

Severe, Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties MEd/Postgraduate Diploma/Postgraduate Certificate/Advanced Certificate



The **Severe, Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties** blended learning programme has been developed for a range of professionals/practitioners who work with children and adults with learning difficulties in educational settings across the severe and profound range (SLD/ PMLD) including autism (where it overlaps with SLD/ PMLD). Most learners with SLD/ PMLD use specialist services such as special schools or colleges but some use inclusive services in nurseries, mainstream schools or community education. The programme will cover issues for staff who work in any of these services and has particular emphasis on working together to meet needs. The programme will aim to study systematically, critically and in-depth, aspects of educating children and adults with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties. In particular, it will emphasize working together to meet needs.

If you are interested in this programme and work in a country other than the UK, please note that the term severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties refers to what is described as mental retardation, severe developmental disabilities or severe intellectual disabilities elsewhere in the world. The course covers the most disabled children and adults in our society. In many countries these children and adults live in institutions and do not attend school nor join in community activities such as paid work.

Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham was awarded The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2013-14
<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx>

Course fact file

Type of Course: Continuing professional development, taught

Study Options: Blended learning, part time

Duration: MEd 3 years part-time; PGDip 2 years part-time; PG Cert 1 year part-time

Start date: September

Contact

Janet Little

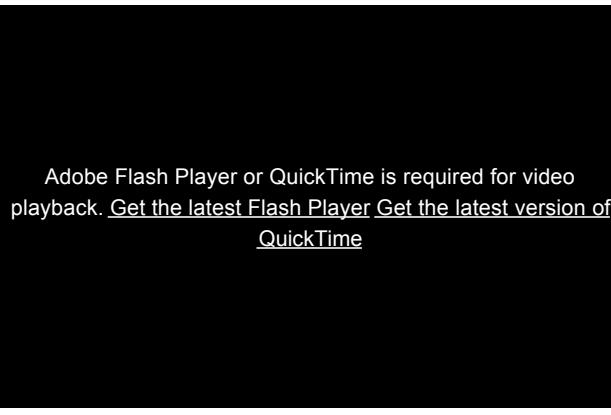
Tel: +44 (0)121 414 4850

Email: j.little@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:j.little@bham.ac.uk>)

[The School of Education \(/schools/education/index.aspx\)](#)

Details

Student Chad Gething talks about his experience of the course



Adobe Flash Player or QuickTime is required for video playback. [Get the latest Flash Player](#) [Get the latest version of QuickTime](#)

This part-time programme is for a range of professionals/practitioners who work with children and adults with learning difficulties in educational settings across the severe and profound range (SLD/ PMLD) including autism (where it overlaps with SLD/ PMLD). Most learners with SLD/ PMLD use specialist services such as special schools or colleges but some use inclusive services in nurseries, mainstream schools or community education. The programme will cover issues for staff who work in any of these services and has particular emphasis on working together to meet needs.

To attempt to meet the needs of the wide range of people working with learners with SLD/ PMLD, the programme is available at more than one level. Level H is available for those with certificates and diplomas (eg: HND, NVQ level 4/5, Foundation degree), whereas Level M is available for those who have an honours degree (or equivalent).

The lecture, seminars and online material contain the same material for everyone but participants studying at different levels are expected to respond to ideas and concepts differently. Further reading and critical analysis is required at M level.

As the programme is designed for a range of practitioners, it is hoped that participants from different agencies or disciplines who work with the same learners will come on the course together (and thus improve their working together). If you are thinking of studying on the course, invite a colleague to study with you!

Aims of the Programme

The programme aims to:

- enable participants to study systematically, critically and in-depth, aspects of educating children and adults with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties that are relevant to their own practice
- provide the support needed for participants to analyse critically and improve their own theory and practice with children and adults with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties
- encourage participants to evaluate critically and develop their collaborative work across disciplines and agencies
- facilitate participants in developing rigorous evidence-based practice

Awards

Certificate (PGCert or AdCert) – modules 1 – 3 (60 credits);

BPhil – modules 1 – 3, plus Special Studies and dissertation (120 credits);

PGDip – modules 1 – 3, plus Special Studies (40 credits), Special Studies (20 credits)(120 credits);

MEd - modules 1 – 3, plus Special Studies, then the module 'Practitioner Inquiry in Education' (preparation for dissertation) plus dissertation (180 credits)

You may also be interested in these programmes which cover multisensory impairments

- [Education of Learners with Multisensory Impairment \(Deafblindness\)](#)** ([/postgraduate/courses/distance/edu/multisensory-impairment.aspx](#))
- [Non Mandatory Qualification for Teachers of Children and young people with Visual Impairment](#)** ([/postgraduate/courses/distance/edu/visual-impairment.aspx](#))
- [Autism \(Children\)](#)** ([/postgraduate/courses/taught/edu/autism-children.aspx](#))
- [Autism \(Adults\)](#)** ([/postgraduate/courses/distance/edu/autism-adults.aspx](#))

Modules

The Modules

Each of the three core modules cover 5 themes related to the education of learners with severe and profound learning difficulties (SLD/ PMLD). The modules are free-standing and can be studied in any order.

The themes are:

- Understanding SLD/ PMLD
- Assessment and Planning
- Interventions
- Curriculum
- Facilitating Learning.

Each 3 core module is worth 20 credits. Successful study of the 3 modules will lead to either AdCert (H level) or PGCert (M level).

SLD/ PMLD: Reflective Practice

Module Codes

H:1125057, M:1125061

This module is primarily concerned with reflecting on current practice within the five themes. You will be supported to identify aspects upon which to reflect through examination of current, relevant developments in theory and practice. It is hard to specify specific topics for reflection, as these will change from year to year, but for example many educational settings are currently reflecting on their current curriculum in the light of the relaxation of governmental direction.

Students choose to base their assignments on aspects of reflective practice that are relevant for them.

SLD/ PMLD: Developing Innovations

Module Codes

H:11 25058 M:11 25062

This module is primarily concerned with developing innovations within the five themes. You will be supported to identify innovations through examination of current, relevant developments in theory and practice. It is hard to specify specific innovations to study as these will change from year to year, but for example currently many educational settings are considering innovative ways of teaching learners who are beginning to develop spoken language.

Students choose to base their assignments on aspects of developing innovations that are relevant for them.

SLD/ PMLD: Enhancing Quality

Module Codes

H:11 25060 M:11 25064

This module is primarily concerned with enhancing quality within the five themes. You will be supported to identify ways in which the quality of provision for learners with SLD/ PMLD can be enhanced. It is hard to specify specific quality enhancement issues as these will change from year to year, but for example currently many educational settings are considering how to enhance the quality of transition to adult life for learners with SLD/ PMLD.

Students choose to base their assignments on aspects of enhancing quality that are relevant to them.

Students who wish to carry on and gain BPhil or MEd will need to complete a practical project (Special Studies) and a dissertation.

For those students who decide to who study for the MEd, the **[Practitioner Inquiry in Education \(PIE\)](#)** ([/postgraduate/courses/taught/edu/pie.aspx](#)) will also need to be completed.

Fees and funding

Fees Home/EU 2015-2016

- Code 8884 AdCert part time £2,100
- Code 8885 BPhil part time £2,100
- Code 8895 PGCert part time £2,070
- Code 8896 PGDip part time £2,070
- Code 8897 MEd part time £2,070

Fees for part-time programmes are based on students studying 60 credits per year.

The fees shown above are the **annual** fees for students starting their courses September in 2015. Please note that where courses last more than one year, the annual fees for subsequent years on the course may increase due to inflation.

Fees Overseas 2015-2016

- Code 8884 AdCert part time £6,597.50
- Code 8885 BPhil part time £6,597.50
- Code 8895 PGCert part time £4,714
- Code 8896 PGDip part time £4,714
- Code 8897 MEd part time £4,714

Fees for part-time programmes are based on students studying 60 credits per year.

The fees shown above are the **annual** fees for students starting their courses September in 2015. Please note that where courses last more than one year, the annual fees for subsequent years on the course may increase due to inflation.

Please view our [fees for international students \(/International/students/finance/fees.aspx\)](#) page for further information.

Learn more about [fees and funding \(/postgraduate/pgt-fees/index.aspx\)](#)

Funding for part-time students

The UK Government provides non-means tested loans to cover the full cost of part-time tuition for all eligible English resident or non UK EU undergraduates. [Find out more about the funding for part-time students. \(/undergraduate/fees/funding/part-time.aspx\)](#)

Scholarships and studentships

Scholarships may be available. International students can often gain funding through overseas research scholarships, Commonwealth scholarships or their home government. More details may be found on the [international scholarships \(/International/students/finance/index.aspx\)](#) page

For further information contact the School directly or the Student Funding Office via [online enquiries \(<http://www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk>\)](#).

Entry requirements

Please refer to the [School of Education entry requirements \(/postgraduate/courses/cpd/edu/progression-admission-requirements.aspx\)](#) webpage

Applicants need to have relevant experience with learners who have SLD/ PMLD and access to at least one learner with SLD/ PMLD during the modules

International students

We accept a range of qualifications, our [country pages \(<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/country/index.aspx>\)](#) show you what qualifications we accept from your country.

English language requirements

You can satisfy our English language requirements in two ways:

- by holding an [English language qualification \(<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-pg/international/index.aspx>\)](#) to the right level
- by taking and successfully completing one of our [English courses for international students \(<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-pg/international/english-courses.aspx>\)](#)

How to apply

When clicking on the Apply Now button you will be directed to an application specifically designed for the programme you wish to apply for where you will create an account with the University application system and submit your application and supporting documents online. Further information regarding how to apply online can be found on the [How to apply pages \(<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx>\)](#)

[Apply now \(<https://pga.bham.ac.uk/lpages/COS145.htm>\)](https://pga.bham.ac.uk/lpages/COS145.htm)

Related links

[Scholarships and bursaries \(/schools/education/scholarships/index.aspx\)](#)

Learning and teaching

The 3 core modules are taught through Blended Learning which is a combination of campus face-to-face sessions and online education. Each 30 hour module contains 18 hours of taught sessions with 12 hours of online study. The personal study for a 3,000 or 4,000 word written assignment completes the '200 hours of student effort' for each module.

Each module contains a 3 day campus study course (6 sessions of 3 hours each).

- Friday 10.30-6.00
- Saturday 9.00-5.00
- Sunday 8.30-3.30

The timings allow for an additional 1.5 hours of study skills over the 3 days.

Attendance at each campus study course is compulsory but if one is missed for unavoidable reasons then it can be studied in the following year. The 3 day study courses take place immediately before half terms for most people. You will be expected to carry out reading and online activities both before and after the 3 day course in order to study the other aspects of each module (equivalent to 4 campus sessions of 3 hours each). Written assignments will be due at the beginning of January, April and September.

There are 2x2 day (Friday and Saturday) study courses for students who continue to MEd or BPhil and wish to take Special Studies followed by PIE (for MEd). These take place at the beginning of October and after Easter. Tutorials are mainly held through phone, Skype and email but there are group tutorials on the Saturday of each campus study course and online discussions.

Students are organised in small study groups and encouraged to support each other both in the campus weekends and online.

Accommodation

Students who live too far from the campus to travel daily are assisted to book overnight accommodation in the area. You may stay for more days before or after the study weekend if you wish so you can complete the module in a single block (using online education to add to the taught sessions). The course tutor will be available for tutorials.

Dates for 2015-16 (dates to be confirmed)

The programme begins on 28th September 2015 with online materials.

- Module 1 study weekend 23rd – 25th October 2015
- Module 2 study weekend 12th - 14th February 2016
- Module 3 study weekend 27th - 29th May 2016

Second Year Dates for 2016-17 (dates to be confirmed)

- Special Studies 2 day study course 9th-10th October 2016
- PIE/ Dissertation 2 day study course 21st-22nd April 2017

Assessment methods

Each module has a written assignment and all assignments are based on students own practice. There is a free choice of topics (but some of the learning outcomes of the module must be met through the assignment). Suggestions for suitable topics will be made.

For example, for the first module:

Level H AdCert or BPhil (3,000 words)

Choose an aspect of your own practice in SLD/ PMLD and reflect on it in the light of theory. Evaluate the success of your current ways of working and make recommendations for the future. You could focus on either an individual child/ adult or on a small group.

Level M PGCert, PGDip, MEd (4,000 words)

Critically analyse the current theoretical discourse on a personally chosen aspect of working with learners with SLD/ PMLD and in the light of this, rigorously reflect on and evaluate your practice and/ or the practice in your organisation. Make sure that you provide a sound rationale for any plans for the future.

Employability

This programme is for a range of professionals and practitioners who work with children and adults with learning difficulties in educational settings across the severe and profound range (SLD/ PMLD, including autism where it overlaps). Most learners with SLD/ PMLD use specialist services such as special schools or colleges but some use inclusive services in nurseries, mainstream schools or community education and the programme will cover issues for staff who work in any of these services and has particular emphasis on working together to meet needs.

Comments from former students

Thanks again for such a wonderful weekend of campus study. Fascinating, rigorous and inspiring.

I just wanted to email to say a massive thank you for last weekend. You really are so inspiring and I left feeling very refreshed. It is so nice to be around other professionals who understand and have the same teaching approaches as myself.