Special Needs and Inclusive Education by distance learning

*Please note that this programme specification is currently being revalidated and will be updated by end of July 2014.

Final award   *BA Honours*

Intermediate awards available   *Cert HE, Dip HE*

Mode of delivery   *Distance learning*

UCAS code   *X161*

Details of professional body accreditation *N/A*

Relevant QAA Benchmark statements   *Education Studies*

Date specification last up-dated   July 2014

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

What is BA Special Needs and Inclusive Education?

Special Needs and Inclusive Education is the study of the challenging concepts of equal educational opportunities within disability, behaviour, autism, dyslexia, speech, language and communication. The programme considers children's rights and working in partnership within an educational and social context. This exciting degree programme offers a holistic understanding of childhood, education and society. Practical application of inclusion is analysed in the light of theoretical understanding and legislation. This programme will enable you to develop a reflective approach to inclusion, together with critical thinking skills that are transferable and highly valued in the workplace.

BA Special Needs and Inclusive Education at UEL

BA (Hons) Special Needs and Inclusive Education at UEL is designed to give a broad and in-depth understanding of the current theoretical concepts in the field, including:

- critical awareness of the theoretical perspectives of inclusion and models of inclusive practice.
- developing skills in the evaluation of the language of special needs in relation to concepts of equal opportunity, rights, and disability.
- knowledge and understanding of inclusion from an international perspective, including international agreements.
- Examining concepts of 'challenging behaviour' and inclusive responses
- Analysing the concept of 'professional expertise' and role of the multi-disciplinary team; SENCO; the Teaching Assistant and the Learning Support Assistant, in the light of National Standards.
- Investigating the implications of inclusion for classroom management; curriculum; assessment; inspection; league tables.
- Understanding the educational needs of students with specific conditions such as autism and dyslexia.

Students gaining this knowledge and the required skills can transfer these to future employment in fields such as teaching, early years provision, community and voluntary sector provision, higher education and local authority support services.It is expected that the programme will enhance the promotion prospects of students, and some may consider continuing their professional development through post-graduate study to MA, MPhil, PhD, or EdD studies.

At UEL we are committed to working together to build a learning community founded on equality of opportunity - a learning community which celebrates the rich diversity of our student and staff populations. Discriminatory behaviour has no place in our community and will not be tolerated. Within a spirit of respecting difference, our equality and diversity policies promise fair treatment and equality of opportunity for all. In pursuing this aim, we want people applying for a place at UEL to feel valued and know that the process and experience will be transparent and fair and no one will be refused access on the grounds of any protected characteristic stated in the Equality Act 2010

Programme structure

Students may study full-time or part-time to complete the BA (Hons) Special Needs and Inclusive Education degree. A full-time programme would typically take three academic years to complete with students taking six modules per year. If studying part-time, students would take between two and four modules per year.

Career opportunities

Successful completion of this degree will enable you to apply for the Primary PGCE programme. Teachers with this degree background may choose to teach in mainstream inclusive schools or in special schools. They may become special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) or inclusion managers in their schools. Other career paths include working within local authority support services, early years settings, and non-governmental organisations such as charities. You may also continue your studies at master's level. "

Learning Environment

The programme is delivered exclusively through distance learning. Learning will be supported through study guides accompanying a core textbook, and through the use of our online student community.

The main purpose of the study guide is to help you to make the most effective use of the core textbook and other resources. It provides clear structuring, routeing and signposting, to establish a context for learning. It highlights key concepts, models and frameworks and it clearly indicates to you the sections of the textbook that you should study.

The study guide encourages deep learning through the use of activities, self assessment questions and other formative assessments. Self-assessment questions enable you to check your progress – by comparing your answers with sample answers, you can assess for yourself how well you have met the learning outcomes for a particular section of the study guide.

Each module is accompanied by a site in our online student community, UEL Plus, with discussion facilities that will enable students to discuss and resolve issues related to their

studies. In addition, the module tutor will use this facility to address any common academic issues, and to contact students where necessary. It is essential therefore that you have easy and regular access to the Internet and reliable email.

Whilst much of your work will be individual, enabling you to set your own schedule, for some modules, you will be expected to participate in group discussions or chat sessions, or to work together with other distance learning students as a group on a project.

Assessment

All modules are assessed using various methods which are chosen as the most appropriate to demonstrate the learning outcomes for each module. Assessment can take such forms as essays, reports, learning journals, portfolios, book reviews and exams.

Project work

At Level Three students are expected to carry out an empirical research project on a topic relevant to the field of Special Needs and Inclusive Education. This is a core module (ED3000) and runs throughout the year counting as a double project (equivalent of two modules). Students develop research skills which are valuable in both understanding and evaluating published research and empowering students to become researchers themselves.

In addition, students are involved in a number of collaborative projects throughout the degree which benefit them by developing project management, time management and interpersonal team work skills.

Added value

This programme will help students develop both a reflective approach to Special Needs and Inclusive Education as well as critical thinking skills which are transferable to the workplace.

IS THIS THE PROGRAMME FOR ME?

If you are interested in:

Understanding the issues concerning the term 'special educational needs'

Investigating international perspectives

Exploring education practices

Learning theories and personal development

If you enjoy:

A personal intellectual challenge

Working in groups

Using theory to inform practical application in the workplace

Carrying out original research

If you want:

A challenging programme which includes study in theoretical and practical issues in the field of Special Needs and Inclusive Education.

A programme which allows you flexibility in the modules and topics to study.

A programme which allows you to study in a number of modes to suit your personal circumstance through the use of flexible modules, distributed learning, distance learning.

Your future career

Successful completion of the BA (Hons) Special Needs and Inclusive Education degree programme will enable you to apply for an appropriate teacher training programme (e.g. a PGCE primary) if desired. Teachers with this degree may choose to teach in mainstream inclusive schools or in special schools. They may become Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) in their schools. Other career paths include working within Local Authority Support Services, Early Years settings, and non government organisations such as charities. A number of graduates may also continue their studies at Masters or PhD level.

How we support you

On enrolment, you will be provided with introductory materials on the use of UEL Plus and UEL Direct.

You will be provided with a printed copy of the study guide and the core texts for each module. You will also be given access to the distance learning module site in UEL Plus where you will find digital copies of the study guide and other information provided by the module leader such as the handbook for the programme. Further, you will have access to online journal articles and e-books via the Athens system which is administered by Library and Learning Services.

During your studies, you will be supported by our team of Distance Learning Student Advisors in UEL Connect. These advisors act as a first point of contact for you, addressing the majority of student queries and referring only those that relate to academic matters to the module tutor. The Student Advisors will also contact students who seem to be falling behind and will offer advice and encouragement to them.

The programme fully implements our Skills Curriculum, and one of the first modules that you will be expected to undertake is our level 1 Academic Study Skills module, which will provide you with additional support in your study habits and in being an effective distance learner.

We also provide useful advice and information in our online Student Handbook .

Bonus factors

UEL offers PGCEs in Primary Education and a number of secondary subjects (which are expanding yearly). Students are offered support in their application for placements and PGCE staff are readily available for advice.

Programme aims and learning outcomes

What is this programme designed to achieve?

This programme is designed to give you the opportunity to:

- Develop knowledge and understanding of the key theories and current issues underpinning the study of the field of Special Needs and Inclusive Education
- Increase your analytical and evaluative skills enabling you to sustain an academic argument and problem solve
- Develop key transferable skills which will increase your employability.

What will you learn?

Knowledge

-You will learn about the historical development of special education.

-You will develop an understanding of the concept and language of special needs; equal opportunity; children's rights; inclusion.

-You will learn about educational organisations, the social context of learning and schooling, and the development of children as learners.

-You will develop an understanding of the theoretical perspectives of inclusion which underpin models of inclusive practice.

-You will learn about special needs in an international context.

Thinking skills

-You will learn how to think critically about the theories and models presented as part of your studies.

-You will learn how to analyse practical and theoretical situations, in the context of current policy on inclusion and special needs.

-You will learn to evaluate information and present an argument in a range of modes of delivery, such as group discussions, written work, ICT.

-You will plan, manage, reflect on your own learning and professional development.

Subject-Based Practical skills

-You will learn how to apply the theoretical concept of inclusion in practice through work based learning; case study research; presentations.

-You will demonstrate understanding of research methodology by applying this knowledge to undertake a small-scale research project in the field of Special Needs and Inclusive Education.

-You will learn how to present information clearly and coherently and communicate effectively to different audiences in a range of modes and media.

Skills for life and work (general skills)

-You will demonstrate autonomy, self-reliance, teamwork and leadership skills.

-You will develop transferable graduate skills in communication and interpersonal relationships.

The programme structure

Introduction

All programmes are credit-rated to help you to understand the amount and level of study that is needed.

One credit is equal to 10 hours of directed study time (this includes everything you do e.g. lecture, seminar and private study).

Credits are assigned to one of 5 levels:

0 - equivalent in standard to GCE 'A' level and is intended to prepare students for year one of an undergraduate degree programme

1 - equivalent in standard to the first year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme

2 - equivalent in standard to the second year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme

3 - equivalent in standard to the third year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme

M - equivalent in standard to a Masters degree

Credit rating

The overall credit-rating of this programme is 360 credits.

Typical duration

The expected duration of this programme is three years when studied in full-time mode or five years in part-time mode. It is possible to move from a full-time mode of study to a part-time mode of study and vice-versa, to accommodate any external factors such as financial constraints or domestic commitments. Many of our students make use of this flexibility and this may impact on the overall duration of their study period.

How the teaching year is divided

The teaching year begins in September and ends in June, but some programmes also allow students to join at the start of Semester B, in February. A student, normally registering for six modules in one year (three modules in each Semester) would do so in a full-time attendance mode of study and a student registering for up to four modules in one year (two modules in each Semester) would do so in part-time attendance mode of study.

What you will study when

This programme is part of a modular degree scheme. A typical full-time student will take six 20 credit modules per year. An honours degree student will complete six modules at level one, six at level 2 and six at level 3. See table below.

.

LEVEL	TITLE	SKILLS CURRICULUM MODULE	CREDITS	STATUS SINGLE
1	ED1000 Critical Reading and Writing	Y	20	Core
1	ED1025 Introduction to Special Needs and Inclusive Education		20	Core
1	ED1002 The Sociology of Education		20	Core
1	ED1010 Children in their Social Context		20	Core
1	ED1012 Issues in Child Health		20	Core
1	ED1042 Speech, Language and Communication Needs		20	Core
2	ED2000 Research Design and Methods	Y	20	Core
2	ED2003 Challenging Disability		20	Core
2	ED2013 Issues in Child Development		20	Core
2	ED2001 Professional Development	Y	20	Core
2	ED2019 Managing Behaviour		20	Core
2	ED2036 Autism Spectrum Disorders and the Curriculum		20	Core
3	ED3000 Independent Research Project		40	Core
3	ED3028 Inclusion		20	Core
3	ED3004 Educational Issues, Special Needs and Inclusive Education		20	Core
3	ED3010 Specific Learning Difficulties		20	Core
3	ED3019 Explaining Behaviour		20	Core

Requirements for gaining an award

In order to gain an honours degree you will need to obtain 360 credits including:

A minimum of 120 credits at level one or higher

A minimum of 120 credits at level two or higher

A minimum of 120 credits at level three or higher

In order to gain an ordinary degree you will need to obtain a minimum of 300 credits including:

A minimum of 120 credits at level one or higher

A minimum of 120 credits at level two or higher

A minimum of 60 credits at level three or higher

In order to gain a Diploma of Higher Education you will need to obtain at least 240 credits including a minimum of 120 credits at level one or higher and 120 credits at level two or higher

In order to gain a Certificate of Higher Education you will need to obtain 120 credits at level one or higher

In order to gain an Associate Certificate you will need to obtain a minimum if 20 credits at level one or higher)

Degree Classification

Where a student is eligible for an Honours degree, and has gained a minimum of 240 UEL credits at level 2 or level 3 on the programme, including a minimum of 120 UEL credits at level 3, the award classification is determined by calculating:

The arithmetic mean of the best 100 credits at level 3	x	2/3	+	The arithmetic mean of the next best 100 credits at levels 2 and/or 3	x	1/3

and applying the mark obtained as a percentage, with all decimals points rounded up to the nearest whole number, to the following classification

70% - 100%	First Class Honours
60% - 69%	Second Class Honours, First Division
50% - 59%	Second Class Honours, Second Division
40% - 49%	Third Class Honours
0% - 39%	Not passed

Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning

Knowledge is developed through:

Online discussions and activities

Research projects and group work

Individual reading

Research seminars organised by staff in the Cass School of Education

Thinking skills are developed through:

Analysing and applying theory through programme work and examination preparation

Discussing key theoretical issues raised in readings

Group activities online

Keeping of learning/reflective logs and journals

Practical skills are developed through:

Individual research projects and observations

Skills for life and work (general skills) are developed through:

Group work which enables skills in planning, negotiation, working with others to develop

Individual work which requires learner strategies in planning, reflecting, time management, meeting deadlines

ICT skills

Assessment

Knowledge is assessed by:

Coursework assignments

Self reflective assignments

Participation in online activities

Thinking skills are assessed by:

Course work assignments

Participation in online forums

Keeping reflective logs and journals

Practical skills are assessed by:

Course work assignments

Skills for life and work (general skills) are assessed by:

Work-based learning

Personal development plans and students' own reflection

How we assure the quality of this programme

Before this programme started

Before this programme started, we checked that:

- there would be enough qualified staff to teach the programme;
- adequate resources would be in place;
- the overall aims and objectives were appropriate;
- the content of the programme met national benchmark requirements;
- the programme met any professional/statutory body requirements;
- the proposal met other internal quality criteria covering a range of issues such as admissions policy, teaching, learning and assessment strategy and student support mechanisms.

This is done through a process of programme approval which involves convening a panel of academic experts including some subject specialists from other institutions. Each panel

member scrutinises key documents and talks to the staff who will deliver the programme before deciding whether it should be approved.

How we monitor the quality of this programme

The quality of this programme is monitored each year through evaluating:

- external examiner reports (considering quality and standards);
- statistical information (considering issues such as the pass rate);
- student feedback.

Drawing on this and other information, programme teams undertake the annual Review and Enhancement Process which is co-ordinated at School level and includes student participation. The process is monitored by our University's Quality and Standards Committee.

Once every six years we undertake an in-depth review of the whole field. This is undertaken by a panel that includes at least two external subject specialists. The panel considers documents, looks at student work, speaks to current and former students and speaks to staff before drawing its conclusions. The result is a report highlighting good practice and identifying areas where action is needed.

The role of the programme committee

This programme has a programme committee comprising all relevant teaching staff, student representatives and others who make a contribution towards the effective operation of the programme (e.g. library/technician staff). The committee has responsibilities for the quality of the programme. It provides input into the operation of the Review and Enhancement Process and proposes changes to improve quality. The programme committee plays a critical role in the quality assurance procedures.

The role of external examiners

The standard of this programme is monitored by at least one external examiner. External examiners have two primary responsibilities:

- To ensure the standard of the programme;
- To ensure that justice is done to individual students.

External examiners fulfil these responsibilities in a variety of ways including:

- Approving exam papers/assignments;
- Attending assessment boards;
- Reviewing samples of student work and moderating marks;
- Ensuring that regulations are followed;
- Providing feedback to through an annual report that enables us to make improvements for the future.

Listening to the views of students

The following methods for gaining student feedback are used on this programme:

Module evaluations

UELPlus Student forum

Student representation on the Programme Committees (meeting twice a year)

Student/Staff consultative committee

Students are notified of the action taken through:

circulating the minutes of the programme committee

providing details on the programme noticeboard

providing details through UELPlus student forum and student emails

Listening to the views of others

The following methods are used for gaining the views of other interested parties:

Annual student satisfaction questionnaire

Questionnaires to former students

Liaison with Local Authorities

Liaison with Local Schools

Further information

The UEL web site (http://www.uel.ac.uk)

The UEL Cass School of Education and Communities Undergraduate handbook

Module study guides

UEL Manual of General Regulations and Policies http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/

UEL Quality Manual http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/

Regulations for the Academic Framework http://www.uel.ac.uk/academicframework/

UEL Guide to Undergraduate Programmes

UEL Cass School of Education and Communities webpage www.uel.ac.uk/education