from the University.
- Students who pass less than 90 credits but have submitted all items of assessment will be required to retake modules.

Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
CertHE	Passed 120 credits at Level 4 or higher
Foundation Degree FdA	120 credits at Level 4 and 120 credits at Level 5 (including NCTC 2115)
Degree (non-honours)	Passed a minimum of 300 credits with at least 90 credits at Level 5 or higher and a minimum of 60 credits at Level 6
BA (Hons) Birth and Beyond Educator Degree with honours	120 credits at Level 4 (Cert HE Birth and Beyond Practitioner) 120 credits at Level 5 (including NCTC2115 & NCTC2109 (if students do not have NCT ANT PNL modules)) 120 credits at Level 6 i.e. A minimum of 360 credits with at least 90 credits at Level 5 or higher and a minimum of 120 credits at Level 6

Classification

The honours classification will be determined by the best grades from 120 credits attained at Level 6 only.

For further information on honours degree classification, see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework

<http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/TaughtCoursesRegulatoryFramework.pdf>.

21. Indicators of quality and standards

External Examiners have consistently judged the previous NCT award (BA Educational Studies NCT) to be a robust programme providing a positive and rewarding learning experience that met appropriate academic standards.

In the field of 'supporting parents in the transition to parenthood', the skills demonstrated by NCT practitioners are widely acknowledged and NCT is seeking to formalise these through NCT Competency Standards Framework.

The University underwent a QAA Institutional Audit in March 2011. The audit confirmed that confidence can be placed in the soundness of the institution's current and likely future management of the academic standards of its awards and the quality of the learning opportunities available to students. The audit team highlighted several aspects of good practice, including the student academic representative initiative, the proactive approach which supports the student experience for disabled students, the comprehensiveness of the student online environment (SOLE), the wide range of opportunities afforded to students to enhance their employability, the institution's commitment to enhancement, and the inclusive approach to working with its collaborative partners.

22. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Graduate destinations

Career openings

Successful completion of the Level 6 module Reflecting on Assessment Practice NCTC3101 enables practitioners to apply for the role of NCT assessor provided they have obtained the status of 'Excellent Practitioner' in their specialism. From the last cohort of students completing the Level 6 Assessment module, 100% were offered a position as an NCT assessor.

Successful completion of the BA (Hons) Birth and Beyond Educator enables practitioners to apply for the role of NCT tutor. From the last cohort of students completing the BA Educational Studies, 80% have been offered a position as an NCT tutor.

Graduates with the BA (Hons) Birth and Beyond Educator are well qualified to apply for any teaching or 'train the trainer' position, not just those within its higher education programme, especially in any field relating to the transition to parenthood.

The employment market for practitioners who work supporting parents in the transition to parenthood includes not only the direct-to-parent services, but also the opportunities provided by the courses commissioned by Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Progression routes/further study opportunities

Successful completion of the Level 6 module Reflecting on Assessment Practice NCTC3101 allows for progression to completion of the BA (Hons) Birth and Beyond Educator.

Successful completion of the BA (Hons) Birth and Beyond Educator enables students to progress to postgraduate study with NCT College and undertake research relating to supporting parents in the transition to parenthood or to adult learning. Alternatively students could progress to external postgraduate study, including for example a PGCE in Early Years or Primary Education.

Student employability

The course prepares students for employment by ensuring that the programme includes both observation of, reflection on, and practice in the role of NCT assessor or tutor. Relevant skills are developed such as the ability to implement a range of assessment strategies; the ability to apply effective and relevant skills to support a range of diverse adult learners in higher education; the ability to design and utilise appropriate curricula.

Work-based learning includes placements with NCT tutors and NCT assessors and the opportunity to undertake supervised assessments, tutorials and facilitated sessions.

Students will have also acquired a wide range of transferable skills which could be used to apply for a wide range of careers requiring degree level education.

Links with employers

The main employer of graduates of the BA (Hons) Birth and Beyond Educator is NCT. As both the employer and the body which has developed and is delivering the course, NCT is in a unique position to ensure that the course is aligned with the requirements NCT has of tutors and assessors.

Whilst there is currently no professional body for those supporting parents in the transition to parenthood, NCT is involved in preparing its competencies as the foundation of formal accreditation in this field. The BA (Hons) Birth and Beyond Educator is completely aligned with these competencies.

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 s/he 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 outlines and Section 3 of the course handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education](#).

For details of Cert HE and FD courses, please see here...

<http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/CertHEBirthandBeyondPractitioner.pdf>

<http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/FDAdvancedBirthandBeyondPractitioner.pdf>