

Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

Basic Course Information

1.	Awarding Institution:	Nottingham Trent University
2.	School/Campus:	Social Sciences / Clifton
3.	Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study:	BA (Hons) Childhood (Special Educational Needs and Inclusion) Full time
4.	Normal Duration:	Three years
5.	UCAS Code:	

6. Overview and general educational aims of the course

This BA (Hons) Course is a broad-based degree studied full-time, over three years. You will focus on the holistic development, education and experiences of children between birth and early adolescence (0-11 years). You will examine areas as diverse as how children learn and develop, behaviour, cultural perspectives and the effect of environments. The underlying principle is a rights-based view of the child as an active, responsive and decisive individual, at the centre of families and their communities, interacting with societies and situated within a global context. Perspectives on the influences on children's learning and development are central to the teaching and learning for this course of study.

You will follow an area of specialist interest in Special Educational Needs and inclusion for 20 credits in each year.

The distinctive features of the course are breadth, connection and experience. Firstly, the breadth of module areas studied and the range of potential career possibilities make the course an ideal choice if you are sure you want to work with children and have a particular interest in inclusion, learning support and disability in educational and community contexts.

Secondly, there are 5 themes that thread through the course and these themes promote cross-modular links both through and between the years of the course allowing you to make strong connections with knowledge and understanding of children and childhood learning and development. Knowledge and skills in these areas are considered to be essential for employability in the children's sector. The themes, which cover core areas for personal and professional development, are woven through the course and are reflected in your learning at each level as you progress through your course of study. The five themes are, academic and personal development, research skills, diversity and inclusive practice, childhood learning and development and the policy/social context for this. These make up 100 credits in each year.

Teaching and assessment in areas of special interest in each year provide the additional 20 credits in special educational needs and inclusion.

Thirdly, there are opportunities for diverse work-based learning experiences in a variety of settings, most particularly with the chance to undertake an international experience. In your final year there is a synoptic assessment of your understanding, skills and knowledge in relation to your employability.

These three distinctive features work together to ensure you will be a strong candidate for employment as a graduate within the children's' sector.

The staff team are professionals who have had experience of working with children and families in a range of contexts. There is also a growing body of graduates from the course who continue to inform us about developments in

the work-place, which endorses the relevance of the course to current practice.

The course enables those of you who aspire to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding as practitioners in the children's sector, to develop appropriate pedagogical approaches to work with babies, young children, families and communities and to support and co-ordinate current initiatives within education, social services, health services and community / voluntary project work, whilst also developing the professionalism and confidence to respond to future initiatives.

You will undertake a work-based learning opportunity in year 2 that is integral to a core module where the focus is on developing a perspective of childhood learning and development and children's lived experiences in a global context, when you organise your own work-based learning experiences with other communities, either overseas or in the UK. This experience will be undertaken normally for up to 80 hours.

For those of you who are interested in supporting and working alongside children and their families, but are unsure as yet as to the precise setting or career pathway, the broad context of modules on the course(s) offers you opportunities to help identify your strengths and interest areas. This ensures, in terms of employability, that there are a range of different career pathways from the course which may be considered, including teaching, social work, play work, family support, charity work, community projects, nursing, environmental projects, refugee support, child counselling and advocacy and other roles within Children's services. Some of these pathways will require further specialist study at either academic or professional level.

In summary, the overall aims of the course are:

1. To demonstrate awareness of the nature and theory of learning in children, and develop a strong understanding of their holistic needs;
2. To develop your knowledge and understanding of current practice, policy and inter-professional approaches that exist in both the UK and abroad;
3. To explore the relationship between the child, family and society;
4. To aspire to become an ethical, inclusive and reflective practitioner, by linking theory and practice, in order to support children's needs at various stages of their lives;
5. To develop your potential by applying new knowledge, skills and understanding to academic and contextual domains.
6. Develop a critical insight into Special Educational Needs and Inclusion as a unique aspect of childhood

7. Course outcomes

Course outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of your course if you take advantage of the opportunities for learning that we provide.

Knowledge and understanding

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- Critically evaluate how children learn and develop, including the importance of the role of play, with reference to theory and the values of the children's sector. (B)

- Critically evaluate what contributes to the development of quality provision and services for children and families and reflect upon these to inform future practice. (B)
- Critically evaluate theoretical perspectives relating to the global status of children and the concept of childhood as a social construct. (B)
- Identify and analyse issues relevant to children and childhood using research and systematic investigation (B)
- Identify and critically appraise Special Educational Needs and Inclusion as a unique aspect of childhood

(B) = indicates these outcomes having specific reference to the QAA Education (and/or Early Years) Benchmark statements.

Skills, qualities and attributes

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- Critically reflect on the design of learning experiences for children that meet their holistic needs; (B)
- Demonstrate professional conduct and attitudes that will support the meeting of the responsibilities of an inclusive and ethical professional. (B)
- Demonstrate the capability to advocate for children and their families. (B)
- Select, apply and justify research skills in specific areas of interest, relevant to future employability in a range of contexts with children and families. (B)

(B) = indicates the outcomes having specific reference to the QAA Education (and/or Early Years) Benchmark statements

8. Teaching and learning methods

The Institute of Education's commitment to enhancing the quality of your experiences involves providing a framework for learning and teaching that supports independent and lifelong learners. Learning and teaching approaches are diverse and continually monitored and developed to take account of new research, external reports and policy initiatives, and supported through staff development.

In order to optimise this learning, you will have opportunities to experience:

- A range of learning and teaching methods within which you can express your growing competency as a learner and professional and meet the specific and generic course outcomes;
- Lectures, seminars, workshops, small group and individual tutorials, field study, presentations and conferences, directed and independent study tasks, small scale research and interaction with the university VLE;
- The development and enhancement of your knowledge and understanding of childhood, children's learning and development, families and the wider social context as well as explore the skills and professional attributes required to work alongside children, families and

support services across the children's sector within the ethos of anti-discriminative practice and advocacy;

- Using modern technologies alongside your prior experiential learning as we encourage the widening participation of lifelong learners; this includes e-learning as a key transferable skill, and work based experience possibilities in a range of contexts which may be national or international as you develop your ability to make connections between theory and practice and identify the diverse ways people learn and practice their professional roles;
- A development in your own knowledge and understanding of the theory, policy and practices associated with children's learning and development. Through engagement with reflection, discussion and presentations, you will be encouraged to challenge your own thinking, values and attitudes, as well as those of your peers and lecturers and explore opportunities to find diverse solutions to problems through research.

9. **Assessment methods**

You are required to achieve all course outcomes and these are assessed through the learning outcomes of the individual modules. Not all module learning outcomes are assessed but those that are use a variety of assessment strategies to ensure that you can demonstrate and evidence the range of learning outcomes. Our aim is that you should be able to demonstrate personal and professional responses to teaching and learning strategies, curriculum content and experiential tasks.

There are no traditional examinations; all assessment is by coursework with knowledge, understanding and skills being assessed through:

- Reflective journals;
- Group presentations;
- Discussion papers;
- Resource Folders;
- Academic poster;
- Creation of artefacts or learning tools;
- Projects;
- Web based coursework;
- Essays
- Case Studies;
- Notebooks; and
- Research process and reports.

We provide formative feedback during the modules to support you in your ability to recognise strengths and weaknesses in your own knowledge and understanding of the topic under enquiry and to negotiate targets for improved learning. At the end of the module, summative assessments are used to establish the level of achievement and to provide further feedback and support. To obtain an Honours degree you must pass all of the Course modules. Your final degree classification will be based on the aggregate mark for Year 3 (NQF Level 6) modules and will include a contribution of 20% from the aggregate mark for Year 2 (NQF Level 5) modules.

10. **Course structure and curriculum**

You will undertake the following modules:

Year 1 Modules

Professional and academic skills	20 credits	CORE
Ethical research with Children	20 credits	CORE
Including all learners	20 credits	CORE
Learning and pedagogical approaches	20 credits	CORE
Children's Rights and Identity	20 credits	CORE
Inclusive Communication	20 credits	CORE
	120 credits	

Year 2 Modules

Enriching Learning	20 credits	CORE
Becoming a Researcher	20 credits	CORE
Global Childhoods	40 credits	CORE
Social Constructions of Childhood	20 Credits	CORE
Special Educational Needs and Disability	20 credits	CORE
	120 credits	

Year 3 Modules

Research Dissertation	40 credits	CORE
Leadership & Management	20 credits	CORE
Children's Mental Health & Well-being	20 credits	CORE
Sustainable Childhoods	20 credits	CORE
Supporting Diverse Learners	20 credits	CORE
	120 credits	

There are opportunities at each Level to allow some flexibility over the focus of study.

For example, in Year 1 in 'including all learners' you choose the focus for the development and evaluation of a resource to support children's learning and development between ages 0-11 .

In Year 2 you may choose to focus your assessed work on children's learning and development in particular times or places within 'Social Constructions of Childhood' and in Year 3 there are opportunities for you to choose the focus for your research project in 'Research Dissertation' and for the case study approach used in 'Mental health & Well-Being'.

If you do not reach the final year of study, you will be eligible for a Certificate of Higher Education for successfully completing Year 1 and a Diploma in Higher Education for successfully completing Year 2. An Ordinary Degree may be available for you if you complete successfully Years 1 and 2 and accrue 60 credit points in Year 3.

The broad range of modules available within these courses gives opportunities for you to develop both personally as a learner and professionally by incorporating the world of work and global perspectives into your studies. Key transferable skills are embedded in the modules through teaching, learning and assessment, and reinforced whilst working alongside experienced practitioners. All modules have childhood learning and development, family and community at the core of the content enabling you to assimilate an extensive knowledge of the discipline of childhood studies as

well as the wide range of careers that support children and families which are open to graduates. The modules are further grouped into five themes to facilitate cross-modular connections and understandings.

The first theme, 'academic and professional development', encompasses both personal and professional learning. There is a strong focus on inquiry-based study and employability skills running in Years 1 and 2 through the 'professional and academic skills' and 'enriching learning modules', where your ability to solve problems, improve your own skills, work collaboratively, investigate your own needs to plan and work effectively, are actively encouraged and assessed. In Year 3, the focus turns towards the needs of the workplace and examines the skills needed to both function as an effective practitioner within the children's sector and to further develop the necessary skills for 'Leadership and Management'.

The second theme of research skills begins in Y1 as you begin to develop your familiarity with research in children's learning and development through your knowledge and understanding of different and ethical research methodologies, including for example research as an observer of children. In year 2 you will collaborate in a small scale research project, applying your skills to the justification and design of a research project and the analysis, interpretation and presentation of your findings. This theme will culminate in Year 3 in a 'Research Dissertation' module where the threads of inquiry-based study and communication already studied, form the basis which will allow you to choose an area to research and demonstrate critical thought, self-directed learning and your ability to plan work and use time effectively.

The third theme, 'Diversity and inclusive practice' begins in Y1 with a module, 'including all learners', which focuses on developing awareness of special educational needs to underpin your studies of the diverse needs of all children and how they might be fully included in all settings. In Year 2 this is built upon to expand beyond the UK experience and to explore diverse experiences of childhood and what it means to be a child in a global context in the 'global childhood' modules as you investigate, organise and undertake a work-based experience which you may elect to undertake internationally, or nationally. In year 3 your personal research project will allow you to follow your own interests in an area of children's diverse experiences.

Learning and development is the fourth theme and this focuses on promoting your development as practitioners working within the children's sector, from starting out as relative novices in Year 1 through to becoming accomplished practitioners in Year 3 developing leadership and management skills for the workplace.

In Year 1, through 'learning and pedagogical approaches' the focus is on how children develop and learn holistically and examines pedagogical and curriculum approaches which support children's learning and development within a variety of contexts from ages 0-11.

In Year 2 the global childhood modules provide you with the theoretical frameworks to understand children's learning experiences in a range of global contexts and there is also a placement opportunity to be able to see the application of this knowledge in practice. In Year 3 you will study the impact of mental health and wellbeing on a child's learning and development.

Finally, within the policy and social context theme you will study and examine the various ways in which children's learning and development may be understood and conceptualised through 'children's rights and identity' in Y1.

In Year 2 the focus develops further to look at 'Social Constructions childhood' by exploring our understanding of 'childhood' through examining the differences that time, place and adversity make, thereby enabling discussion of historical, legal and social justice issues. This heightened awareness to the issues relating to children's learning and development will be extended in Year 3, becoming more focussed through 'sustainable childhoods' where the future of childhood and the challenges to its ongoing construction as a concept and a reality will be critiqued along with the place of the professional in this area.

All the modules contribute to supporting the attainment of the Course Learning Outcomes.

11. **Admission to the course**

Entry requirements.

For current information regarding all entry requirements for this course, please see the 'Applying' tab on the NTU course information web page.

12. **Support for learning**

Prior to commencing your studies you will engage in a series of pre-induction activities. These are incorporated into your early taught sessions and early formative feedback is provided to support your transition into HE level of study and writing.

When you begin the degree, a series of induction activities are made available to help you get to know one another and the students already studying in Years 2 and 3, as well as beginning to understand the content and expectations of the Course. These Course-specific activities are dovetailed with a series of University-wide events held in your first few weeks here. Information about all events is sent out to you prior to arriving at the University.

The University has a team of students with a specific mentoring remit to support and mentor Year1 students with their transition process.

In addition to getting to know fellow students, you will also get to meet the team of academics who are responsible not only for teaching you but also in providing support for your learning. For advice and guidance with a specific module, you would first approach either your Teaching Tutor or the Module Leader. For more generic, pastoral support you will have a named Personal Tutor. Additionally, your Personal Academic Tutor will be direct you to specialist support provided by the University.

The Personal Tutors and Year Leaders will provide you with information about the Course and relevant procedures, target setting and developing an academic and professional portfolio. They will help to:

- Support your induction;
- Seek support to improve the quality of your academic work;
- Guide you to support information and careers advice within the university;
- Identify your strengths and weaknesses;
- Support the development of portfolios that represent and reflect academic, professional and university achievement during the course, in preparation for graduate employment, further qualifications and experience;
- Liaise with Student Support Services where necessary;
- Liaise with the Course Leader to monitor and evaluate your experience;

- Advise you on exceptional circumstances with regard to assignments;
- Liaise with academic tutors to assure quality and management of learning and teaching; and
- Advise you on your rights and be informed about the students' charter and all university policies pertaining to the conduct of students and staff.

The Course Administrator will support your general Course queries and questions concerning registration and processes. You will have electronic access to information which describes University systems and procedures as well as information about your Course of study through the virtual environment referred to as NOW (NTU's On-line Workspace).

As a student enrolled on the Course you will have access to all of the University facilities including the Library and IT resources, both on campus and electronically through the University's Libraries and Learning Resources (LLR) department.

There is also the University-wide Student Support Services who offer a range of services including Financial Support Services, Counselling, Learning support, Disability Support, International Student Support, Mature Student Support, Progression Support and access to affiliated health centres.

13. **Graduate destinations/employability**

This degree offers a broad, contextual foundation for a number of graduate careers and post-graduate training. Our extensive contact with many employers, as providers of our current work-based placement opportunities, means they support and inform our provision of a broad base of skills, knowledge and understanding about the whole child in diverse contexts, which they feel allows flexibility in the workforce and develops confident practitioners willing and able to adapt and respond to change.

We are also actively in contact with our own NTU alumni to ensure currency with a variety of employers.

Each of the themes running through the Course contributes to building graduates with marketable skills, knowledge and understanding, useful for roles in the children's sector such as:

- *Learning Mentors* and graduate teaching assistants for children with Autism / other Special Educational Needs;
- *Teachers* on PGCE, GTP and SCITT courses for the Primary and Post Compulsory sectors.
- *Practitioners* in nurseries and Children's Centres;
- Accessing specialist fast-track training as *social workers*
- Teaching English within International school settings
- Family support workers in third sector organisations working to deliver children's services
- *Social Workers*
- *Graduate Trainees as Speech and Language Therapy Assistants* prior to completing further post-graduate training.
- *Therapists* involved with Play Therapy or Counselling.

14. **Course standards and quality**

For each module you study there are two main opportunities for feedback. Your tutors give you detailed feedback about your assessed work but you also have an opportunity to respond to the module by providing feedback on your learning experiences through student evaluation. Module Leaders use student evaluations along with their own evaluations to create a Module Report which, with other reports, become part of the annual Course Report (ICR). The draft report, written by the Course Leader, is then scrutinised by the Course Committee and the final report is submitted to the School Academic Standards and Quality Committee (SASQC) who make recommendations to the Course Committee for future action.

The Course has an External Examiner who examines the assignment marking and reports on the quality of the assessment process to the Board of Examiners and then in a formal report to the university. This report becomes an appendix of the ICR.

The subject benchmarks of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) have also been addressed in the Course's learning outcomes.

The University has been the subject of a number of successful institutional audits by QAA. For information, please see the latest QAA Audit Report.

15. Assessment regulations

This course is subject to the University's Common Assessment Regulations (located in Section 16 of the Quality Handbook). Any course specific assessment features are described below:

None

16. Additional Information

Collaborative partner(s): N/a

Course referenced to Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Benchmark Statements:

Course recognised by:

Date this course specification approved:

Any additional information:

None.