

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION for Foundation Degree (FdA) in Early Years

1	Awarding institution/body: University of Worcester
2	Teaching institution: University of Worcester and Partner Institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birmingham Metropolitan College (Sutton Campus) (<i>Full-time and Part-time</i>) • Birmingham Metropolitan College (Matthew Boulton Campus) (<i>Full-Time and Part-time</i>) • Birmingham Metropolitan College (Stourbridge Campus) (<i>Full-time and Part-time</i>) • Halesowen College (<i>Full-time and Part-time</i>) • Herefordshire & Ludlow College (<i>Full-time and Part-time</i>) • Heart of Worcestershire College (Redditch) (<i>Part-time</i>) • Heart of Worcestershire College (Worcester) (<i>Part-time</i>) • University of Worcester (Flexible and Distributed Programme) (<i>Part-time</i>) • Walsall College (<i>Full-time and Part-Time</i>)
3	Programme accredited by: University of Worcester
4	Final award: Foundation Degree (FdA)
5	Programme title: FdA in Early Years
6	Pathways available: Progression route: BA (Hons) Integrated Working with Children and Families Top Up (refer to Section 22 below)
7	Mode and/or site of delivery: Standard taught programme delivered at partner institutions; two Student Conferences per year held at UW Flexible and Distributed online and at UW
8	Mode of attendance: Part-time, Full-time and Flexible and Distributed
9	UCAS Code: X312 (Full-time)
10	Subject Benchmark statement: Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement (2015). Early Childhood Studies Subject Benchmark Statement (2014) Sector requirements: National Occupational Standards, Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children’s Workforce (2010)
11	Date of Programme Specification preparation/revision: May 2013; amendment to regulations August 2014. Amendment to Partnership to include Matthew Boulton May 2015, May 2016 (removal of Bournville College), August 2016 (HoW, regs and QAA changes)
12	Educational aims of the programme The FdA in Early years provides an opportunity for experienced practitioners working in early years settings and students progressing from level 3 qualifications to gain a professional and academic qualification which is recognised nationally and locally within the sector. The programme combines academic rigour with practice based experience to allow students to develop as reflective practitioners. It is a major route to a top-up honours degree, Early Years Teacher Status (for leaders of early years practice with children under 5 years of age). The aim of the programme is to play a significant role in the on-going development of the early years workforce, nationally, regionally and locally. The FdA Early Years aims to provide a child-centred approach and a framework for academic and professional skills development. Thinking skills, including the ability to reflect and analyse, are facilitated through the student’s developing knowledge, understanding and experience in practice. The programme, which sits within a culture of inter-agency working, requires students to maintain high standards of care and education. Students are expected to develop their personal and professional dispositions within a framework that supports inclusion and diversity. Students who gain the award of FdA Early Years will have demonstrated intellectual abilities and key transferable

attributes, descriptors of which are informed by the QAA Characteristics Statement for Foundation Degrees.

As this degree sits within an arena which has seen many new directives over recent years, there is a need for the programme to remain flexible and responsive to change in its assessment and partnership structure.

The programme aims to:

1. Provide the appropriate knowledge and understanding required for the care and education of children within wider Early Years settings.
2. Develop students as independent reflective practitioners, with a sound understanding of the wider issues relating to young children and their development.
3. Develop students as effective advocates for the rights of young children.
4. Develop an understanding of the regulatory and legislative framework of Early Years, and the effect that it has on children and their families.
5. Enable students to develop appropriate pedagogical approaches to working inclusively with children and families, exploring theory in practice within their settings.
6. Develop students' personal and transferable skills, including communication, IT, team working and leadership, study skills, safeguarding and problem solving.
7. Provide a suitable basis for progression to further academic study or professional qualifications.

13 Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

Knowledge and understanding:

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

- a) Knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of early years care and education and the way in which those principles have developed;
- b) Knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject, and ability to evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in early years care and education and apply these in an integrated work context.

Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:

- Tutor-led and visiting speaker-led seminar groups
- Directed study and set reading
- Interactive tutor-led workshops
- Practice/ work-based enquiry
- Peer group study
- Analysis of reflective journal entries
- Consultation with tutors and professional practice consultants
- Written assignments
- Group presentations
- E-learning and support

Cognitive and intellectual skills:

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

- c) Employ independent learning and research skills to analyse, evaluate and challenge contemporary research, policy and literature in the sector;
- d) Develop academic skills, including the ability to engage in and reflect upon practice/ work-based enquiry and responding to diverse forms of course assessment.

Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:

- Tutor-led and visiting speaker-led seminar groups
- Directed study and set reading
- Interactive tutor-led workshops
- Practice/ work-based enquiry
- Peer group study
- Analysis of reflective journal entries
- Group presentations (including, where appropriate presentations to the FDA conference)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written assignments • Document analysis • E-learning and support
<p><i>Practical skills relevant to employment:</i></p> <p>On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:</p> <p>e) Successfully implement skills learnt on the course within the workplace to develop and implement an inclusive curriculum that promotes the education and wellbeing of children in order to help them achieve, safeguard their welfare and promote equality;</p> <p>f) Use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis in the field of early years care and education and in a work context;</p> <p>g) Undertake further training, develop existing skills, and acquire new competences that will enable students to assume responsibility within organisations.</p>	<p><i>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting agendas and producing action plans • Individual and group presentations • Tutor-led and visiting speaker-led seminar groups • Directed study and set reading • Interactive tutor-led workshops • Practice/ work-based enquiry • Peer group study • Analysis of reflective journal entries • Self-directed, computer mediated learning tasks • Consultation with tutors and professional practice consultants • Written assignments • E-learning and support
<p><i>Transferable/key skills:</i></p> <p>On successful completion of the course, students will be able to demonstrate:</p> <p>h) Ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, and the application of those principles in a work context;</p> <p>i) An understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge in the field of early years care and education and in a work context.</p> <p>j) Effective communication of information, arguments, and analysis, in a variety of forms, to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively in an early years, inter-agency work context;</p> <p>k) The development of qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment and progression to other qualifications requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making;</p> <p>l) The ability to utilise opportunities for lifelong learning.</p>	<p><i>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting agendas and producing action plans • Individual and group presentations • Tutor-led and visiting speaker-led seminar groups • Directed study and set reading • Document analysis • Interactive tutor-led workshops • Practice/ work-based enquiry • Peer group study • Analysis of reflective journal entries • Self-directed, computer mediated learning tasks • Consultation with tutors and professional practice consultants • Written assignments • E-learning and support

m) Effective use of ICT skills

14 **Assessment Strategy**

The programme's assessment strategy has been considered within the context of UW's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, Assessment Policy, Curriculum Design Policy and Policy on the Management of Work-based and Placement Learning.

The programme assesses the ability to reflect and theorise practice thereby supporting professional development through academic study and practice based learning. Competence in practice is assessed against current criteria for effective practice and evidenced through a portfolio of evidence.

A range of assessment strategies contribute to the assessment of the overall course learning outcomes and module learning outcomes. Formative and summative assessment strategies are used to support personal and professional development, which underpins but also goes beyond the achievement of specific learning outcomes.

Formative assessment is provided through responses to academic and practice based learning activities including reflective journal entries. Interactive face to face and online learning and teaching approaches including student evaluation of learning, provides further opportunity for timely formative assessment.

The form of summative assessment (for each module) is determined by its appropriateness in allowing the student to demonstrate they have understood and can meet the learning outcomes with potential for achievement across the full range of grades. Assessment strategies are embedded within the learning and teaching experience. Some forms of assessment require forms of representation that facilitate the assessment of theory in practice and incorporate practice based study.

There will be one summative assessment per module, supported by two formal formative assessments. The formative assessments will be used to provide students with feedback to inform their summative submission.

Assessments:

- Are a maximum of 4,000 words
- Include formative and summative elements
- Are aligned with subject, course, module outcomes and learning and teaching methods
- Summatively assess all module learning outcomes
- Include different assessment points and split assessments within modules where this approach is deemed to be beneficial to the students achievement of course and module learning outcomes
- Provide opportunity for achievement of all grades
- Provide opportunity for choice/negotiation where appropriate to the module content, learning outcomes and level of study
- Include a range of assessment methods that enable students to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes and the transferable skills inherent within them

Further information on how the assessment methods at each level are mapped to modules is included in the Student Handbook.

Centre for Early Childhood generic assessment criteria (developed from the University of Worcester criteria) apply to all modules.

Module learning outcomes relevant to the appropriate level of study as identified in QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ 2008) and provide the focus for the assessment of student achievement. Module outlines identify learning outcomes and those being assessed for each summative assessment task.

Assessment of practice

Evidence from experience in practice is essential to all aspects of learning, teaching and assessment:

- Evidence from experience in practice will stimulate individual and peer learning in modules and will be used by students as a source of data in assessments.
- Completion of hours and competence in practice is assessed through a Practice Portfolio within FDEY1500 (Level 4) and FDEY 2500 (Level 5) (0 credit modules) which are a requirement for the FdA in Early Years award

Assessing competence in practice

The assessment of competence in practice has been developed across all of the UW Centre for Early Childhood undergraduate courses involving the assessment of professional practice. This provides a standardised approach across the Centre for Early Childhood, which is helpful to progressing students, settings, colleagues in partner institutions and the CEC Team.

The criteria for assessment have been aligned with current indicators of effective practice in early years settings with the purpose of supporting the progressive development of your professional practice; currently these are the current Early Years Teacher standards which relate to practice competence.

15 Programme structures and requirements

Requirements at level 4

Students must take the 4 mandatory modules

Students must successfully complete 120 credits in total at level 4.

LEVEL 4

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	Prerequisites (Code of Module required)
FDEY 1500	Competence in Practice (Level 4)	0	M	N/A
FDEY 1501	Understanding Children's Development and Learning	30	M	NA
FDEY 1502	Supporting learning and development in practice (Practice Based Learning Module)	30	M	FDEY 1501

FDEY 1503	Protecting and safeguarding: working together for the child. Note: this module (30 credits) must be passed to enable progression as it underpins the professional requirements to safeguard children.	30	M	NA
FDEY 1504	Working together to develop positive learning environments (Practice Based Learning Module)	30	M	FDEY 1503

Students must have successfully completed 90 credits at level 4 in order to progress to Level 5 study.

Requirements at level 5

Students must take the 4 mandatory modules

Students must successfully complete 120 credits in total at level 5.

LEVEL 5

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	Prerequisites (Code of Module required)
FDEY 2500	Competence in Practice (level 5)	0	M	FDEY 1500
FDEY 2501	Investigating key features of quality enhancement in early childhood education and care	30	M	FDEY 1503
FDEY 2502	Evaluating and developing the curriculum for young children	30	M	FDEY 1503
FDEY 2503	Reflecting, responding and learning: practice and self (Practice/ work-based learning)	30	M	FDEY 1503
FDEY 2504	Practice/ work-based enquiry: improving quality in early years settings	30	M	FDEY 1503

Practice based learning

Practice based learning forms a significant proportion of the Foundation Degree, with practice based learning incorporated into taught modules. Learning in practice is supported through a mixture of practice based learning activities, face-to-face delivery, e- learning, directed tasks, a reflective diary and a reflective journal.

Practice based Learning will usually take place in an OFSTED registered setting deemed good or outstanding. Consideration will be given to paid employees in settings which do not meet these requirements; extended experience in different settings will be a requirement in these cases.

If the OFSTED grade changes from good or outstanding after students have registered on the programme, they must notify the Course Leader so that extended experience in a different setting can be negotiated.

All students are required to be in employment or working voluntarily in an early years setting for the duration of their studies.

Students are required to be in employment or working voluntarily in an early years setting for a minimum of 600 hours.

- Students studying full-time are expected to be in practice for a minimum of two days (10 hours) per week for 40 days per year in the same setting (serial placement) and 20 days in two blocks of 10 days (block placement) in different settings. This equates to a minimum of 300 hours per level of study / academic year.
- Students studying part-time are expected to be in practice for a minimum of one day (5 hours) per week for 20 days per year in the same setting (serial placement) and 10 days in two blocks of 5 days (block placement) in different settings. This equates to a minimum of 300 hours at each level of study.
- Students who are employed within an early years setting are likely to exceed this requirement in their own setting. However, during the course of their studies, they will need to negotiate a period of professional practice experience in a different setting. The Practice Based Learning Tutor will provide guidance as required.
- Completion of hours and competence in practice is assessed through a Practice Portfolio within FDEY1500 (Level 4) and FDEY 2500 (Level 5) (0 credit modules) which are a requirement for the FdA in Early Years award.

Evidence from experience in practice is essential to all aspects of learning, teaching and assessment:

- Evidence from experience in practice will stimulate individual and peer learning in modules and will be used by students as a source of data in assessments.
- Completion of hours and competence in practice is assessed through a Practice Portfolio within FDEY1500 (Level 4) and FDEY 2500 (Level 5) (0 credit modules) which are a requirement for the FdA in Early Years award.

FdA in Early Years Flexible and Distributed Learning (FDL)

This pathway recognises the importance of accessing a delivery mode which meets the needs of the learner in relation to the expectations of Higher Education. A significant amount of study time will be online, in the Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard which is designed to facilitate collaborative and independent learning. In addition to face to face and practice based learning

experience, this mode of study requires considerable commitment to on-going engagement with on-line learning opportunities. Practice based learning in OFSTED registered settings which are deemed good or outstanding is a requirement of the FdA in Early Years programme.

ICT Competence Requirements

This mode of study requires a basic level of ICT competence.

An audit of ICT skills is completed at interview. Students will be asked to review skills as they progress through the course and engage with online tutorials and are introduced to other tools within the VLE.

There is time allocated within induction and the first face-to-face session at UW to ensure all students are supported regardless of their level of ICT skills to become familiar with the online learning environment.

Computer and software needs to be current and have to access information via the VLE and via the web. Many of the conversion programmes needed for older computers are freely available via the web however some of the animations or video may not play if you have not the required software and hardware.

Minimum hardware and software would be as follows.

At the university, we now use Office 2012 as standard. This means that the following are compatible:

Office 2012

Office Live (cloud based service for students only – comes free with student SkyDrive)

Office 2007

Office 2008 for Mac

Office 2011 for Mac

Pages for Mac

It is also possible to download free viewers for office programs, which will let people open, but not edit documents:

Word Viewer and PowerPoint Viewer both have free access software via the Internet.

Windows office suites older than 2007 may be compatible, but will require compatibility pack to work correctly (which is free to download).

A free office suite can be downloaded from www.openoffice.org which will also enable you to open / edit office documents.

16 QAA and Professional Standards and Quality

The [QAA Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement](#) (2015), Early Childhood Studies Subject Benchmark Statement (2014), UK Quality Code for Higher Education (B3 Section 2 indicator 2) Work-based and placement learning, and Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ 2008) have been used as a framework within which this programme has been developed, and within which it will be implemented and monitored. The course is located at level 5 of the FHEQ.

The Characteristics Statement defining the distinctive features of Foundation Degrees within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ 2008) ensures that expectations placed on student performance are recorded in language appropriate to the levels on module outlines and that assessment of knowledge, understanding and skills of students is appropriate at individual centres and across the partnership i.e. supporting moderation and standardisation. Feedback from external examiners facilitates on-going evaluation of the expectations placed on students and the extent of their attainment.

17 Support for students

Students are supported by a Personal Academic Tutor, Module Tutors, Course Leaders, a professional Partner in the setting and Practice Based Learning Tutor. A peer learning support system is integral to the course design and organisation. A student handbook and module outlines provide relevant information and guidance.

Individual support

A named personal academic tutor will be available so that a learning relationship can quickly be established. Tutors are accessible by telephone, e-mail or in person by appointment.

Online and distance learning

Online learning and tutor support will be available through e-mail and the use of the Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment.

Curriculum design

The programme has been designed to support student's achievement through an emphasis on reflective practice which supports personal and professional development, theorisation of practice and its impact on quality improvement within early years settings. Competence in practice is developed and assessed throughout the course.

As students progress through the programme and gain confidence, the module content will require more independence. The learning outcomes of the programme reflect a student-centred approach enabling students from diverse but relevant educational backgrounds to build on previous learning and experience.

Student Conferences

Twice per academic year, once in each semester, the Foundation Degree in Early Years community is able to meet at the University of Worcester and be part of a dynamic and growing national and international community. The conference is designed to support the modules currently being undertaken at all levels. They provide opportunity for collaborative research to be shared and allows attendees to be informed by other practitioners, Local Authority and eminent speakers identified as leaders in the field of early years, reinforcing our ethos of collaborative communities of practice. The conferences also provide a forum for learning about progression and career opportunities.

Study skills

Study skills are identified and embedded within all modules.

Practice Based Learning

Practice based learning forms a significant proportion of the Foundation Degree. It is incorporated into taught modules and dedicated practice based learning modules. It is supported through a mixture of face-to-face delivery, e- learning, directed tasks, a reflective diary and a reflective journal. Deadlines will be set for the completion of tasks. Students have responsibility for organising their own time to meet deadlines.

Support in the workplace

Practice based learning requires as much support as traditional learning.

The structure consists of appropriate support from the setting through a designated Professional Partner. The Professional Partner will be a colleague within the student's setting. This person is

someone with whom they can chat informally and from whom they can gain day-to-day advice and feedback.

Further support will be available from the Practice Based Learning Tutor, the Course Leader and other tutors, where appropriate.

Peer Group Support.

Learning groups will be established with a central membership of peers and will meet for informal but regular discussions based on personal and professional development. Learning groups will also be utilised within module group work where appropriate.

Other methods of peer group support include e-mail communication and online conferencing, described above.

Progression

The BA (Hons) Top Up in Integrated Working with Children and Families (IWCF) is the identified progression route to full honours for this programme (See Section 22).

Transition on to this programme is supported by Information and support for students:

- **from** Partner Course Leaders (in collaboration with the FdA Early Years Partnership Management Team), Link Tutor and IWCF Course Leader;
- **via** induction, student handbooks, leaflets, Course Management Committee, Student Conference, Blackboard (VLE) and e mails.

UW and Partner Colleges provide other support through:

- An Induction Programme at the beginning of each academic year for new entrants
- Student Services
- Specialist support for disabled students via the Disability and Dyslexia Service
- Student representatives
- Careers
- Learning Resources: Library, Media and IT (supported by visits to UW and visits to partner colleges by ILS staff)
- Student union, Sports & Leisure facilities
- Student conferences

18 Admissions

Admissions policy

The course seeks to recruit students from a range of educational and experiential backgrounds, including those with significant experience of working in early years settings and those who are progressing from vocational or academic courses at college or school.

A lack of formal qualifications is not necessarily a barrier to joining the course if you have relevant experience and commitment to learning. The course is committed to widening participation. University and partner college equal opportunity policies apply in relation to course admissions processes and selection criteria.

We welcome applicants who hold alternative qualifications/experience different to those shown in this section who can demonstrate the ability to benefit from the course and show their potential to complete the course successfully.

Although recent preparatory study at an appropriate level (e.g. Access to HE Diploma) is recommended, students may be considered on the basis of prior evidenced professional/work experience and/or other assessment procedures, and the assessment of personal suitability. University Admissions office staff will be able to offer information, advice and guidance on this process.

Students with relevant previous study at HND or degree level or extensive experience may be considered eligible for Recognition of Prior Learning. Entry may be possible to Year Two of the course, depending upon the qualifications or experience gained.

Entry Requirements

4 GCSEs at Grade C or above.

Evidence of level 2 Literacy is also required, for example Key Skills level 2 or GCSE English Language at C or above. Maths GCSE at Grade C or above is desirable. If students do not have evidence of Literacy at level 2, it will be necessary to complete a University of Worcester literacy equivalency test (details of how to organise this are available from the Registry Admissions Office, the contact details are below. Please note there is a charge for taking an equivalency test; this is currently £25).

Plus:

- 140 UCAS points to include: a minimum of 1 A Level and maximum of 3 1/2 A Levels or an equivalent Level 3 qualification; for example the CACHE Diploma or EdExcel BTEC National Diploma in Children's Care, Learning and Development.

All students need:

- current police clearance to work with young children (DBS); relevant forms will be sent by admissions on receipt of a firm acceptance of an offer of a place on the course; a testimony / reference that supports the student's commitment and suitability for the course.

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).

Applicants for the part-time programme route who do not hold the above qualifications will be considered on the basis of prior professional experience and the criteria indicated above.

Further information or guidance is available from Registry Admissions Office (01905 855111) or from <http://www.worc.ac.uk/courses/howtoapply/476.html>

Admissions procedures

Selection criteria for all modes of study and delivery

The applicants:

- commitment to working with and for children;

- commitment to personal development as evidenced in different ways such as work experience, previous study, and/or training courses, portfolio of professional achievements, performance assessments, personal interests etc.;
- suitability for working with young children;
- suitability for working as part of a team within an early years setting;
- literacy skills in relation to how these will enable them to fulfil the requirements of the course.

Offers of places are usually made on the basis of the application and an interview with representatives from the course team.

The application should address the selection criteria above:

- Full-time applicants apply through UCAS (Code X312)
- Part-time applicants apply directly to University of Worcester (UW) (Part-time application form available on UW website).
- Part-time applicants to Heart of Worcestershire College apply directly to the college

The interview provides an opportunity for:

- applicants to fully understand the nature and requirements of the course and to be able to make an informed decision if offered a place on the programme;
- applicants to demonstrate their suitability for the course;
- the course team to gain further information in relation to the selection criteria (below) and to make an informed decision or identify further action or evidence as required;
- the course team to identify additional learning needs and relevant support required, which might include organising a placement or providing guidance on student support services.

Access to practice based learning in an OFSTED registered setting deemed good or outstanding is a course requirement. For some applicants this may require further discussion with the Course Leader at interview.

Flexible and Distributed Programme

To support your successful engagement and achievement on the programme an audit of IT skills will be conducted at the interview to identify your strengths and weaknesses and how these can be supported. Details of this audit will be sent to you on confirmation of your interview at the University of Worcester.

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

The course is monitored at a local level by student evaluation of modules and student representation at course committees. Each partner institution writes its own Annual Evaluation Report; these are then collated to develop an overall programme Annual Evaluation Report. To support the programme UW's Partnership Management Team lead on the on-going communication and delivery of the programme. They plan regular cross-moderation and standardisation events for the whole course team to ensure quality and standards are consistent across partner institutions. Further to this Link Tutors have a role in working with individual partner institutions. This process is further strengthened by external examiners who verify work and marks across the institutions and feedback on quality issues. Tutors at partner institutions are registered lecturers of UW, which supports and offers opportunities for staff development and scholarly activity. Conference days at UW provide further opportunity for CPD, collaborative working and peer assessment. A Partnership

Management Committee oversees Quality Assurance and Enhancement. Regular partnership team meetings are essential to the planning, delivery and development of the programme within a collaborative approach.

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 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.
- Some 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](#).

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.
- 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	Passed a minimum of 240 credits with at least at 120 credits Level 4 or higher and 120 credits at Level 5

These awards are not classified.

21. Indicators of quality and standards

External examiner reports not only confirm that standards are appropriate for study at Level 4/5 and are in line with standards experienced elsewhere, they have identified that the programme is 'innovative and cutting edge' (February 2013). The partnership team's commitment to on-going evaluation and improvement has been identified.

Course review May 2010: Good Practice and Innovation

The Panel noted the following features of good practice and innovation:

1. The involvement of Local Authorities and their representatives, particularly from Shropshire and Herefordshire as partners in the design, development and delivery of the programme, and specifically as essential and core elements of the work based learning initiative.
2. The collaboration between partner college staff and University staff in pedagogical research and development projects culminating in presentations at national conferences and publications.
3. The development of the partnership across areas of Shropshire and Herefordshire which has allowed access to higher education for non-traditional students and those who would not otherwise have had such an opportunity.
4. The conceptual model of the 'team around the student' underpinning the new course proposal and the potential for employers and tutors to work together in supporting the development of students as professional practitioners.
5. The way in which the partnership team has built a community of practice and encouraged engagement in a joint learning experience.
6. The way in which the team has made use of staff expertise in the development of the course and specific projects including mentoring of staff across the partnership to support both individuals and course teams.
7. Strong links with a range of UW support services, particularly ILS and the Welfare and Financial Advice Service to help with students' induction into the course.

The Foundation Degree remains a sought after qualification for those wishing to progress in the area of Early Years education and care. An increasing number of students are progressing on to UW's BA (Hons) in Integrated Early Childhood Studies Top-up or Early Years Teacher Status which have also received praiseworthy reports from external examiners.

22. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Student employability

The FdA in Early Years prepares students for employment in early years settings but also provides opportunities for progression on to further study and qualifications. It provides opportunities for practice-based experience and learning and the development of relevant transferable skills and

attributes which provide a strong foundation for a range of professional roles in the sector and beyond. The Student Conferences provide opportunities for students to receive advice on careers and progression and to benefit from participation within the wider community of practitioners and employers.

Graduate destinations

The FdA in Early Years will support students in pursuing careers in areas such as:

- Leadership and management within early years settings e.g. as an Early Years Teacher or nursery manager
- Social welfare / Social work
- Family support work
- Children's charities: e.g. Barnardos
- Playwork
- Early years education: teaching or teaching assistant
- Day care provision
- Early Years Services

N.B. Further study may be necessary for some these. Further advice is available during the course and from UW Careers Advisors.

Links with Employers

The FdA EY opens up opportunities for career progression for students who are already in employment, working voluntarily in the sector or progressing from Level 3 study. Employers are involved in the design of the course, its on-going delivery and review. A Partnership Forum which includes representatives from Early Years LA Services across the region supports collaborative working with UW and FE providers.

Progression to Linked Honours Degree(s)/Top-Up Degree(s)

The identified progression route to an honours award is the BA (Hons) Top Up in Integrated Working with Children and Families. Other possibilities include: BA (Hons) Social Welfare, BA (Hons) Education Studies, Early Years Teacher and direct entry to year two of BA Hons Primary Education (QTS).

The entry requirements for the BA (Hons) Top Up in Integrated Working with Children and Families include GCSE English and Mathematics (Grade C or above) in addition to a relevant Level 5 qualification (e.g. Foundation Degree).

Students registered for the FdA in Early Years or FdA in Early Childhood prior to and in the academic year 2012-13 will not need GCSE in Mathematics (Grade C or above) for entry on to the BA (Hons) Top Up in Integrated Working with Children and Families because this was not a requirement on entry to the Foundation Degree; the entry requirements to the designated progression route have since changed (June 2012).

Due to the requirements for further progression e.g. Early Years Teacher Status / Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) it is strongly recommended that students gain GCSEs in English, Mathematics and Science or equivalent whilst studying for their Foundation Degree. Advice on equivalency tests will be provided during the course.

Support for transition to the linked Honours Degree/Top-Up route is provided through:

- The FdA in Early Years curriculum design – aligned to the expectations of the progression route e.g. study skills, practitioner research and related skills and knowledge
- The FdA in Early Years learning, teaching and assessment strategy which has been designed to support transition to honours level study e.g. independent and critical engagement
- The FdA in Early Years Partnership Team which provides a standardised and coherent approach to information and support for students (Refer to Section 17). In addition to progression being embedded within the provision students will be offered advice on choice of progression routes (and where relevant to the identified UW route), advice on subsequent module choices and Independent Study preparation.
- UW's Centre for Early Childhood standardisation across different levels supports the transition of students from different partner colleges to the UW BA (Hons) Top Up in Integrated Working with Children and Families.

Other progression routes include:

Early Years Teacher: applicants to the Undergraduate Practitioner Pathway require GCSE's in English Language and Mathematics and Science (in addition to a Level 5 qualification).

Progression routes for BA(Hons) Top Up in Integrated Working with Children and Families graduates include:

- Early Years Teacher: Graduate Entry Pathway and Graduate Practitioner Pathway): an honours / non honours degree and GCSE's in English Language, Science and Mathematics required prior to application;
- PGCE Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) course: a good honours degree and GCSE's in English Language, Mathematics and Science required prior to application.

Further information is available at <http://www.worc.ac.uk/departments/8792.html>

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 study guides and course student handbook.