

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION – Postgraduate Certificate in Special Educational Needs Coordination (PG Cert SENCo): The National Award SENCo (NASC)**

1.	<b>Awarding institution/body</b>	University of Worcester
2.	<b>Teaching institution</b>	University of Worcester
3.	<b>Programme accredited by</b>	N/A
4.	<b>Final award</b>	Post Graduate Certificate
5.	<b>Programme title</b>	<b>Programme title:</b> Postgraduate Certificate in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination (National Award SENCO.)
6.	<b>Pathways available</b>	NA
7.	<b>Mode and/or site of delivery</b>	Taught programme with elements of blended learning, participants will be mentored by experienced colleagues (LA and schools) as indicated in the programme handbook.
8.	<b>Mode of attendance</b>	part-time, full day delivery
9.	<b>UCAS Code</b>	N/A
10.	<b>Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement</b>	<b>Subject /Professional Benchmark statements</b> – this programme is designed to enable participants meet the TDA professional learning outcomes of the National Award SENCO.
11.	<b>Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision</b>	Preparation December 2010. Revision September 2011.

**12. Educational aims of the programme**

The award is designed to support teachers and educationalists with responsibility as special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) in a range of settings. The programme is part of the Postgraduate Education Programme (PEP) and is designed to enable participants meet the learning outcomes as specified by the TDA in order to achieve the National Award SENCO.

The programme aims to develop rigorous professional practice in ways which will have an impact on the workplace and on the achievement of all learners in that context. It has been designed to provide opportunities for course participants to pursue reflective and systematic enquiry which will enable them to extend their capacity for critical analysis, reflection, leadership and autonomous action, underpinned by a high level of professional knowledge, skills and understanding.

The overall aims of the programme are to enable participants to:

1. Identify and plan for actual improvements in the leadership of professional practice in their context of work;
  2. Implement and evaluate the effectiveness of change, based upon measurable outcomes in relation to Every Child Matters;
  3. Implement and monitor personalised learning plans appropriate for pupils' needs;
  4. Develop skills in analysing and monitoring data and setting relevant targets for individual and groups of pupils;
  5. Create and utilise professional and systemic support networks within their context, measuring their effectiveness against outcomes;
  6. Apply principles and frameworks relevant to promoting inclusive education to their own professional practice, including the application of relevant law and policy;
  7. Develop flexible, collaborative and inclusive ways of leading and managing others in
  8. special and inclusive settings;
  9. Demonstrate an ability to undertake reflective and systematic enquiry in special and inclusive settings;
  10. confront and where appropriate revise their own values, beliefs and actions;
  11. Critically reflect on policy, leadership and management issues in special and inclusive education.
- 13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods**  
Learning outcomes will be achieved through application and interpretation of cyclical processes of experience, reflection, analysis, and the identification of the relevance of principles to leadership and management contexts. In order to develop and sustain a critical form of educational practice, each of the modules employs learning processes through which course participants are encouraged to critically analyse principles and procedures becoming active practitioner researchers.

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**Knowledge and understanding:**

1. A systematic understanding of knowledge of the professional and legal obligations of schools, children's centres and nurseries towards children with special needs;
2. A comprehensive understanding of a range of specific learning needs and appropriate pedagogical and contextual responses to them;
3. A comprehensive professional understanding in identifying and skills in applying insights in collaborative working and leadership.

**Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:**

- Participants will have a designated mentor throughout the course, who will assist them in auditing their experience against previous and on-going learning, support progress, and advise on the participant's route through the programme against the professional learning outcomes.
- Participants will keep a portfolio of evidence mapping achievement against the learning outcomes.
- Participants will give and receive peer support by the encouragement of real and virtual networks utilising the VLE.

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**Cognitive and intellectual skills:**

1. A comprehensive and systematic understanding of techniques applicable to reflective and critical enquiry in special and inclusive settings;
  2. An articulation of their own professional values in the context of wider academic debates in special and inclusive education, leading and mentoring others in doing so;
  3. A systematic understanding of knowledge of policy, leadership and management issues in special and inclusive education.
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**Practical skills relevant to employment:**

1. Apply principles and frameworks relevant to promoting inclusive education to their own contexts;
2. Create and utilise professional support special and inclusive education networks.
3. Develop flexible, collaborative and inclusive ways of leading and managing others in special and inclusive settings.

**Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:**

- Professional dialogue is at the heart of this programme, and this will be facilitated during taught sessions, mentored support and online via the VLE.
- Taught sessions will focus upon case studies of practice to encourage the articulation of values and the connection of theory and action.
- Policy and leadership in practice will form core content for critical reflection throughout the programme.

**Transferable/key skills:**

1. Pursue further professional development and organisational improvement with rigorous critical understanding of their own achievement and goals.
2. Enhanced school leadership and change management skills.
3. Honed capacities to engage with partners in education.

**Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:**

- The programme models and supports the creation of networks of SENCOs across the region.
- Leadership, change management and inclusion issues in wider professional context are discussed by reference to case studies.
- Mentoring of participants facilitates deep reflection on context specific aspects of application of knowledge. Engagement in professional dialogue is at the heart of this programme, enhancing participants' skills of reflective practice and action learning.

**14. a) Assessment Strategy**

The programme's approach is one of action learning and critical reflection in the context of rigorous professional dialogue. Participants undertake an initial audit of professional experience against the professional (TDA defined) learning outcomes of the programme and will be guided in subsequent meetings towards the presentation of a portfolio evidencing achievement of these learning goals in the context of Masters level work. This portfolio of evidence, which accompanies the progress of the student through the award, will be supplemented at end of module stage with a critical commentary on the issues of the module and the learning outcomes achieved. Formative assessment will occur in professional dialogue with peers throughout the programme, and via the mentoring relationship with the designated professional mentor. Formative assessment

will occur within modules by the presentation and exploration of case-studies for critical reflection and context/child studies in tutorials and seminar contexts and via the VLE, taking into ethical issues where appropriate.

The summative M-level assessments draw upon a 'patchwork text' approach to assessment (Scoggins and Winter, 1999). Participants collect evidence from a range of sources to show their participation in, and engagement with, the role of the SENCO in the domains of the three modules of this award: statutory and professional obligations and responsibilities and pupil learning; meeting the children's needs in partnership; leadership and change management and across the TDA outcomes as linked to each module. Across the three modules the evidence of engagement in these three areas will be accompanied by a critical commentary telling the 'story' of the chosen text-based artefacts. The artefacts presented as evidence for the portfolio may vary depending upon participant, and may be taken from a range of sources e.g. presentations to staff or governors; transcripts of interviews; lesson plans or schemes of work. Each accompanying critical commentary will explain and justify the choice of artefact and will rigorously situate the artefact in the literature and contemporary debate around special and inclusive education around a selected them in relation to the learning outcomes of the module. Thus the M-level summative assessment will be:

- a. Critically discuss the statutory and professional obligations towards children with special educational needs and/or children with disabilities. The discussion should be pertinent to your context. Ensure that the discussion is also supported with reference to evidence in a supporting portfolio of artefacts or documents (3,000 words).

OR

Submit a portfolio of learning (electronic or hard copy) providing evidence of your involvement in the application of statutory and professional obligations to your role as SENCo. The portfolio should be evidence based and consist of the following:

- A relevant analytical case study OR series of journal entries.
- A critical commentary on a recently published article, book or documentary pertaining to the role of SENCo and how this has implications for the statutory and professional context.
- Professionally self-reflective and critical contributions to VLE discussion threads based upon relevant theoretical frameworks.  
(3,000 words or equivalent).

- b. Critically discuss your role as SENCo as it pertains to working in partnership with others (for example, working with outside agencies, with teaching assistants, with parents and children or governors). Ensure that the discussion is supported with reference to evidence in a supporting portfolio of artefacts or documents (3,000 words).

OR

Submit a portfolio of learning (electronic or hard copy) providing evidence of your involvement in partnership in your role as SENCo. The portfolio should be evidence based and consist of the following:

- A relevant analytical case study OR series of journal entries.
- A critical commentary on a recently published article, book or documentary pertaining to change practices and or leadership with reference to the role of SENCo.
- Professionally self-reflective and critical contributions to VLE discussion threads based upon relevant theoretical frameworks.  
(3,000 words or equivalent).

- c. Critically discuss your involvement in leadership, management and / or change initiatives in your role as SENCo. Ensure that the discussion is supported with reference to evidence in a supporting portfolio of artefacts or documents (3,000 words).

OR

Submit a portfolio of learning (electronic or hard copy) providing evidence of leadership and engagement with change processes in your role as SENCo. The portfolio should be evidence based and consist of the following:

- A relevant analytical case study OR series of journal entries.
- A critical commentary on a recently published article, book or documentary pertaining to change practices and or leadership with reference to the role of SENCo.
- Professionally self-reflective and critical contributions to VLE discussion threads based upon relevant theoretical frameworks.  
(3,000 words or equivalent)

## **b) Assessment Policy**

### **Requirements to pass modules**

Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications. The minimum pass mark is 50% for each module. Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required. Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

### **Submission of assessment items**

Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at 50% unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted. Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances. Students who fail to submit an item of assessment lose their right to reassessment in that module, and will be required to retake the module, which will incur payment of the module fee. For full details of submission regulations see PRF.

### **Retrieval of failure**

Students are entitled to re-sit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade, unless the failure was due to non-attendance or non-submission. Reassessment takes place during the following semester or during the summer reassessment period at the end of the academic year. If following reassessment the module has been passed, the module grade will be capped at 50%. If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they will have one further and final reassessment opportunity. A student who fails 40 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University.

**Requirements for Awards**  
PG Cert

**Requirement**  
Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7

## 15. Programme structures and requirements

<b>Module Titles:</b>	<b>Code:</b>	<b>Credits:</b>
The role of the SENCO: the professional context and pupil learning	MEDD4049 (or MEDD4007 where appropriate)*	20
The role of the SENCO: meeting children's needs in partnership	MEDD4059 (or MEDD4007 where appropriate)*	20
The role of the SENCO: leadership, change and impact	MEDD4051 (or MEDD4007 where appropriate)*	20

N.B. Participants must meet the programme learning outcomes and the TDA prescribed professional learning embedded within the award to receive the award of PGCert (National Award SENCo).

\*APEL arrangements will be taken into account in determining whether participants are exempt from one or more modules of the award up to a maximum of 50%. This will be decided at application stage. Participants are required to attend all taught sessions, workshops and mentor meetings for this fully-funded programme.

## 16. QAA Academic Infrastructure

The learning outcomes for this award have been aligned to the Framework for HE Qualifications benchmarks for awards at level 7/M.

## 17. Support for students

The University of Worcester is committed to supporting the student experience full information is on the website under the [services for students](#). A special induction to the programme of learning will be provided. This will include advice regarding how to access materials and resources through effective use of [the Information and Learning Support Services](#) and a [Registry](#) induction at the beginning of their course. Additional induction into the subject will be provided by module tutors. All students will engage in a self-reflective needs analysis of their current knowledge and experience, taking into account their working context, so that as far as possible the programme contact and tutorial support can be tailored to their needs and interests. This incorporates a review of the TDA intended learning outcomes. The programme will make use of a VLE (Blackboard or Moodle) to facilitate interaction between students, general communication and learning. The opportunity to present to peers and tutors as an informal and formative part of the learning process will be made. All students will be provided with a module guide for each module outlining in greater detail the learning outcomes, content and focus and specific resources for each module.

## **18. Admissions Policy**

Recruitment to the programme will be facilitated by strong partnerships in the region with local authorities. All applicants seeking admission to a course must apply to the University using the appropriate application form. The normal minimum entry requirement for this postgraduate taught course is a lower second class Honours degree or equivalent. Applicants should hold an appropriate professional qualification (e.g. QTS/QTLS) or have experience which demonstrates they possess appropriate knowledge and skills.

### **Entry requirements**

Applicants should be in-post and have some responsibility for teaching and learning in their job, they will require SENCo status. In keeping with University policy on widening participation and diversity, the Programme encourages and welcomes the contribution of older learners and people from the widest range of social, economic and cultural backgrounds.

### **Accreditation of Prior Learning**

Students with relevant previous study at postgraduate level or with extensive experience may be considered eligible for accreditation of prior learning. Please contact the Registry Admissions Office for further information or guidance on 01905 855111.

### **Admissions procedures**

Intending participants should complete the application form for this Post Graduate Certificate level course. This includes a written personal statement. Forms are available from the CPD Coordinator: cpdeducation@worc.ac.uk or telephone 01905 855056

### **Admissions/selection criteria**

Participants should have written support of their school's head teacher in order to progress with admission. A section for this written support is included on the application form.

## **19. Evaluating and improving teaching and learning quality standards**

Student feedback on aspects of the quality of provision is a crucial facet of quality enhancement of the programme. Student Academic Representatives (STARS) are in integral part of the programme and formative discussions will enable these representatives to ensure on-going strengthening of the programme. Additionally, all modules are evaluated and information from the evaluations is shared with course participants. The PGCert SENCo is subject to the internal annual review process within the overall context of the Professional Education Programme (PEP). A designated external examiner has been appointed to the programme and monitors the quality of learning, teaching and assessment on the award as work arises during each year. A Course Management Committee meets twice a year to review quality issues. PEP staff development events consider matters of specific import to teaching and learning at postgraduate level and will occur three-times per year. Staff who are teaching on this award have a national and international profile in the subject and are active in research and knowledge transfer across many aspects of Special and Inclusive Education.

## 20. Regulation of assessment:

### Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is 50% for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Some modules have attendance requirements (*delete if this does not apply*).
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.
- Students are assessed by a combination of course work, within module tests and examinations. The minimum pass mark is 50% for each module.
- The following awards will be available to students who meet the following requirements:

### Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at 50% unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- Students who fail to submit an item of assessment lose their right to reassessment in that module, and will be required to retake the module, which will incur payment of the module fee.
- For full details of submission regulations see Postgraduate Regulatory Framework.

### Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to retake failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade, unless the failure was due to non-attendance or non-submission.
- Reassessment takes place during the following semester or during the summer reassessment period at the end of the academic year.
- If following reassessment the module has been passed, the module grade will be capped at 50%.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they will have one further and final reassessment opportunity.
- A student who fails 40 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University.

### Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
PG Cert	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7
PG Dip	Passed a minimum of 120 credits at level 7
Masters (MA/MSc/MBA/MTL)	Passed a minimum of 180 credits at level 7 including a minimum of 40 credits from the Dissertation

The awards of PG Cert, PG Dip or Masters may be made with Merit or Distinction. Institute-level Examination Boards review and confirm results for modules, and the Scheme Examination Board considers candidates' mark profiles to make decisions about progression, awards and degree classifications as appropriate. The University requires Institutes and/or course teams to have a formally stated policy for internal and external verification and moderation of marking which meets the requirements of the University Assessment Policy

## **21. Indicators of quality and standards**

Standards on PEP are viewed by external examiners as being in line with that of other HEIs. Quality on the programme is continually monitored and further enhanced by an engagement in all of the processes described above. In November 2005, the institution was audited by the Quality Assurance Agency. The audit confirmed confidence in the University's management of the quality of its academic programmes and the standards of its awards. The QAA particularly commended the University's supportive ethos and range of departmental and central services provided to students and staff in support of its mission to deliver an excellent inclusive higher education.

The University underwent a QAA Institutional Audit in March 2011. The audit confirmed that confidence can be placed in the soundness of the institution's current and likely future management of the academic standards of its awards and the quality of the learning opportunities available to students. The audit team highlighted several aspects of good practice, including the student academic representative (StARs) initiative, the proactive approach which supports the student experience for disabled students, the comprehensiveness of the student online environment (SOLE), the wide range of opportunities afforded to students to enhance their employability, the institution's commitment to enhancement, and the inclusive approach to working with its collaborative partners.

## **22. Employability and graduate destinations**

Postgraduate study is widely recognised as enhancing the career prospects of participants. In 2008 the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families asserted the government's goal that teaching should become a Masters level profession. This new award will draw upon the expertise of LA Advisers and a team of experienced mentors to ensure the relevance of content to the professional practice of participants. Close links with local authorities and schools in the area will be maintained by the module tutors on this programme personally and by the university's existing and strong relationship with strategic partners through its CPD network and regular meeting of a CPD steering group.

**Please note:** This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module outlines and the course handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education](#).