



SPED8923

Literacy for Learners with Blindness/Low Vision

Session 2, Online-flexible 2023

Macquarie School of Education

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor and Lecturer

Frances Gentle

frances.gentle@mq.edu.au; frances.gentle@nextsense.org.au

Contact via 02 9872 0808

NextSense Institute

9-5 Wednesday to Friday

Master Disability Studies Course Director

Susan Silveira

susan.silveira@mq.edu.au

Contact via 0477202129

NextSense Institute

9-5 Monday to Friday

Graduate Studies Coordinator

Tanya Kysa

tanya.kysa@nextsense.org.au

Contact via 0484913641

NextSense Institute

9-4 Mon, Tues, Thurs, Friday

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

Admission to MDisabilityStud and (SPED8926 or SPED926) and permission by special approval

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This Unit examines the implications of blindness/low vision for language, literacy and numeracy development. Unit content includes current principles and concepts underlying emergent literacy and numeracy development, multisensory approaches to literacy and numeracy development, braille literacy instruction, learning media assessment, and guidelines for the production of alternative formats and examinations.

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: Display professional knowledge of educational planning and collaborative approaches in the area of literacy or numeracy development for students with blindness/low vision

ULO2: Draw on relevant literature and professional standards to design individualised braille literacy programs that link with the curriculum and expanded core curriculum for learners with blindness/low vision.

ULO3: Produce individualised Braille resources that demonstrate your knowledge of Unified English Braille (Grade 2), current alternative format guidelines, and accessible media and production methods.

ULO4: Apply knowledge of the educational implications of low vision and blindness to the teaching of literacy and numeracy

General Assessment Information

Unit assessment for SPED8923 consists of three tasks. Each assessment task should be submitted electronically via the Unit iLearn site. The online sessions, commentaries, presentations, readings, and publications (available through Leganto) will serve as a rich source of information and ideas.

When submitting your assessment tasks, please note the following:

- **All assignments must comply with the NextSense Accessible Style Guide**
- The assignment title page should include the student's name, student number, unit code, title of the assessment and submitted word count.
- Faculty assignment cover sheets are NOT required.
- For assessments completed in MS Word, allow a left and right-hand margin of at least 2cm, using Arial font, paragraph spacing of 0pt before and 6pt after, and line spacing of multiple at 1.2 or 1.3. Please review the paragraph settings for this Word file as an example.
- It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all assignments are successfully submitted through Turnitin.
- All assignments must be submitted through Turnitin in an accessible format, e.g., MS

Word or PowerPoint – **do not submit in PDF format.**

- For written assignments, the Turnitin Similarity Report must also be submitted using the Turnitin submission point at the time of assignment submission.
- Macquarie University's Quick Reference Guide for APA (7th edition) is available at <http://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/reference-guide.pdf>
- Curtin University's APA 7th guide is available at <https://uniskills.library.curtin.edu.au/referencing/apa7/introduction/>
- You are strongly encouraged to use recognised referencing software (e.g., Endnote) in their preparation of assignments. Please visit the iLearn Referencing tab where advice on referencing software is provided.
- Note: The marking rubrics for the assessment tasks include reference to the SPEVI (2016) Professional Standards Elaborations for Specialist Teachers (Vision Impairment) – available at <https://www.spevi.net/professional-standards-elaborations/>

Draft Submissions and Turnitin Similarity Reports

Students must use the Turnitin Similarity Report as a learning tool to improve their academic writing and, in consideration of the report outcome, attend to any potential academic integrity issues, prior to submission of the final version of the assignment. Students are strongly encouraged to upload a draft copy of each assignment to Turnitin at least one week prior to the due date to obtain a Similarity Report. The Similarity Report provides students with a similarity index that may indicate if plagiarism has occurred. Students will be able to make up to three amendments to their drafts prior to their final submission on the due date.

Please note:

- Students should regularly save a copy of all assignments before submission.
- Students are responsible for checking that their submission has been successful and has been submitted by the due date and time.
- It is not the responsibility of unit staff to contact students who have failed to submit assignments. If you have any missing items of assessment, it is your responsibility to make contact with the unit convenor.

Application for Special Consideration – extensions

Applications for Special Consideration - extensions must be made via AskMQ (<https://ask.mq.edu.au/>).

Late submission of assessments

Unless a Special Consideration (see: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/assessment-exams/special-consideration>) request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends).

After the 7th day, a mark of zero (0) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A one hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue.

This late penalty will apply to non-timed sensitive assessment (including essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc). Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special Consideration application. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.

Assessment marking

Word limits are strictly applied. Work 10% above the word limit will not be marked.

All assessments are marked using a rubric.

Marking of all assessments is moderated by the Unit Convenor.

Turnitin plagiarism detection software is used to check all written assessments.

University policy on grading

Criteria for awarding grades for assessment tasks

Assignments will be awarded grades ranging from HD to F according to guidelines set out in the University's Grading Policy. For Professional Experience units the PE Report is marked as satisfactory or unsatisfactory and the Teaching Performance Assessment (in final PE units) is marked as not meets, meets or exceeds. The following descriptive criteria are included for your information.

Descriptive criteria for awarding grades in the unit

In order to meet the unit outcomes and successfully pass this unit, students must make a genuine attempt at all assessment tasks. Where any submitted assessment task is considered to be unsatisfactory in this regard, the highest possible final grade that can be awarded for the unit will be 45.

Grade	Descriptor
HD (High Distinction)	Provides consistent evidence of deep and critical understanding in relation to the learning outcomes. There is substantial originality and insight in identifying, generating and communicating competing arguments, perspectives or problem-solving approaches; critical evaluation of problems, their solutions and their implications; creativity in application as appropriate to the discipline.
D (Distinction)	Provides evidence of integration and evaluation of critical ideas, principles and theories, distinctive insight and ability in applying relevant skills and concepts in relation to learning outcomes. There is demonstration of frequent originality in defining and analysing issues or problems and providing solutions; and the use of means of communication appropriate to the discipline and the audience.
Cr (Credit)	Provides evidence of learning that goes beyond replication of content knowledge or skills relevant to the learning outcomes. There is demonstration of substantial understanding of fundamental concepts in the field of study and the ability to apply these concepts in a variety of contexts; convincing argumentation with appropriate coherent justification; communication of ideas fluently and clearly in terms of the conventions of the discipline.

P (Pass).	Provides sufficient evidence of the achievement of learning outcomes. There is demonstration of understanding and application of fundamental concepts of the field of study; routine argumentation with acceptable justification; communication of information and ideas adequately in terms of the conventions of the discipline. The learning attainment is considered satisfactory or adequate or competent or capable in relation to the specified outcomes
F (Fail)	Does not provide evidence of attainment of learning outcomes. There is missing or partial or superficial or faulty understanding and application of the fundamental concepts in the field of study; missing, undeveloped, inappropriate or confusing argumentation; incomplete, confusing or lacking communication of ideas in ways that give little attention to the conventions of the discipline.

Note: *If you fail a unit with a professional experience component, the fail grade will be on your transcript irrespective of the timing of the placement.*

Withdrawing from this unit

If you are considering withdrawing from this unit, please contact the Course Director Sue Silveira on 0477202129 or susan.silveira@mq.edu.au, prior to withdrawing, for advice related to your progression. You can also seek academic advice via <https://ask.mq.edu.au> before withdrawing as this unit may be a co-requisite or prerequisite for units in the following sessions and may impact on your progression through the degree.

Results

Results shown in iLearn, or released directly by the Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to the student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Braille Literacy Teaching Program	35%	No	25/9/23 by 11.55pm
Braille book kit production	25%	No	21/8/23 by 11.55pm
Personalised learning plan	40%	No	16/10/23 by 11.55pm
Unified English Braille Grade Two	0%	Yes	31/7/23

Braille Literacy Teaching Program

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 17 hours

Due: **25/9/23 by 11.55pm**

Weighting: **35%**

Development of a two-term individualised braille literacy teaching program. (2000 words)

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Display professional knowledge of educational planning and collaborative approaches in the area of literacy or numeracy development for students with blindness/low vision
- Draw on relevant literature and professional standards to design individualised braille literacy programs that link with the curriculum and expanded core curriculum for learners with blindness/low vision.
- Produce individualised Braille resources that demonstrate your knowledge of Unified English Braille (Grade 2), current alternative format guidelines, and accessible media and production methods.

Braille book kit production

Assessment Type ¹: Creative work

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **21/8/23 by 11.55pm**

Weighting: **25%**

Creation of a braille book and supporting braille materials

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Produce individualised Braille resources that demonstrate your knowledge of Unified English Braille (Grade 2), current alternative format guidelines, and accessible media and production methods.
- Apply knowledge of the educational implications of low vision and blindness to the teaching of literacy and numeracy

Personalised learning plan

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 18 hours

Due: **16/10/23 by 11.55pm**

Weighting: **40%**

Personalised learning planning for student with low vision

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Display professional knowledge of educational planning and collaborative approaches in the area of literacy or numeracy development for students with blindness/low vision
- Produce individualised Braille resources that demonstrate your knowledge of Unified English Braille (Grade 2), current alternative format guidelines, and accessible media and production methods.

Unified English Braille Grade Two

Assessment Type ¹: Field work task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 0 hours

Due: **31/7/23**

Weighting: **0%**

This is a hurdle assessment task (see [assessment policy](#) for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)

Provide evidence of attainment of UEB Grade Two (certificate level) competency

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Produce individualised Braille resources that demonstrate your knowledge of Unified English Braille (Grade 2), current alternative format guidelines, and accessible media and production methods.

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

PRESCRIBED TEXTS

1. Swenson, A. M. (2016). *Beginning with braille: Firsthand experiences with a balanced approach to literacy* (2nd Ed.). AFB Press. ISBN: 978-0-89128-732-2
2. Wormsley, D.P. (2016). *I-M-ABLE: Individualized meaning-centered approach to braille literacy education*. AFB Press. ISBN: 978-0-89128-723-0

Options for obtaining the prescribed texts:

- **Option 1:** [Free access online is available for the two prescribed texts via MQU library at Multisearch -](#)
- Swenson: https://multisearch.mq.edu.au/permalink/f/1b3gi1p/MQ_ALMA51178579880002171
- Wormsley: https://multisearch.mq.edu.au/permalink/f/1b3gi1p/MQ_ALMA51178589920002171
- **Option 2:** The texts may be purchased at the American Printing House for the Blind - [APH](#)
- **Option 3:** Compare prices (of books and postage) at on-line bookshops

Information about the unit iLearn site

SPED8923 has a full web presence through iLearn. All requirements for this unit begin Session 2 Week 1, 2023. Students are expected to access the iLearn site and engage with unit materials regularly during session 2. The unit includes weekly online tutorials on Wednesdays at 7-8 pm Sydney time. Details of the sessions and zoom links are presented in the topic overview on iLearn.

Support resources

Macquarie University has a range of services for students. If you are struggling with any aspect of academic life or career trajectory and skills, we have great supports within the university. Please refer to the comprehensive list of support services [here](#).

Access and technical assistance

Information for students about access to the online component of this unit is available at <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/tools-and-resources/ilearn>. You will need to enter your student username and password.

Please do **NOT** contact the Unit Convenor regarding iLearn technical help. No extensions will be given for any technical issues. Allow enough time for your submissions. Assistance is available from IT Helpdesk ph: 1800 67 4357, or log a request at help.mq.edu.au. OneHelp is the online IT support service for both students and staff. This unit requires students to use several ICT and software skills:

- Internet access: The iLearn site contains materials for this unit; it is also required for the online submission of all Assessment Tasks, and for the use of Turnitin submission for ALL tasks.
- Word processing, visual representations, and document formatting: You are required to use an appropriate form of software to present your assignments.
- Uploading of assessment tasks to iLearn.

Unit Schedule

Week Beg	Weekly topics and due dates for assessment tasks	Compulsory online sessions, Wednesdays 7:00-8:00pm (Syd time)
24 July	Topic 1: Communication, language and literacy development for students with VI; history of braille and other tactile codes	No online session in Week 1
31 July		2 nd August
7 August	Topic 2: Implications of blindness and low vision for communication, language and literacy development	9 th August
14 August	Topic 3: Literacy and numeracy development for students with VI	16 th August
21 August	Topic 4: Assessment and goal setting	23 rd August
28 August	Topic 5: Instructional approaches to reading development for students with vision impairment	30 th August
4 September		6 th September
25 September	Topic 6: Instructional approaches to writing development for students with vision impairment	27 th September
2 October		4 th October
9 October	Topic 7: Literacy and numeracy development for students with VI and additional disabilities or deafblindness	No online session in Week 10
16 October	Topic 8: Enhancing literacy and numeracy development in inclusive settings; and information and communication technologies	18 th October
23 October		25 th October
30 October		No online session in Week 13

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au). 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](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

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

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/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

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

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

The Writing Centre

[The Writing Centre](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Workshops](#)
- [Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)

- [Complete the 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

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)
- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via [AskMQ](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

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.

5 Rs Framework

The 5Rs Framework, developed by the School of Education at Macquarie University, is embedded throughout this unit. Your use of the 5Rs Framework will help you develop the capabilities that will make your career sustainable and fulfilling. In this unit, you will learn using the 5Rs framework in the following important ways:

Resilient	Reflexive	Responsive	Ready to learn	Research engaged
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Students gain exposure to the disability sector and develop an understanding of the critical role they will play, the need for personal resilience and resilient approaches when supporting people with disability.	Students are encouraged to critically reflect in the context of themselves as a practitioner, their previous and future professional experiences and the engagement they will have with people, organisations and society in general.	<p>The individualised learning content encourages students to be responsive to clients, organisations and critical issues faced in the disability sector.</p> <p>Students are expected to be responsive to the ideas of peers and provide meaningful and supportive feedback.</p>	<p>Students are encouraged to reflect and then identify their own learning needs for their context, to pursue learning that achieves great outcomes for all people they work with now and into the future.</p> <p>Students take responsibility for learning independently as well as fostering collaborative learning in other students.</p>	Students engage with literature and base their practice on evidence. Students practice academic integrity as they learn to explore contemporary and relevant literature.
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Unit information based on version 2023.03 of the [Handbook](#)