



SPED8910

Critical Reflection and Professional Experience for Teachers in Sensory Disability

Session 2, In person-placement, On location 2026

Macquarie School of Education

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Alison Hawkins-Bond

alison.hawkins-bond@mq.edu.au

Contact via 0419 227 368

NextSense Institute, Macquarie University

Tuesday and Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm (AEST)

Unit Convenor

Sheridan Howell

sheridan.howell@mq.edu.au

Contact via 0436 624 517

NextSense Institute

Tuesday and Thursday, 8.30am - 4.30pm (AEST)

Administration Coordinator, Professional Experience

Celise Hill/Morrison

prof.exp@nextsense.org.au

Contact via 0405 120 463

NextSense Institute, Macquarie University

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 9.00am - 5.00pm (AEST)

Course Director

Susan Silveira

susan.silveira@mq.edu.au

Contact via 0477 202 129

NextSense Institute, Macquarie University

Tuesday - Thursday 8am - 4pm (AEST)

Graduate Studies Coordinator

Tanya Kysa

student.enquiries@nextsense.org.au

Contact via 0484 913 641

NextSense Institute, Macquarie University

Monday - Thursday 10am - 4pm (AEST)

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

40cp from SPED units at 8000 level including SPED8906 or SPED8907 and permission by special approval

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit provides students with the opportunity to observe, plan, implement, manage and evaluate teaching programs as part of undertaking 16 days of professional experiences. 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 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: Investigate research in sensory disability and synthesise findings to make improvements in identified focus areas for improvement.

ULO2: Critically reflect on level of competency of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (and relevant elaborations) in order to formulate an improvement teaching plan

ULO3: Create, and deliver lesson sequences using knowledge of student learning and evaluate effectiveness of implemented teaching strategies

ULO4: Apply understanding of assessment strategies, including formal and informal, diagnostic, formative and summative approaches to assess and report on student learning.

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 in the instructions for each unit assignment task.

Assignment preparation guidelines

- 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.
- 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 in SPED8910 a **Turnitin Similarity Report** should be reviewed but **is NOT required** to be submitted.

Special Consideration / Late Penalties

It is not the responsibility of unit staff to contact students who have failed to submit assessments. It is the student's responsibility to contact the unit convenor when assessments are missed. Students who may need an extension of time should contact the Unit Convenor via dialogues **PRIOR** to submitting the Special Considerations request.

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.

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

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.
- 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 may 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.

Assignment marking

- Word limits are not applied to SPED8910 assignments.
- All assessments are marked using a feedback/marking rubric.
- Marking of all assessments 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 according to guidelines set out in the [University's Grading System](#) and [University Assessment Policy](#).

- SPED8910 is a pass/ fail unit. You are required to complete two assessments:

Assessment 1A: ePortfolio (First Placement) due 23:55pm on 20/09/2025 week 8 (unless on delayed placement)

- Includes **Assessment 1B: Mid-Session Blog**
- Gradebook display: 50/100

Assessment 2A: ePortfolio (Final Placement) 23:55 pm on 8/11/2026 week 13

- Includes **Assessment 2B: End-of-Session Blog**
- Gradebook display: 100/100

- To successfully complete the Professional Experience component and receive an S (Ungraded Pass), you must:

1. Achieve a 'Satisfactory' grade for both Professional Experience ePortfolios by demonstrating **Graduate**-level performance against the **Unit Learning Outcomes** and **teaching competencies** in the marking rubric; and
2. Achieve **Graduate**-level performance on all competencies in the **Practicum Assessment Tool** (PAT) by the end of the 16-day placement; and
3. Contribute to online blog reflection posts in a timely manner.

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 (first placement)	50%	Yes	20/09/2026	Individual	Yes	Open
ePortfolio (final placement)	50%	Yes	08/11/2026	Individual	Yes	Open

ePortfolio (first placement)

Assessment Type ¹: Portfolio

Indicative Time on Task ²: 25 hours

Due: **20/09/2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

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

Practical experiences in the field of sensory disability

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Investigate research in sensory disability and synthesise findings to make improvements in identified focus areas for improvement.
- Critically reflect on level of competency of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (and relevant elaborations) in order to formulate an improvement teaching plan
- Create, and deliver lesson sequences using knowledge of student learning and evaluate effectiveness of implemented teaching strategies
- Apply understanding of assessment strategies, including formal and informal, diagnostic, formative and summative approaches to assess and report on student learning.

ePortfolio (final placement)

Assessment Type ¹: Portfolio

Indicative Time on Task ²: 25 hours

Due: **08/11/2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

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

assessment tasks)

Practical experiences in the field of sensory disability

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- Critically reflect on level of competency of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (and relevant elaborations) in order to formulate an improvement teaching plan
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- Apply understanding of assessment strategies, including formal and informal, diagnostic, formative and summative approaches to assess and report on student learning.

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. The iLearn site opens 2 weeks before the start of the Session to view and complete all **mandatory check requirements**. All academic requirements for this unit begin Session 2 Week 1, 2026. All resources for this unit, inclusive of ePortfolio templates and submission dates (see tab '**Unit /information and Important Dates**') are available on iLearn. Students are expected to access the iLearn site and engage with unit materials regularly during session 1. Students are responsible for the organisation and completion of Professional Experience placements to ensure the First Placement is completed mid session (unless on a delayed placement) and the Final Placement is completed by **week 13 of the session at the latest**. .

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
- Please make effective use of the online component of the unit and access iLearn regularly. Keep up to date with checking Announcements on at least a 2x weekly basis especially when on placement.

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

The unit is divided into a series of topics; the materials are open for the entirety of the session:

- Completion of **Activity 1-** Critical Reflection Tool (**prior** to starting Professional Experience- end of week 1)
- Completion of **Activity 2-** Focus Area planning, setting of individual, professional SMART learning goals and outline of literature review (**prior** to starting Professional Experience- end of week 1)

- Completion of **Activity 3-** Understanding Reflection SCORM package (by Sunday of week 4)
- Completion of 8 days Professional Experience and submission of **Assessment Task 1A** - ePortfolio (First Placement) and **Assessment Task 1B-** Mid Session 500 word reflection blog.
- Completion of 8 days Professional Experience and submission of **Assessment Task 2A** - ePortfolio (Final Placement) and **Assessment Task 2B-** End of Session 500 word reflection blog.

Note: reflection blogs (mid-session and end of session) should be posted no later than **7 days after completion of placement** to enable sufficient time for students to comment on each other's blogs. Any student completing their final placement in week 13 of the session is required to comment on 2 blogs before the end of week 12.

Note: ePortfolios (first and last placements) should be uploaded no later that **14 days after the completion of placement**.

For first placement **ePortfolio** ensure submission date allows **10 working days** for marking before final placement start date.

For final placement **ePortfolio** ensure submission no later than **end of week 13**.

Unit Calendar

See iLearn tab '**Unit Information and Important Dates**' for specific details.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from **Policy Central** (<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>). 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](#).

Professional Experience

School of Education Procedures

In addition, the following policies and procedures of the School of Education are applicable in this unit.

To be eligible to commence the placement component of this unit:

Students are responsible for ensuring completion of foundational **Auslan** or **Braille** Literacy and Maths (prior to enrolment in SPED8910) and checking their **Mandatory Checks** evidence is current and valid for the duration of the session. Please be aware that you may need to update your training or credential prior to beginning your first placement. Students may need to withdraw from this unit if this has not been obtained in time. Students must be able to present evidence of completion of the following prior to Week 2:

- A Working with Children Check or State/ Territory equivalent. For school placements this must be verified by Supervising Teacher overseeing the placement before you visit the school.
- Anaphylaxis training (course or online training). Please note that Anaphylaxis training is only current for 2 years so students will need to update this, if lapsed.
- Mandatory Child Protection (online training).

In order to meet the Professional Experience placement expectations of this unit and pass, students must:

- achieve a 'Satisfactory' grade for both Professional Experience ePortfolios by demonstrating **Graduate**-level performance against the **Unit Learning Outcomes** and **teaching competencies** in the marking rubric; and
- achieve **Graduate**-level performance on all competencies in the **Practicum Assessment Tool** (PAT) by the end of the 16-day placement; and
- contribute to online blog reflection posts in a timely manner.

Fail Rule

This Professional Experience unit is a part of a professional course listed on Schedules 2 and 3 of the Academic Progression Policy. This course has additional requirements that are applicable for the full duration of the course, including course-specific inherent requirements, Fitness to Practice requirements and other compulsory course requirements. It also has rigorous academic progression standards. Inability to meet these requirements may result in a withdrawal of offer of admission and/or permanent exclusion from the course in accordance with the General Coursework Rules.

Professional Experience Unit Placement Expectations

- Students must have submitted all written assessment tasks and/or associated unit component requirements prior to the commencement of the First Placement.
- Students may not be able to commence their placement until all alleged academic honesty breaches have been investigated and concluded.
- Students who are completing other units are expected to inform and negotiate with that Unit Convenor about their professional experience dates and to discuss how that unit's requirements can be met.
- Feedback from the Supervising Teachers is of a general nature. It is incumbent on the student to check the requirements of any assessments prior to submission.
- If a Student is identified being **in need of additional support** for Professional Practice and/or the ePortfolio, the School of Education's '**In Need of Additional Support**' (INAS) procedure will be activated. [In need of additional support information](#)
- The timing of placements can vary. For placements early in the Session, Fail grades may be approved by the University prior to the end of Session for students who do not meet the placement expectations of the unit.

Fitness to Practice requirements

- Macquarie University operates under a 'Fitness to Practice' model as specified in the University's Academic Progression Policy. For this unit, this means that, when undertaking a placement, a student is declaring that they are able to demonstrate professional competence, acceptable professional behaviour, freedom from impairment, and compliance with program specific requirements needed for a student to practice properly and safely throughout their Practical, Clinical or Professional program or unit. It is the responsibility of the student to determine whether they are fit to undertake a placement. Therefore, if a student is feeling unfit to undertake a placement, they should not do so. For more information <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/academic-progression> and for Fitness to Practice specifically <https://policies.mq.edu.au/document/view.php?id=6>

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 2026.04 of the [Handbook](#)