

Programme Specification

1.	Programme title	PgDip in Specialist Assessment and Teaching for Literacy-related Difficulties
2.	Awarding institution	Middlesex University
3a	Teaching institution	Real Group Ltd, trading as Dyslexia Action
3b	Language of study	English

4a	Valid intake dates and mode of study
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Mode of Study	Cohort	Delivery Location	Duration
Part time	September	Online	1 year *
Part time	October	Online	3 years
Part time	January	Online	1 year *
Part time	April	Online	3 years
Part time	May	Online	1 year *

* These intake dates only apply to students who have had an Recognition of Prior Learning application approved that would allow direct entry onto M06.

4b	Delivery method	Distance Education
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5. Professional/Statutory/Regulatory body (if applicable)
Accredited by the SpLD Assessment Standards Committee (SASC)

6.	Apprenticeship Standard (if applicable)	
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7. Final qualification(s) available
PgDip in Specialist Assessment and Teaching for Literacy-Related Difficulties
PgCert in Specialist Teaching for Literacy-Related Difficulties

8. Academic year effective from	2026/27
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9. Criteria for admission to the programme

Prospective students will have:

- An honours degree or equivalent.
- Candidates with English as an additional language will need a high level of competence in the use of English, equivalent to a GCSE result of C/4 or an IELTS result of at least 6.5 (with a minimum of 6.0 in all components).
- GCSE Maths grade C/4 or higher (or equivalent).
- Recent and relevant experience (minimum of two years in a teaching/teaching support role).

Applicants who do not fulfil all the requirements above may be considered for 'special entry' if they can demonstrate other relevant academic and professional experience. Such applicants are advised to apply in the first instance and fully explain their experience in their application statement.

Applications for recognition of prior learning are accepted on this programme for up to two-thirds of the total credit needed for an exit award.

10. Aims of the programme

The programme aims to:

- Enable students to develop critical thinking skills, reflective practice and disciplined enquiry to postgraduate level and to provide students with a thorough theoretical grounding in the complex field of dyslexia and literacy skills research.
- Produce enlightened, reflective practitioners who have the specialist subject knowledge necessary to competently appraise, plan and deliver tailor-made intervention programmes for learners with literacy-related difficulties.
- Develop students' ability to effectively communicate their specialist knowledge to specialist and non-specialist audiences in a range of settings.
- Provide students with a thorough theoretical grounding in the psychometric assessment of cognitive processes that underlie literacy-related difficulties.

11. Programme learning outcomes

A. Knowledge and understanding

On completion of this programme the successful student will have an advanced knowledge, and systematic understanding, of:

1. A range of research perspectives and factors that can affect literacy acquisition and cognitive processing.
2. The way in which theory and research contribute to the development of professional practice in dyslexia and literacy teaching.
3. The theoretical underpinnings of structured, sequential, cumulative, multisensory tuition for literacy-related difficulties.
4. The principles and practice of the psychometric assessment process.

5. Statistical and qualitative analysis and how these can be employed to appraise learner performance on a range of assessment tests.

B. Skills

On completion of this programme the successful student will be able to:

6. Appraise the role that bias plays in teachers' judgements and actions.
7. Adaptively plan, prepare and deliver a teaching intervention that effectively addresses the individual study requirements of a learner with literacy-related difficulties using structured, cumulative multisensory methods.
8. Critically reflect on observations and experiences of professional teaching practice and make links with theories and research relevant to literacy-related difficulties.
9. Effectively select, administer and interpret a range of educational tests, and report the findings in a way that is intelligible to a lay person.
10. Competently conduct assessment processes including the compilation of professional assessment reports for a variety of purposes.

12. Teaching/learning methods

Students gain knowledge and understanding through:

- Guided study utilising the online learning platform, webinars, online discussion forums, online tutor support.
- Critical analysis of current research.
- The application of new theoretical and professional knowledge to their practice.

Students learn skills through:

- Self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems.
- Acting autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional level.
- Assigned tasks within their applied educational setting and coaching.

¹ Approx. number of timetabled hours per week (at each level of study, as appropriate), including on-campus and online hours	FT NA	PT 0
Approx. number of hours of independent study per week (at each level of study, as appropriate)	FT NA	PT 12
Approx. number of hours on placement (including placement, work-based learning or year abroad, as appropriate).	FT NA	PT 28

13. Employability

13a Development of graduate competencies

These awards are professional postgraduate qualifications that expect students to have

¹ This information will be used as part of our submission to Discover Uni (previously Unistats).

already significantly developed the graduate competencies prior to registration through their previous qualifications and employment experience. However, all of these are developed by the programme through the focus on professional development and reflection that is embedded within the modules.

13b Employability development

This programme aligns to the professional standards expected within the field of SpLD teaching and assessment, and successful completion of any of the exit awards will allow registration with one of the SpLD professional membership bodies and allow the graduate to carry out new jobs within this regulated sector.

13c Placement and work experience opportunities (if applicable)

As part of this programme students must undertake at least 20 hours of specialist literacy teaching, as well as at least 8 hours administering psychological assessments.

13d Future careers / progression

These awards allow graduates to carry out new roles upon completion. The Postgraduate Certificate in specialist teaching trains students to become a specialist literacy-difficulties teacher, who is able to design and implement interventions for pupils with a relevant SpLD diagnosis.

The Postgraduate Certificate in specialist assessment, the Postgraduate Diploma and the Masters of Education will allow graduates to apply for an Assessment Practice Certificate (APC), which allows them to carry out legally recognised SpLD assessments as well as carry out assessments under the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulations for exam access arrangements.

14. Assessment methods

Students are assessed by:

- Written coursework comprising critical analysis, applied practice analysis and reflective analysis.
- Analysis of the needs/problems of current work setting.
- Critique of current theoretical perspectives.
- Engagement in problem-based learning scenarios.
- Critique of local policy and practice.
- Multimedia presentation/seminar with accompanying notes.

15. Programme Structure (level of study, modules, credits and progression requirements)

The programme is only offered as part time and has two entry points per year, one in October and one in April. The programme starts with two compulsory modules, DAPP21-01 & DAPP21-02, which are studied consecutively with DAPP21-01 taking six months and DAPP21-02 taking eight months. Students can then either choose the six-month long DAPP21-03 or the eight-month long M02. These modules can be taken concurrently with

DAPP21-02, however it is advised that students complete the structured teaching practicum prior to taking on an additional module. The programme concludes with the year-long module M06.

Students who fail to complete the full PgDip, but do successfully complete DAPP21-01 and DAPP21-02, are eligible for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate in Specialist Teaching for Literacy-Related Difficulties.

The modules on this programme all relate to PSRB accreditation requirements and are non-compensatable.

Year 1

Level 7

Module Code	Type	Module Title	Credits at FHEQ Level	Full time /Part time	Semester
DAPP21-01	<i>Compulsory - Non-compensatable</i>	Literacy Acquisition - Underpinning Theory	30 at Level 7	Part time	NA
DAPP21-02	<i>Compulsory - Non-compensatable</i>	Specialist Literacy Teaching - Linking Theory to Practice	30 at Level 7	Part time	NA

Year 2

Level 7

Module Code	Type	Module Title	Credits at FHEQ Level	Full time /Part time	Semester
DAPP21-03	<i>Optional - Non-compensatable</i>	Psychometric Assessment of Literacy-related Difficulties	30 at Level 7	Part time	NA
M02	<i>Optional - Non-compensatable</i>	Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing	30 at Level 7	Part time	NA
M06^	<i>Compulsory - Non-compensatable</i>	Dyslexia: Professional Report Writing	30 at Level 7	Part time	NA

Year 3
Level 7

Module Code	Type	Module Title	Credits at FHEQ Level	Full time /Part time	Semester
M06^	<i>Compulsory - Non-compensatable</i>	Dyslexia: Professional Report Writing	30 at Level 7	Part time	NA

^ These modules span from one year to the next

*Please refer to your programme page on the website re availability of option modules

16. Programme-specific support for learning

- Support for online learning will be given as this programme is delivered via distance learning.
- Students entering the programme may have a range of recent academic experience, with some continuing students, and some with a gap between their last studies at higher education and/or master's level.
- Advice is available on all the modules to support any student with the study skills they need to undertake the programme including: critical analysis, critical writing and academic referencing.
- Students are also encouraged to think critically about the area of special educational needs relevant to their particular educational setting.
- Technical support for the virtual learning platform and any general technology support issues is provided by the Real Group IT department.
- Pastoral support is also provided by the tutor team who ensure each student's needs are treated according to their individual situation.

17. HECos code(s)

Specialist Teaching: 101085
Psychometrics: 101383

18. Relevant QAA subject benchmark(s)

None

19. University Regulations

This programme will run in line with general University Regulations: [Policies | Middlesex University](#)

The programme is accredited by SASC and all course outcomes required by SASC must be met. These requirements have been designed to be met through the learning outcomes of the modules. However, due to the level of critical understanding required of these elements this requires these modules to have a minimum pass mark of 50%.

20. Reference points

- Middlesex University regulations. These can be found at: <https://www.mdx.ac.uk/about-us/policies/>
- The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, Second Edition (2024) <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/qualifications-framework>
- Master's Degree Characteristics Statement - (2020) <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/characteristics-statements/characteristics-statement-masters-degrees>
- SpLD Assessment Standards Committee (SASC), APC Course Outcomes <https://www.sasc.org.uk/approved-spld-qualifications/apc-course-approval/>
- SpLD Assessment Standards Committee (SASC), Literacy SpLD Specialist Teacher and Specialist Teacher Assessor Course Criteria for School Level – pre-16
- SpLD Assessment Standards Committee (SASC), Literacy SpLD Specialist Teacher and Specialist Teacher Assessor Course Criteria for FE-HE

21. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of learning

In addition to the standard methods for reviewing and evaluating the quality of learning, this programme is reviewed annually as part of Real Group's Continuous Quality Improvement (CQi) Strategy.

The programme is also accredited by SASC and undergoes periodic reaccreditation.

The module M02 is also verified by the British Psychological Society (BPS), and they carry out periodic reviews of the module teaching materials and the assessment outcomes of the individual tutors.

22. Other information (if applicable)

- Access to a computer with word processing and suitable internet connection is a requirement for online study.
- The module DAPP21-02 requires students to have access to an appropriate setting to carry out teaching interventions and to at least one suitable learner to work with.
- The modules DAPP21-03, M02 and M06 require students to have access to a range of psychometric tests, an appropriate setting to carry out psychometric testing and a range of suitable learners to work with.

Please note programme specifications provide a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information about the programme can be found in the rest of your programme handbook and the university regulations.

23. Curriculum map for PgDip in Specialist Assessment and Teaching for Literacy-related Difficulties

23a Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

A1	On completion of this programme the successful student will have an advanced knowledge, and systematic understanding, of a range of research perspectives and factors that can affect literacy acquisition and cognitive processing.
A2	On completion of this programme the successful student will have an advanced knowledge, and systematic understanding, of the way in which theory and research contribute to the development of professional practice in dyslexia and literacy teaching.
A3	On completion of this programme the successful student will have an advanced knowledge, and systematic understanding, of the theoretical underpinnings of structured, sequential, cumulative, multisensory tuition for literacy-related difficulties.
A4	On completion of this programme the successful student will have an advanced knowledge, and systematic understanding, of the principles and practice of the psychometric assessment process.
A5	On completion of this programme the successful student will have an advanced knowledge, and systematic understanding, of statistical and qualitative analysis and how these can be employed to appraise learner performance on a range of assessment tests.

Skills

B6	On completion of this programme the successful student will be able to appraise the role that bias plays in teachers' judgements and actions.
B7	On completion of this programme the successful student will be able to adaptively plan, prepare and deliver a teaching intervention that effectively addresses the individual study requirements of a learner with literacy-related difficulties using structured, cumulative multisensory methods.
B8	On completion of this programme the successful student will be able to critically reflect on observations and experiences of professional teaching practice and make links with theories and research relevant to literacy-related difficulties.
B9	On completion of this programme the successful student will be able to effectively select, administer and interpret a range of educational tests, and report the findings in a way that is intelligible to a lay person.
B10	On completion of this programme the successful student will be able to competently conduct assessment processes including the compilation of professional assessment reports for a variety of purposes.

Programme learning outcomes

Highest level achieved by all graduates

A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10
7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7

23b Mapping by level of study and module

Module Title	Module Code by Level of study	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10
Literacy Acquisition: Underpinning Theory	DAPP21-01	X	X				X				
Specialist Literacy Teaching - Linking Theory to Practice	DAPP21-02			X				X	X		
Psychometric Assessment of Literacy-related Difficulties	DAPP21-03				X					X	
Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing	M02				X					X	
Dyslexia - Professional Report Writing	M06					X					X