

Programme Specification for Cert HE Birth and Beyond Practitioner

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	NCT
3.	Programme accredited by	N/A
4.	Final award	Certificate of Higher Education
5.	Programme title	Cert HE Birth and Beyond Practitioner
6.	Pathways available	NA
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	<p>Course delivered from September to July including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monthly tutorials – 11 in total (held at one of many tutorial locations around the UK) ○ Module-specific study days (held at one of 8 regional locations around the UK) <p>http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&e=UTF8&msa=0&msid=215166817300838072855.0004bc217d4b6b4f72bb0, and including a residential event at the University of Worcester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assessment days (held at one of 8 regional locations around the UK) ○ Distance learning (including use of some e-learning) at home/place of study of student
8.	Mode of attendance	Full-time (1 year) or Part-time (2 years) – all daytime Majority of Tutorials and Study Days are held on weekdays, though weekends may be available at limited locations.
9.	UCAS code	CertHE/BBP course code L52A Institution W80
10.	Subject benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	Higher education qualification at Level 4 as specified in the QAA Framework for HE Qualifications . In line with National Occupational Standards for Work with Parents (National Occupational Standards 2011)
11.	Date of programme specification preparation/ revision	Regulations (August and November 2014) Updated September 2015

12. Educational aims of the programme

The Cert HE Birth and Beyond Practitioner provides the qualification required to become an NCT Birth and Beyond Practitioner and to facilitate NCT Essentials Courses. These antenatal courses aim to prepare all parents for the transition to parenthood (Department of Health 2011).

This course is for those wishing to work with and support parents as they prepare for the transition to parenthood. It is also the core qualification for those wishing to develop a wider and more advanced skill base by studying the Level 5 Birth and Beyond Modules. Students can progress to Level 5 and the Foundation Degree Birth and Beyond Advanced Practitioner when they have passed 90 credits at Level 4.

The aims of the programme are to:

1. Develop NCT Birth and Beyond Practitioners who are fit for practice and who accept responsibility for on-going personal development.

2. Equip NCT Birth and Beyond Practitioners with the ability to respond to the changing social context of parenting
3. Enable students to have an understanding of the significance of issues of diversity in their practice including, but not exclusive to, cultural diversity
4. Develop the attitudes, values and skills in students that reflect the NCT vision and underpin effective evidence-based practice.
5. Develop practitioners who work in a person-centred manner, showing empathy, warmth and respect for those they work with.
6. Develop critically reflective practitioners who have the ability to utilise contemporary knowledge, research and evidence on which to base their practice.
7. Provide a rewarding and transformational learning experience which ensures the development of a range of transferable academic and practical skills which meet the needs of students, parents, NCT and the wider community.
8. Promote an ethos of partnership with other NCT practitioners and health and social care professionals, enabling parents to benefit from a holistic approach.

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

Learning Outcomes for the Cert HE Birth and Beyond Practitioner

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

Knowledge and understanding:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and an understanding of the key features affecting the health and wellbeing of both parents and babies across the transition to parenthood.
 2. Identify a range of ways in which groups can effectively be used to promote learning, self-realisation and support.
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Cognitive and intellectual skills:

3. Learn independently using reflection, evaluation, feedback, self-directed study and time management skills to meet set objectives.
 4. Access and select up-to-date knowledge, research and evidence, and critically evaluate it before use in practice.
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Practical skills relevant to employment:

5. Demonstrate group facilitation skills which meet the practical, emotional and relationship needs of parents across the transition to parenthood.
6. Apply person-centred skills when working with parents, showing respect for an individual's beliefs and needs and valuing their experience.

7. Evaluate the effectiveness of the NCT Essentials courses that they facilitate, identifying strategies for improving their practice.
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Transferable/key skills:

8. Use a range of strategies for working effectively with groups and for promoting adult learning in a holistic and experiential manner.
9. Employ appropriate and effective communication and interpersonal skills.
10. Assume personal responsibility for practice, learning and continuing development, whilst also being able to identify personal support needs.
11. Demonstrate a non-judgmental attitude which values individuals, their needs and their experiences.

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 tutors model the approach taken by NCT Practitioners when working with students.

Examples of learning and teaching methods:

- Residential Induction Event providing an introduction to both the programme and to life as an adult learner with NCT and the University of Worcester
- Interactive Study Days including information giving, discussion, small group work, and the practise and development of physical skills
- Tutorials including facilitated discussions, presentations, group facilitation and physical skills work
- Facilitation of a Birth and Beyond Course (work-based learning)
- One-to-one sessions with tutors
- NCT Practitioner and Course observation
- 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:
Evaluation of Course Observation
Assessment Days to assess ability to lead a Facilitated Discussion and Interactive Session
Presentation
- Content based:
Evaluation of Case Study; Essay; Report; Reflective Commentary; Resource File;

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 an 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 and include those focussed on 'content' (essays, resource files, evaluations, reflective commentaries) and those focussed on 'practical skills' (facilitated discussions, interactive sessions and facilitated sessions).

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.

In the Course Handbook each assessment, along with comprehensive guidelines, is outlined in the module specifications. 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.

15. Programme structures and requirements

Award Map for Cert HE Birth and Beyond Practitioner

LEVEL 4				
Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	Prerequisites
NCTC 1101	Facilitating Learning in Groups	30	M	None
NCTC 1102	New Family: Changes and Challenges Part 1	30	M	None
NCTC 1103	The Developing Baby	30	M	None
NCTC 1104	Introduction to Reflective Practice	15	M	None
NCTC 1105	Giving Birth	15	M	None

Requirements at level 4

Students must take the 5 mandatory modules. Students must successfully complete 120 credits in total at level 4.

Students will also be expected to:

- Be a member of NCT <http://www.nct.org.uk/get-involved/become-nct-member>
- Attend the residential Induction Event
- Observe two sets of NCT courses
- Become actively involved with their local NCT branch <http://www.nct.org.uk/train-nct/student-involvement-nct>

Students can progress to Level 5 and the Foundation Degree Birth and Beyond Advanced Practitioner when they have passed 90 credits at Level 4.

The Cert HE Birth and Beyond Practitioner can be taken as either a full-time or as a part-time course. The delivery patterns are as follows:

Full-Time Cert HE Birth and Beyond - all 5 Modules completed in 1 year

Part-Time Cert HE Birth and Beyond - all 5 Modules completed over 2 years

Year 1

Introduction to Reflective Practice – 15 credits

Giving Birth – 15 credits

The Developing Baby – 30 credits

Year 2

Facilitating Learning in Groups – 30 credits

New Family – 30 credits

Five Level 4 Modules:

Practitioner Skills modules

- Facilitating Learning in Groups (30 credits)
- Introduction to Reflective Practice (15 credits)

These modules are studied over the whole academic year to allow the student the time needed to learn the art of facilitation and of reflective practice through practise and layered learning.

Theme-based modules

- The Developing Baby (30 credits)
- New Family (30 credits)
- Giving Birth (15 credits)

These modules are studied for set periods during the academic year to allow students to develop their knowledge base in discrete areas.

Programme Structure for full-time Cert HE Birth and Beyond Practitioner

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug
Facilitating Learning in Groups (30 credits)	Start									End		
Giving Birth (15 credits)		Start								End		
The Developing Baby (30 credits)					Start	End						
New Family (30 credits)						Start				End		
Introduction to Reflective Practice (15 credits)	Start									End		

Programme Structure for part-time Cert HE Birth and Beyond Practitioner

Year 1

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug
The Developing Baby (30 credits)					Start	End						
Giving Birth (15 credits)		Start								End		
Introduction to Reflective Practice (15 credits)	Start									End		

Year 2

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug
Facilitating Learning in Groups (30 credits)	Start									End		
New Family (30 credits)						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 4 as specified in the [QAA Framework for HE Qualifications](#).

This award is located at level 4 of the FHEQ.

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

1. Tutors

Core Tutors

The NCT core tutor system is an important part of ensuring that every student receives the individual support that will allow them to progress academically and personally; the core tutor takes on the role of the Personal Academic Tutor for students through level 4. Every student is allocated a Core Tutor and becomes part of a small (up to 16 students) local tutorial group. Students must attend monthly tutorials where they have a chance to practise group facilitation skills, engage in group discussions, share relevant information through presentations and discuss any particular issues of relevance. Core Tutors also provide one-to-one support through face-to-face contact, e-mail and telephone.

Guidance and Support:

Students will be given guidance and support from Core Tutors on how to manage their time in relation to the differing module formats and submission dates.

Module Tutors

Students are also supported through specific modules by Module Tutors who deliver module study days to small groups of students (up to 16) enabling them to work with individual students where necessary. They will also provide one-to-one support where requested.

Mentors

Students are assigned a mentor as they complete the Cert HE Birth and Beyond Practitioner course to support them through their Probationary Year

2. 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.

3. Course Logbook

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

4. Induction

A two-day 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](#)

5. Pre-Qualifying Day

Towards the end of their training students attend a pre-qualifying day which will prepare them for work as a practitioner by covering issues such as:

- NCT Practitioner CPD requirements
- NCT Practitioner contracts and Licence-to-Practise
- Career progression within NCT
- Self-Employment (finance and tax)
- Marketing NCT courses
- Liaising with local health professionals
- Ethics and the NCT Practitioner
- NCT Competencies

6. Work-Based Learning – support for facilitation of NCT Essentials Courses

Students will be provided with clear guidance on how to set up, book and facilitate the NCT Essentials Courses that they will facilitate as part of their probationary period. This will be in the form of written NCT guidelines and as a one-to-one preparatory session with their Core Tutor. They will be issued with an NCT Student Contract which will outline the responsibilities and expectations of both the student and NCT. Further details of 'working within NCT' will be given at the Induction programme.

7. 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

<http://babble.nct.org.uk/info-resources/library-services>

<http://www.nct.org.uk/professional/research>

8. Study Skill Support

Students are able to access the University's learning support both online and through Study Skills Advice Sheets <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/studyskills/>

9. 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.

10. NCT Practitioners and Branches

NCT students are supported by their local NCT practitioners (in particular Excellent Practitioners) and spend time developing a relationship with them through course observation. Students also access support from local branches through relationships built up through branch involvement.

11. Disability and Dyslexia

NCT (Disability Discrimination Policy and Equal Opportunities Policy) and the University (Equal Opportunity Policy) 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. wish to work with parents in the transition to parenthood
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, and who will be able to practise and contribute as NCT Birth and Beyond Practitioners.

NCT is committed to widening participation in line with the NCT 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 2 A Levels (or equivalent) at Grade C or above or

Students need evidence of relevant life and/or work experience related to birth, babies and mothering, adult education or women's issues, coupled with evidence that they will be able to succeed at this level of academic study.

Students must be a member of NCT to study on this course

<http://www.nct.org.uk/get-involved/become-nct-member>

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>

Admissions procedures

All applicants are considered on an individual basis and are invited for interview. Interviews are held at one of 8 regional locations around the country and will comprise of:

- Group discussion with other applicants on topic relating to Birth and Beyond

- Individual 15 minute interview
- Review of standard of written personal statement (UCAS full-time), or of application statements (NCT form part-time)

Full-time applicants apply through UCAS (course code L52A, Institution W80)

Part-time applicants apply directly to NCT

<http://www.nct.org.uk/train-nct/how-apply>

Information on assistance with fees can be found at

<http://www.nct.org.uk/train-nct/fees-funding/help-fees>

Admissions/selection criteria

Students are offered a place if they can demonstrate through interview and submitted personal statements that they:

1. wish to work with parents in the transition to parenthood
2. are committed to the values and ethos of NCT
3. have the capacity to benefit from study at higher education level

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
3. External Examiner Reports
4. Annual Evaluation Report
5. NCT Annual Education Report
6. Review by Course Management Committee in conjunction with NCT Academic Board
7. Evaluation and Feedback from parents attending Birth and Beyond Courses
8. Evaluation from NHS Trusts and Children's Centres contracting Birth and Beyond Courses

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

- 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

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 awards (Diplomas of Higher Education Antenatal Education, Breastfeeding Counselling and Postnatal Group Facilitation) to be robust programmes 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 (StARs) 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

This programme qualifies students as NCT Birth and Beyond Practitioners and enables them to apply for an NCT Birth and Beyond Licence-to-Practise. Practitioners are able to:

- Facilitate NCT Essentials courses that have been contracted for by NHS Trusts and/or Children's Centres.
- Facilitate NCT Essentials courses open to any parent that wishes to book through the NCT booking system.

On completion of the Cert HE Birth and Beyond Practitioner students are eligible to continue to the Foundation Degree Advanced Birth and Beyond Practitioner (Level 5). Specified pathways in this award allow students to specialise as:

- Antenatal Teachers
- Breastfeeding Counsellors
- Postnatal Practitioners
- NCT Yoga for Pregnancy Teachers
- NCT Doulas
- NCT Relax and Stretch with Baby Teachers
- NCT Baby Massage Teachers

On completion of the Foundation Degree, students are eligible to continue to the BA (Hons) Degree (Level 6). Modules at this level allow practitioners to apply for roles as NCT Assessors and NCT Tutors.

(See programme spec below)

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

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](#).