

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities MA/ Postgraduate Diploma/ Postgraduate Certificate

The **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** programme is designed for educational and health practitioners that work with, or have an interest in working with, children identified as having special educational needs and disabilities. It provides opportunities for participants to reflect on their practice, to critique the conceptualisation of disability within culture and society, and to be analytical as to SEND practices and policies.

This course is internationally focused, and examines SEND practices around the world. Students will, however, be given opportunities to experience UK schools and to engage in research at both the UK and international level.

Awards available on the SEND programme

PG Cert – 3 modules (60 credits at M Level)

PGDip – 6 modules (120 credits at M Level)

MA – 6 modules plus a 15,000 word dissertation (180 credits at M Level)

[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: Taught

Study Options: Full time

Duration: MA - 1 year; PGDiploma - 1 year; PGCert - 1 year

Start date: September

Contact

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

[The Department of Disability Inclusion and Special Needs \(/schools/education/departments/disability-inclusion-special-needs/index.aspx\)](/schools/education/departments/disability-inclusion-special-needs/index.aspx)

Details

The **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** programme will enable you to deepen and extend your knowledge and understanding of educational and social theories which are related to working with children and young people with a range of special educational and individual learning needs.

The programme utilises lectures, seminars, tutorials, school visits, practical tasks, and discussions. Lectures and seminars are facilitated by academics who are leaders in research in the field of SEND.

The programme has been designed to allow opportunities for individualisation of content to ensure that it is relevant to your professional and personal needs. As a student on the programme, you will be expected to be self-directed in your learning, and propose projects that can be practical, theoretical, or both. If you choose to pursue the MA award, you will have the opportunity to design and implement research that will allow you to gain skills in research design and methodology.

This programme is designed to supplement professionals already working in the field, or those seeking a general introduction to topics within special educational needs and disabilities. In general, this includes educators already working with students with special educational needs and disabilities, support workers in places such as a university or workplace disability service unit, a social worker or nurse providing care for persons with disabilities, someone working for a non-governmental organization dealing with disabilities issues, or a staff member of a Ministry of Education or Ministry of Health, amongst other things. This programme is *not* intended to be a training programme for Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs), nor will it provide specific teacher training to directly work with students with disabilities in education or health settings.

If you are interested in a part-time, distance learning programme, please see our **[Inclusion and Special Educational Needs \(/postgraduate/courses/cpd/edu/inclusion-spec-educ-needs.aspx\)](/postgraduate/courses/cpd/edu/inclusion-spec-educ-needs.aspx)** course.

The **[Department of Disability Inclusion and Special Needs \(DISN\) \(/schools/education/departments/disability-inclusion-special-needs/courses/index.aspx\)](/schools/education/departments/disability-inclusion-special-needs/courses/index.aspx)** within the School of Education also has a number of other courses relating to special education that provide more specific training for those with limited initial experience that seek to work directly in the field following university training. For more of a speciality focus, there is also a MA course in **[Management of Special Education in Developing Countries \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/edu/management-special-education.aspx\)](/postgraduate/courses/taught/edu/management-special-education.aspx)** that is offered in the **[Department of Education and Social Justice \(ESJ\) \(/schools/education/departments/education-social-justice/index.aspx\)](/schools/education/departments/education-social-justice/index.aspx)**.

To help you decide which level of award you need to apply for, please view the **[Levels of Award table \(PDF\) \(/Documents/college-social-sciences/education/courses/levels-of-award-send.pdf\)](/Documents/college-social-sciences/education/courses/levels-of-award-send.pdf)**. This table provides an overview of the different awards, modules and credits needed to achieve the Postgraduate certificate (PGCert); Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) or Masters (MA) qualification.

Modules

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities: Analysing Research

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities: Evaluating Practice

Practitioner inquiry in Education (PIE)

Practice based Research

Cross-cultural issues in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Special studies

Dissertation

Fees and funding

Fees Home/EU 2015-2016

- Code 297A PGCert £2,070
- Code 300A PG Dip £4,140
- Code 301A MA £6,210

For the PG Dip and MA an enhanced DBS/police check will be required and it will be necessary to pay a small additional fee.

Fees overseas 2015-2016

- Code 297A PGCert £4,714
- Code 300A PGDip £9,427
- Code 301A MA £14,140

For the PG Dip and MA an enhanced DBS/police check will be required and it will be necessary to pay a small additional fee.

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

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 \(http://www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk/\)](http://www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk/).

Entry requirements

Applicants must have:

- a relevant or related 1st degree and some relevant experience with children or young people with SEN.
- an enhanced DBS/police check if applying for the PG Dip and MA. A small additional fee will be necessary, in addition to the standard fees
- demonstrate that you have a good level of written and spoken English. (see 'English Language Requirements' below).

There is only one intake per year at the beginning of the Academic Year (September/ October).

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

English language requirements

In order to undertake the SEND programme of study, you will need to demonstrate that you have a good level of listening skills, reading comprehension, written and spoken English. You can demonstrate your level of English with IELTS or alternative qualifications. The following link, to the [English language qualifications \(/postgraduate/requirements-pgt/international/index.aspx\)](#) page, will give you more detailed information about English tests excepted at the University of Birmingham and the required grades you will need to achieve.

Alternatively, or in addition, you may want to take and successfully complete one of our pre-sessional [English courses for international students \(/postgraduate/courses/presessional/index.aspx\)](#) courses, based at the University of Birmingham.

International students

We accept a range of qualifications, our [country pages \(/International/students/country/index.aspx\)](#) show you which qualifications we accept from your country.

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 \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx)

Learning and teaching

The SEND programme commences annually in September. The modules are offered over two semesters (Autumn and Spring), with the MA dissertation due at the end of the Summer. If you are studying for an MA, you will conduct the data collection and analysis for your research dissertation and complete the final write-up between April and August. This research can occur in the UK and/or your home country. Thus, the SEND programme is approximately 11 months in length if pursuing the MA award.

For planning purposes, the following is an outline of the academic calendar for the SEND programme:

- September – December: Semester 1 (on campus)
- Winter Break (off campus; approx. 3 weeks)
- January – April: Semester 2 (on campus)
- April – August: MA students work on dissertation (off campus)

Related staff

[Dr Matthew Schuelka \(/staff/profiles/education/schuelka-matthew.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/education/schuelka-matthew.aspx)

Employability

Employable skills that are learned through completion of the SEND programme include analysing and conducting research, evaluating practice, policy analysis, and academic writing. Because of the self-directed and project-based nature of this programme, you will be encouraged to set your own skills and knowledge objectives. Your advisor will work with you to facilitate meeting these.

Whilst the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) award does not qualify you to become a teacher in the UK or elsewhere, it is ideal for graduates who wish to deepen their knowledge and understanding of special educational needs and disabilities in educational settings. Upon completion of this course, you will have experience of issues relating to special educational needs which could be applied to a wide range of professional roles. There is also the opportunity to work towards a further professional qualification in the field of Education, which includes progression to a PhD or EdD.

