



SPED8908

Sensory Communication Foundations

Session 2, Online-flexible 2026

Macquarie School of Education

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

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NextSense Institute

Tuesday - Thursday 8am - 4pm

Course Director

Susan Silveira

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Contact via 0477202129

NextSense Institute

Tuesday - Thursday 8am - 4pm

Administration Coordinator

Celise Morrison

prof.exp@nextsense.org.au

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NextSense Institute

Monday to Friday 9am - 4pm

Credit points

0

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit is intended to assess Auslan and braille competency to ensure graduates are well equipped to meet the professional demands of working with people with sensory disability.

To satisfy requirements of this zero credit point unit of study, students must meet the required standard in Auslan and braille set by externally administered competency training and examinations, recognised by the Macquarie School of Education, and the NextSense Institute.

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: Understand Auslan as the language of the Australian deaf community and how Auslan grammatical structures differ from English.

ULO2: Conduct accurate Auslan simple communication including exchanges about daily routines, use of question forms including appropriate facial expressions, and negotiating basic discussions applying Auslan signs for dates, times and common events and celebrations.

ULO3: Demonstrates understanding of the six-dot braille cell that is used to form 64 distinct characters, including the alphabet, words, numerals, and a blank cell with zero dots.

ULO4: When translating print to braille and braille to print, demonstrates employment of the system of rules that allow precise interpretation of braille character sequences.

ULO5: Demonstrates graduate level skills in transcribing the letters of the alphabet and basic punctuation into uncontracted braille, and transcribing printed text into the approximately 200 UEB contractions used for frequently occurring words and letter combinations.

General Assessment Information

Auslan level 1

Assessment Type: Practice-based task

Due: **11.55pm 15th November 2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Completion of an externally offered Auslan level 1 course.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand Auslan as the language of the Australian deaf community and how Auslan grammatical structures differ from English.
- Conduct accurate Auslan simple communication including exchanges about daily routines, use of question forms including appropriate facial expressions, and negotiating basic discussions applying Auslan signs for dates, times and common events and celebrations.

Unified English Braille Fundamentals

Assessment Type: Practice-based task

Due: **11.55pm 15th November 2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Students to complete **one** of the following introductory Unified English Braille modules:

* Literacy module 1

OR

* Foundations of Braille Literacy

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrates understanding of the six-dot braille cell that is used to form 64 distinct characters, including the alphabet, words, numerals, and a blank cell with zero dots.
- When translating print to braille and braille to print, demonstrates employment of the system of rules that allow precise interpretation of braille character sequences.
- Demonstrates graduate level skills in transcribing the letters of the alphabet and basic punctuation into uncontracted braille, and transcribing printed text into the approximately 200 UEB contractions used for frequently occurring words and letter combinations.

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.

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

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
Auslan level 1	50%	No	15/ 11/ 2026	Individual	Yes	Open

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
Unified English Braille Fundamentals	50%	No	15/ 11/ 2026	Individual	Yes	Open

Auslan level 1

Assessment Type ¹: Problem-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 0 hours

Due: **15/11/2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

Completion of an externally offered Auslan level 1 course.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand Auslan as the language of the Australian deaf community and how Auslan grammatical structures differ from English.
- Conduct accurate Auslan simple communication including exchanges about daily routines, use of question forms including appropriate facial expressions, and negotiating basic discussions applying Auslan signs for dates, times and common events and celebrations.

Unified English Braille Fundamentals

Assessment Type ¹: Problem-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 0 hours

Due: **15/11/2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

Students to complete one of the following introductory Unified English Braille modules:

* Literacy module 1

OR

* Foundations of Braille Literacy

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrates understanding of the six-dot braille cell that is used to form 64 distinct

characters, including the alphabet, words, numerals, and a blank cell with zero dots.

- When translating print to braille and braille to print, demonstrates employment of the system of rules that allow precise interpretation of braille character sequences.
- Demonstrates graduate level skills in transcribing the letters of the alphabet and basic punctuation into uncontracted braille, and transcribing printed text into the approximately 200 UEB contractions used for frequently occurring words and letter combinations.

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
- [Academic Success](#) 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.

³ An automatic short extension is available for some assessments. Apply through the [Service Connect Portal](#).

Delivery and Resources

Students are expected to source their Auslan 1 course themselves that are approved by the NextSense Institute. Students are also required to register for their chosen [Unified English Braille \(UEB\) Online](#) module (literacy 1 module or Foundation of Braille Literacy video series).

To confirm the suitability of any Auslan courses, students can contact student.enquiries@nextsense.org.au

Information about the iLearn site

This unit has a full web presence through iLearn. All requirements for this unit begin Session 2 Week 1, 2026. Students are expected to access the iLearn site and engage with unit materials regularly during session 2.

Electronic Communication

It is the student's responsibility to check all electronic communication on a regular weekly basis. Communication may occur via:

- Official *MQ Student Email* Address
- The *Dialogue* function on iLearn
- Other iLearn communication functions

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, 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/technology/systems/ilearn>. You will need to enter your student username and password.

Please do **NOT** contact the Unit Convenor regarding iLearn technical help. Assistance is available from IT Helpdesk ph: 02 98504357 and 1800 67 4357 or log a request at onehelp@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

For the Master of Disability Studies, students need to demonstrate foundational skills in Auslan and Unified English Braille (UEB). **It is also mandatory for students to demonstrate that these skills have been gained prior to enrolling in their observational professional experience unit, SPED8909.**

For the ‘**Sensory Disability**’ specialisation: SPED8908 *Sensory Communication Foundations* - a unit that requires students to demonstrate basic competency in Auslan (Australian Sign Language) level 1 and Unified English Braille (UEB) – choice of ‘Foundations of Braille Literacy Training Program’ video series or UEB online literacy module 1. **Students must complete SPED8908 prior to enrolment in their placement unit, SPED8909.**

Please note there is a fee to purchase the completion certificate at the end of the UEB module. Students are **not** required to complete the UEB competency exams for this unit. Once all courses/modules have been completed, students must upload their completion certificates to the SPED8908 iLearn site by the end of 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 connect.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/>

Academic Success

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

- [Ask a Study Coach](#)
- [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 the [Service Connect Portal](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/technology/service-desk>.

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.

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
17/07/2026	Nil

Unit information based on version 2026.03 of the [Handbook](#)