

The University of Hong Kong  
Faculty of Education

Master of Education (MEd)  
Early Childhood Education

Specialism Coordinators:  
Dr Carrie Lau (Tel: 3917 7601; Email: [carriegl@hku.hk](mailto:carriegl@hku.hk))

The specialism aims to provide participants with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to facilitate high quality and contextually appropriate early childhood education. Specifically, the specialism will help participants acquire scientifically-based knowledge about early childhood education, develop a deeper understanding of contextual influences on children's development and learning, and further develop their professional competence in planning, implementing and evaluating programmes of early childhood education and care. Participants will also be encouraged to access the most recent international knowledge in the field.

Who would benefit from this specialism?

This specialism is designed for educators and key personnel in the field of Early Childhood Education. It will attract those with experience in child care and kindergarten settings and who plan to work or are working in early childhood settings, tertiary institutions and government.

Mode of study:

The specialism is available in 1-year full-time mode only.

Outline of the four specialist courses:

Course 1: Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood Education (6 credits)

This course will consider global, contemporary and controversial issues in early childhood education (ECE). It will consider (i) international trends in ECE policy and provision including concerns with equitable access to quality services; (ii) trends and issues in ECE curriculum; (iii) issues related to the professional development of teachers; (iv) issues related to parental choice of ECE programs; and (v) selected controversial issues in ECE. The course will analyse trends and issues from multiple perspectives.

Course 2: Learning and Teaching in Early Childhood Education (6 credits)

This course considers how theoretical approaches and socio-contextual factors have shaped approaches to early childhood education. Curriculum models adopted in early childhood programmes in different countries will be critically evaluated. The course will also consider (1) evidence-based practice in curriculum, planning, implementation and evaluation; and (2) the influence of recent research and the educational reforms on learning and teaching.

Course 3: Planning, Management, Evaluation and Leadership in Early Childhood Education (6 credits)

This course provides an overview of how to plan, implement and evaluate early childhood programmes. Specific topics include: the development and review of programmes; financial management; staff development and appraisal; leadership, the development of effective communication strategies for working with other adults; and advocacy for children. Case studies based on the local context will be used throughout

the course and the impact of the educational reform on the administration and management of early childhood programmes will also be considered.

#### Course 4: Promoting Child Development in Early Childhood Education (6 credits)

This course will consider approaches to understanding and facilitating various aspects of development, which include physical, cognitive, language and social and emotional development of young children. It will consider influences on early childhood development and examine the applications of child and human development theories in early childhood education programmes. This course will also cover various topics in early childhood development and education: (a) observation and assessment in the early years; (b) school readiness; (c) optimal child development; and (d) home-school cooperation.

In addition to four specialist courses, students will also have to complete:

- The compulsory core course Educational Issues and Research (6 credits);
- Three elective courses (6 credits each); and
- An option of a professional portfolio (12 credits) or a research project (12 credits).