



AUTISM STUDIES

Canterbury

/ Undergraduate
study

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1965-2015
THE UK'S
EUROPEAN
UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND INSPIRATIONAL TEACHING

Kent is ranked as one of the top 20 universities in the UK in *The Guardian University Guide 2014*. All its academic schools produce world-class research and it has a reputation for excellent teaching.

The Tizard Centre, part of the School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research (SSPSSR) is at the forefront of research into autism, intellectual disability and community care. Kent is ranked 6th in the UK in *The Complete University Guide 2014* and 7th in *The Guardian University Guide 2014* for the overall category of Social Work.

World-leading research

The School is one of the largest of its type in the UK and gained the highest ranking in the most recent Research Assessment Exercise. It is home to world experts in the social sciences, with a broad range of multi-disciplinary interests.

The Tizard Centre is recognised as leading the field in issues of deinstitutionalisation and community living, quality of support, challenging behaviour, abuse and adult protection, and has had a significant impact on national policies. Our academics have specialist research interests that are constantly developing, and our research informs and illuminates our teaching. The Tizard Centre has benefited from funding from



the Department of Health, the European Commission and Kent County Council.

Prize-winning centre

The University has recently been awarded The Queen's Anniversary Prize for the work of the Tizard Centre. The judges commended 'its outstanding contribution to improving the lives of people with disabilities and their families through its research, teaching and consultancy work, both in the UK

and in countries ranging from Australia to Romania'. The Queen's Anniversary Prizes are awarded, within the honours system, for exceptional contributions by institutions in the higher and further education sectors.

Inspirational teaching

The Autism Act and the autism strategy, produced by the Department of Health, highlighted the need for appropriate training for those who work with people on the autism spectrum. The programmes taught at the Tizard Centre deliver the knowledge and skills required to support people with intellectual disabilities in a range of situations.

Our degree programme in Autism Studies has been designed for anyone who supports children or adults on the autism spectrum, whether in the home, community or at school, or who would like to do so in the future. It is flexible enough for students to combine workshops,



web-based study and discussions with work-based learning at Stages 1 and 2. Stage 3 combines work-based learning with home study, supported by intensive workshop-based teaching.

Supportive community

We believe the range of our staff is one of our greatest assets, allowing us to give our students a fuller understanding of the issues they need to tackle. Members are selected for their academic record and their practical experience. They represent a variety of disciplines and theoretical and methodological approaches. You are assigned an individual tutor and there is also a programme tutor to resolve any group problems. You also have a local supervisor from your area of practice to support you at Stages 2 and 3. The Tizard Centre hosts regular seminars and an annual lecture that you are welcome to attend.



A global outlook

Kent has a reputation as the UK's European university and has developed international partnerships with a number of prestigious institutions. We have an international community on campus: our students are from 149 nationalities and this helps to create our lively and diverse atmosphere.

A successful future

As well as providing a first-rate academic experience, we want you to be in a good position to face the demands of a tough economic climate. During your study, you develop key skills that are essential for a successful career. For more information, see p8 or visit www.kent.ac.uk/employability

Professor Jack Tizard (1919-1979)

Professor Jack Tizard was a pioneer of community care in Britain. His work on alternatives to institutional care in the 50s and 60s underpinned the subsequent development of 'ordinary life' models for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. The Centre's work reflects Tizard's contribution in its commitment to social justice, in the way it focuses on the relationship between policy, management and practice, and in bridging psychology, social policy and other related disciplines to help improve services.

The primary aims of the Tizard Centre are:

- to advance knowledge about the relationship between the organisation of community care services and their outcomes
- to help service agencies (both purchasers and providers) develop their own competence to provide and sustain a high quality, comprehensive community care service.

DID YOU KNOW?

In the National Student Survey 2013, Kent was in the top ten for student satisfaction.



SUPERB STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Our Autism Studies programmes are designed so that you can enjoy the benefits of flexible, blended learning – using a mixture of web-based resources, alongside the facilities available at our Canterbury campus.

Blended learning

Blended-learning modules are taught via a mixture of web-based texts, recommended reading, guided study, video resources and online discussions. Moodle – the University’s online learning environment – is used as a virtual learning resource. As a blended-learning student, you have an assigned tutor to provide support by mail, online discussion and telephone. Web-based course materials are available for many modules, accessible on campus or from home.

Some attendance on campus is also required as part of your studies. In October at the beginning of Stage 1, you attend a two-day induction that allows you to become familiar with Moodle and learn about web-based library resources. You also have the opportunity to meet your tutor and fellow students. Then, at the beginning of Stage 2, you attend a two-day induction where you are briefed about the Work-based Learning module and are given some practical teaching on methods to assess challenging behaviour and quality of life.



You also attend campus for two days in the spring for group supervision on your work-based learning portfolio and to prepare you for your exams. During Stage 3, you complete five modules, each of which involves a three or four-day workshop. All of your examinations are also held on campus.

First-class facilities

The Tizard Centre is based at our Canterbury campus, within a short walk of the main campus facilities, and most of the teaching takes place within the Centre’s own dedicated teaching room.

Also on campus is the Templeman Library which has a wealth of resources to support study and research. There are over 1,000 PCs for student use on campus; it also has print and electronic collections to underpin your subject area.

The information available includes access to many useful online databases such as PsycINFO, ASSIA, Web of Science and many others. For those who wish to improve their IT or library skills, there are various courses available: see www.kent.ac.uk/itservices/training for details. Or for courses on study skills, see www.kent.ac.uk/learning/programmes

Sociable campus

The campus is built on 300 acres of parkland overlooking Canterbury. Modern buildings are surrounded by open green spaces, courtyards, gardens and woodland. All the main campus facilities are within walking distance. These include a bank, general store, medical centre, pharmacy, sports centre, cinema and theatre, as well as a wide choice of cafés, restaurants and bars.



STUDENT PROFILE

Elaine Hatfield is in the final year of her BSc (Hons) degree in Autism Studies.

What attracted you to studying at the Tizard Centre?

I've worked with people on the autistic spectrum for about 25 years within education and social services. I now work in a university as a Disability Support Manager and we have an increasing number of people on the autistic spectrum coming to study with us. I felt it would be helpful for me to get a better understanding of how we can support these students. Also, a friend of mine had studied at the Tizard Centre herself, and had good things to say about the course.

What did you think of the support on offer?

The support services here are very good. When I started the course, I was given a mentor who helped me in various ways, from how to present information so that the reader can easily understand it to how to decipher the briefs for the assignments.

What about the other students on the course?

Because it's blended learning, you get to know your fellow students on your first workshop. Once we started doing regular workshops and having online discussions on Moodle, everything became much

easier. I'm quite conscientious so I always try to say something when we have a discussion online and the tutors do a brilliant job of getting people together as much as they can.

Which aspects of your studies have you enjoyed exploring?

The case studies are really good. When you have a tangible person to focus on, that puts it all into perspective. During the first year we worked on case studies provided by our tutors. Then, later on, we moved on to our own case studies, people within our learning environments.

How has the course affected your working practices?

The research I've done has helped me to understand people on the autistic spectrum so much better. One of the fundamental things I learnt was about how people on the spectrum develop mentally, looking at aspects of learning and communication such as 'joint attention'. Having your own case studies has spin-offs too because it enables you to share your knowledge within your work environment and encourage attitudinal changes. I used one of my assignments as a training model for other people within my organisation.

The driving motivation for me is enabling people's understanding: for instance, Asperger's can be seen as a hidden disability.

A student with Asperger's might outwardly appear to be the same as everyone else but might inwardly be feeling very anxious. Problems around communication can affect that person's quality of life and lead to feelings of isolation. Yet when someone with Asperger's feels understood, they often feel more accepted.

Another area I'm interested in is diagnosis. It's important to give the diagnosis in a positive way: for instance, students on the autistic spectrum can be way ahead of other students in terms of creativity. Or, from the point of view of employment, someone with Asperger's is typically very focused, diligent and honest. I've helped quite a few people to get a diagnosis and that can be life-changing.

How do you think the course will affect your career?

At the moment I work in general areas of disability support and what I'd like to do is more specialist work around autism. I'd love to do some mentoring work, for instance.

Any advice for prospective students?

Be realistic about the amount of time you need. I work four days a week so a lot of my free time is dedicated to my studies.

A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

Kent equips you with essential skills that can help you when it comes to getting a job and for the rest of your career. Six months after graduation in 2013, only 6% of Kent graduates were without a job or study opportunity.

Graduates from Tizard programmes do well and go on to a wide variety of jobs. Some of our students on our undergraduate courses continue to work in their original posts but with more knowledge and skills to support their practice. Others go on to more senior posts or into specialist roles, such as behavioural specialists within service provider organisations or community-learning disability teams. A few choose to continue their studies, moving on to one of our postgraduate programmes.

Gain transferable skills

As part of your learning experience at Kent, we help you to acquire key transferable skills in areas such as communication and presentation, IT skills, gathering information, project planning and teamwork, that will stand you in good stead for future employment. Getting to grips with challenging ideas, writing well, gaining confidence in expressing your ideas coherently and with sensitivity are all important skills that you gain during your degree.

Continuing support

Your involvement with the Tizard Centre does not necessarily end upon graduation. The Tizard Practitioners' Network provides the opportunity for graduates from the Centre to meet four times a year, usually on the same day as the Tizard Research Seminars. These meetings give graduates an opportunity to hear about new ideas

and research, talk about service issues, make contacts and think about service developments and putting research into practice. Although initially the Network covered people working in the south-east of England, the membership is now extended to all of Tizard's graduates. It is recognised that people from further afield may not be able to travel to meetings but may wish to join the online discussions and be listed in our directory of practitioners.

Careers advice

Kent's Careers and Employability Service can give you advice on how to choose your future career, apply for jobs, write a good CV and perform well in interviews and aptitude tests. It also provides up-to-date information on graduate opportunities before and after you graduate. For more information on what the Service offers go to: www.kent.ac.uk/employability



DID YOU KNOW?

The University of Kent is consistently in the top 20 in the UK for graduate starting salaries.

GRADUATE PROFILE

Narelle Cox graduated with a BSc (Hons) degree in Autism Studies in 2013.

What attracted you to the course at Tizard?

Due to work commitments I was looking for a course that I could follow in my own time. I knew that I wanted to pursue a career with individuals with autism and when I found the course at Tizard, it fitted all my requirements.

How were your studies?

I really enjoyed the whole course; all three years build on different knowledge and skills. The first year increases your knowledge about autism and everything related to it, including origins, interventions, assessments, and the effect of autism on the whole family. It was useful in giving me facts and examples to back-up my own ideas. The second year was about gaining the skills to observe behaviour and record data and then using those skills in real life.

The third year was very different from the first two and at first it was difficult to adjust – but learning about Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) is so rewarding; it's an approach that can be used in so many ways. Again, you get to put your skills into practice – the group supervision seems scary at first but actually it's very helpful. Everyone is in the same position, so you don't feel any pressure and everyone has useful ideas to help you when you're stuck. It also means that you get to

hear about other people's work, so you learn about issues and interventions beyond what you're working on.

What about the teaching and academic support?

The teaching was very good. All the tutors are so enthusiastic and skilled in their areas that they make it engaging and fun. Everyone at Tizard wants to make a difference and that affects you as a student. During the first two years, learning happens online but I never felt overloaded or lost and my tutor was always available to give further information or check my work. Studying online worked well for me, as I could do it in my own time.

In the third year, the monthly workshops give you regular access to teaching in the classroom and that is important when you are learning about something as complex as ABA. Each workshop sets you up for the next piece of work and I found the face-to-face workshops and tutorials were vital, because ABA was so different to what I already knew.

How would you describe your fellow students?

Many students come to Tizard because they are already working in the field and have heard about its great reputation. My group was varied with everyone having different jobs and previous qualifications. This was good as people brought a range of ideas and experiences. Everyone was very friendly and got on well.

Were you able to pursue your own interests?

Yes – in the second year we could choose the topic of our extended essay and also the work-based learning allowed us to work with a chosen individual, looking at areas specifically tailored to that person's needs.

How do you think your course changed you?

It has given me the confidence and knowledge to back up my own ideas and to talk about interventions with other professionals. Before I had ideas about autism and best practice, but did not have the facts and the examples to back them up.

How did the degree affect your working life?

I currently work with children with autism, providing respite on a one-to-one basis. The course has given me the skills to work more effectively with the children. It has also helped me to support the parents, especially when I'm providing advice on issues related to schooling. I am now able to suggest ways to help their children engage and learn. Prior to the course, I could identify the issues but didn't know how to advise.

Any advice for prospective students?

Definitely stick with it for the full three years. I knew very little about ABA prior to the course and I really appreciate the skills I gained.

CHOOSING YOUR PROGRAMME

Not sure which study path to choose? Here's a guide to what's available.

The Tizard Centre offers a range of qualifications to suit different requirements. Students may transfer between programmes and between levels (providing they can meet the entry or progression requirements). Please note that, since we are committed to revising, updating and expanding our teaching, the modules taught on our programmes may be subject to change.



Autism Studies

Stand-alone modules

Some of the Stage 1 degree modules are also available as stand-alone courses. At present these are: Introduction to the Autism Spectrum; Introduction to Supporting People on the Autism Spectrum; and Intervention in Autism Part 1. (See p11 for module details). Successful completion of all the Stage 1 modules provides a Certificate in Autism Studies. Those who currently support children or adults on the autism spectrum (including carers), or who can obtain a suitable placement, are welcome to apply. The entrance requirements are listed on p15.

FdSc Autism Studies

This two-year foundation degree combines blended learning with a personal development programme involving work-based learning and workshops. Stages 1 and 2 are largely completed by blended learning. The programme focuses

on understanding autism and on supporting children and adults with autism spectrum conditions and their families. For the foundation degree, you combine web-based guided study and discussions with work-based learning.

BSc (Hons) Autism Studies

Following completion of Stages 1 and 2 in Autism Studies, there is an opportunity for you to study for a further year to complete a BSc. This third year (Stage 3) involves work-based learning and campus-based workshops focusing on Applied Behaviour Analysis.

Other Tizard programmes

Other undergraduate programmes offered by the Tizard Centre include:

FdSc Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

This two-year foundation degree (Stages 1 and 2) increases your understanding of the needs

of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities across statutory, private and voluntary agencies in the care sector. The programme puts the emphasis on practice and expects you to be already working with people who have intellectual and developmental disabilities.

BSc (Hons) Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Designed for those providing community-based services, this degree programme follows on from Stages 1 and 2 (see FdSc above). Stage 3 takes a further year and gives you the chance to integrate studies with working in your own agency. Partly coursework, partly practical, it allows you to tackle issues against a backdrop of shared experience with other students. You bring your own knowledge to the programme, which, in turn, influences the teaching we provide.

STUDYING AT STAGE 1

Stage 1 represents the first year of your degree.

The modules you take are:

- Academic Development
- Introduction to the Autism Spectrum
- Introduction to Supporting People on the Autism Spectrum
- Intervention in Autism Part 1.

Your final module draws on the skills and knowledge you have gained in the modules above:

- Autism Case Study.

Modules: Stage 1

Academic Development

Starting your studies can be daunting so this module provides you with the core skills that you can use and expand throughout the rest of your studies. You develop the ability to learn subject material

and to prepare written and verbal assignments, as well as using IT and web-based applications.

Introduction to the Autism Spectrum

What is an autism spectrum disorder? What subtypes are there and how is it diagnosed? How many people have autism? What does the condition mean for people with autism and their families – how does it affect their lives? You look at the theories behind the causes of autism and the models applied to the autism spectrum with a particular focus on person-centred approaches.

Introduction to Supporting People on the Autism Spectrum

You are introduced to ideas of policy, funding, service models, approaches and interventions when working with people,

child/adult protection, and supporting families and individuals with autism in education. You are encouraged to engage and discuss your ideas with other students, and assessment is by two written essays and an exam.

Intervention in Autism Part 1

The evidence, application and implication of the following approaches are covered here: SPELL (Structure, Positive approaches and expectations, Empathy, Low arousal, Links); TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related-CommuniCation Handicapped children); person-centred approaches and support; communication; and positive behaviour support. Using case study material, you use the ideas you learn to help propose ways in which an individual could be supported to have a better quality of life.

Autism Case Study

Here, you complete two case study assignments. For the first assignment, you present training materials based on a case study, to improve the knowledge and awareness of staff or family carers. For the second assignment, you read a detailed case history of an individual and then produce a report presenting an assessment of the issues with a suggested intervention to improve their quality of life.



STUDYING AT STAGE 2

You take five Stage 2 modules in your second year of study.

Stage 2 modules are completed by blended learning or in the workplace. The modules you complete at Stage 2 include:

- Autism Case Study Assessment
- Autism Extended Essay
- Intervention in Autism Part 2
- Theoretical and Diagnostic Approaches to Autism
- Work-based Learning in Autism Studies.

Modules: Stage 2

Autism Case Study Assessment

Following on from the Stage 1 Case Study Assessment module, here you take on longer and more detailed assessments in two parts across two terms. In the first part, you prepare a 3,000-word assessment from a hypothetical case study,

suggesting an approach to ascertain a person's quality of life and what needs to be taken into account in the assessment process. In the second part, you produce a 5,000-word essay using theoretical approaches and investigate background influences to develop an intervention strategy.

Autism Extended Essay

In this module, you have a choice of essay topic titles to produce a 4,000-word essay. For this essay, you conduct a literature review as well as draw upon the knowledge gained at Stage 1.

Intervention in Autism Part 2

Following on from the Stage 1 module, the topics include: the research basis of intervention in autism, including specific approaches such as Son-Rise and Relationship Development Intervention®; approaches to

assess the effectiveness of interventions; and the application of non-specific intervention therapies, such as art therapy, music therapy, teaching social skills, and diet.

Theoretical and Diagnostic Approaches to Autism

This module extends your knowledge of both the theories of, and diagnostic approaches to, autism. Topics include historical and current approaches; the biological, psychological and neuropsychological theories of the autism spectrum; and the methods and tools of diagnosis.

Work-based Learning in Autism Studies

This module allows you to use your job, your role as a carer, or your experience on a placement, to apply the concepts of the course and demonstrate your learning in a practical environment. Following an induction workshop in October, and with careful liaison with your tutor and local supervisor, you prepare a portfolio that includes a personal development plan, a quality of life assessment, an intervention plan and a critical account of how the intervention was implemented. Parts of the portfolio are submitted throughout the year, which allows the feedback to guide your progress.



WORK-BASED LEARNING IN AUTISM STUDIES



Our Autism Studies degree is designed to enhance both your theoretical and practical knowledge. During the course, you are expected to draw on your experience of supporting someone with autism.

At Stage 1, the references to your practical experience are mostly informal, during discussions and in assignments. At Stage 2, you need to be working directly with an individual or a group of individuals with autism spectrum conditions. You could be a family carer, a teacher or teaching assistant, a support worker or someone in another relevant supportive role.

If you are not working in a direct support capacity, you need to obtain a placement during Stage 2. This can be as a part-time paid post or a voluntary position.

The Tizard Centre has excellent links with social services, health authorities, local schools and other relevant organisations where placements might be possible. A number of staff work part-time in the NHS or other agencies, or act as trustees to voluntary organisations providing services to people with learning disabilities. We have particularly strong links with service users, families and service providers in the south-east of England.

“Autism is now more widely recognised as a condition affecting a large number of children and adults. It is essential that those involved in their support fully understand the nature and impact of the condition and the kinds of approaches and adaptations that are likely to be helpful.”

Dr Julie Beadle-Brown
Reader in Intellectual and
Developmental Disabilities

STUDYING AT STAGE 3

Stage 3 represents your final year of study.

Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) offers a systematic means of observing behaviour, identifying beneficial areas of change, and enabling change. You complete five modules on Applied Behaviour Analysis:

- Concepts of Applied Behaviour Analysis
- Developing and Implementing Interventions
- Observation and Analysis of Behaviour
- Values, Ethics and Professional Practice
- Work-based Learning in Applied Behaviour Analysis.

Modules: Stage 3

Concepts of Applied Behaviour Analysis

Here, you become familiar with the principles of the experimental analysis of behaviour and ABA, to enable you to describe the principles of operant and respondent behaviour. You critically evaluate both the strengths and limitations of ABA as an approach to understanding human behaviour and, specifically, the behaviour of children/adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

Developing and Implementing Interventions

Exploring approaches to changing and developing new behaviour, and the barriers to such implementation, this module places emphasis on how to promote more independent



and competent behaviour and how to bring about and sustain change in challenging behaviour.

Observation and Analysis of Behaviour

In this module, you learn practical approaches to checking and calculating the reliability of observational data and how to undertake descriptive assessment and experimental analysis including internal and external validity.

Values, Ethics and Professional Practice

Professional practice requires an understanding of a number of ethical and legal issues. In this module, you look at the development of approaches to individual planning and needs assessment, particularly the role of person-centred planning and

adopting person-centred, values-based approaches to children and adults with complex needs.

Work-Based Learning in Applied Behaviour Analysis

Here, you consolidate the knowledge and skills developed so far, and apply that learning in your workplace or a comparable environment. The main objective of this module is to allow you to demonstrate and implement your professionally-relevant knowledge. Accordingly, your learning is centred on guidance provided by supervision and mentoring (from a University-based tutor and a local supervisor).

VISIT THE UNIVERSITY

Come along and see for yourself what it is like to be a student at Kent.

Open Days

Kent runs Open Days during the summer and autumn. These provide an opportunity for you to discover what it is like to study at the University. You can meet academic staff and current students, find out about our courses and attend subject displays, workshops and informal lectures. We also offer tours around the campus to view our sports facilities, the library, and accommodation. For further details and to book your place, see www.kent.ac.uk/opensdays

Taster days

Our taster days give you the chance to find out what it's like studying at the Tizard Centre. The sessions offer free training and run from 9.30am-1pm at the Canterbury campus. After the teaching session, there is the opportunity to speak to members of the Tizard team and have a look around the campus facilities. See www.kent.ac.uk/tizard/courses/short

Informal visits

You are welcome to make an informal visit to our campuses at any time. The University runs tours of the Canterbury campus throughout the year and it may be possible to arrange meetings with academic staff, although we cannot guarantee this. For more details, or to download a map for a self-guided tour, see www.kent.ac.uk/informal

Location

Canterbury

Award

BSc (Hons), FdSc

Degree programmes

Single honours

- Autism Studies (L514) (three years)

Foundation degree

- Autism Studies (L515) (two years)

Programme type

Full-time blended learning (Stages 1 and 2); workshops and work-based learning (Stage 3).

Offer levels

CCD at A level. BTEC Extended Diploma, Merit, Merit, Merit.

Some experience of working with people with autism is recommended. Mature students who do not hold appropriate qualifications can apply, but you need to demonstrate that you have the skills or experience to study at degree level. References will be required.

You need to be either in employment supporting children or adults with autism, or a family carer of a child or adult with autism. We also accept students who are able to arrange a placement for the second and third years of study.

Required subjects

None.

Scholarships and bursaries

For details of scholarships and bursaries at Kent, see www.kent.ac.uk/ugfunding

Q-Step Centre

Students have the opportunity to benefit from Kent's Q-Step Centre, which provides advanced training in quantitative methods in the social sciences.

Admissions enquiries

T: +44 (0)1227 827272
Freephone (UK only):
0800 975 3777

Offer levels and entry requirements are subject to change. For the latest course information, see: www.kent.ac.uk/ug

Terms and conditions: the University reserves the right to make variations to the content and delivery of courses and other services, or to discontinue courses and other services, if such action is reasonably considered to be necessary. If the University discontinues any course, it will endeavour to provide a suitable alternative. To register for a programme of study, all students must agree to abide by the University Regulations (available online at: www.kent.ac.uk/regulations).

Data protection: for administrative, academic and health and safety reasons, the University needs to process information about its students. Full registration as a student of the University is subject to your consent to process such information.

COME AND VISIT US

We hold Open Days at our Canterbury and Medway campuses.

For more information, see:
www.kent.ac.uk/opendays

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