

Sheffield Hallam University

Pre-Course Activity Booklet

Entry and Employed Pathways

**Department of Teacher Education
PGCE Early Childhood Education
and Care (0-5) with EYTS**



Welcome

Welcome to Sheffield Hallam University! We have developed this guide to support you to prepare for the start of your course in September.

The activities and readings contained in this booklet were first designed to help ensure that Entry pathway trainees were fully prepared for the course but we hope that for those who have been working for some time in the field there are also some useful preparatory activities which will focus on :-

- 1) Self-evaluation initial needs analysis
- 2) Reflection and reflecting on your experiences.
- 3) Teacher Standard (Early Years)
- 4) Reading and writing at level 7

1. Self-Evaluation - Initial Needs Analysis

Throughout the course you will be asked to self-evaluate the skills you are developing and the areas that you need to prioritise to become an effective Early Years teacher.

Early Years Teacher Status ITT Programme Initial Needs Analysis

Please answer the following questions:

Trainee Name
Pathway
Give a brief overview of your background/experience. (500 words maximum)
What strengths have you developed up to starting the course? You'll discuss these when you meet with your academic tutor for the first time
Develop a subject knowledge audit by stating what you already know, e.g. language development, schematic play, the EYFS.
What are your initial areas for development? These will also form part of your first academic tutorial
What other points or questions do you want to raise at your first tutorial?

** Save your notes on a word.doc to transfer to your online Trainee Development Space later*

2. Reflecting on your experience

As a trainee Early Years teacher you are expected to reflect on and review your ideas about effective teaching and learning in the early years throughout the course. It is therefore important for you to consider what you already know. All trainees come to this course with a range of valuable skills which are relevant to early years teaching. You will probably already have strong ideas about teaching and working in early years, here we ask you to make notes on these ideas. These will be used as the starting point for discussion during the early stages of the course. Please record your reflections and bring them with you when you start.

- a) Task: Think about your own experiences of working in schools/nurseries/other educational establishments. Think about teachers/practitioners and lessons you remember clearly, for either positive or negative reasons. Make notes on these and the reasons why they are memorable.**

Consider.....

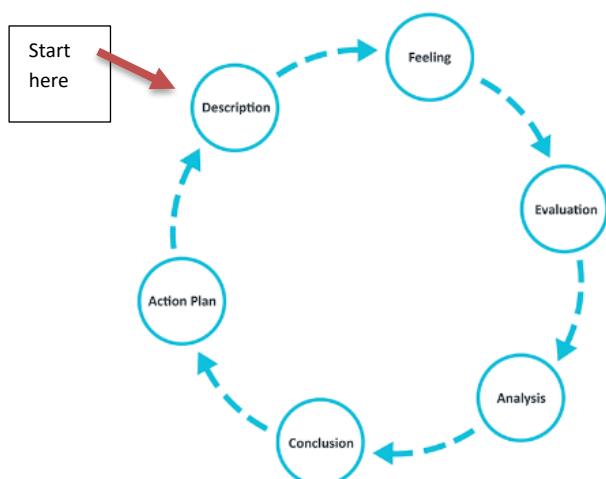
- how learning was supported and encouraged
- and/or any barriers to learning that you observed or experienced.

- b) Task: Based on your reflections write a list of ways in which adults can support children to learn effectively. You may wish to comment on some of the following areas:**

- relationships
- classroom or setting ethos
- meeting different needs
- choice of teaching methods or approach to working with children
- behaviour management
- types of activities
- working alongside additional adults in the classroom/setting
- any other areas you feel are important

Reflection is a key skill which will aid self-evaluation and all Early Years teachers need to be able to do this.

There are many models of reflection including the one you can see below by Gibbs (Gibbs G (1988). Learning by Doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods. Further Education Unit. Oxford Polytechnic: Oxford.)



You can get more information about this model and how it can be usefully applied by following this link:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience/gibbs-reflective-cycle>

3. Teacher Standards (Early Years)

To help you to start your journey to EYTS it is useful for you to also reflect on your current work and job role in relation to the Teacher Standards (Early Years). Reflect on which standards you feel most comfortable with currently and if there are others which may feel more challenging. This will help you to consider any development needs you may have which you can focus on whilst in placement and in your workplace.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-teachers-standards>

This document outlines what standards Early Years teachers must reach in relation to both of the age groups of children you will focus on during this year of training (0-3 years and 3-5 years). It also provides statutory assessment guidance. You may wish to document the type of evidence you already have which proves that you know and understand this standard. For example, **TS (EY) 5.4 Support children through a range of transitions**. For example, you may already have written observations of children who you have supported to settle, which you have shared with parents. This would provide good evidence of the standards which you can collect in your Teaching file.

4.Academic skills – Self-evaluation Questionnaire

For many of our EYT trainees this will be the first time you have studied at Level 7 and in addition it may be some time since you have undertaken academic study. It is important to remember that different Colleges and Universities have different beliefs about what makes a study 'academic' this confidence questionnaire has been produced to help us to help you.

Please mark the box which represents how confident you feel about different academic literacy skills.

How confident do you feel that you can ...	Very Confident	Slightly Confident	Don't Know	Slightly Unconfident	Very Unconfident
1. select the most appropriate texts for your assignments					
2. use different reading strategies effectively in your studies					
3. take effective notes that will help you with your assignments					
4. critically evaluate a range of information from a range of sources					
5. write succinctly					
6. explain your ideas clearly					
7. justify reasons for your choices					
8. use texts to develop your argument					
9. use references appropriately					
10. make your own position clear					

11. use texts to support your own position					
12. adapt your writing for different purposes					
13. adapt your speaking for different purposes					
14. adapt your writing for different audiences					
15. adapt your speaking for different audiences					
16. demonstrate an academic identity in your writing					
17. demonstrate an academic identity in your speaking					
18. demonstrate critical evaluation in your writing					
19. edit and proofread your work to improve clarity and accuracy					
20. demonstrate a reflective practitioner identity in your writing					
21. demonstrate critical reflection about your learning					
22. Is there anything else that you want your Academic Advisor to know?					

4a. Preparatory reading and writing task

Critical reading and writing at Level 7 presents a challenge for some of our trainees and to prepare you for this aspect of the course and to help us provide you with an appropriate level of support we would like you to complete the following task. We expect this to be testing, especially if it is some time since you have studied, and attempting this now will really help you to prepare for the course.

4.1 Read the following analysis of successful and unsuccessful student readers and reflect on how you currently approach reading texts and writing about them.

Successful Student Readers	Unsuccessful Student Readers
Had no initial definite opinion on the topic, read source texts purposefully to identify essential information of both pro and con arguments. Carefully analysed conflicting arguments. Discovered inconsistencies in both arguments.	Began reading with strong opinion on topic; changed opinion after reading first text, and again after reading second text.
Stopped reading and wrote notes, listing the pro and con arguments 'to look objectively at both sides'. (McGinley 1992 p237)	Got trapped in the reading, viewed each argument as valid and logical; made little attempt at analysing and reconciling the different perspectives.
Stopped writing notes and brainstormed to clarify own position and to develop arguments consistent with own position.	Was aware that note taking is important but unaware of which functions notes might serve.
Started writing assignment. The writing helped to articulate and understand own position.	Was unsure how to start writing. Reread articles beginnings and endings. Wrote dysfunctional notes.
Referred back to notes and sections in articles purposefully for information; was able to identify precisely own position.	Found notes unhelpful; resorted to rereading texts; 'When I got stuck, I usually reread what I had just written....but if nothing came to me I went back to the articles hoping to get some ideas. Most of the time I was just looking for something to sound appealing and to inspire me....' (McGinley, 1992: 238)
RESULT: Formulated a novel and convincing argument.	RESULT: Paraphrased, restated arguments from articles without developing own position.

(Adapted from Wingate, U (2015) Academic Literacy and Student Diversity: The case for Inclusive Practice, Bristol, Multilingual Matters)

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4.2 With this information in mind read make notes on the Chapter from

Fisher, J. (2016) *Interacting or Interfering?* Open University Press.

(included as a pdf)

4.3 Use your reading and notes to write 500 words on what you think about this chapter considering:

- **What is the author's main purpose?**
- **What are the main claims?**
- **Are you convinced? Does the argument/evidence support the claims?**
- **What are the author's values / assumptions?**
- **What are the implications for early years settings?**

You will be asked to email these 500 words to your Academic Advisor at the start of the course.

The other chapters in the appendices represent some of the current thinking and research that informs or perhaps challenges early years practice. Please read these materials and reflect on how they relate to your own experiences and practice. If there are any other articles, books or reports that you have read please note them for discussion later.

Pre-Course Tasks Checklist

Please complete this to monitor your progress through the recommended pre course tasks.

Task	Completed Y/N	Comments/Notes
Self-evaluation initial needs analysis		
Teacher Standards (EY)		
Reflecting on your experience		
Reading and writing at level 7		

Please bring/have this completed booklet and any additional notes with you on induction week at the start of the course.

You will be invited to your own Trainee Development Space, our online system that moves us to a more paperless way of working. You will need to transfer some of the information across to the online forms.

Appendix 1

Preparatory Reading - here are some suggestions to start your reading journey, we don't expect you to read them all and would advise you to find online books if possible to minimise costs. Once enrolled on the course you will have access to the library and a wealth of information!

- Bottrill, G. (2018). *Can I go and play now?: Rethinking continuous provision for the early years.* London, Sage.
- Neaum, S. (2017). *What comes before phonics?* London, Sage
- Neaum, S. (2019). *Child development for early years students and practitioners.* London, Sage.
- Williams, A. (2018) *Bold beginnings or pressure from the start?* Forum 60 (3)
<http://doi.org/10.15730/forum.2018.60.3.365> (Available as a downloaded file with your pre course materials)
- Palaiologou, I. (2019). *Child Observation: A guide for students of early childhood.* LEARNING MATTERS LTD.

Appendix 2

You will also receive a file containing some relevant chapters on Early Years as part of the pre course material package, use these as starting points and you can always read further if interested, the references for those are here:

- Ephgrave, A. (2013) *The reception year in action: a month-by-month guide to success in the classroom.* London, Routledge (Chapter 1 - September)
- Gascoyne, S. (2012), *Treasure Baskets and Beyond*, Maidenhead, Open University Press (Chapter 1: Introducing Sensory Rich Play)
- Lindon, J. (2012) *Reflective Practice and Early Years Professionalism*, London, Hodder Education (Chapter 1 Reflective Practice - what does it mean?)
- Moylett, H. (2013), *Characteristics of Effective Learning: Helping Young Children Become Learners for Life*, Maidenhead, Open University Press (Chapter 1 How young children learn: introduction and overview)