

MA Specific Learning Difficulties/ Dyslexia

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Awarding institution	Bath Spa University
Teaching institution	Bath Spa University
School	School of Education
Main campus	Newton Park
Other sites of delivery	N/A
Other Schools involved in delivery	N/A
Name of award(s)	Specific Learning Difficulties/ Dyslexia
Qualification (final award)	MA
Intermediate awards available	BDA Accredited awards: PgCert in Specific Learning Difficulties/ Dyslexia PgDip in Specific Learning Difficulties/ Dyslexia Exit awards not accredited by BDA: MA in SpLD/ Dyslexia Theory PGDip in SpLD/ Dyslexia Theory PgCert in SpLD/ Dyslexia Theory
Routes available	Single
Duration of award	3 years part time
Professional Placement Year	No
Modes of delivery offered	Blended
Regulatory Scheme [1]	Taught Postgraduate Framework
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body accreditation	British Dyslexia Association accreditation: ATS/APS and AMBDA
Date of most recent PSRB approval (month and year)	October 2021
Renewal of PSRB approval due (month and year)	October 2026
UCAS code	N/A
Route code (SITS)	SLDDMA

Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements (including date of publication)	Masters Characteristics Statement (2020)
Date of most recent approval	
Date specification last updated	

[1] This should also be read in conjunction with the BSU Qualifications Credit Framework

Exemptions table

The following exemptions are in place:

Programme/Pathway	Regulations/Framework	Brief description of variance	Approving body and date
MA SpLD/Dyslexia	Postgraduate Academic Framework	Exemption to depart from Framework, paragraph 1.6.2	Curriculum Committee, June 2023

Programme Overview

The MA in Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)/Dyslexia (accredited by the British Dyslexia Association) focuses upon identification, assessment and practical support for school aged learners with SpLD/Dyslexia. These include the exploration of theories and how these relate to the assessment and support of individuals with dyslexia. Wider issues connected with specific learning difficulties are explored, including inclusive practice and the role of stakeholders.

The modules can combine direct academic teaching and study at Master's level at the University to obtain the academic awards of PG Cert, PGDip or Masters in SpLD/Dyslexia with the development of practical competence required to obtain Accredited Teacher/Practitioner Status (ATS/APS) and/or Associate Member of the British Dyslexia Association (AMBDA) accreditation from the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) through professional practice supervised by expert tutors.

For BDA accreditation 80% attendance is required for the core modules. Some individual tutorial support is offered alongside good opportunities for extended discussion with tutors and colleagues. Collaborative analysis of ideas through discussion and problem solving is key to teaching and learning on the programme.

Programme Aims

1. To explore the theoretical and research base underpinning current knowledge of SpLD/Dyslexia.
2. To ensure participants are confident in the key principles of identifying, observing and assessing the learning differences associated with SpLD/Dyslexia within a teaching context to enable both the provision of appropriate specialist teaching and classroom support for such learners.
3. To produce work-ready graduates who have the practical skills of specialist assessment for SpLD/Dyslexia while securing an understanding of fundamental psychometric principles.
4. To create practitioners who participate in reflective and evaluative professional practice, with the critical awareness of current problems or new insights in the area of SpLD/Dyslexia.
5. To consider the social, emotional and legal issues for learners with SpLD/Dyslexia

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

(NB These ILOs are at level 7 of the FHEQ)

A Subject-specific Skills and Knowledge

A1 A critical awareness of professional understanding within the field of SpLD/ dyslexia education, and the capacity to identify its significance and relevance in educational settings within national and global contexts

A2 Critical reflection and evaluation of your own practice in SpLD/Dyslexia and that of others, as well as the ability to provide an evidence base in support of claims made for evolving competencies

A3 An in-depth understanding of current issues and developments linked to SpLD/Dyslexia and informed by scholarship and research, and apply this to professional situations

A4 Comprehensive knowledge, critical understanding and reflection on theoretical underpinnings associated with SpLD/ dyslexia education as presented in published research and policy literature.

B Cognitive and Intellectual Skills

B1 The ability to articulate a clearly structured and cohesive original argument

B2 The ability to design and manage a research project which is ethically compliant, academically rigorous and professionally relevant

B3 Comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to the synthesis of ideas and apply them to new SpLD/Dyslexia cases or research questions in an innovative format

B4 The ability to deal with complex issues systematically and creatively through the development of personal effectiveness, self-awareness and self-management through academic and professional evaluation.

C Skills for Life and Work

On achieving Level 7 you will be able to:

C1 Work Independently - Act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks in a professional context.

C2 Work with Others - Plan for and actively engage in inclusive collaboration with others to tackle and solve complex problems and develop original insights.

C3 Communicate with Impact - Communicate complex ideas clearly, effectively and impactfully with specialist and non-specialist audiences.

C4 Demonstrate Digital Fluency - Use digital skills productively, critically and ethically to enhance creativity and communication in a professional context.

Intermediate awards

PgCert Intended Learning Outcomes

A1, A4, B1, B4, C1, C4

PgDip Intended Learning Outcomes

A1, A2, A4, B1, B4, C1, C3, C4

Programme content

This programme comprises the following modules

Key:

Core = C

Required = R

Required* = R*

Optional = O

Not available for this status = N/A

If a particular status is greyed out, it is not offered for this programme.

Subject offered as single and/or joint programme

MA in SpLD/Dyslexia				Status	
Level	Code	Title	Credits	Single	Joint
7	EDU7123-30	Identifying and Supporting Learners with SpLD/Dyslexia - 1	30	C	

7	EDU7124-30	Identifying and Supporting Learners with SpLD/Dyslexia - 2**	30	C	
7	EDU7118-30	Assessment Methodology in SpLD/Dyslexia**	30	C	
7	EDU7113-30	Independent Study	30	O	
7	EDU7102-15	Research and the Professional Part 1	15	C	
7	EDU7103-15	Research and the Professional Part 2	15	C	
7	EDU7104-60	Dissertation	60	C	

Assessment methods [↗](#)

A range of summative assessment tasks will be used to test the Intended Learning Outcomes in each module. These are indicated in the attached assessment map which shows which tasks are used in which modules.

Students will be supported in their development towards summative assessment by appropriate formative exercises.

Please note: if you choose an optional module from outside this programme, you may be required to undertake a summative assessment task that does not appear in the assessment grid here in order to pass that module.

Work experience and placement opportunities [↗](#)

The expectation is students on this programme will be in an educational setting with access to learners to work with for the professional practice requirements. Those without this access will be supported in sourcing learners by our Partnership Office.

Completion of professional practice requirements, in conjunction with the completion of academic modules, can lead to Accredited Teacher/ Practice Status (ATS/APS) and Associate Membership of the British Dyslexia Association (AMBDA).

Students successfully completing EDU7123-30 Identifying and Supporting Learners with SpLD/Dyslexia 1 and EDU7124-30 Identifying and Supporting Learners with SpLD/Dyslexia 2 together with successful completion of the professional practice requirements will be eligible to apply to the British Dyslexia Association for Accredited Teacher/ Practitioner Status (ATS/APS). Students who subsequently successfully complete EDU7118-30 Assessment Methodology in SpLD/Dyslexia together with additional professional practice will be eligible to apply to the British Dyslexia Association for Associate Membership of the British Dyslexia Association (AMBDA).

In extenuating circumstances if students are unable to complete the required professional practice they will not be eligible for the MA SpLD/Dyslexia (accredited by BDA), however they *may* be eligible for the MA SpLD/Dyslexia Theory.

Additional Costs Table [↗](#)

Module Code & Title	Type of Cost	Cost
EDU7118-30 Assessment Methodology in SpLD/Dyslexia	Consumables: Students are provided with three copies of the consumables required which is sufficient to meet the British Dyslexia Association accreditation requirements. If they wish to use more, they can purchase them from the Education Admin team directly.	Approximate current cost £2.40-£4.20 per item.

A DBS certificate will be required; if you do not hold a certificate, the approximate cost to the student will be £60

Graduate Attributes [↗](#)

Graduate Attribute	While at Bath Spa, I will develop my ability to:	This programme will help me to do this through:
Confidently Self-Aware	Reflect on and recognise my unique skills, strengths, and values and be able to apply and articulate them in a range of different contexts.	<i>Students are encouraged to become dyslexia specialists through a strong foundation in theory which is continuously linked to their professional context. Students are encouraged to engage with the wider dyslexia world (regulatory bodies, training providers) to maintain and update their knowledge and become practitioners with in-depth knowledge and the confidence to implement programs of support or take on complex assessments within the boundaries of their roles.</i>
Emotionally Attuned	Be mindful of how my actions and emotions impact those around me so I can better navigate difficult situations and build effective interpersonal relationships.	<i>Module content covers the holistic needs of dyslexic learners and the impact of literacy difficulties across the lifespan on mental health and confidence. Learner background, including SES, environmental context, and cultural factors are covered to appreciate the need for sensitivity in conversations and approaches to build effective relationships with learners, parents, and schools.</i>
Inclusive Collaborator	Contribute independently to collaborative projects while working effectively with others, valuing diversity and respecting individual differences.	<i>Students start the program as trainee practitioners and are encouraged to collaborate to develop their own professional practice through sharing best practice, resources, and constructive feedback.</i>
Adaptable Innovator	Embrace challenges, taking risks where needed and applying individual and collective problem solving.	<i>As students become more familiar with specialist approaches to teaching methodology and gain confidence in various evidence-based approaches, they can develop a flexible toolkit of resources and become increasingly adaptive to the context of the learner.</i>
Critical Thinker	Keep an open mind, ask curious questions and think creatively to gain a deeper and broader understanding of global perspectives and the world around me.	<i>Teaching focuses on the most current theoretical perspectives on dyslexia and encourages students to engage with new research and policy to critically interrogate the impact on dyslexic learners in different contexts.</i>
Forward Thinker	Set goals, plan ahead and utilise resources to support my personal ambitions and achieve my own version of success.	<i>Students utilise the program to graduate as specialist practitioners able to design and implement specialist teaching programs and assessments.</i>

Ethical Leader	Act with empathy, making decisions grounded in ethical principles while advocating for sustainability and positive social change.	<i>The program makes students aware of the remit of the dyslexia practitioner. The legal and ethical framework is closely studied, and various policy and regulatory frameworks are explored to allow students to feel confident in their role.</i>
Responsible Self-Starter	Be accountable for my actions and decisions while demonstrating creativity, proactivity, and a focus on solutions.	<i>Students design their own bespoke interventions, plan assessments, and conduct research on dyslexia demonstrating increased independence and solution-driven focus.</i>
Compassionately Resilient	Respond to setbacks with a reflective and positive attitude, flexibility and a self-caring approach.	<i>Students are enculturated into the field of dyslexia with clear appreciation for the need for ongoing research and professional development to maintain their qualifications.</i>
Digitally Resourceful	Utilise and responsibly leverage existing and emerging technologies to solve problems and communicate.	<i>Students are confident in using a range of technologies to present their work professionally including creating multisensory resources for specialist teaching, assistive technology, and creating functional and professional PDFs for report documents which are accessible and easy to navigate.</i>

Modifications [↗](#)

Module-level modifications

Code	Title	Nature of modification	Date(s) of approval and approving bodies	Date modification comes into effect
EDU7123-30	Identifying and Supporting Learners with SpLD/Dyslexia	Assessment change	SQMC March 2024	2024/25
EDU7113-30	Independent Study	Change of contact and independent study hours	SQMC March 2024	2024/25
EDU7124-30	Identifying and Supporting Learners with SpLD/Dyslexia 2	Removal of Additional Costs	Curriculum Approval Panel December 2024	September 2025
EDU7118-30	Assessment Methodology in SpLD/Dyslexia	Removal of Additional Costs	Curriculum Approval Panel December 2024	September 2025

Programme-level modifications

Nature of modification	Date(s) of approval and approving bodies	Date modification comes into effect

EDU7118-30 Assessment Methodology in SpLD/Dyslexia and EDU7124-30 Identifying and Supporting Learners with SpLD/Dyslexia 2, removal of additional costs	Curriculum Approval Panel December 2024	2025/26
EDU7101-30 Research Methods in Social Science, module removed	Curriculum Approval Panel March 2025	2025/26
EDU7101-30 Research Methods in Social Science, EDU7102-15 Research and the Professional Part 1, EDU7113-30 Independent Study, EDU7118-30 Assessment Methodology in SpLD/Dyslexia, change of Trimester	Curriculum Approval Panel March 2025	2025/26

Attached as appendices:

1. Programme structure diagram
2. Map of module outcomes to level/programme outcomes
3. Assessment map
4. Module descriptors

Appendix 1: Programme Structure Diagram [🔗](#)

Students take 60 credits per year.

MA Specific Learning Difficulties/Dyslexia		
Level 7 - Year 1		
Trimester 1	Trimester 2	Trimester 3
Core Modules		
EDU7123-30 Identifying and Supporting Learners with SpLD/Dyslexia - 1	EDU7124-30 Identifying and Supporting Learners with SpLD/Dyslexia - 2	
Rule Notes: EDU7124-30 takes place across trimester 2 and 3; <i>Teaching input is in Trimester 2. Trimester 3 allows for completion of professional practice and submission of final assignment.</i>		
Level 7 - Year 2		
Core Modules		
	EDU7118-30 Assessment Methodology in SpLD/Dyslexia	
EDU7102-15 Research and the Professional Part 1 (and Part 2 in trimester 3)		EDU7103-15 Research and the Professional Part 2
Optional Modules		
EDU7113-30 Independent Study	N/A	N/A
Rule Notes: EDU7118-30 takes place across trimester 2 and 3; <i>Teaching input is in Trimester 2. Trimester 3 allows for completion of professional practice and submission of final assignment.</i>		
<i>Students must take EDU7102-15 in trimester 1 and EDU7103-15 in trimester 3 (total 30 credits) if intending to complete the full MA OR EDU7113-30 Independent Study in trimester 1 (for those wishing to exit with a PGDip but not wanting to take research methods).</i>		
Level 7 - Year 3		
Core Modules		

EDU7104-60 Dissertation
Rule Notes: EDU7104-60 is a year long module.

Appendix 2: Map of Intended Learning Outcomes [↗](#)

Appendix 2 – Map of module outcomes to level / programme outcomes

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Status (C,R,R*,O) [1]	Intended Learning Outcomes											
				Subject-specific Skills and Knowledge				Cognitive and Intellectual Skills				Skills for Life and Work			
				A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	B4	C1	C2	C3	C4
7	EDU7123-30	Identifying and Supporting Learners with SpLD/Dyslexia -1	C	x		x	x	x			x	x			x
7	EDU7124-30	Identifying and Supporting Learners with SpLD/Dyslexia -2	C	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x
7	EDU7118-30	Assessment Methodology in SpLD/Dyslexia	C	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
7	EDU7113-30	Independent Study	O	x			x	x			x	x			x
7	EDU7102-15	Research and the Professional Part 1	C	x	x		x	x			x	x		x	x
7	EDU7103-15	Research and the Professional Part 2	C	x	x		x	x			x	x		x	x
7	EDU7104-60	Dissertation	C	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

[1] C = Core; R = Required, R*= Required, O = Optional

Appendix 3: Map of Summative Assessment Tasks by Module [↗](#)

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Status (C,R,R*,O) [1]	Assessment method										
				Coursework						Practical				Written
				Reflective Case Study	Dissertation	Critical Review of Literature	Research proposal	Portfolio	Research paper	Practical Project	Practical skills	Presentation	Set exercises	Written Examination
7	EDU 7123-30	Identifying and Supporting Learners with SpLD /Dyslexia 1	C			6,500 words						1,500 word equivalent		
7	EDU 7124-30	Identifying and Supporting Learners with SpLD /Dyslexia 2	C	7,500 words										
7	EDU 7118-30	Assessment Methodology in SpLD/Dyslexia	C	7,500 words										
7	EDU 7113-30	Independent Study	O			8,000 words								
7	EDU 7102-15	Research and the Professional part 1	C			4,000 words								
7	EDU 7103-15	Research and the Professional part 2	C				4,000 words							
7	EDU 7104-60	Dissertation	C		16,000 words									

[5] C = Core; R = Required; R* = Required*; O = Optional