Options With Your Early Years and Childhood Studies Degree
Studying for a degree in Early Years equips you with many skills for employment, a huge amount of relevant knowledge, work experience, and opens up many career possibilities. This booklet looks at your options and gives real examples of how Manchester Met students like you have used their Early Years degree studies as a platform to build a career: I hope that reading this booklet will inspire you to think about your own career plans.

Remember, you are in charge of your career, no-one else is as interested in it as you are, and nobody else is going to make it happen for you! - There are lots of possibilities - how do you want to use your degree and what are you going to do to get there?

Some questions to consider when you’re reading this booklet:

- What matters to you in a career – what are your values and interests?
- Who do you want to work with – e.g. kids, specialist groups?
- Do you know which organisations are doing the type of work that interests you?
- Have you done any research? What are the ways in to careers that interest you - will you need to do a specialist post-graduate course or will relevant work experience/volunteering be enough?

Career Research:

Have a go at a Careers quiz to generate some ideas:
prospects.ac.uk/planner

Have a look at this article: What can I do with my degree in Childhood Studies?
prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/what-can-i-do-with-my-degree/childhood-studies

Browse job-profiles to get ideas and find out how to get into a huge variety of different careers:
prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles

Further study:

To get an overview of studying at postgrad level, including funding info etc. take a look at: prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study
Find out more about popular career choices for Early Years & Childhood graduates:

Teaching

Have a look at the government’s information website for an overview of this career: education.gov.uk/get-into-teaching

Use our specially written teaching guides: mmu.ac.uk/careers/guides - scroll down to the Education & Teaching section for a range of useful information which includes guides on:

- Finding School Work Experience
- Resources and support for potential teachers with a disability
- Routes into Teaching
- Teaching English as a Foreign Language
- Teaching in the Further Education and Skills Sector
- Teacher Training Interviews
- Writing Personal Statements for UCAS Teacher Training Applications

Roles in education - not teaching

There are a wealth of jobs in education that aren’t teaching – e.g. pastoral/support roles in schools, colleges and universities. These can go by a range of job titles – learning mentor, support officer, education assistant, welfare assistant – have a look at greater.jobs (The jobsite for the 10 Greater Manchester councils) for more live vacancy examples.

Education Alternatives

A guide to roles other than teaching is available on the target jobs website and in our guides section:
https://www2.mmu.ac.uk/media/mmuacuk/content/documents/careers/guides/education_alternatives-2017.pdf

For more ideas have a look at the National Careers Service website – gives over 50 education-related job profiles: nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobfamily/Pages/educationandtraining.aspx

Social work

Find out more about the qualifications and skills needed to become a social worker: prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/social-worker

You’ll usually need some work experience/volunteering with vulnerable groups to get onto a post-grad course in social work as well as a genuine commitment to social work and social justice. The majority of opportunities to train are in universities – find courses on ucas.com and search on “Postgraduate” and “social work”
Frontline is a paid scheme aimed at getting more graduates into social work: to apply you’ll need a 2:1 or higher in your undergraduate degree (predicted or obtained) thefrontline.org.uk

Step up to Social work is an in-work government scheme to train social workers. The application process for the next programme will open in summer 2018. Find out more here: gov.uk/guidance/step-up-to-social-work-information-for-applicants

Think Ahead is a new mental health social work training graduate scheme which also incorporates the Post-graduate diploma in Social work. You need a 2.1 to apply. It is a 2 year paid scheme. thinkahead.org

Therapy-related roles
Many early years graduates are interested in working with children and families in a therapeutic way. Popular related-careers:

Play therapy
Play therapists usually work with children aged three to 11 using play as a communication tool to understand their world and to help them and their families deal with emotional distress and trauma. Many play therapists are self employed and work across different settings—such as schools and social services centres and/or with private clients. You’ll need to undertake a postgraduate qualification recognized by the professional bodies BAPT or PTUK (and have a lot of experience of working with children) to become a play therapist – for many people this is role they take up as a second career after working with children for a number of years. See this job profile for full info: prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/play-therapist

Health play specialist (previously known as a hospital play specialist)
Health play specialists use play as a therapeutic tool to help children understand their illness and treatment, often in a hospital setting. Most employers expect health play specialists to be registered with the Healthcare Play Specialist Education Trust. To register, you need a foundation degree in healthcare play specialism. This is a two-year part-time course. To get onto the course, you usually need:

- a childcare qualification at level 3 or above
- GCSEs (or equivalent) in maths and English
- at least two years’ experience of working with children (paid or voluntary)

Courses are a mix of practical work and theory. Many students have a role in a hospital as a play assistant when they start the foundation degree, but if you are not already working in healthcare play, you need to arrange a placement during the course, see: healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/corporate-services/health-play-staff To look at live job vacancies and entry requirements see - jobs.nhs.uk
Counselling roles

Counselling skills can be very useful in a huge range of jobs working with children and young people. Many people interested in this kind of work start with a level 2 introduction to counselling course (sometimes called Counselling Concepts) which provides basic counselling skills and an overview of training before committing to a full counselling course. These typically last eight to twelve weeks and are widely available part-time at further education (FE) colleges. Some local colleges that offer these type of courses include The Manchester College, Stockport and Bolton College. Some postgraduate level courses have a linked graduate certificate to undertake first to allow you entry e.g. Salford University course. Read up on training as a counsellor here: prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/counsellor

Child psychotherapy

Child and adolescent psychotherapists offer psychoanalytic treatment to children and young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties. To get onto one of the accredited training routes it is necessary for you to have considerable experience of working with babies, children, young people or families, so this is another choice that you might work towards as part of a longer-term plan. Find out more here: prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/child-psychotherapist

Working for charities/social care sector

Many graduates from your course find work in the charity and social care sectors, often working with organisations specialising in work with families and children – job titles and duties can be varied. Looking at live vacancy sites will give you a good idea of the types of jobs available and the entry requirements for individual roles – for example look at: ukcharityjobs.com

Get a great overview of 39 different professionals’ real-life day-to-day work in the social care sector: guardian.co.uk/social-care-network/series/a-day-in-the-life-of

Have a look at our guide Working in the Public and Not for Profit Sectors for lots more info.

charity-works.co.uk - Paid 12 month Graduate Management Programme.

Health

To find out about the range of careers available in the NHS and the ways to train see: healthcareers.nhs.uk You can look at live vacancies and check out entry requirements on: jobs.nhs.uk and gmcareershub.nhs.uk is a useful site—have a look at the “learners” section. healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/training-opportunities-degree - gives info about careers in the NHS for those without a health-related degree
See below some examples of the jobs ex-Manchester Met Early Years & Childhood Studies students were working in 6 months after graduation from the last few years:

**Nursery & Childcare roles:**
- Nursery practitioner
- Deputy manager of nursery
- Room leader
- Pre-school supervisor
- Sure Start Mobile crèche leader
- Sure Start Centre deputy manager
- Children’s Centre worker family worker

**Charity & Voluntary sector roles**
- Behavioural worker – at a children’s charity
- Learning mentor
- Literacy and numeracy outreach worker, for a children’s charity
- Family support worker

**Local authority/council roles**
- Quality officer Early Years
- Community Exchange Worker; project link between a charity and NHS
- Early Years Quality officer; delivering pre-registration courses for child-minders, setting strategies and goals for staff
- Family Intervention Project Keyworker; working with complex families, mental health, rehabilitation and safeguarding

**Schools & college-based roles**
- Teaching assistant
- Higher level teaching assistant
- Pastoral team
- College - Placement co-ordinator

**Private sector – not related to childcare**
- Restaurant manager
- Insurance consultant
- Self-employed – creative sector

**Further Study**

Further Study is also a popular option for people on your course and 6 months after finishing their degree many graduates from your course are already doing a bit more studying! – here are some examples of courses they have gone on to:
- Post graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
- Early Years Teacher Status course
- Youth work
- Counselling
- Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)
- Social work Masters
- MA’s and Diplomas – e.g. MA in Education Studies, MA in Early Childhood Studies
Case Studies

For career inspiration, have a look at our Careers blog education section which includes 6 detailed case-studies written by past students from your course about their career path since graduating and their current roles: mmucareers.wordpress.com/tag/education

They include:

Emma Jane Shaw, and Mehreen Kayani, who both studied for a PGCE and are now working as primary teachers.

Fay Beaman, who is now an Integrated family intervention service worker (IFIS), employed by Stoke-on-Trent city council.

Karen Moorcroft, who graduated from your course a number of years ago and now holds a very senior position – working as the Children’s Services Manager at Action for Children’s National Programmes and Prisons cluster.

Kelly Warburton, who works as a co-teacher in a bilingual preschool at Bilingual Kids Academy, Basel, in Switzerland.

Sophie Daniels, who studied for a post-grad counselling course after graduating and now works as an Educational Assistant in a charity-funded specialist school for children on the Autistic spectrum.

Applications

When you start applying for jobs make sure your applications are top quality. This is crucial – no matter how good you are in person, you need to get your application technique right to get to the interview stage. Have a look at our application form handout, and our CV handout (both on our guides page) and/or come to an application form and CV workshop: mmu.ac.uk/careers/events to learn how to ace it. Remember, you can bring completed application forms to the Jobshub CV/application drop-in at the Business School Employability Hub – this runs every weekday 1-4pm all year round.

CVs

There is no single correct way to write your CV by any means – but have a look at an example CV for an Early years graduate (who is applying for roles working with children) to give you an idea of a successful layout:
Personal profile

Recent Early Years and Childhood Studies graduate from Manchester Metropolitan University, with excellent knowledge of child development gained throughout my studies. I am passionate about encouraging children to thrive and work experience in a school has equipped me with classroom support skills. I am now seeking an opportunity within education in order to utilise my existing skills and contribute to a positive learning environment.

Education

2013-2016: Manchester Metropolitan University
Early Years and Childhood Studies (BA Hons) Predicted grade: 1st Class Honours

Key Modules Included
Children’s learning and development, Health, Community and Social Care, Constructing Child Development, Rights and Participation, Childhood, Youth and Society, Partnerships for Creativity and Social Enterprise, Perspectives of Play, Working with Diversity and Inclusion, Issues in Education

University Projects
Carried out a small-scale research project in my second year of study, which involved successfully interviewing 10 professionals regarding child behaviour and behaviour control. My ability to liaise with both education professionals and my dissertation coordinator ensured that information was collated into a well-reviewed resource which was widely shared.

Working with large quantities of qualitative data required me to be extremely organised and to effectively analyse my results in order to develop a presentation that was delivered to a varied audience of students and professionals.

My dissertation on “How an effective transition is achieved from nursery to reception” emphasised that every child is unique, and the importance of collaboration between parents, teachers and children. Due to my diligence and extensive research I achieved the outstanding mark of 75%.

University Childcare Placements
Sunny Daycare, Moss Side January 2014 - February 2014
Dudley Day Village Nursery January 2015 - February 2015
Church of England Primary School October 2015 - April 2016

Working with children within both the nursery and primary environments I have gained valuable insight into child development within education. Working one to one or in small groups with children to provide extra support I developed my communication skills and my ability to create stimulating, small scale lesson plans. Supporting learning and play through literacy and numeracy activities with the children I encouraged them to excel and exceed their targets. Through all of my placements I received excellent feedback from my placement coordinators.
Other Qualifications
2006 – 2013: Geoffrey High School
A-Levels: French (A), Psychology (A), Mathematics (D)
AS-Level: Biology (B)
GCSEs: 10 A* - C grades including Maths and English
Health and Social BTEC (Distinction*)

Career History

Waitress: The Lion Hotel, Dudley June 2011- June 2012

- Delivering excellent customer service to all guests, ensuring that the reputation of the hotel was upheld at all times.
- Working within a busy customer facing environment my ability to work effectively as part of the service team proved essential and ensured a prompt and efficient service.
- Utilising excellent communication skills when handling complaints and enquiries in order to provide a positive customer experience.

Shop Assistant: Bowden News, Solihull June 2012- September 2013

- Working alone enabled me to develop my leadership skills as I would have overall responsibility for the store, customers and staff.
- Effectively managing customer enquiries and sales including the sale of restricted items, where I worked within the law and store policy. This required me to have a keen attention to detail and to ask for appropriate age identification as required.
- Due to positive feedback from both customers and management I was promoted to train new staff members.

Additional Skills
Hold a full clean driving licence
Basic First Aid Certificate

Hobbies and interests
During my spare time, I am a committed member of a local community group which involves taking part in volunteering, encouraging community participation, as well as attending meetings and leading the committee when required. Being a member of this community centre has built my confidence and taught me to be well organised which I believe to be important in all aspects of work. I consider myself to be a sociable person and possess a good sense of humour. I also like to keep active in my spare time, and regularly attend the gym.

References: available on request
Some Job Vacancy Site examples:

- Manchester Met Careerhub site mycareerhub.mmu.ac.uk
- Local charity/community jobs: manchestercommunitycentral.org/news-and-events/job-opportunities
- Greater Manchester local authority vacancies greater.jobs
- Children & Young People Now Jobs: cypnowjobs.co.uk
- Early Years recruitment specialists: Nurseryworldjobs.co.uk

The Careers & Employability Service

Detailed Careers Guides

Our full range of careers guides, including information on finding and applying for opportunities are available on our website: mmu.ac.uk/careers/guides

Ask a Careers Question

Get online advice through My Career Hub, ask your question at any time and receive support via email.

mmu.ac.uk/careersquestion

Book an Appointment

Book a 30 minute appointment to discuss your career options with a Careers & Employability Consultant. All you need to do to book in is call us on 0161 247 3483.

Birley Drop-In

Come along to the Birley drop in – Thursdays 10am – 3 pm in term time, room 1.38. No appointment needed!

Find out about all our services on www.mmu.ac.uk/careers