

Early Childhood BA (Hons)

UCAS Code: X320 | Duration: 3 years | Full-time | Hope Park | 2025/2026

Placement year opportunities available



Course Overview

The undergraduate programme in Early Childhood Studies provides a higher level of academic study that will extend your knowledge and understanding of children in their early years. We hope to ignite your curiosity as we explore young children's development and interaction with the world and that in understanding the inequalities that children face locally and globally, you will grow as advocates for young children's needs and rights.

The Early Childhood team aim to provide a stimulating and supportive learning environment for all our students through a high level of tutor support, access to exceptional University resources and engagement with our multidisciplinary teaching team with wide experience in research, practice and policy in the field.

The degree is taught by academics from a wide variety of backgrounds, including Sociology, Education, Philosophy and Psychology. The teaching team are all actively involved in research and have published in their specialist fields. They are all members of the thriving Liverpool Hope Childhood Research Forum and contribute to a range of research conferences both nationally and internationally.

For Single Honours students there is a compulsory placement as part of your degree. The placement will enable you to enhance your understanding of key themes and provides you with an insight into the professional context. For Combined Honours students the placement is optional. The Single Honours programme also offers the option to obtain separate professional certification as a graduate practitioner through assessment against the Early Childhood Graduate Practitioner Competencies.

Entry Requirements

This course follows the standard University entry requirements. Please see the website for further information.

Fees and Additional Costs

The tuition fees for 2025/2026 are £9,535 for full-time undergraduate courses.

On top of tuition fees, you will need approximately £100 to buy key textbooks required for the degree.

You will also need to consider the cost of your accommodation each year whilst you study at university.

Visit our accommodation webpages for further details about our Halls of Residence: www.hope.ac.uk/halls/

Applicants will need access to a computer if course delivery is switched to online. The University has a laptop lending service if remote study is necessary.



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Early Childhood BA (Hons) Curriculum

Year One

Your first year of study is an introduction to Early Childhood. You will look at the socio-cultural and historical constructs of childhood, including perceptions of childhood and the contemporary understandings of child development. Other topics you study include the history of the development of the study of Early Childhood, including the Early Childhood pioneers, as well as the role of play.

There is also an exploration of attachment theory and the role of the key person, and you are introduced to researching young children, the role of research ethics and child observation.

Single Honours students also study education for sustainable development focusing on the environment, children and nature, and are introduced to notions of professional practice, involving the role of the critically reflective learner and the role of using evidence for learning. Finally, you study contemporary trends in Early Childhood associated with the environment.

Year Two

In your second year, you develop your knowledge of Early Childhood and the key themes that underpin it. You will build up your understanding of learning theory, including socio-cultural approaches such as inclusive practice and current educational approaches for working with babies and young children. You investigate contemporary understandings of developmental psychology, involving the biological basis of infancy and cognition in infancy.

There is also an exploration of culture, environment and experience on well-being, learning and development, for example gender and identity. You will look at international comparisons of Early Childhood education and care. Other topics studied involve exploring researching young children, including the critique of research design, research

patterns, research methods and measurement techniques.

Single Honours students develop your understanding of professional practice, including a critical knowledge of current provision for prenatal, babies and young children. You also develop your understanding of education for sustainable development, focusing on equity, democracy and inclusion. Finally, you examine contemporary trends in early childhood associated with well-being and development.

Year Three

You will explore the historical, philosophical, global, economic and political development of ideas of childhood, involving issues in relation to rights, diversity, equity and inclusion. You also look at the historical, social and global development of policy and legislation regarding children and their families.

You will explore some of the key issues for children in their early years and their families and will critically examine the function of a multi-agency team in relation to high profile cases. You also study the professional practitioner, focusing on leadership in early year's contexts.

Single Honours students also study education for sustainable development, focusing on economy, social justice and social action. Undertaking research in the area of early childhood, you explore enhancing research, such as the philosophy of research, creativity in research, and innovation in research. You will explore contemporary trends in early childhood associated with the needs of the child and family, such as research informed understandings of the looked after child, excluded children, disabled children, and global childhoods.

All third year students complete a dissertation, which analyses a topic of your choice with guidance from your tutor.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Teaching on this degree is structured mainly into lectures, seminars and tutorials which typically have no more than 10 students. You will also take part in workshops, guided reading activities and distance learning. You also have the opportunity to meet with your tutor on a one-to-one basis each week.

If you are studying a Single Honours degree, in your first year there are approximately 12 teaching hours each week, which reduces to approximately 10 teaching hours in your second and third years. If you are studying a Combined Honours degree, in your first year there are approximately 6 teaching hours each week, which reduces to approximately 5 teaching hours in your second and third years.

On top of teaching hours, you are also expected to spend a number of hours each week studying independently, as well as studying in groups.

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

Assessment methods include essays, exams, posters, and reflective journals. Feedback on assessments will be given to you online and you will also have the opportunity to meet face-to-face with your tutor. Longer pieces of writing are supported by interim constructive written and oral feedback.



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