

## Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

### Basic Course Information

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|----|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | Awarding Institution:                         | Nottingham Trent University          |
| 2. | School/Campus:                                | Social Sciences/ Clifton and offsite |
| 3. | Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study: | MA Education (Full Time)             |
| 4. | Normal Duration:                              | 12 months                            |
| 5. | UCAS Code:                                    |                                      |

### 6. Overview and general educational aims of the course

The general aim of the course is to produce graduates who are autonomous, able to carry out ethical research studies in different educational contexts, and who can recognise the importance of the application of education theories and research to understand education debates and policies across a range of educational settings and contexts.

This course is designed for a wide range of people interested in education, such as those who currently, or are wanting to, work in an education setting or education policy or research contexts. These education settings range from early years to higher education and all sectors in between and beyond formal education. Therefore the course is designed to provide different modes and routes that are suited to the breadth of potential students who have a range of expertise and experience. As such it has a generic approach to the modules which can then be applied locally and in different contexts.

The course is designed so that the modules and opportunities offered align with the Nottingham Institute of Education's aims:

1. Working with and for the disadvantaged and hard to reach
2. Growing and enriching external engagement
3. Driving improvement and aiming for excellence.
4. Building a research culture with impact.

The course aims to:

1. Develop students systematic understanding of knowledge, a critical awareness of current problems and new insights informed by and from the forefront of the field of education;

2. Develop students' comprehensive understanding of research techniques applicable to students' own research;
3. Enable students to demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the field of education;
4. Conceptual understanding that enables students:
  1. to evaluate critically current education research
  2. to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.
5. Equip students with the skills to communicate clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences
6. To provide clear and coherent routes from undergraduate and teacher education course and onto doctoral study.

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**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:

1. Demonstrate comprehensive, specialised knowledge of current debates, policy, evidence and theory regarding education;
2. Develop a critical and comprehensive understanding of a range of research methodologies and methods;
3. Know how to ethically conduct a systematic investigation within the field of education;
4. Critically evaluate published research and provide an assessment of the validity of their conclusions;

**Skills, qualities and attributes**

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

5. Independently and ethically undertake a systematic enquiry into a matter of educational significance, drawing as appropriate, on both extant literature and primary data derived from first-hand investigation;
6. Demonstrate a range of communication skills in a manner appropriate for specialist and non-specialist audiences;
7. Be able to critically interpret and analyse data derived from first-hand investigation;

- 8. Demonstrate how evidence from your research, or the research of others, can beneficially contribute to the field of education;
- 9. Synthesise learning from your academic work to develop an effective professional profile relevant to, or progression within, your desired career area(s).

8. **Learning and teaching methods**

The course content reflects the changing education environment and is subject to regular review and development.

A variety of teaching and learning approaches are used to support you during the course. These approaches are designed to help you to achieve the course learning outcomes and prepare you for your future careers.

While completing your master's you will study in a number of ways including:

- blended learning
- our virtual online learning environment (NOW)
- learning through practical experience in an educational setting
- study sets.

Face-to-face and blended learning teaching provides core course teaching, supported by seminars as a space where you will enhance your understanding of the taught material.

Lectures and online activities are given and prepared by tutors and visiting guest lecturers, who may include course alumni and postgraduate research students from the Institute of Education. Additionally, group work and activities, discussions and debates is used to explore issues from the lecture and pre-session reading. Tutors draw on their own research that is relevant to the course, such as their research on teaching, educational issues and research methods. You can choose to build on or use tutor's research in your own studies, particularly in the Dissertation module.

9. **Assessment methods**

A wide range of creative assessment strategies are used in the course, which will develop the skills, knowledge and expertise you will need to develop an effective professional profile relevant to, or progression within, their desired career area.

These include:

- Seminar presentations;
- Research posters;
- Critical reviews of published research;
- Extended critical reflections on your own practice and professional development experiences;
- Research study in an area of your choice.

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### **Course structure and curriculum**

You will complete five modules:

1. Research Skills (30 credits)
2. Social Justice in Education (30 credits)
3. Education Policy and Practice (30 credits) and
4. Curriculum Innovations (30 credits)
5. Dissertation (60 credits)

The full time route includes these modules because they build on your experiences, and gives you a breadth of knowledge and understanding and fosters transferrable skills that are applicable to a range of career areas.

The Research Skills module will prepare you for undertaking empirical study independently and ethically and it will help you critique published work you study in subsequent modules. It provides a foundation for other modules, it helps you understand how research has impact and is the start of your progression towards conducting research studies that will have impact. In this module you are also introduced to alternative research methods and will study creative and indigenous research methods.

The Social Justice in Education module explicitly links to the Institute's aim to work with and for the disadvantaged and hard to reach. Its focus is to enable you to critically analyse current debates on aspects of social identity, equality, inequality, inclusion and exclusion in education. During the module there will be opportunities for you to bring your own views and experience to bear on these debates, whilst introducing you to new concepts and theories.

The Curriculum Innovations module is broad, giving the you an insight into a wide range of theories and research that inform curriculum development for informal and formal educational settings in local, national and international contexts, with a focus on curriculum innovations that support working with and for the disadvantaged and hard to reach. Whilst it is unlikely that you will go on to teach in schools or colleges, you will probably be involved in implementing policy into practice or designing educational programmes for informal education settings. This module does not aim to prepare you to teach the curriculum, but to critique curriculum innovations in order to evaluate, implement, develop or design curriculum innovation in your future careers.

In the Education Policy and Practice module you will develop specialised knowledge of educational policy, taking into account current debates around education in this country and beyond. You will gain a greater knowledge and understanding of the nature of policy and its impact and implications for society. Like the Social Justice and Education module this prepares you for working with and for the disadvantaged and hard to reach as they understand the effects of policy at global, national, regional and local levels.

The dissertation module is where you will undertake an independent research project. This module gives you the opportunity to carry out an extended piece of empirical research of your own design under the supervision of an individual staff member with specialist knowledge in your chosen area of study. The dissertation module allows you to focus your research in an area of professional interest; thus, you will deepen your knowledge and understanding in your chosen career area.

You will complete two modules in term 1 and term 2, with the dissertation started in term 3 and submitted at the end of August. The full time route has been designed over three terms to enable you to achieve 180 credits in an academic year.

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### **Admission to the course**

#### **Entry requirements.**

Applicants will be expected to have achieved a 2:2 honours degree, or equivalent, at undergraduate level in a relevant area of study. Equivalent international qualifications are acceptable for entry to the programme.

Tier 4 applicants are able to apply for the full time route.

#### **Standard of English required for international students**

For those applicants where English is not a first language, they will need to evidence their proficiency in English by having an IELTS score of 6.5, with minimum subscores of 5.5 in each component.

#### **Entry points**

The entry point for the full time course is October.

#### **Accreditation of Prior Learning**

There is no APL for the full time route.

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

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### **Support for learning**

Full time students are offered an induction at the start of the course. This is a detailed induction at the start of the course is intended to support you in your transition to a level 7 course. During the induction you will be introduced to the course structure, course team, library and academic support provision, and using IT facilities.

Academic and pastoral support is provided in a variety of ways: face to face during taught sessions, individual tutorials, by email and through NOW. The course learning room in NOW signposts students to welfare and pastoral support available from Student Services and employability and careers advice from the Employability team.

Provision from the library and School of Social Sciences learner support is flexible and inclusive. They form an integral part of the induction and subsequent support and guidance during the course.

Once on the course, you are assigned a personal tutor and provided with a group tutorial programme. These tutorials cover a range of topics, such as making effective use of feedback, writing a CV, and help with job-hunting. These tutorials are facilitated by an academic member of the course team, and who offers pastoral support outside of the scheduled tutorials, if necessary.

The course is designed to build a community amongst students on the course; this is developed through group tasks, peer feedback and online discussion forums.

### **Supporting different student groups**

International students are given support through sessions provided by colleagues from the Nottingham Language Centre. A range of different sessions are made available to international students: individual one-to-one support, classes and in-session English support.

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### **Graduate destinations/employability**

Employability skills are embedded throughout the taught modules and personalised with the wider course.

During Welcome Week you will be introduced to the Employability Team; also an Alumni from the course will meet students to share their experience on the course and career progression. In the early stages of the course you will be asked to reflect on their career ambition after the course and how you hope to personalise your dissertation and other assignments to help you achieve this ambition. Employability skills will be addressed in the Research Skills modules, where you will learn a range of key research and dissemination skills necessary for careers in the education sector. The Employability Team will work with you to access work related opportunities during the course.

Graduate employability is fundamental to the strategic aim of NTU, as reflected in the fact that NTU is consistently placed close to the top of the league table of all UK Universities for graduate employment. The knowledge and skills that MA Education students gain are those that employers in a variety of different educational sectors seek.

During the course you will be encouraged to disseminate your dissertation work at the annual Nottingham Institute of Education Partnership Conference, which gives you an opportunity to raise your profile as an expert in your chosen area of study and build your professional networks.

Upon graduating from the course there are a range of careers previous students have progressed onto, such as:

- Student advisor
- Employability coordinator

- Lecturer
- National education policy advisors within the civil service
- Doctoral study.

14. **Course standards and quality**

Quality management of the course is in line with the University Academic Standards and Quality Handbook and School of Social Science Practice.

The External examiner plays a crucial role in the quality management and enhancement of the course. Their comments feed into the Exam Boards and their recommendations are addressed through the Course Committee and Course Action Plan.

Each year Module Leaders write a Module Action Plan that feed into the Course Action Plan and are discussed at the Course Committee.

Students are represented at the Course committees, where there is representation from the full time and part time routes.

Partnership Schools and other key stakeholders offer insights and suggestions for the curriculum through the CPD (Continuous Professional Development) Strategic Partnership group.

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:

**Commencement of the dissertation module**

To progress onto the dissertation module all students are required to have met the following requirements:

Have achieved 120 credits which must include the Research Skills module (30 credits)

16. **Additional information**

Collaborative partner(s):

Course referenced to national (QAA) Benchmark Statements:

Course recognised by:

Date this course specification approved:

Any additional information:

