



## THE NATIONAL AWARD FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS COORDINATION - EXPERIENCED SENCOs

### What is it?

This training programme leads to The National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination and is in response to the government's desire to uphold high standards in the teaching work force.

A number of initiatives are underway to improve teacher knowledge and confidence in teaching pupils with SEN and disabilities in both initial teacher training and in continuous professional development.

*Explanatory memorandum: education regulations (2009 no. 1387)*

### Who is it for?

Experienced SENCOs, who were in post before 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008, are not required to gain the award but may participate if they wish. Therefore, this specially tailored programme is offered at no cost, i.e. fees for the training element of this programme will be waived.

### How does this course work?

Like the course for SENCOs new to post, this training takes a twin-track approach: the professional strand which is validated by the set Learning Outcomes and a Master's strand which leads to 60 credits at M level. Therefore, whilst the aims and assessment criteria are the same as those for SENCOs new to role, the route to gaining the award is different in order to acknowledge the fact that experienced SENCOs will meet many if not all of the Learning Outcomes. The programme lasts a year with a further two years to complete all the Master's level requirements, though it is possible to complete sooner, depending on prior experience and qualifications.

Providers should, therefore, have arrangements in place for such SENCOs to be considered for the award of the qualification without undergoing the full programme, taking account of their prior experience and learning.

*Specification for nationally approved training for SENCOs*

### What is involved in the professional strand?

In order to meet the Learning Outcomes SENCOs must demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding in these major areas:

1. Professional context
2. Strategic development of SEN policy and procedures
3. Coordinating provision
4. Leading, developing and supporting colleagues
5. Working in partnership with pupils, families and other professionals

### What is involved in the Master's strand ?

In order to meet the requirements at Master's level, SENCOs will engage in critical reflective practice, choosing to complete one or two tasks taken from the following

- A Portfolio with supporting critical reflections which demonstrate a deep understanding of professional learning in relation to the set outcomes;
- A Presentation which demonstrates critical engagement with the subject, e.g. leading staff training in some aspect of specialised curriculum provision;
- Action Enquiry Report or Case Study – an enquiry report tracking the work undertaken or situation reflected on.

### How is the training organised?

- **Fees:** University funds will be used to make the course free.
- **Teaching sessions:** Since there is no supply funding available, it will be necessary to run these as 'Twilight sessions'. These will run locally and begin at 2.30 pm, demonstrating commitment from schools, LAs and the University.
- **Professional Development Portfolio:** each SENCO will use the PDP as an organizational tool to audit prior experience and record progress through the Learning Outcomes.
- **Session 1:** will review and audit the experience that individual SENCOs bring to the training and draw up a Training plan – this will be led by BSU tutors.
- **Leading, developing and supporting colleagues:** Experienced SENCOs will be invited to the coaching day for the second cohort of new SENCOs, providing a saving of £200 plus compared with other courses in coaching. It is hoped that the school may provide supply for SENCOs in order to assist them to take part in this important aspect of training.
- **Tutorial 1:** will be based on reflective practice, action enquiry and aims to help SENCOs establish a clear focus for study – this will be run locally and is led by BSU tutors.
- **Tutorial 2:** will be a writing tutorial and is aimed at supporting SENCOs in preparing for the M level assignments – this will be run locally and is led by BSU tutors.
- **Exit review of Outcomes:** Whilst the M level work is assessed through submission of assignments which go through the University Exam Board, the Learning Outcomes will be assessed through a Viva Voce based on the Professional Development Portfolio of evidence.



### Where will it be taught?

Much of the learning will take place in schools, and local authority venues. The Coaching event will be held centrally at the University.

### Further information may be obtained by contacting:

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