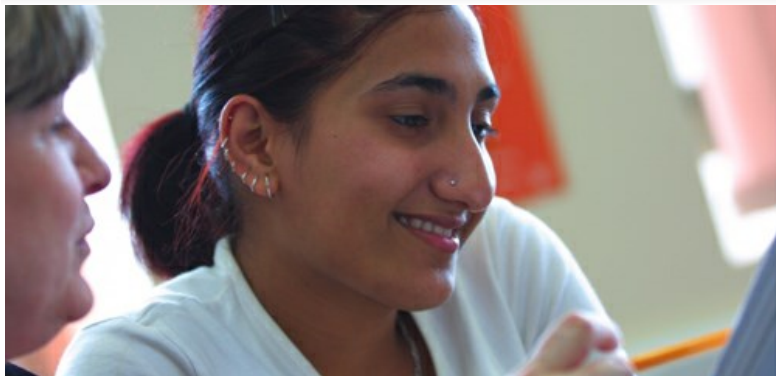


Special Educational Needs Coordination (National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination)



The University of Birmingham is a Department for Education and National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) approved provider for the National Award for SEN Co-ordination. It has been running accredited (Masters level) professional development programmes for special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) for over 15 years. Over a thousand SENCOs have successfully completed their training over this period!

The University runs partnership versions of the National Award for SEN Co-ordination course with the following Local Authority partners:

Birmingham; Dudley, Sandwell & Wolverhampton (combined cohort); Shropshire; Staffordshire.

Within these Local Authority areas SENCOs wishing to apply for a place on the course work in a range of maintained mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools, academy and free schools, and pupil referral units (PRUs). SENCOs working in other neighbouring Local Authority areas may also be able to join one of the partnership courses (in 2013-2014 for example, SENCOs from Derbyshire, Herefordshire, Solihull, Telford and Wrekin and Warwickshire are participating in versions of the course).

It is anticipated that the National Award will be running in 2015-2016.

This Masters level course (60 credits) will be updated to reflect changes to the NCTL learning outcomes framework. It will also be closely aligned to the changes taking place to special educational needs and disability policy, provision and practice in England. For example, following the introduction of the new Children and Families Act (2014), we implemented the new Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.

[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)
<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: Part time

Duration: 1 year part-time

Start date: Contact the School directly (Different course cohorts have the have different start dates)

Contact

Graeme Dobson

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

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

Details

The National Award is a mandatory qualification which all SENCOs who are new in role must undertake. The law states that SENCOs in all mainstream, state-funded English schools must either be "experienced", hold the award, or be working towards the award. All prospective applicants must refer to the detailed eligibility criteria for the Award which is available on the website.

The training courses are 12 months in duration however SENCOs have up to three years from the point at which they are designated as a lead SENCO in which to complete the award. Final responsibility for ensuring the school's compliance lies with the school's governing body.

The course is designed to support all SENCOs' professional development, giving them an opportunity to reflect upon and improve their practice whilst learning more about the coordination of special educational needs.

This course will ensure that SENCOs working in a range of settings are able to carry out their responsibilities in relation to key tasks outlined in the SEN Code of Practice (2001) & the SENCO Regulations (2009), including those that focus on 'day-to-day' & 'strategic & leadership' dimensions of the role. It will also ensure that SENCOs are up-to-date with regard to key changes being made to the SEN system in England. These include major changes to legislation (as set out in the Children and Families Bill introduced to Parliament in the early part of 2013), associated regulations and the new 0-25 SEN Code of Practice which came into force in September 2014.

The following key components of the SEN system will be outlined during the course with a consideration of the implications for SENCOs, schools, parents, children and young people:

- joint service planning and commissioning
- family centred support
- the introduction of a clear 'local offer'
- single assessment procedures and Education and Health Care plans
- school based Additional SEN Support ('single category')
- SEN funding (including the delegated and personal budgets)
- continuity and transition (pre- and post-school).

The course will also take account of the work of SEN and Disability Pathfinder projects as they continue to test proposed components of the new SEN system.

Course Content

Fees and funding

Applications have closed for Department for Education funding.

SENCOs who do not meet the eligibility criteria or who do not succeed in securing a funded place can still self-fund to do the training.

Fees 2014-15

Course code: 8905 £1,980 (Home/EU), £4,555 (overseas).

Entry requirements

Applicants should be SENCOs with qualified teacher status (QTS) or teachers working in pupil referral units.

Partnership programme – to join one of the partnership cohorts, eligible applicants should be working in one of the relevant local authority areas (Birmingham; Dudley, Sandwell, Wolverhampton; Shropshire; Staffordshire) or be able to travel to one of these areas.

Experienced SENCOs – who do not meet eligibility criteria for funding may also apply for a place on one of the partnership courses.

How to apply

Email Graeme Dobson: g.j.dobson@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:g.j.dobson@bham.ac.uk>) indicating which Local Authority partnership course you are applying to join.

Related links

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

Learning and teaching

The teaching takes place over ten days during term-time and the days are evenly spread over the school year. Sessions are taught in local authority/school centres and at the University of Birmingham.

Courses for the National Award for SEN Coordination are delivered through a variety of methods including face to face, online and blended learning.

Assessment

Learning outcomes - participants have to opportunity to 'self- assess' against the specified learning outcomes prior to starting the course, at the course mid-point & upon course completion with support from a local authority or school based mentor/critical friend. All learning outcomes need to be achieved.

Specific assignments - course participants all need to complete three 4000 word written assignments at Masters level. Reflective learning log kept throughout the course with a focus on 'What have I learnt?', 'What action will I take?', 'When & with whom?' Submitted at the end of course.

A portfolio focusing on specific course content & aspects of the SENCO's role (e.g. analysing partnership & collaboration to support pupils with SEND families). Submitted at the course midpoint.

A professional development project presented as a brief 'research report' focusing on an aspect of professional development carried out by the SENCO in her/his school or setting. Submitted at the end of course.

Related staff

[Graeme Dobson \(/staff/profiles/education/dobson-graeme.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/education/dobson-graeme.aspx)

Employability

This course will enable SENCOs to meet essential requirements for undertaking the role in English schools. These requirements are set out in regulations and state that:

Governing bodies of maintained mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools and the proprietors of Academy (including Free Schools) must ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the school.

The SENCO must be a qualified teacher working at the school. A newly appointed SENCO must be a qualified teacher and where they have not previously been the SENCO at that or any other relevant mainstream school for a total period of more than twelve months, they must achieve the National Award in Special Educational Needs Coordination within 3 years of appointment.

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