



SPED8909

Critical Reflection and Professional Experience for Practitioners in Sensory Disability

Session 2, In person-placement, On location 2026

Macquarie School of Education

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor/ Professional Experience Coordinator

Sheridan Howell

sheridan.howell@nextsense.org.au

Contact via 0436624517

NextSense Institute

Tuesday & Thursday 8am to 4pm

Course Director

Susan Silveira

susan.silveira@mq.edu.au

Contact via 0477202129

NextSense Institute

Tuesday to Thursday 8am to 4pm

Administration Coordinator

Celise Morrison

celise.morrison@nextsense.org.au

Contact via 0405120463

NextSense Institute

Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm

Graduate Studies Coordinator

Tanya Kysa

student.enquiries@nextsense.org.au

Contact via 0484913641

NextSense Institute

Tuesday to Friday 10am to 4pm

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

(40cp from SPED8900 - SPED8999) and SPED8908

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit provides students with the opportunity to prepare for and then undertake the equivalent of 12 days of professional experiences in the field of sensory disability. As a means of understanding both diverse roles and a team approach, students complete a professional experience including both observation of professionals supporting people with sensory disability and online learning experiences relating to the student's chosen areas of interest. Central to this professional experience is a critical reflection model that guides and highlights the student's awareness regarding the role that research plays in strengthening their professional skills and knowledge. Using critical reflection students will demonstrate in the ePortfolio knowledge of professional practice that optimises outcomes for people with sensory disability.

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: Analyse research in sensory disability and synthesise findings to make evidence based improvements in identified focus areas for improvement.

ULO2: Critically reflect on level of professional practice in order to formulate a plan for improvement of service delivery to clients with a sensory disability

ULO3: Using ePortfolio reflections evaluate the features of effective interdisciplinary team collaboration to support the needs of clients with a sensory disability.

ULO4: Apply professional experience scenarios to support translation from a professional role grounded within health model, to a role that reflects person-centred approaches within the field of disability

General Assessment Information

Academic honesty

At all times, students should be aware of and apply the Macquarie University policy on academic honesty (<https://policies.mq.edu.au/document/view.php?id=3>)

In accordance with the Academic Integrity Policy a student must take responsibility, be proactive, take ownership and hold oneself responsible for ensuring all information and content, including citations and references in their assignment, have been generated and communicated in an ethical, honest and responsible manner. Failure to show responsibility by checking the accuracy and integrity of your own content, citations and references, or the submission of falsified content, is a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy.

Information on the acceptable and permitted use of generative artificial intelligence tools (GAIT) is outlined at: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/assessment-exams/assessments/ai-and-assessment>

Assignment preparation guidelines

Please follow these guidelines when you submit each assignment:

- Include a completed **ePortfolio title cover page** using the template provided on iLearn.
- Allow a left and right-hand margin of at least 2cm in all assignments.
- Type all assignments using a minimum of Arial, 12-point font and SINGLE line spacing.
- Students are recommended to regularly save a copy of all assignments before submission.
- Students to 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 Turnitin Similarity Report. The Turnitin Similarity Report provides students with a similarity index that may indicate if plagiarism has occurred. Students will be able to make amendments to their drafts prior to their final submission on the due date.
- For written assignments in SPED8909 a **Turnitin Similarity Report** should be reviewed but **is NOT required** to be submitted.

Assignment submission guidelines

All assignments must be submitted electronically. Turnitin plagiarism detection software is used to check all written assignments. It is the responsibility of all students to ensure that their submitted work is in a format compatible with Turnitin software for plagiarism checking. Submissions must meet the required file type and formatting specifications outlined in the assignment guidelines. Failure to submit work in an acceptable format may result in delays in processing your submission and potential penalties for non-compliance with assignment requirements. If you are unsure about the file format or have technical difficulties, it is your responsibility to seek assistance before the submission deadline.

Students should be careful to check that they submit the correct file for an assessment as no re-submissions will be accepted after the due date and time, including instances where students upload an incorrect file. It is not the responsibility of unit staff to contact students who have failed to submit assessments. If items of assessment are missing it is the student's responsibility to contact the unit convenor.

Special Consideration / Late Penalties

Applications for extensions must be made via [Service Connect](#).

If requesting a [Short Extension](#) please ensure you still submit your first ePortfolio at least 10

working days before your final placement is due to begin, to allow time for receiving feedback. If this timeframe is not met, you may be asked to reschedule your final placement start date.

Assignment marking

- Word limits are not applied to SPED8909 assignments.
- All assignments are marked using a marking scheme or a rubric.
- Marking of all assignments is moderated by the Unit Convenor.
- Turnitin plagiarism detection software is used to check all written assignments.

University Policy on Grading

- Assignments will be awarded grades ranging from HD to F according to guidelines set out in the [University's Grading System](#) and [University Assessment Policy](#).
- SPED8909 is a pass/ fail unit. Students who demonstrate a 'Competent' level of competency in their Professional Experience will be awarded an Ungraded Pass.

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.

Results

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

Withdrawing from this unit

If you are considering withdrawing from this unit, please contact the Graduate Studies Coordinator Tanya Kysa on 0484913641 or student.enquiries@nextsense.org.au, prior to withdrawing, for advice related to your progression. You can also seek academic advice via [Service Connect](#) 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.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
ePortfolio (block 1)	50%	No	13/09/2026	Individual	Yes	Open
ePortfolio (block 2)	50%	No	06/11/2026	Individual	Yes	Open

ePortfolio (block 1)

Assessment Type [1](#): Portfolio

Indicative Time on Task [2](#): 33 hours

Due: **13/09/2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

Record of observations and learning experiences in the field of sensory disability

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse research in sensory disability and synthesise findings to make evidence based improvements in identified focus areas for improvement.
- Critically reflect on level of professional practice in order to formulate a plan for improvement of service delivery to clients with a sensory disability
- Using ePortfolio reflections evaluate the features of effective interdisciplinary team collaboration to support the needs of clients with a sensory disability.
- Apply professional experience scenarios to support translation from a professional role grounded within health model, to a role that reflects person-centred approaches within the field of disability

ePortfolio (block 2)

Assessment Type ¹: Portfolio

Indicative Time on Task ²: 33 hours

Due: **06/11/2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

Record of observations and learning experiences in the field of sensory disability

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse research in sensory disability and synthesise findings to make evidence based improvements in identified focus areas for improvement.
- Critically reflect on level of professional practice in order to formulate a plan for improvement of service delivery to clients with a sensory disability
- Using ePortfolio reflections evaluate the features of effective interdisciplinary team collaboration to support the needs of clients with a sensory disability.
- Apply professional experience scenarios to support translation from a professional role grounded within health model, to a role that reflects person-centred approaches within the field of disability

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

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.

Required and recommended texts

Boud, D. (2001). Using journal writing to enhance reflective practice. *New Directions for Adults and Continuing Education*, 2001 (90), 9-18.

Boud, D. (1998). Promoting reflection in professional courses: The challenge of context. *Studies in Higher Education*, 23(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

Week	Date	SPED8909 Event
	01/07/ 2026	SPED8909 iLearn site opens
1	27/07/ 2026	Session 2 starts
1	30/07/ 2026	Online welcome session (7pm-8:30pm AEST)
1	02/08/ 2026	Activity 1 – Critical Reflection Tool due
1	02/08/ 2026	Activity 2 – Focus Area planning due
2	05/08/ 2026	Mandatory Checks deadline
3	10/08/ 2026	Earliest observational placement start date
3	16/08/ 2026	First observational placement 1A PEX details deadline – <i>must ensure submission 10 working days, excluding public holidays prior to start date</i>
4	21/08/ 2026	Census Date (Students required to have organised first observational placement at a minimum to continue enrolment in unit)
7	13/09/ 26	Assessment 1B (mid-session blog) – <i>within 7 days of completion of first placement</i>
7	13/09/ 26	Assessment 1A (ePortfolio) – <i>at least 2 weeks (10 working days, excluding public holidays) before final placement is due to begin</i>

7	13/09/26	Final observational placement 2A PEX details deadline - must ensure submission 10 working days, excluding public holidays prior to start date
8	15/09/2026	Tutorial 1 PowerPoint due
8	17/09/2026	Tutorial 1 online (10:30am-2:30pm AEST)
MQ Recess	21/09/2026	QLD/VIC/NT Spring School Holidays <i>*Placements can continue during university recess</i>
MQ Recess	28/09/2026	NSW/QLD/VIC/NT/WA/ACT/SA Spring School Holidays <i>*Placements can continue during university recess</i>
9	05/10/2026	NSW/WA/ACT/SA Spring School Holidays
11	20/10/2026	Tutorial 2 PowerPoint due
11	22/10/2026	Tutorial 2 online (10:30am-2:30pm AEDT)
12	01/11/2026	Assessment 2B (End of session blog) submitted <i>within 7 days of completion of final placement or before the end of week 12</i> to give time for comments.
13	06/11/2026	All observational placements should be completed by the end of Week 13 at the latest
13	08/11/2026	Assessment 2A (ePortfolio) submitted by end of week 13 at the latest <i>Submit within 14 days of completion of final placement or by this date</i>
13	08/11/2026	End of Session 2, 2026

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.

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