

Level 7

Teaching and Assessing Learners with Dyslexia, Specific Learning Differences and Barriers to Literacy



Aim of the Course

The Level 7 Diploma aims to

- develop candidates' ability to identify and assess the needs of learners with specific learning differences and barriers to literacy, using observation and evidence-based assessment and standard tests;
- develop candidates' ability to write assessment reports and teaching programmes to inform and advise other professionals on learners with specific learning needs;
- write assessment reports to advise external bodies (e.g. awarding organisations and Local Authorities) with regard to learners' specific assessment needs;
- develop candidates' professional values and commitment to professional standards;
- develop candidates' understanding of a range of specific learning differences and barriers to literacy affecting learning and cognition;
- develop candidates' ability to plan, deliver, review and evaluate effective teaching programmes for learners with specific learning differences and barriers to literacy, both in individual and small group settings
- plan, deliver and evaluate programmes which include both literacy and numeracy, and to understand how difficulties with language and literacy will affect the development of numeracy skills
- develop candidates' ability to work with others in supporting learners with specific learning differences and barriers to literacy
- to develop candidates' theoretical understanding of specific learning differences and barriers to literacy with reference to international research.

Target Group

This qualification is designed to provide a route for continued professional development for teachers and other professionals working within one phase of educational provision – primary, secondary or adult who support learners with dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy and numeracy acquisition.

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Entry Requirements

Candidates should possess an appropriate level of learning support experience and should have a relevant qualification at Level 5 or its equivalent, e.g. OCR level 5 'Teaching Learners with Specific Learning Difficulties' or the Gateway equivalent at level 5. It is anticipated that Candidates will already have a high level of skill and be working at or above the equivalent of Level 5 in the following key skill areas: literacy, numeracy, ICT, working with others, improving own learning and problem solving.

The following two level 5 units in the Level 7 Diploma are also contained in the Level 5 qualification:

- Planning and teaching learning programmes for individuals with dyslexia and/or other specific learning differences
- Evaluation of teaching and learning programmes for individuals with dyslexia and/or other specific learning differences

Recognition of prior learning can be applied to these two Level 5 units within the Level 7 Diploma when the candidate has achieved them within the last 3 years, (this can be longer than 3 years if there is evidence of appropriate continued teaching practice and CPD).

In exceptional circumstances, candidates with extensive and highly specialised training and experience in SpLD may be considered for a place on Level 7 Diploma, even though they do not have a Level 5 qualification. Further charges will apply for units 4 and 5 in such cases and will be decided on an individual basis.

If a potential candidate feels that s/he already has this level of extensive and highly specialised training and experience in SpLD, s/he should submit a detailed CV (including clear details of this extensive and specialised training/experience) with the application, after which an interview date will be given. To ascertain a candidate's suitability in such circumstances, evidence of previous coursework/assignments may be requested. Candidates are advised that there is a requirement for significant independent study and research, in their own time and throughout the course, to provide the evidence for Units 4 and 5.

Progression

Candidates will be able to progress to MEds and other higher-level qualifications in education.

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Candidates will also be able to progress to job roles which require the ability to:

- carry out diagnostic assessments for specific learning difficulties (dyslexia) and write assessment reports on learners' educational needs, to inform local authorities, other professionals, learners and parents/carers;
- carry out assessments and write reports on learners' special assessment needs for schools, colleges, Local Authorities and awarding bodies;
- take an advisory role with regard to formulating and implementing school/college policies for both inclusion and effective teaching of learners with specific learning difficulties.

The course consists of 6 units:

Unit 1 Understand theoretical concepts for teaching individuals with dyslexia and/or other specific learning differences and barriers to literacy

Learning Outcome 1 Understand theoretical concepts underlying dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy

- Explain how dyslexia and/or other specific learning differences and barriers to literacy can be defined.
- Analyse theoretical models of dyslexia and/or other specific learning differences and barriers to literacy.

Learning Outcome 2 Understand theoretical concepts underpinning the teaching of individuals with dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy

- Analyse theoretical concepts underpinning the teaching of individuals with dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy.
- Critically evaluate perspectives of sector experts on teaching methodologies relating to dyslexia and/or other specific learning differences and barriers to literacy.

Learning Outcome 3 Be able to present information on theoretical concepts to other professionals

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- Present balanced reflections on theoretical concepts underlying dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy.
- Present balanced reflections on teaching individuals with dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy to other professionals.

Unit 2 Understanding psychometric and educational assessment methods in the context of dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy

Learning Outcome 1 Understand how patterns associated with dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy are reflected in the results of underlying ability tests

- Explain concepts of underlying ability.
- Explain how underlying ability is measured.
- Describe expected patterns of scores associated with dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy in underlying ability tests.

Learning Outcome 2 Understand types of assessment procedures available to assess for the presence of dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy

- Analyse assessment procedures including
 - standardised tests
 - diagnostic tests.
- Explain information given in test manuals, including
 - technical terminology
 - statistical data.

Learning Outcome 3 Understand the importance of selecting appropriate published tests and assessment procedures for dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy

- Critically compare tests and procedures for use in assessing:
 - literacy attainments
 - numeracy attainments

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- attributes associated with dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy.
- Analyse impact of intrinsic and extrinsic factors on test performance.
- Justify selection of tests and assessment procedures to suit specific assessment situation.

Learning Outcome 4 Understand how to work within professional and ethical frameworks in relation to assessment

- Analyse expected ethical standards and professional practice in assessment.
- Explain how tests to determine the presence of dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy are administered within a professional and ethical framework.

Learning Outcome 5 Understand how to interpret quantitative and qualitative outcomes of assessments

- Describe expected patterns of scores and outcomes from assessments associated with dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy, including
 - attainment tests
 - underlying ability tests
 - diagnostic assessments.
- Explain relationships between quantitative data and qualitative information obtained from assessments.
- Evaluate benefits of quantitative data and qualitative information obtained from assessments.

Unit 3 Assessing individuals for dyslexia and other specific learning differences

Learning Outcome 1 Be able to judge appropriate courses of action following referrals for individuals experiencing difficulties in learning

- Analyse factors underpinning referrals.
- Identify courses of action.
- Justify courses of action.

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Learning Outcome 2 Be able to design assessment sessions based on background information for individuals experiencing difficulties in learning

- Justify design of assessment sessions to suit the needs of individuals, including:
 - assessment procedures
 - resources.

Learning Outcome 3 Be able to apply regulations and guidance regarding access arrangements for examinations for individuals with specific learning differences

- Justify selection of assessment tests to provide information necessary for access arrangement applications.
- Justify recommendations for access arrangements for individuals with dyslexia and/or specific learning differences.

Learning Outcome 4 Be able to conduct assessment sessions

- Implement assessment for individuals with dyslexia and/or specific learning differences.

Learning Outcome 5 Be able to interpret outcomes of assessment

- Interpret individuals' performance in standardised tests using test manuals.
- Compare profiles of individuals' attainments against expected standards.
- Analyse outcomes of the assessment process to determine the nature and extent of individuals' learning difficulties

Learning Outcome 6 Be able to communicate outcomes of assessment for individuals with dyslexia and/or specific learning differences to others involved in individuals' education

- Justify outcomes of assessment to others involved in individuals' education.
- Apply procedures for maintaining records of discussions and feedback.
- Review and revise recommendations based on feedback.

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Unit 3 Level 5/Unit 4 Level 7 Planning and teaching learning programmes for individuals with dyslexia and/or other specific learning differences and barriers to literacy

Learning Outcome 1 Be able to plan lessons for individuals with dyslexia and/or other specific learning differences and barriers to literacy at different stages of education in one-to-one and/or group settings, based on previous background information and assessment data.

- Identify learning support needs for individuals, including long-term aims; short-term targets
- Identify objectives for lessons.
- Justify selection of commercially produced resources for use in lessons.
- Develop own resources for use in lessons.
- Justify teaching methodologies for teaching individuals with dyslexia and/or other specific learning differences and barriers to learning.

Learning Outcome 2: Be able to communicate planned programmes and their implications to others involved in the education of individuals.

- Identify others involved in the education of individuals with dyslexia and/or other specific learning differences and barriers to literacy.
- Justify elements of teaching and learning programmes to others.
- Explain implications for classroom practice.

Learning Outcome 3 Be able to deliver Special Educational Needs learning programmes

- Implement teaching and learning activities.
- Develop opportunities for individuals to practice new skills.
- Promote the implementation of skills in other situations.

Learning Outcome 4 Be able to encourage individuals with dyslexia and/or other specific learning differences and barriers to literacy to learn independently.

- Identify resources and sources of support for independent learning.
- Introduce techniques and resources for independent learning to individuals.
- Introduce techniques for self-evaluation to individuals.

Learning Outcome 5 Be able to demonstrate competency in teaching using a range of assistive and contextual technology.

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- Demonstrate competency using assistive technology to support learners with dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy.
- Demonstrate competency in using contextual technology to support learners with dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy.

Unit 4 Level 5/ Unit 5 Level 7 Evaluation of teaching and learning programmes for individuals with dyslexia and/or other specific learning differences and barriers to literacy

Learning Outcome 1 Be able to evaluate own lessons for individuals with dyslexia and/or other specific learning differences and barriers to learning at different stages of education in one- to-one and/or group settings.

- Evaluate lessons, including:
 - own performance
 - teaching methods
 - teaching resources.
- Evaluate the progress of individuals with dyslexia/specific learning differences and barriers to literacy against SMART lesson targets.

Learning Outcome 2 Be able to evaluate the progress of individuals with dyslexia and/ or other specific learning differences and barriers to literacy at different stages of education against programme targets.

- Evaluate individuals' progress against short-term SMART programme targets.
- Evaluate individuals' progress against long-term needs.
- Critically compare the progress of individuals at different stages of education.
individuals with dyslexia and/ or other specific learning differences and barriers to literacy at different stages of education against programme targets.

Learning Outcome 3 Understand factors influencing the outcomes of teaching and learning programmes for individuals with dyslexia and/ or other specific learning differences and barriers to literacy at different stages of education.

- Explain influence of individuals' situations on outcomes of teaching and learning programmes.
- Critically review effectiveness of own teaching between different programmes.
- Analyse effectiveness of chosen resources in different programmes.

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- Record own continuous professional development (CPD) and identify future needs.

Learning Outcome 4 Be able to use evaluation to inform subsequent teaching and learning programmes for individuals with dyslexia/specific learning differences and barriers to literacy at different stages of education.

- Use evaluation to modify teaching and learning programmes for subsequent blocks of learning support.
- Justify modifications to the proposed teaching and learning programme.

Learning Outcome 5 Understand the content and importance of assessments by specialist educators.

- Summarise specialist educators' reports for colleagues.
- Evaluate how assessment reports produced by specialist educators could inform the planning of teaching and learning programmes.
- Explain psychometric testing vocabulary used by specialist educators.

Unit 6 Relating theoretical and methodological perspectives to practice in the context of dyslexia and/or specific learning differences and barriers to literacy

Learning Outcome 1 Be able to conceptualise complex issues arising from own professional practice as a focus for further investigation

- Critically analyse own area of work in relation to complex issues.
- Justify prioritisation of issues identified.

Learning Outcome 2 Understand different theoretical and methodological perspectives and how they affect the area of study or work

- Critically evaluate literature/information relating to issues identified in own practice.

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Learning Outcome 3 Be able to develop strategies to address complex issues

- Identify potential solutions.
- Assess feasibility of solutions.
- Justify proposed solutions.

Learning Outcome 4 Be able to manage the implementation of planned strategies

- Manage discussions on planned strategies.
- Identify how to monitor progress of planned strategies.
- Implement monitoring processes for planned strategies.
- Review results/feedback from monitoring processes adopted.

Learning Outcome 5 Be able to evaluate effectiveness of own practice in responding to complex issues

- Critically evaluate solutions adopted.
- Critically reflect upon own effectiveness as a practitioner responding to complex issues.