



SPED8300

Current Developments in Special Education

Session 1, Fully online/virtual 2020

Macquarie School of Education

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Lecturer

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By appointment

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Credit points

10

Prerequisites

Corequisites

(SPED8210 or SPED821) and (SPED8260 or SPED826)

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit examines current issues in special education research and practice. Students will gain an understanding of current research in special education, particularly research carried out at Macquarie University and other Australian organisations. Students will be encouraged to critically consider the application of research to classroom practice, program design and policy in contemporary special education.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Critically evaluate the research projects presented during the unit and the theories underpinning them.

ULO3: Reflect in depth on the evidence base for practices in special education.

ULO2: Investigate and analyse the application of the theories and principles of quality research design in special education.

ULO5: Discuss and effectively communicate the policy implications of research in special education.

ULO6: Communicate to an academic audience, applying appropriate academic conventions.

ULO4: Analyse, synthesise and apply recent research findings to classroom scenarios.

ULO7: Communicate to the wider community regarding research based practices in special education.

Assessment Tasks

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

Assessment details are no longer provided here as a result of changes due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Students should consult [iLearn](#) for revised unit information.

[Find out more about the Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) and potential impacts on staff and students](#)

General Assessment Information

Online discussion forum participation

Due: **Sunday of each Week BEFORE 11:55 PM**

Weighting: **10%**

What does online participation involve?

Online participation involves making posts on the Topic Discussion Forums of the unit website. Once a post is made in a topic Discussion Forum, anybody in the unit can read or respond to it. Staff will post questions periodically or you may ask your own questions, give answers or offer comment. Only posts to Topic Forums will be counted.

Online participation allows you to give feedback and receive feedback from other students and staff, to explore issues in discussion with other students and staff and to practice required skill competencies.

When can I contribute?

Topic discussion forums will close progressively through the semester. All forums will close on Sunday of each week at 11.55pm, as indicated on iLearn, either Australian Eastern Time or Australian Eastern Daylight Saving Time (whichever is applicable).

The content of each forum will remain accessible, but posts made after the closing date will not count towards your assessment.

How much do I have to contribute?

Each student is expected to make a minimum of ten (10) contributions to the topic discussions over the course of the semester. Each post should be a minimum of 50 words in length.

You should post in **at least eight (8) of the ten (10)** topics.

Instructions on how to compile and submit posts will be provided on the iLearn website.

Do discussion posts count towards assessment?

Yes. Discussion contributions are weighted at 5% of your final grade. Only contributions to Topic Forums are counted, social posts and general questions and comments do not count towards your assessment. If you make fewer than ten posts to topic forums, your maximum possible mark will correspond to the number of posts made.

How do I know my submission was successful?

There are two options for you to see your uploaded Assignments/Post compilations.

1. Return to the Assignment activity submission point where the uploaded file will be viewable.
2. If the Activities block is available for the unit, click on the Assignments link. All Assignment activities, including those that are 'already open' and 'closed', will be viewable here.

Students should print a copy of one of these screens after submission. No claims regarding missing post compilation submissions will be considered under any circumstances without a copy of this printout.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Critically evaluate the research projects presented during the unit and the theories underpinning them.
- Investigate and analyse the application of the theories and principles of quality research design in special education.
- Reflect in depth on the evidence base for practices in special education.
- Analyse, synthesise and apply recent research findings to classroom practice.
- Discuss and effectively communicate the policy implications of research in special education.
- Communicate to an academic audience, applying appropriate academic conventions.
- Communicate to the wider community regarding research based practices in special education.

Online Quizzes

Due: **Sunday of each Week BEFORE 11:55 PM**

Weighting: **20%**

ASSESSMENT QUIZZES

What are assessment quizzes?

Assessment quizzes are online assessments in multiple-choice format. There is one quiz for each topic in the unit on iLearn.

How do I do assessment quizzes?

I am concerned about doing an online quiz. What should I do?

A "practice quiz" has been set up to give you some practice and allow you to get used to the quiz module. You may attempt the practice quiz as many times as you like and will receive "practice" feedback. It is strongly recommended that every student attempt the practice quiz each semester. The practice quiz is in the "Start here! IMPORTANT INFORMATION" section. The practice quiz is under the headings "THINGS YOU SHOULD DO" AND "Attempt the Practice Quiz". Click on the link to open the quiz.

How do I know my attempt at a quiz has been successful?

You will receive confirmation that your quiz has been submitted. Your mark will not be available in "Grades" until after the quiz has been closed on Monday night. The unit convenor will send an announcement when the scores have been released, typically it will be the following day, sometimes longer.

How many times may I attempt a quiz?

Since quiz marks contribute to your final grade, you may attempt each assessment quiz **ONLY ONCE**. Be sure you are ready to complete the quiz before you open it. Once you open the quiz, you must complete it.

Can I revise a quiz after it is closed?

No, the quizzes are deliberately only open for a fixed window of time to encourage students to stay on track with topic coverage. Consequently, once closed they will not be reopened.

What is each quiz worth?

There are 10 assessment quizzes and each quiz is weighted evenly.

What if I have problems with access to the website?

It is YOUR responsibility to ensure that each quiz is completed within the window of time allowable. If your Internet connection is not very reliable, it is strongly suggested that you do not leave the quiz until the last minute. If you lose your connection during a quiz, you should attempt to reconnect as soon as possible and finish the quiz. **DON'T LEAVE IT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE**. There will be no allowances for students who do not complete quizzes on time due to Internet access problems.

Is there a time limit on each quiz?

There is a time limit of 15 minutes to complete each quiz. You must submit the quiz within the time limit or your submission will be rejected. It is important to note that as soon as you open a quiz, the time clock starts. **DO NOT** open a quiz before you are ready to attempt it.

What if the website becomes unavailable?

At times the iLearn sites will not be available due to routine maintenance. These dates and times are advertised well in advance in the Announcements section of the log in page and you will also be notified through your student email. Updates and notices are available at <http://students.mq.edu.au/home> and at <https://macquarieuniversity.statuspage.io/>

You should take these times into account as you plan your work. Extra open time for Quizzes will NOT be provided for advertised outages.

If iLearn becomes unavailable **unexpectedly** for any length of time due to other causes, the cut-off dates for Assessment Quizzes may be extended by the equivalent time.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Critically evaluate the research projects presented during the unit and the theories underpinning them.
- Investigate and analyse the application of the theories and principles of quality research design in special education.
- Analyse, synthesise and apply recent research findings to classroom practice.

Systematic literature search

Due: **06/04/20 BEFORE 11:55 PM**

Weighting: **20%**

This assignment (1,000 - 1,500 words) involves a literature search on a selected topic or question selected from the two broad areas below.

1. Any controversial intervention or assessment strategy used in special education (apart from those specifically covered in the unit). This topic could include interventions and assessments marketed to parents and teachers through the internet and other media.
2. Any specific intervention or assessment strategy that has shown to be effective or promising for students with special education needs (apart from those specifically addressed in this unit). Topics here should be specific, and not more generic practices such as explicit instruction or functional assessment.

Sample topics or questions include: Effective strategies to teach handwriting to students who are having difficulty. Effective strategies to improve the vocabulary of students with special education needs. What are the benefits of inclusion for students with high support needs? Is there a research base for the claims made for XXXX intervention strategy? (insert the name of the particular strategy of interest).

Students will provide a brief description of the search strategy, identify research articles appropriate to the topic, and provide a brief justification for the selection of each of these specific articles.

The assignment will be available on the unit iLearn site in Week 1 of the semester.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Investigate and analyse the application of the theories and principles of quality research design in special education.
- Reflect in depth on the evidence base for practices in special education.
- Communicate to an academic audience, applying appropriate academic conventions.

Literature review and summary

Due: **25/5/20 BEFORE 11:55 PM**

Weighting: **50%**

The assignment (2000 words) will involve the review of key articles from the systematic literature search. Students will select and justify a subset of the most salient articles for review. The review will include providing a concise overview of the methodology, an evaluation of the relevance, strengths and weaknesses of the selected articles. The final component of this assignment will involve producing a plain language summary of findings and implications for practice, suitable for a non-specialist audience.

The assignment will be available on the unit iLearn site in Week 2 of the semester.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Investigate and analyse the application of the theories and principles of quality research design in special education.
- Reflect in depth on the evidence base for practices in special education.
- Analyse, synthesise and apply recent research findings to classroom practice.
- Discuss and effectively communicate the policy implications of research in special education.
- Communicate to an academic audience, applying appropriate academic conventions.
- Communicate to the wider community regarding research based practices in special education.

General organisation of the unit

The unit is organised in external mode only, and in a flexible delivery format.

Delivery is designed such that students may seek as much or as little assistance as required in completing the unit. In flexible delivery units, it is critical that students are organised and disciplined. It is suggested that you allocate a total of 8-12 hours per week to study for this unit. If you get significantly behind in your topic coverage, it may be impossible to catch up. Please start your study as soon as possible.

Unit delivery: Teaching and learning activities

- **Study guides** provide an overview of topics and guide learning.
- **Readings** are designed to prepare students for the online presentations as well as broaden their understanding of topics.
- **Online presentations** provide information and highlight key concepts.
- **Forums** provide students with the opportunity to ask question and discuss issues relevant to the unit. Contributions to the online discussion forum can be a beneficial way of exchanging ideas and discussing unit content with other students. Although unit convenors typically check the Discussion Forums daily (on weekdays), they will not respond to all posts, as discussion between students may be more appropriate. **Forums should be checked every 48 hours for important announcements.**
- **Dialogue** allows students to communicate privately with the unit staff. **Dialogue should be checked every 48 hours for important information.**
- **Assessments** allow students to refine and demonstrate achievement of unit learning outcomes.

Technologies used and required

The unit uses an Ilearn web site. You may access the site from: <https://ilearn.mq.edu.au>

Grading Procedures

Results for assessments will be reported as grades (i.e., HD, D, Cr, P, F). Where grades are used to report results for assessment components with significant weighting, convenors may also optionally add the suffixes of + (plus) or - (minus) to the generic descriptor in order to provide additional detail. For example:

Pass + Pass Pass -

In this case, a “Pass +” would indicate performance in the upper end of the pass range, a grade of “Pass” would indicate a mid-range pass and a “Pass -” would indicate performance at the lower end of the pass range. This principle is applied to all grade descriptors (i.e., HD, D, CR, P, F)

Raw scores for all assessments will be moderated according to the University guidelines so that work judged to be of a given standard is awarded a moderated score within the following distribution: High Distinction 85-100; Distinction 75-84, Credit 65-74; Pass 50-64; Fail 0-49.

For example, if it is judged that the HD standard for a particular assessment is met by work scoring 90-100, raw scores will be adjusted so that students received moderated scores between 85 and 100. This moderation takes into account both the stated performance standards for the

assessment component and the degree of difficulty of the specific task.

Assessment Weighting

All assessment tasks must be attempted for students to be eligible for an overall passing grade in the unit.

Students are required to gain an overall pass on the unit, but do not have to pass all assessment components. If you perform poorly on one component, you may compensate for this with a better performance in the other components.

Consistent with the University Assessment Policy, moderated scores will be used in the calculation of final grades. The final unit score will be the weighted average of the moderated scores for the unit.

Resubmission

Students are required to gain an overall pass on the unit, but do not have to pass all assessment components. If you perform poorly on one component, you may compensate for this with an improved performance in the other component. **Resubmission is not permitted.**

Appeals against grades for individual assessment components

If any student has concern about the marking of an assessment, they must:

- Consult the member of staff who marked the work.
- If there is no satisfactory resolution, an appeal should be made in writing to the unit convenor within **one week** of the marked assessment being returned or of results being made available. The student should explicitly state the basis of the appeal.

The Unit convenor will review the marking and may, at their discretion, ask for a re-marking by a second marker. If re-marking by a second marker is judged appropriate, the final mark will normally be the average of the two marks awarded for the assessment task. Students should note that the revised mark for the task may be higher, the same, or lower than the original mark.

Please note that it is policy to double mark all failing assessments. The decision of the unit convenor is final.

Appeals against final unit grades

See the Policies and Procedures section for details on appeals against Unit Grades.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

You must read the Academic Honesty Policy in the the Policies and Procedures section of this guide

Important points:

- Close paraphrasing of another persons' writing is considered to be plagiarism. You must express ideas using your own words.
- Claim of ignorance of the University policy on plagiarism is NOT a defence. If you do not

understand the Academic Honesty Policy, please seek advice from a member of the academic staff.

Information Regarding the Assignments

What is required for the assignments?

In general, good presentation, correct grammar, spelling and appropriate word choice will be expected. Express your ideas concisely and clearly, and observe any stated word limits.

Strict APA referencing procedures should be used.

How do I submit my assignment?

You will submit your assignment through the iLearn website via the link in the Assessment section.

How do I know my assignment submission was successful?

Staff will NOT respond to requests to confirm that assignments have been correctly submitted. You will receive an email receipt on successful submission of your assignment in your student email account. Make sure that this has been received and retain this receipt. No claims will be considered regarding missing assignments without this receipt. You can also re-download your assignment to double-check it was submitted.

Assignment extensions and late penalties

Applications for extensions must be made via AskMQ at <https://ask.mq.edu.au> as a "Special Consideration" request before the submission date. Students who experience a disruption to their studies through ill-health or misadventure are able to apply for this request. *Extensions can only be granted if they meet the Special Consideration policy and are submitted via ask.mq.edu.au.* This will ensure consistency in the consideration of such requests is maintained.

In general, there should be no need for extensions except through illness or misadventure that would be categorised as unavoidable disruption according to the University definition of same, and currently available at: <https://students.mq.edu/study/my-study-program/special-consideration>

Assignments received after the due date will be accepted provided they are received no later than 10 calendar days late. Note that this is a period of grace, not a new dead line, and extension requests for events after the original due date will not be considered. No assignment will be accepted after 10 days, except when an extension has been approved. Note that the 10 day period of grace applies only to the original due date. No period of grace applies when an extension has been granted. When an extension has been granted, the work must be submitted by the revised due date or a mark of zero will be awarded.

Late submissions without extension will receive a penalty of 5% reduction of the total possible mark for each day late (including weekends and public holidays). You are reminded that submitting even just 1 day late could be the difference between passing and failing a unit. Late penalties are applied by unit convenors or their delegates after tasks are assessed.

No assessable work will be accepted after the return/release of marked work on the same topic.

If a student is still permitted to submit on the basis of special consideration, an alternative topic may be set.

Students should keep an electronic file of all assessments. Claims regarding "lost" assessments cannot be made if the file cannot be produced. It is also advisable to keep an electronic file of all drafts and the final submission on a USB untouched/unopened after submission. This can be used to demonstrate easily that the assessment has not been amended after the submission date.

What if my hard drive crashed, my pet hippopotamus ate my computer etc?

Computer problems will not be accepted as reasons for extensions. You are responsible for making sure your work is adequately backed up. Make sure your work is regularly backed up on a USB drive or to a cloud-based backup and don't leave your submission to the last minute. Always keep your hippopotamus and computer in separate rooms.

When is the deadline for submission?

The deadline is 11:55 pm on the due date. Note that this means you must submit **BEFORE 11:55 pm**. Note that it takes time to upload your assignment to Turnitin. This is normally quite quick but will depend on the speed of your internet connection at the time. The submission time is the time that assignment is recorded as received by Turnitin as we can not verify the time you started uploading. You need to allow time for the upload. **Do not leave submission of your assignment to the last hours (or minutes).**

What if my assignment is only 11 seconds late?

Late is late. Any submission after the deadline will be considered late. Do not leave submission of your assignment to the last hours (or minutes).

What if I accidentally submit a blank assignment, the wrong document, etc?

We can only mark what you submit. Make sure you re-download your assignment from the location that it was submitted and verify the correct document has been submitted. No consideration will be offered if you submit the incorrect document. You may submit your assignment as many times as you wish before the due date and only the last submitted version will be marked.

When preparing your assignments, it is essential that:

- Students regularly save a copy of all assignments before submission.
- Unless there are exceptional circumstances, no assessment will be accepted after the date that the assessment has been returned to other students.

Final Submissions

- Students are responsible for checking that their submission has been successful and has been submitted by the due date and time.

- Late submissions due to last minute technical difficulties will incur a lateness penalty.

What if I exceed the word limits?

Some components of the assignment will have specific word limits. Components of answers beyond the stated word limit will not be marked. **That is, answers will only be marked up to the stated word limit.**

How will I get feedback for my assignment?

Individual feedback will be provided electronically where you submitted your assignment. Assignment grades will be available in the Grades section of the website.

Assignment Rubrics

Assignment rubrics and performance criteria will be available on the iLearn site in the Assessment section.

Delivery and Resources

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

Any references to on-campus delivery below may no longer be relevant due to COVID-19.

Please check here for updated delivery information: https://ask.mq.edu.au/account/pub/display/unit_status

General organisation of the unit

The unit is organised in external mode only, and in a flexible delivery format.

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respond to all posts, as discussion between students may be more appropriate. **Forums should be checked every 48 hours for important announcements.**

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Technologies used and required

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Unit Schedule

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

The unit schedule/topics and any references to on-campus delivery below may no longer be relevant due to COVID-19. Please consult [iLearn](#) for latest details, and check here for updated delivery information: https://ask.mq.edu.au/account/pub/display/unit_status

Closing Dates for Discussion Forums and Online Quizzes

Topic	Study schedule	Closing date
1. Research-based practice in special education	Week 2	End of Week 3 (March 15th)
2. Teaching conversational skills to individuals with ASD	Week 3	End of Week 3 (March 15th)
3. Hyperlexia	Week 4	End of Week 4 (March 22nd)
4. Intervention decision-making of parents of children with ASD	Week 5	End of Week 5 (March 29th)
5. Surveying practices used in special education	Week 6	End of Week 6 (April 5th)
6. iPads in classrooms	Week 8	End of Week 8 (May 3rd)
7. Sensory integration	Week 9	End of Week 9 (May 10th)
8. University students with ASD	Week 10	End of Week 10 (May 17th)
9. Oral narrative intervention	Week 11	End of Week 11 (May 24th)
10. The use of perceptual motor programs (PMPs) in special education	Week 12	End of Week 12 (May 31st)

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central\)](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway \(https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway\)](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central \(https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central\)](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/getting-started/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to help you improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Getting help with your assignment](#)
- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

If you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.