MA Special and Inclusive Education (Online) - Module summary

EDUC4112 Debating Special and Inclusive Education

This module will explore key issues concerning the field of special and inclusive education:

- definitions of special needs and inclusion;
- global perspectives on diversity and access to equality of educational opportunities;
- understanding theoretical approaches to special needs/inclusion and models of disability;
- understanding prevalence of need and issues concerning classification and assessment;
- exploring the impact of policy on practice and equality of opportunity;
- examining the evidence on effectiveness of different types of educational settings e.g. mainstream, resource base and special provision;
- pedagogy and creativity;
- balancing equity and choice through collaborative and ethical problem solving.

This module aims to develop in participants an awareness of the:

- theory relating to purpose of education and equality of access to learning opportunities;
- key debates and issues concerning the field of special and inclusive education;
- impact theory and policy have upon practice.

EDUC4115 – Practice Based Inquiry

This module will develop or build upon participants' existing critical engagement with educational research. This is part of a focus on developing practitioners who understand the complexities of the research process in order to respond to the kinds of research evidence used in educational discourse, as well as to enable practitioners to plan and conduct practitioner inquiry within their current or future professional contexts. These processes will be achieved through:

- examination of literature pertaining to the philosophical underpinnings of educational research;

- conceptualising different kinds of practitioner inquiry relevant to work-based understanding and development (purposes, processes, contexts, dilemmas, outcomes);
- examining a range of approaches to educational inquiry, with an emphasis on action research;
- developing an inquiry into the candidates' professional context.

The module aims to develop students' understanding of the field of educational research, with its different methodological stances, and to critically examine the concepts and use of practitioner inquiry as a means to enhance professional practice and organisational growth.

EDUC4113 Responding Mindfully to Challenging Behaviour

This module considers the following key areas:

- experiential learning and its relationship to reflective practice and reflexivity: exploration via a learning journal genre;
- world views and models of human behaviour;
- theoretical perspectives on behaviour: behaviourist, humanistic and postmodern approaches;
- social and emotional aspects of behaviour: mental well-being, shame, self-esteem;
- punitive and restorative justice, responding to bullying and challenging behaviour, conflict resolution and peer mediation;
- the intensity/functionality of behaviourism, escalation/de-escalation, communication and crisis intervention;
- controversial issues: e.g. restraint, exclusion from school, sex and relationship education;
- supporting students with ADHD;
- workforce issues: self-care, partnership working.

This module aims to develop:

- an awareness of how mindfulness, contemplation and reflexivity are key to the development of self-awareness which is a key resource/skill in facilitating other individuals and groups;
- a critical understanding of theory relating to relationship and behaviour and how this informs and is informed by practical issues concerning the management of students, specifically social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, in educational contexts.

EDUC4110 Communication and Literacy

This module considers the following key areas:

- typical and atypical development of communication;
- typical and atypical development of literacy/learning including specific learning difficulties/dyslexia;
- communication and literacy/learning assessments and interventions;
- communication and literacy/learning for children with learning disabilities including Autism, Downs Syndrome and Dyslexia;
- effective teaching and learning environments.

This module aims to develop in participants an awareness of:

- theory relating to special and inclusive education, focusing on development of language, literacy and learning;
- practical aspects of meeting individual needs, focusing on those with communication and literacy/learning difficulties;
- how the development of language and literacy facilitates learning;
- theoretical models of development and how these can inform the meeting of a diversity of needs;
- atypical developmental difficulties such as communication impairments and Dyslexia.

EDUC4236 Education for Students on the Autism Spectrum

This module will encourage students to consider the support needs of students on the autism spectrum in mainstream and special schools. They will be introduced to the characteristics and prevalence of autism and what this means for teachers. Discussions of the benefit of a 'whole school approach' to supporting children on the autism spectrum will lead to exploration of values, attitudes and expectations as well as strategies for building a supportive community. The concept of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) will be reviewed and applicability to mainstream and special schools will be investigated.

Students will be introduced to strategies for planning the support for students with a range of needs associated with the autism spectrum, including environmental, communication, sensory, social/emotional, and learning support. In addition, they will be introduced to the concept of positive behaviour support and strategies for supporting students.

Some of the key educational interventions for students on the autism spectrum will be evaluated and applicability to mainstream and special schools will be assessed.

Interventions will include, but not be limited to: Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communication related handicapped Children (TEACCH), Pivotal Response Training (PRT), Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) and social emotional skills programmes. Elements of these interventions that could be used in mainstream and special settings will be identified and applications explored.

This module aims to:

- build on learning from previous modules to encourage students to use their research and critical thinking skills to develop knowledge and understanding of the needs of autistic students in mainstream schools;
- consider approaches to education development such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL);
- explore and critically appraise some of the strategies and interventions developed to support learning for students on the autism spectrum;
- develop an understanding of schools as a whole community including the voice of students, parents, teachers and others.