



SPED8923

Literacy for Learners with Blindness/Low Vision

Session 2, Online-scheduled-weekday 2026

Macquarie School of Education

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Frances Gentle

frances.gentle@mq.edu.au

Contact via 02 9872 0808

NextSense Institute

Thursdays and Fridays, 9am to 4pm

Course Director

Susan Silveira

susan.silveira@mq.edu.au

Contact via 0477202129

NextSense Institute

Tuesday - Thursday 8am - 4pm

Graduate Studies Coordinator

Tanya Kysa

tanya.kysa@mq.edu.au

Contact via 0484913641

NextSense Institute

Tuesday - Friday 9.30am - 4pm

Administration Coordinator

Celise Morrison

prof.exp@nextsense.org.au

Contact via 0405120463

NextSense Institute

Monday to Friday 9am - 4pm

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

Admission to MDisabilityStud and (SPED8926 or SPED926) and SPED8907

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

Academic Integrity

Students should be aware of and apply the University policy on academic integrity (see: <https://policies.mq.edu.au/document/view.php?id=3>).

Students should be aware of and apply the University advice on Artificial Intelligence (see: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/assessment-exams/assessments/ai-and-assessment> <https://policies.mq.edu.au/document/view.php?id=394>)

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.

Assignment preparation guidelines

- Word limits (+/- 10%) are strictly applied and must be adhered to. Work above the word limit will not be marked.
- Allow a left and right-hand margin of at least 2cm in all assignments.
- All assignments should be types using a minimum of Arial, 12-point font and 1.5 spacing.
- Faculty assignment cover sheets are NOT required.
- The assignment title page should include the student's name, student number, unit code, title of the assignment and correct submitted word count.

All assignments must be submitted electronically through Turnitin as a **Word document – do not submit as a pdf. Assignments submitted as pdfs will not be marked.**

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 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.

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.

For written assignments, the Turnitin Similarity Report must also be submitted using the correct Turnitin submission point at the time of assignment submission.

Special Consideration / Late Penalties

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

Late submission penalty

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, **a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day to late submissions, up until the 7th calendar day (including weekends)**. After the 7th day, a mark of '0' (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided for students who experience a technical issue.

Important to note:

- Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs) will be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application.
- Students should not request an informal arrangement from their tutor, lecturer or Unit Convenor (or equivalent).
- Where an application for Special Consideration is approved and the outcome is an extension to the due date of a task, submissions that are received after the new due date will be subject to late penalties that are calculated from the new due date. This only applies where the outcome is an extension to the due date – see the [Special Consideration Policy](#) for a schedule of all possible outcomes.
- A Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic. Applications must be made via Service Connect.

Assignment marking

- Word limits are strictly applied. Work 10% above the word limit will not be marked. Work below the word count may attract a penalty.
- 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](#).
- To attain a pass or higher grade in Professional Experience a student must obtain a satisfactory in both the Professional Experience component **and** a pass or higher grade in the academic component. For Professional Experience units the Professional Experience Evaluation Report is marked as Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. The Macquarie Teaching Performance Assessment (MQTPA - in final WIL/PEX units) is marked as Not met, Met or Exceeds.

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
Braille Literacy Teaching Program	50%	No	05/10/2026	Individual	Yes	Open
Braille book kit production	50%	No	26/10/2026	Individual	Yes	Open

Braille Literacy Teaching Program

Assessment Type ¹: Professional task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 25 hours

Due: **05/10/2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

Development of a one term individualised braille literacy teaching program

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: Professional task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 25 hours

Due: **26/10/2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

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

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.

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 Beg	Topics and assessment dates	Topics and zoom links Compulsory online sessions, Tuesdays 7:00-8:00pm (Syd time)
27 July (Wk1)		No online session in Week 1
3 Aug (Wk2)	Topic 1: Communication, language and literacy development; and history of braille and other tactile codes	4 th August: Introductions, overview of unit content and iLearn site, and expectations
10 Aug (Wk3)	Topic 2: Educational implications of (a) blindness and (b) low vision: Supporting communication, literacy and learning	11 th August: Developing tactile skills: The braille cell and efficient touch
17 Aug (Wk4)	Topic 3: Literacy and numeracy development for learners with blindness and low vision	18 th August: Reading and writing the alphabet: contractions, beginning braille activities

24 Aug (Wk5)	Topic 4: Accessible educational materials: Digital publishing and global access to information	25 th August: Producing accessing braille resources and tactile graphics; accessibility guidelines.
31 Aug (Wk6)	Topic 5: Reading development for learners primarily using (a) non-visual access, and (b) visual access	1 st September: Assessment and programming.
7 Sept (Wk7)	Topic 6: Instructional approaches to writing development for learners primarily using (a) non-visual access, and (b) visual access	8 th September: Teaching mathematics through braille and tactile resources; Education Queensland resources.
14 Sept (Wk8)	Topic 7: Literacy and numeracy development for learners with deafblindness, multiple disabilities or cerebral visual impairment (CVI)	15 th September: International deafblind alphabet; Moon.
Monday 21 September to Friday 2 October 2026 - Mid-semester recess		
5 Oct (Wk 9)	Topic 8: The expanded core curriculum and educational participation Assessment 1 due Monday 5 October (before 11.55pm)	6 th October: No online session
12 Oct (Wk10)	Topic 9: Enhancing literacy and numeracy development through inclusive practice, accessibility and digital technologies	13 th October: Inclusive practice - Guest speaker
19 Oct (Wk11)	Topic 10: Early childhood literacy and family-centred practice	20 th October: Early childhood care and education
26 Oct (Wk12)	Topic 11: Artificial intelligence, digital accessibility and the future of literacy Assessment 2 due Monday 26 October (before 11.55pm)	27 th October: Implications of CVI for literacy development
2 Nov (Wk13)	Topic 12: Literacy, self-determination and transition to adult life	3 rd November: Looking forward; concluding discussion

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](#)