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**7PE610 Understanding Childhood**

Module Handbook

Michelle Appleby

# Introduction

Dear Student,

Welcome to the Understanding Childhood module. This module explores, through cross-disciplinary perspectives, the experience of being a child today. It also considers notions of childhood through the exploration of representations, dominant discourses, and the notion of childhood as a contestable concept which has varied over time and around the world.

You will be given the opportunity to reflect on their understanding of critical theory and examine current academic writing on how society views “childhood”. We will explore what research tell us about children’s experience of childhood and what research tell us about diverse childhood experiences.

I am looking forward to reading, thinking and writing with you while we exploring these concepts and your own unique thoughts of the notion of childhood. Please feel free to contact me throughout this semester using the contact details below.

The sessions will run from 17:00-19:30 on Mondays in room N412.

Best wishes,

Michelle

**Contact details**

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# Module Description

This module explores the concept of childhood and how it is socially constructed in various ways by various disciplines, over time and in different regions. The module draws on theoretical explanations of childhood to enable the development of an understanding of the concept. It is designed to respond to a wide range of relevant interests and perspectives. In the context of workshops and discussions, every opportunity will be taken to draw upon the knowledge and expertise that all participants bring to the module. We will explore the diverse nature of childhood, explored through cross-disciplinary approaches and examine the experience of childhood through various perspectives. Finally, we will attempt to engage in a range of critical and contemporary debates impacting on the lives of young children and their families.

# Module Learning Outcomes

# Students MUST demonstrate that they can meet these outcomes to pass the module:

# Demonstrate a critical understanding of the social construction of childhood in relation to a specific context.

# Reflect on the contested nature of childhood.

# Module Learning and teaching methods

This module will be taught through a mixture of active learning approaches including mini-lectures, seminars, individual (including email support) and group tutorials, directed and independent study.

Scheduled learning and teaching activities: 15%

Guided independent study: 85%

# Assignment Guidelines

Module Assessment Method: coursework.

*Students will be required to submit a portfolio in which the competing discourses and the social construction of childhood are explored in relation to a specific context or aspect childhood (s). The portfolio is capped at 3,500 words but you have leeway of +/- 10% (3,150-3,850 words). This word count does not include appendices or references.*

Assessment Weighting: 100% Coursework Weighting

This assignment assesses BOTH learning outcomes written above.

**Submission date for coursework on TurnItIn:** 11 July 2022 by 23.59

**Post-date for viewing assessed work on TurnItIn:** 1 August by 09:00

# Teaching sessions

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| **Session number** | **Lecture content** |
| Session 1  25 April 2022 | An introduction to childhood |
| **2 May 2022** | **No Session** |
| Session 2  9 May 2022 | A historical perspective on childhood |
| Session 3  16 May 2022 | A developmental approach to childhood |
| Session 4  23 May 2022 | An anthropological approach to childhood |
| **30 May 2022** | **No Session** |
| Session 5  6 June 2022 | Formative presentations with feedback from the group |
| Session 6  13 June 2022 | A social and cultural approach to childhood |
| Session 7  20 June 2022 | Conclusions  Coursework Development seminar |
| Session 8  27 June 2022 | Tutorials- Please email [M.Appleby@derby.ac.uk](mailto:M.Appleby@derby.ac.uk) to request an appointment. |
| Session 9  4 July 2022 | Tutorials- Please email [M.Appleby@derby.ac.uk](mailto:M.Appleby@derby.ac.uk) to request an appointment. |
| 11 July 2022 | Assignment due by 23.59 |
| 1 August 2022 | Feedback returned by 09:00 |

# \* Readings specific to each session will be uploaded to Course Resources.

# Additional readings

Burman, E. (2020) ‘Developments; Child, Image, Nation. 2nd edn’. Routledge UK.

Burman, E. (2007) (2nd edition) Deconstructing Developmental Psychology. London: Routledge.

Dahlberg, G., Moss, P. & Pence, A. (2013) Beyond Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care – Languages of Evaluation 3rd edn. London: Routledge.

James, A. and Prout, A. (eds) (2014) Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood: Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood. 3rd edn. London: Routledge.

Kehily, M.J. (2013) ‘Understanding Childhood: a cross-disciplinary approach. 2nd edn.’ Open University Press, UK.

Lee, E., Bristow, J. Faircloth, C. and Macvarish, J. (2014) Parenting Culture Studies. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

MacNaughton, G. (2005) Doing Foucault in Early Childhood Studies: Applying Post-Structural Ideas Routledge.

Murray, J. (2017) Building Knowledge in Early Childhood Education: Young Children Are Researchers’. London: Routledge.

Simmons, H. (2020) Surveillance of Modern Motherhood. experiences of universal parenting courses. 1st ed. 2020. Palgrave Macmillan. (electronic resource)