

# **Programme Specification for M.Ed (part-time) Special Educational Needs (Hong Kong)**

## **1. Awarding Institution**

University of Newcastle upon Tyne

## **2. Teaching Institution**

As above

## **3. Final Award**

M.Ed

## **4. Programme Title**

Special Educational Needs

## **5. Accrediting Bodies**

Hong Kong Registry of Courses

## **6. UCAS Code**

N/a

## **7. Relevant QAA Benchmarking Groups**

Education

## **8. Date of production/revision**

01.11.04

## **9. Programme Aims**

The M.Ed Special Educational Needs aims to equip students with the skills to research and develop their own professional practice in the field of education. The

programme promotes critical analysis of educational practice and theory and encourages engagement in and with research in order to use such evidence to support their teaching practice. Students will also develop the knowledge and skills to enable them to apply theory to practice in a way that fits with contemporary evidence-based practice approaches. The programme builds on a strong research base in the School and the experience of tutors involved in supporting the continuing professional development of teachers and other professionals in the Hong Kong, Chinese and other appropriate contexts. The programme is linked to current developments in the field of Special Educational Needs and Inclusive learning.

## **10. (a) programme intended learning outcomes**

### **A: Knowledge and Understanding**

1. Current research into special educational needs and inclusion
2. International trends in the field
3. Issues in educational practice

### **B: Cognitive skills**

1. critical evaluation
2. problem solving in the student's own occupational context
3. analysis and synthesis of current research/theory and professional practice

### **C: Subject specific/professional skills**

1. evaluation of the impact of particular teaching and learning interventions in the students' own contexts
2. design and implementation of systematic inquiry into aspects of professional practice and topics related to the broad field of special educational needs
3. Application of theory to practice in specific international contexts

D: Key (transferable) skills

1. oral and written communication and the effective use of ICT
2. planning and organising using individual initiative
3. flexibility and adaptability in team work

**(b) Teaching and Learning Methods and Strategies**

	<i>Intended learning outcomes</i>	<i>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</i>
<b>A</b>	Knowledge and Understanding	Lectures, workshops and seminars are designed to contribute to the development of knowledge and understanding. Supported self-study materials also include resources and guided readings which are available in the Resource Centre at British Council in Hong Kong.
<b>B</b>	Cognitive skills	Students critique research in seminars and work on designing research projects in workshops and tutorials. They conduct field-work in their own professional and learning context and evaluate the findings with their peers and tutors.
<b>C</b>	Subject specific/professional skills	Students conduct research projects (dissertation) to explore questions arising from their reading of literature and reflections on professional practice.
<b>D</b>	Key (transferable) skills	Tutor and peer support for drafting the components of the portfolio (e.g. literature review/critique of methods used/reflection on professional development). Local tutors are used to support learning, along with email support by tutors within the School.

### (c) Assessment Strategy and Methods

	<i>Intended Learning Outcomes</i>	<i>Methods of assessment</i>
<i>A</i>	Knowledge and Understanding	Literature review component of the dissertation and assignment work.
<i>B</i>	Cognitive Skills	Design of the research study as recorded in the dissertation proposal and the dissertation itself.
<i>C</i>	Subject specific/professional skills	Project design and evaluation. Reflection on professional development in assignments. Dissertation.
<i>D</i>	Key skills	Assignments, Approaches to Academic Study portfolio. Dissertation.

## 11. Programme Features, Curriculum and Structure

### (i) Programme Features

- (a) the duration of the course is 2 years
- (b) there are 2 stages: taught modules and the dissertation
- (c) 180 credits
- (d) 4x30 credit taught modules each consisting of 400 hours of study (lectures/seminars/tutorials/practical fieldwork/private study) + research methods module and dissertation at 60 credits
- (e) students must accumulate 120 credits from taught modules before proceeding to the dissertation stage.

## ***(ii) Curriculum and Structure***

In Stage 1, students follow a programme of study through 3 subject modules, one of these may be taken from the Guidance and Counselling MEd. The choice of Special Educational Needs modules includes: Improving Pupil Performance: Developing Thinking Skills (EDU982), Managing and Supporting Learning: Responding to Special Educational Needs (EDU980), Child Language Development and Specific Learning Difficulties (EDU981) and Working with Gifted Learners (EDU984). The Guidance and Counselling module advised is Introduction to Counselling (EDU962). The Approaches to Academic Practice module is embedded in the specialist modules and assessed through a portfolio of work. Students must also take the Research Methods module which includes the dissertation.

In Stage 2, students are required to extend and develop their knowledge, understanding and skills of research and evaluation by completing a dissertation on a key area of their practice, which consolidates and builds on the work completed in Stage 1.

## **12. Criteria for Admission**

Entry requirements for the M.Ed are **either** a first degree and qualified teacher status or equivalent professional qualifications and experience. Students with alternative experience/knowledge without formal qualifications will be considered individually.

## **Support for Students and their Learning**

There is an induction process carried out by staff at British Council in Hong Kong and this process is further supported by local tutors. The induction programme includes support on electronic access to journals, study skills and academic writing. Personal tutors are assigned for each module in Stage 1 and for the dissertation in Stage 2 and they assist students in addressing any individual academic and pastoral needs. The staff at British Council also provide ongoing support for students and their learning via the Resource Centre and students have email contact with academic staff when not available in-country.

## **Library**

The Robinson Library provides a full range of traditional borrowing facilities, an Inter-Library Loans System, co-operative arrangements for access to other local academic libraries (i.e. Sunderland and Durham Universities), a wide range of audio-visual material, microcomputer workstations for word processing and access to the University's network, and a Liaison Librarian service with linkage to academic departments for book and periodical purchase. The Library increasingly provides guidance for postgraduate students in information retrieval skills, both group instruction and individual support. The Education liaison Librarian is Linda Kelly (Tel: 0191 2227667). Hong Kong students can access journals electronically and have email access to the librarian and support facilities/services. Six requests for articles via the British Library are available as a resource for each student in the second stage of their programme.

### **Provision for Disabled students:**

The University has a Disability Unit which is a centre offering advice, guidance and support for students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties (Dyslexia). The unit is headed by the Disability Officer and has a Dyslexia Adviser, Coordinator for deaf students and a Technical Support Adviser. This service is available as a consultant to tutors and students involved in the Hong Kong programme. The student facilities at British Council in Hong Kong are accessible to students with physical disabilities. Further information on provision for students with disabilities can be found in the University's Disability Statement which can be obtained from Sandra Chilton (Disability Officer) Room 202 Robinson Library, Telephone 7610 or e-mail.

## **14 Methods for Evaluating and Improving the Quality and Standards of Teaching and Learning**

Each module is evaluated each time it is taught through student feedback forms which are collated by the DPD, discussed with module leaders and tabled at the

relevant Board of Studies and Staff Student Committee. There is an annual internal review of the modules and the programme conducted by the DPD and module leaders.

The programme is reviewed by the Board of Studies, which has student representation, and by the Faculty and the University through the Taught Programme Review and Internal Subject Review. The Board of Examiners and the External Examiner also contribute to the scrutiny and review of the programme on an annual basis. The External examiner completes an Annual Report on the quality of the standards of teaching and learning.

## **15 Regulation of Assessment**

Students must complete Stage 1 successfully before proceeding to Stage 2. All the modules have equal weighting and both stages count towards the final award of the Masters degree. The University has a Common Marking Scale for Taught Postgraduate Courses. The main features are a fail (below 49%) a pass mark range of 5-59%); merit (60-69%) with marks of 70-100% leading to the award of pass with Distinction. There are three main categories of assessment: coherence and quality of discussion; use of literature and other forms of evidence; presentation.

### ***Role of External Examiner***

The function of external examiners is to assist the University in discharging its responsibility by providing assurance that the standards of all awards at Newcastle are at least comparable to those in similar subjects in other universities in the UK and with relevant external referents.

## 16 Indicators of Quality and Standards

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably expect to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided. The accuracy of the information contained is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Please note that further information is available via the following sources:

- I The University Prospectus
- I The Departmental Prospectus
- I The University and Degree Programme Regulations
- I The Degree Programme Handbook

