

## **Validation of BA with Honours in Early Childhood Education and Care and the Norland Diploma**

28<sup>th</sup> June 2023

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**Programme title:** BA with Honours in Early Childhood Education and Care and the Norland Diploma

**Type:** Taught

**Award (including exit awards):** BA with Honours  
Norland Diploma

**Mode(s) of study:** Full time, on site, face-to-face delivery

**Programme Leader Designate:** Dr Rebecca Digby (Head of Learning & Teaching at Norland)

**Location of Delivery:** Norland College, 39-41 Upper Oldfield Park, Bath, BA2 3LB

**Date of First intake:** September 2023

### **VALIDATION PANEL**

**Chair**

Dr Kay Aaronicks (Associate Professor and Head of School, Education and Social Care, Anglia Ruskin University)

**External Panel Member/s**

Laura West-Burnham (Curriculum and Academic Development Specialist to the Quality Enhancement Directorate (QED), Cardiff Metropolitan University)

Dr Rose Drury (Early Years Education Consultant and Honorary Associate at The Open University)

Aaron Bradbury, Principal Lecturer Childhood and Early Years, Nottingham, Institute of Education & External Examiner for Norland (BA)

**Academic/Research Representative/s**

Vince MacLeod (Early Years Lecturer)

Viki Bennett-Kane (Principal Lecturer in Early Years)

**Student representative/s**

Hannah McGrath-Wells (Current student in Set 45)

**Graduate representative/s**

Emily Louise-Moore (Former student in Set 41)

**Clerk**

Callum Marshall (Quality & Regulations Officer)

**SECTION A: OUTCOME**

**Approve/Not Approve:** Approve

**Length of approval:** 5 years

**1 Conditions of validation****Deadline**

1.1 None

N/A

<b>2</b>	<b>Required technical corrections (RTCs)</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
2.1	On page 24 of Programme Specification (BA), tick C2 for NC5201.	28 <sup>th</sup> July 2023 - <b>Complete</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Mechanism for approval</b>	
	Completion of validation process in line with section 7 guidance on Programme Design and Development Policy.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	
4.1	Make the ECGPC coherent and visible across the course materials and assessments.	
4.2	Greater consideration and consistency in terminology across assessment level expectations in line with SEEC guidance	
4.3	To review commonality between modules and ensure development of common strands in relation to levelness and appropriate development of skills & knowledge (i.e. inclusion, SEND, bilingualism)	
<b>5</b>	<b>Good practice and commendations</b>	
5.1	The panel commends the relevant and innovative nature of the optional modules which demonstrates currency and breadth of practice knowledge.	
5.2	The panel commends the clarity and spiral design structure of the courses, this commendation also relates to the complexities involved in multiple layers of assessment of intended learning outcomes across the degree, diploma and ECGPC. It is evident this has been considered from end to end in a collegiate manner with all stakeholders and is very clearly communicated throughout the course design, mapping and assessment for learning.	

- 5.3 The panel commends the depth of consideration for the individual student journey including the quality of the provision of student support services and the sense of belonging to the Norland family.
- 5.4 The panel commends the core development of graduate skills which celebrates the child at the centre. The dissertation module was particularly identified as an area of opportunity to tailor student expertise and the students' professional identity.
- 5.5 The panel commends the range of placement opportunities and the way in which these are scaffolded across the programmes to transpire into varied employment and graduate destinations.

## **SECTION B: CONFIRMATION AND COMMENTARY ON REFERENCE MADE TO THE RELEVANT EXTERNAL BENCHMARKS IN PROGRAMME DESIGN AND DELIVERY**

The panel agrees the Norland Degree and Diploma meet the QAA Subject Benchmarks and are well informed by other external reference points, such as the Early Years Foundation Stage and the SEEC Descriptors. Further, the Early Childhood Graduate Practitioner Competencies are clearly defined and mapped throughout.

## **SECTION C AWARENESS OF EQUALITY ISSUES**

**(Good practice; areas for development; support for students with disabilities and learning differences; UDL)**

Issues of equality form an integral aspect of the course content (i.e NC5207 on self identity), enabling students and staff to undertake constructive discussions around developing concepts of inclusion, diversity and identity within the programme of study and across the institution.

## **SECTION D ENHANCING LEARNING THROUGH TECHNOLOGY (ELT)**

Excellent opportunities are provided to enhance learning through technology, for example in the form of innovative assessments such as blogs, vlogs and podcast assessment types, that work to promote currency of digital skills. The development of practical skills is significantly enhanced by the use of up-to-date technologies such as baby simulated manikins.

The team demonstrate a clear commitment to keeping up to date with technological advances, such as through the consideration of how AI might support learning, teaching and assessment.

## **SECTION E COMMENTARY ON DELIVERY OF PROGRAMME**

### **1 Proposed student market**

Norland has a clear vision built upon a foundation of tradition as a Norland Nanny. These values are embedded throughout practice and at the foreground of student recruitment. In addition, the Early Childhood Graduate Practitioner Competencies build upon the diversity of the Degree in terms of graduating with a DfE recognised full and relevant qualification in the early years sector, increasing the programmes as attractive courses of study.

## **2 Recruitment and selection**

Entry requirements are appropriate and suitable, including a required DBS.

## **3 Curriculum design**

The overall structure and aims of the course are clear and appropriate. It is clear to see that thought has been given to the content and how this aligns with the LOs and early childhood frameworks.

Clear and coherent development of knowledge and skills building upon a spiral curriculum approach to revisit and cement essential knowledge and skills. Theory is related to practice through a structured approach to placement opportunities, with consideration of breadth of experience across the early years sector.

The small modular design allows students to tailor their studies around individual interests and current topics. There is scope to offer the optional modules as CPD opportunities for existing and alumni students, as well as the potential for an external CPD offer as short courses. As such there are significant opportunities to embed the sharing of good practice and research amongst the team and more broadly across the sector and beyond.

## **4 Resources**

### **(Physical resources; learning resources; staff resources; staff development to support programme delivery)**

Norland hosts a wealth of specialist spaces that enhance student learning, providing opportunities to develop practical skills in a safe and supported environment. Specialist areas of the curriculum such as health and nutrition are supported by well-resourced kitchen areas. The small library comprises a variety of physical reading material that is up to date and supported by a larger wealth of online access to key sources of information. Ongoing reflection on resources is apparent, for example by reviewing stock and beginning the journey to decolonise supporting texts. Additional spaces to study, commune and to seek support are inviting and promoted across the campus.

Staff demonstrate an engaged and committed approach to the values of Norland and embody the Norland tradition and identity. There is an active vision that promotes ongoing development of staff, students and of the curriculum, through research, knowledge exchange. Professional development opportunities are encouraged internally and externally, for example through attendance at events such as conferences and CPD

opportunities, further allowing for contributions to knowledge to be offered as well as drawn through into teaching and assessment.

## **5 Student guidance and support**

A strong tailored approach to student support was demonstrated throughout the validation event by all across the Norland team with a clear understanding of the whole student experience. Further examples of good practice were visible with regards to support for students who might be struggling in the current cost of living financial crisis, such as a clear emphasis on support for mental health and wellbeing, as well as opportunities for employment and accommodation support. Most notably students commented that Norland staff promoted a clear sense of family, they inspired trust and the support services were 'faultless'.

Through the clear evidence of planning and thought, the student experience is front and centre of the curriculum design and supporting materials. The unique structure of the Norland Degree and Diploma is an intensive programme of study and this has been catered for, partly in the design of small credit modules that link theory to practice. Further, it is evident that all students including those with learning differences value the support available and speak highly of the wealth of expertise across the team. Regular evaluation processes such as SSLC and module evaluations provide ongoing opportunities for students to feed their voice into development of the student experience. Students feedback that their voice is listened to, as such they have a strong sense of community at Norland.

## **6 Learning, teaching and assessment strategies including ELT**

Further to previous feedback on curriculum design, the programmes include effectively designed assessments which promote integration of theory and practice through various methods. High quality opportunities for learning are provided and governed by rigorous processes of quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation.

Staff keep up to date with sector expertise, through conferences and CPD opportunities and are supported by a Head and Deputy Head of Learning, Teaching, Research and Student Engagement. In addition to foundational knowledge and skills, students benefit from the expertise across the staff team, for example in the optional modules, as well as opportunities to undertake their own work based learning projects.

## **7 Any other observations**

The panel recognise the good practice at Norland offers opportunities for knowledge exchange and research insights amongst the team, more broadly across the sector and beyond. It is understood that the launch of the new research centre will be a positive and significant vehicle through which to make a positive contribution to the sector.

**SECTION E      Authorisation of report for Academic Board**

Report approved by chair	19 <sup>th</sup> July 2023
Report approved by panel	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2023
Copy of final report sent to Academic Board	19 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
Final approval by Academic Board	6 <sup>th</sup> October 2023