

Department of Childhood Studies

Faculty of Education

**MA in Early Years: Frequently Asked Questions**

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**Why study for an MA?**

An MA is undoubtedly an important qualification in the context of your professional development and career pathway. Government intention is that teaching should become a masters profession and leaders of early years practice should have postgraduate qualifications.

Studying for a Master's degree and working with course colleagues from other disciplines will help you to think about your professional practice and context in new and stimulating ways. The programme content is taken from the cutting edge of research, current political and social initiatives and early years practice and child development. In engaging in study towards your Master's degree you will be encouraged to take new perspectives on the nature of professional practice and to assume the roles of researcher and critical analyst in relation to early years, its practitioners and institutions.

**What is the early years programme about?**

This Masters programme recognises that the first five years of a child's life are crucial to later emotional, social and educational development. Your study will centre on the place of the child in a diverse and rapidly changing world. The content reflects a holistic view of early years development and will include such issues as play, learning, literacy and numeracy, media literacy, gender, transitions, culture, inclusion, neuro-scientific research, creativity, different curricula models, integrated and inter-professional working, leadership and management of change. It also enables you to look at early years education within international and historical perspectives.

The agenda for this programme is set by research and the development of policy at both national and international levels. The overall objective is to equip you with the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to be able to initiate and develop effective and independent research projects based on your own particular interests.

**Who is the programme suitable for?**

This is a multi-disciplinary programme with a focus on leadership. As such it is suitable for aspiring leaders of early years in schools, nurseries and pre-school settings, nursery owners and managers, children's centre staff, early years advisers and staff

working in multidisciplinary early years teams. It is also an essential part of continuing professional development for Early Years Professionals (EYPs). It is also suitable for voluntary workers, parents or those with an interest in the early years. You will be part of a Masters community within the Education Faculty.

**How long will it take to complete?**

The programme is offered either on a part-time or full time basis. The **part time programme** for the full MA takes 3 years. Programme members are normally expected to complete within the three year period, although you may take up to five years in special circumstances. It is possible for you to take some time out of your studies if this becomes necessary through work or family commitments. The programme is in three exit award stages, so you can also leave at the end of each stage with a qualification: Stage 1 Post Graduate Certificate, Stage 2 Post Graduate Diploma and finally Stage 3 MA in Early Years. You may also take an individual module at any time, subject to modules being offered. The **full time pathway** can be completed in 1 year.

**When does the teaching take place?**

***Part-time programme***

Teaching takes place in the evening (normally one evening a week over 8 weeks per module) with a few optional Saturday sessions. There are no sessions during half term or school holidays.

***Full-time programme for the MA (suitable for home and international students)***

The programme is taught over one year on 2 or 3 evenings a week with some day time sessions and optional Saturday schools.

**What will be my commitment in terms of attendance and submission of work?**

The programme is primarily based at our Medway Campus, with some sessions taught at our other campuses. A virtual learning environment can be accessed from home through an internet connection and this is an essential part of the programme, enabling you to access resources from home. Assessment for each module is tailored to your own requirements but normally takes the form of an

assignment, which might consist of a written report or analysis: for example of a film which represents childhood in a different time or place, or of a challenging situation encountered at work or some aspect of practice or policy. It could also be a comparative study of curricula, a presentation, a review of literature or a report of your own research projects. Please note that following a successful pilot phase the MA EY is on the Integrated Qualifications Framework (IQF.)

### **What do I need in order to access the programme?**

The entry qualification to this programme is a good Bachelor's degree or the equivalent, e.g. an Advanced Certificate in HE. If you do not have these formal qualifications you may enter the programme on an Associate Member basis and on successful completion of one module, use that as an entry qualification. You should be working in or have access to a school pre-school setting, nursery, children's centre or other early years provision. You must have an understanding of and a commitment to working in the early years, with relevant paid or voluntary experience within the last 2 years. If you visit settings or schools for research purposes you must provide a CRB check. You will be expected to bring this with you when you arrive at the University.

### **What access will I have to University facilities?**

As a student you will have full access to the University's facilities, including library membership and a computer account. Some of the course material will be available on-line through library services and you will be given support to help you to access this effectively and regularly. The library contains an excellent range of titles and books which can be reserved through the internet to minimise the need to visit Medway or Canterbury.

### **What modules could I study in Stage1?**

Year 1 modules are as follows:

- Early Years: Research Reflection and Professional Practice
- Childhood in Context: Historical and International Perspectives
- Leading Practice in the Early Years

There are also optional modules which can be taken in year 1, subject to a viable cohort, which include Pedagogy and Play, Early Years Practice and Integrated Working and Leadership in Integrated Working.

In year 2 you will study 3 modules:

- Policy and Practice
- Curricular Approaches
- Negotiated Module

In year 3 you will complete a dissertation.

### ***How much does it cost? 2011-2012***

Fees for 2011-12 in variations such as UK/EU/Non EU students part time and Full Time have yet to be confirmed.

### **How do I apply?**

Application forms and further information may be obtained from:

<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/courses/ma-early-years>

Following your application, you will be contacted by the Programme Director

**Liz Hryniewicz**

Email: [liz.hryniewicz@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:liz.hryniewicz@canterbury.ac.uk)

**Nikki Price**

Faculty Administrator Education Medway Campus

Canterbury Christ Church University

Rowan Williams Court

30 Pembroke Court, Chatham Maritime

Kent ME4 4UF

Email: [nikki.price@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:nikki.price@canterbury.ac.uk)

Please contact the Programme Director or Administrator any time if you would like more information or any clarification.