



HIBERNIA
COLLEGE

MA/PG Dip (Arts) in

Inclusive and Special Education

Hibernia College in collaboration with the Institute of
Child Education and Psychology (ICEP) Europe



Programme overview

The Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Inclusive and Special Education and Master of Arts in Inclusive and Special Education were developed jointly by Hibernia College and the Institute of Child Education and Psychology (ICEP) Europe. Both institutions are nationally and internationally recognised and have extensive experience in providing flexible, accessible and innovative online programmes.

The programme aims to give participants a thorough professional knowledge and understanding of special educational needs and learning difficulties. It is underpinned with the latest national and international research in relation to inclusive education.

The modular structure and online model of delivery makes this programme particularly suitable to those educators seeking a more flexible postgraduate option due to personal circumstances, work or other commitments.

Who is the programme aimed at?

The MA / PG Dip (Arts) in Inclusive and Special Education is designed to meet the professional and personal needs of educators working with students with special and additional learning needs in diverse educational settings.

This part-time, online programme will empower early years, primary, post-primary and special education teachers with the knowledge, skills, values and competencies to provide an inclusive and quality education for all. It will be of particular interest to special education teachers and those who may wish to take on coordinating or leadership roles in a range of educational contexts relevant to inclusive and special education.

It may also be relevant to other professionals involved in the education and support of learners with additional needs.

Please note that this programme is not a route to a Teaching Council number. If you wish to complete an initial teacher qualification, please refer to our PME programmes.



Course structure

This blended programme will be delivered mainly online, providing a flexible route to specialist training for educators, and will be offered on a modular, part-time basis offering maximum flexibility.

The Postgraduate Diploma comprises four taught modules (15 ECTS each) and can be completed in one year, or participants can take longer if they wish.

The Masters comprises four taught modules (15 ECTS each) and a research methods and thesis component (30 ECTS) and can be completed in two years or more.

Application process

The application process is carried out entirely online. You will be required to complete a personal statement and upload your official undergraduate transcripts to your application. Note that you must upload all documents in PDF format (under 4 Mb) to your application.

Our September 2024 intake is now open, to apply [click here](#).

The College operates a Recognition of Prior Learning Policy for entry into the programme, and applicants with previous learning in a relevant area may be able to have it formally recognised by the College as part of this programme. Those who may wish to be considered under this policy should email rpl@hiberniacollege.net.

Future careers

The programme enables educators to acquire a deep understanding of core issues within the field of inclusive and special education. Educators will develop their skill sets and acquire knowledge and expertise in carrying out educational research relevant to inclusion and learners with diverse special or additional needs.

Graduates may use the knowledge and skills developed during the programme to expand their career opportunities — to become more specialised lead teachers in their schools, to take on educational leadership or management roles, or to work in the field of education policy and practice. Others may continue their studies to doctorate level.

It also enables teachers and others to become change agents within schools, other educational settings and the broader education community by promoting and leading inclusive pedagogy through innovative, evidence-informed practice underpinned by a research culture in inclusive and special education.

Available modules

The programme is set up to be flexible, agile and individualised, allowing participants to tailor modules to their own professional specialisation, research areas and personal interests.

- Inclusive Education and Special Education Needs is a core module (15 ECTS) and must be completed in the first teaching term
- Participants can then choose three of the following elective modules:
 - General Learning Disabilities: Understanding and Best Practice (15 ECTS)
 - Dyslexia and Literacy (15 ECTS)
 - Understanding Autism: Effective Management and Teaching Strategies (15 ECTS)
 - Understanding Behaviour as Communication (15 ECTS)
- Those progressing to MA level will also complete a Research Methods module and a 12,000-word thesis (30 ECTS)

Brief module descriptions

Core module

■ Inclusive Education and Special Education Needs

This is the first module offered and it is a core module for all participants. It aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the principles, philosophy and practice of inclusive education and a framework for supporting diverse and potentially marginalised learners within the education system. International and national perspectives on special educational needs and inclusion are explored and current issues, debates and challenges are examined. It focuses on developing participants' knowledge of inclusive education and evidence-informed practices, emphasising diverse and differentiated teaching approaches and methodologies that are underpinned by research findings. Issues around early identification, assessment and screening are addressed, as well as considerations for the collaboration and modifications necessary to ensure curricular access and participation and to facilitate inclusion at the whole-school level. The module aims to give participants the skills to reflect on their own values and attitudes in relation to inclusion and special educational needs, and to inform and develop their practice.

Elective modules

○ General Learning Disabilities: Understanding and Best Practice

This module aims to develop and expand the knowledge and understanding of evidence-based practices, approaches and interventions for the support of learners with General Learning Disabilities (GLDs), both at individual and whole-school level. It critically examines the history of exclusion, labelling and lack of educational provision for learners with GLDs in the light of recent legislative and policy initiatives. It explores the latest research in relation to the inclusion of learners with GLDs and details current approaches to provision. It provides an overview of the potential learning difficulties that learners with general disabilities may experience and describes the implications of these for teaching and learning. Evidence-informed strategies to help facilitate access to a broad, balanced, differentiated and relevant curriculum for all learners are evaluated, and the module examines how best to plan, assess and record learners' needs at school, at both class and individual level. It also emphasises collaborative planning in support of teaching and learning and highlights the importance of student voice and personalising inclusion. A strengths-based approach is advocated, which focuses on identifying barriers to learning and increasing inclusion and participation.

○ Dyslexia and Literacy

This module aims to expand the knowledge, understanding and skills of educators in support of learners with dyslexia. The module provides an in-depth examination of dyslexia theory and current research; it examines the neurological origins of dyslexia and provides practical information about screening, identification, prevention and early intervention for reading and literacy difficulties. A collaborative, whole-school approach is central to working effectively with both parents and learners; therefore, this module focuses on the factors essential for the inclusion, support and effective education of learners with dyslexia. Evidence-based strategies for teaching and learning literacy skills and supporting learners in specific subjects are examined, and the module also reviews effective intervention and remediation programmes. The module offers the opportunity to gain evidence-based strategies and skills for detecting and responding to the needs of students with learning difficulties arising from dyslexia in the context of inclusive practice.

○ Understanding Autism: Effective Management and Teaching Strategies

This module aims to develop participants' knowledge, awareness and understanding of the contemporary perspectives, current research, policy and practice around autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The history of autism is examined, and the module also reviews current theories and research about prevalence, causes and effective interventions. The strengths and challenges associated with ASD are explored through a developmental lens, and the educational implications are examined. The module provides an overview of diagnosis, assessment approaches and strategies for early identification and screening. The focus is on critical evaluation of current research and literature, on developing an in-depth knowledge of effective approaches and methodologies for inclusion, and on evidence-informed practices for supporting the learning of students with ASD. Participants will consider the lived experience and perspectives of people with ASD and reflect on the implications for teaching and learning.

○ Understanding Behaviour as Communication

This module aims to develop and extend participants' knowledge and understanding of behaviour and social and emotional difficulties in order to develop effective practice to support learning and behaviour. Through engaging with psychological theories and current research, it explores a range of perspectives on behaviour and examines risk, resilience, protective factors and the origins of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. It critically evaluates current policies and practices within schools for responding to the needs of vulnerable students and outlines the practical application of positive behavioural support strategies in the classroom. The rationale for school-wide approaches to behavioural support is reviewed along with key practices associated with this approach. These include universal and targeted interventions for intervening with individual students, promoting resilience and positive behaviour, and developing social and emotional literacy through curricular approaches and embedded practices. The module enables participants to understand and reflect on student behaviour and to examine their own values and attitudes to inform and develop their practice.

Masters module

■ Research Methods and Thesis

*MA only

The aim of this module is to introduce participants to the theoretical, philosophical, sociological and practical aspects of research in the area of special educational needs and inclusive education. Participants will undertake a small-scale research project relevant to inclusion and special educational needs, usually in the context of the participant's role and/or practice with online supervision. Participants on this module will consider ethical issues related to research within the field of inclusion and will develop an in-depth understanding of the link between research and practice.

Awards

- Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Inclusive and Special Education — four modules (60 ECTS)
- Master of Arts in Inclusive and Special Education — four modules + research methods and thesis component (90 ECTS)

Tuition and support

Modules are delivered online over a 12-week period, with live classes delivered every second week. Participants will have the opportunity to interact with peers in online class discussions. Modules are based on continuous assessment and there are no exams.

Both institutions are committed to providing positive and supportive learning environments for all students. The tutors are there to provide individual academic and pastoral support and guidance to all participants. Technical support is provided by a dedicated team of qualified learning technologists, who can be contacted by telephone or email. Students will also find that their fellow classmates will be a great source of support through the discussion forums and online tutorials.

Entry requirements

Applicants must hold a minimum of a Pass, or equivalent, in an honours bachelor degree at NFQ Level 8 in a relevant area.

An applicant whose first language/primary mode of expression is not English will be required to produce evidence of English competence.

Fees and funding

PG Dip (Arts) in Inclusive and Special Education: €5,000 for four taught modules (15 ECTS each).

Continuation to MA in Inclusive and Special Education: Additional €4,000.

MA in Inclusive and Special Education: €9,000 for four taught modules (15 ECTS each) and a research methods and thesis component (30 ECTS).

Per Module Pricing: The fee per module (15 ECTS) is €1,250. Fees for all modules must be paid in full by the agreed deadline, prior to the commencement of the module(s) each term.

In many cases, participants will be able to claim tax back on these fees and may be able to avail of certain fee refund schemes such as the Teacher Fee Refund Scheme for existing teachers.

INTO Credit Union has formulated a loan facility that may interest you. Please [click here](#) for more information.

TUI Credit Union has formulated a loan facility that may interest you. Please [click here](#) for more information.





Further Information

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