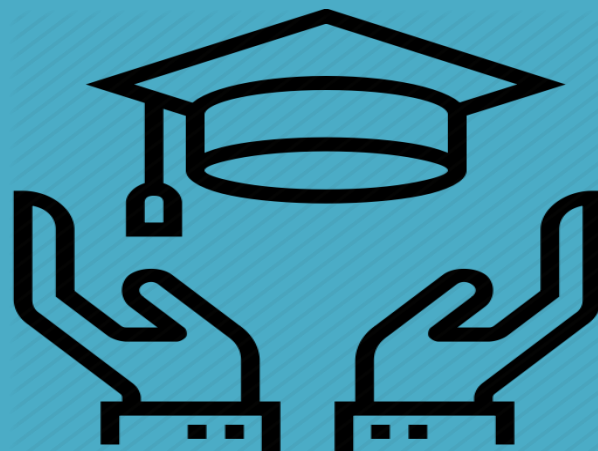




THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA

**Degree of Master of
Education in Special
Needs Education
Programme (with
Research)
2022/2023**

General Information



Department of Special Needs Education,
Faculty of Education,
The Open University of Sri Lanka,
Nawala, Nugegoda.



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Faculty of Education

Mission

The vision of the Faculty of Education is to be a leader of the advancement of knowledge and professional practice in education as a fundamental human endeavor through open and distance learning in Sri Lanka and in the region.

Objectives

The objectives of Faculty of Education is to:

- Achieve excellence in research and scholarship in the field of Education
- Prepare professionals for service and leadership roles in education and related areas
- Constructively inform educational policy makers and to critically appraise educational policy in Sri Lanka
- Contribute to curriculum development in general and teacher education in particular
- Support society to identify and respond to its educational responsibilities and challenges

Welcome

Greetings and welcome to the Master of Education in Special Needs Education Degree Programme

Master of Education in Special Needs Education Degree Programme is here to provide the resources you may need to achieve your educational and career goals. We have designed this programme to expose you to a sound theoretical and research basis of special needs education on which you can expand your knowledge and skills as a professional in the field of special needs education. Our programme provides opportunities for in-depth study in the discipline of special needs education to ensure your professional development through a variety of academic activities.

Learning and teaching activities in the programme are designed in such a way that you will be able to study at your own pace with an emphasis on self-study while providing you with a variety of support to achieve the learning goals. As such, the programme is learner-centred, hands-on, and have a very strong emphasis on learning by doing.

This programme Handbook contains all the information you will need to know about this new programme, including brief descriptions of all the courses, their credit value and academic activities.

We wish you all the best in this programme and a pleasant journey with us.

Dr. Ruwandika Perera
Head/Department of Special Needs Education
Faculty of Education
The Open University of Sri Lanka

Message from the Dean, Faculty of Education

As Dean of the Faculty of Education, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the Open University of Sri Lanka! Your decision to read for the Master of Education in Special Needs Education Degree Programme offered by the Dept. of Special Needs Education was an excellent choice. The Department is dedicated to the task of effecting the professional development of teachers serving in a variety of educational settings. The educational philosophy of the Faculty of Education reflects the confidence that each student has the ability to learn, and that each student learns at his/ her own pace. That is why from early on students are provided with a lot of support and details about the programme so as to encourage self-studies. Students are also encouraged to be mindful of their learning style & learning needs so that the faculty can facilitate their progress.

It is indeed my pleasure to introduce to you a faculty that is highly qualified to execute unique programmes of study that are designed to ensure that our university graduates are fully prepared to fulfill the professional requirements in the field of Special Needs Education. The excitement, rigor and challenge of academic life at the Open University of Sri Lanka are supported by experienced, highly credentialed faculty, superior academic advising and a family of faculty, staff and administration whose mission is to enhance your educational experience.

We hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to study at a unique type of state university in Sri Lanka.

This handbook is prepared to assist you in the process of being a student at the Open University of Sri Lanka. As a student, you are responsible for your interactions with the University and this Handbook serves as a guide for these interactions. This handbook provides information about the academic activities of the Programme including contact sessions, online learning activities, assessment components, compulsory and optional courses and details on how to access the various support systems available to the students. Keep it handy where you can easily access it. It's a great resource.

Best wishes for a productive year of studies!

Prof. Sasikala Kugamoorthy

Dean/Faculty of Education

The Open University of Sri Lanka

1.0 General Instructions to Students

The Master of Education in Special Needs Education Degree Programme, similar to all the other programmes offered by the Open University of Sri Lanka, is designed for study through the distance mode. It is a 66-credit study programme of two (02) years duration which is at Level 10 according to the Sri Lanka Qualification framework. However, as a wide knowledge and a critical attitude are expected from students following a higher degree programme, printed texts are not provided. Instead reading lists and handouts relevant to each course of study will be distributed among the students as and when found necessary. As a student reading for a higher degree, it is essential that you engage in self-study.

1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME

The objectives of the programme is as follows

- To expand opportunities for postgraduate studies in Special Needs Education and Inclusive Education for those who are already serving in the field of education
- To develop knowledge, attitudes, and skills of individuals to act as leaders, consultants and resource personnel in special needs education
- To enhance capacity development in professional reflection, judgment, decision-making and practice to address diverse needs of individuals
- To promote research in the field of special needs education

1.2 PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

- Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the theories, policies, legislation, and practices underpinning the education of learners with special needs education within national and international contexts
- Analyse critically, reflect on and synthesise complex information, problems, concepts, and theories of special needs education.
- Conduct independent research and inquiry into contemporary issues in special needs education, involving higher order conceptualization, new ideas and personal initiative
- Interpret and transmit educational knowledge, pedagogical and professional skills, and ideas to specialist and non-specialist audiences

- Communicate effectively and collaboratively with students with disabilities, their families, and other professionals within the legal, ethical and professional practice context.
- Use advanced knowledge of special needs education concepts, theories, technologies, policies and pedagogical strategies and critical thinking skills to solve complex problems in special needs education settings.
- Apply advanced pedagogic expertise in designing, planning, implementing, adapting, and evaluating programs, technologies, and resources for a diverse range of learners in special needs education classroom settings.
- Act responsibly, ethically, and professionally with diverse populations at local, national and global levels.

1.3. Studying at OUSL

The distance learning methodology adopted by the OUSL may initially appear as a challenging task for you. However, very soon you will learn that it is a rewarding and enjoyable experience. In addition to gaining subject knowledge and skills, you will be developing many other life skills, you will be developing many other life skills, including self - organization and time management. Regular lecturers, a feature of face – to –face teaching at a conventional university, is minimal at the OUSL. Instead, students learn through care-fully prepared study material together with other forms of support that facilitate learning.

2.0 Academic Activities of the Programme

2.1 Courses of the Programme

The Master of Education in Special Needs Education Degree Programme consists of seven (07) compulsory courses and one (01) elective course. The total number of courses you should offer is eight (08) which add up to 66 credits. You may select one (01) elective course of your choice from among the elective courses provided in this programme. Those who have not qualification in Special Needs Education have to follow SNPA007. You will be provided with separate reading lists for each of these topics. The minimum duration of the programme is two (02) academic years.

	Course Code	Course Name	Credit Value	Status (Compulsory /Optional)
1 st YEAR	SNPA601	Psychological Foundations of Special Needs Education	6	Compulsory
	SNPA602	Sociological and Philosophical Foundations of Special Needs Education	6	Compulsory
	SNPA903	Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment in Special Needs Education	9	Compulsory
	SNPA904	Managing Special Needs Education within the existing Education System	9	Compulsory
	SNPA605	Transitions for Students with Special Educational Needs	6	Elective
	SNPA606	Assistive and Adaptive Technologies in Special Needs Education	6	Elective
	SNPA007	Multidisciplinary approach in Special Needs Education <i>(Those who do not have any qualification related to Special Needs Education should complete the course)</i>	0	Optional
2 nd YEAR	SNPA608	Quantitative Research methods in Special Education	6	Compulsory
	SNPA609	Qualitative Research methods in Special education	6	Compulsory
	SNPAI10	Research Dissertation	18	Compulsory

Note: Check whether you have been registered for all the courses you applied for. If you wish to change elective courses, you are allowed to do

so, only on the dates mentioned below. (If the dates are changed, you will be informed.)

Task	Date
Add/Drop	19.09.2022
Drop	12.10.2022

2.2 Contact Sessions

As this is a self-study programme, a limited number of day schools will be conducted, to guide you in each course of study. These contact sessions will be held at Colombo regional center. (If programme run in online mode ZOOM session will be conducted) You will be provided the timetable at the Orientation to the Programme.

2.2 Online Learning Activities

The face-to-face contact sessions of the programme will be supplemented with the provision of resources and activities through the online Learning Management System, MOODLE-LearnOUSL. Students are required to use the resources provided and engage in the activities to complete the programme successfully.

2.3 Continuous Assessment

Continuous Assessment (CA) is based on assignments. Each student is required to present 24 assignments, on the basis of 3 assignments per course. The Overall Continuous Assessment Mark (OCAM) of a student in any course will be the average marks of the given number of assignments in that course.

On completion of the continuous assessment components of a course, a student will be awarded an OCAM as follows:

Overall Assessment Mark (Z%)	Grade	Grade Point Value
85-100	A+	4.00
80-84	A	4.00
75-79	A -	3.70
70-74	B+	3.30
65-69	B	3.00
60-64	B-	2.70
55-59	C+	2.30
50-54	C	2.00
45-49	C-	1.70
40-44	D+	1.30
20-39	D	1.00
00-19	E	0.00

A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+ and C constitute Pass grades.

A student may appear for the Final Examination of any course in Level ten (10) irrespective of the mark obtained as the Overall Continuous Assessment Mark (OCAM) of that course.

A student who sits the Final Examination of any course of the Degree of Master of Education in Special Needs Education Degree Programme shall be awarded a grade and a Grade Point Value for that course based on the Overall Assessment Mark (Z%). The Overall Assessment Mark (Z %) of a course, except the research dissertation, shall be based on the OCAM (X %) and the mark obtained at the Final Examination (Y %).

The weightage given to continuous assessment and the Final Examination will be:

OCAM	40%
Final Examination	60%

A student who fails to obtain an Overall Assessment Mark (Z %) of 50% for a course in Level 10 shall be considered to have failed that course. Such a student may repeat that course by re-registering for the same. A student who is awarded a grade lower than 'C' at the Overall Assessment needs to reappear for that course at a subsequent attempt and obtain a pass grade.

If a student obtains an OCAM of at least 50% for a particular course but fails to obtain a 'C' grade or above as the Overall Assessment Mark, s/he may carry forward that OCAM to one (01) subsequent academic year.

A student who either repeats a course or re-appears for a final assessment will be awarded a grade not higher than C and a GPV not higher than 2.00.

2.4 Final Examination

A student may appear for the final examination of any course except the research dissertation. The final examination of each course will consist of a written examination.

2.4.1 The Written Examination

The written examination consists of seven papers, i.e. one paper per course, each of three-hour duration. It is essential to obtain at least a 'C' grade in all seven courses to pass the written examination. A student who fails in any of the courses may re-sit that course in the following year.

The final score of a course will be computed according to the following formula.

If $Y \geq 50$ then, $Z = 0.4X + 0.6Y$

If $Y < 50$ then, $Z = Y$

X = OCAM

Y = Final Examination Mark

Z=Overall Assessment Mark

2.4.2 Research Dissertation

The research dissertation shall be examined by two examiners. The Board of examiners shall be recommended to the Senate that dissertation be accepted or rejected. In the case of amendments being suggested each amendment shall be affected, and dissertation be resubmitted in the revised form as recommended by the Board of Examiners.

3.0 Assignments

3.1 The Number of Assignments

There are three (3) types of assignments for each course:

- (1) Take - home Assignment
- (2) Activity-based Assignment
- (3) Activity-based Assignment

3.1.1 Take-home Assignments

Students will be provided with questions /problems based on the major topics in each course of study.

The student has to write the answer, after studying an adequate number of sources. The length of the written answer should be approximately 1000 – 1500 words (4-6 typed pages).

3.1.2 Activity-based Assignments

One assignment in each course will be conducted and evaluated during a dayschool as an activity - based assignment. You have to come prepared for this

assignment as instructed under each course in the Assignment Book which will be provided at the Orientation to the Programme.

3.1.3 Oral Presentations

The third assignment of each course will be an oral presentation on a given area/topic. Students are required to plan and prepare their oral presentation according to the guidelines given in the Assignment Book. At these presentations, students will be required to explain and clarify any points that may be raised by the audience.

3.2 Guidelines for Writing and Submission of Written Assignments

Students are required to adhere to the following guidelines when writing and submitting assignments:

- i. All written assignments should be presented neatly typed/written on **one side of the paper, leaving 4cm left margin** for the examiners to write their comments.
 - ii. All assignments should be submitted **using a folder** provided for this purpose, indicating the following particulars.
 - (a) **Name and address of the student**
 - (b) **Registration number**
 - (c) **Course code and course title**
 - (d) **Assignment number**
 - (e) **Assignment title**
- Students are expected to **obtain a receipt for the assignments submitted.**

Online Submission of Assignments:

Students can do the online submission using learnOUSL platform and you must keep the evidence for the submission

- Please note that **any no assignment answer scripts will be accepted after the stated deadline.**

4.0 Courses and Topics

4.1.1 Overview of Courses

- 1. SNPA601 – Psychological Foundations of Special Needs Education-** (Compulsory)

- **Psychological Implications of Disability:** Development of psychology for the area of special needs education. The importance of studying psychology for special needs education, Psycho-social issues related to disability.
- **Learning Characteristics of Children with Special Needs:** Theories of behaviorism and cognitive psychology as they relate to methods of instruction students with SNE.
- **Personality development of children with SEN:** Individual differences/classroom diversity and personality development, aspects of personality development of special needs children, self-concept, self-esteem and self-confidence of children with SEN, moral and ethical development of children with SEN
- **Introduction to Assessment Techniques in Disability:** Functional and clinical Assessments

2. SNPA602 – Sociological and Philosophical Foundations of Special Needs Education – (Compulsory)

- **Development in Special Education:** Historical perspectives of Special Education, Policy perspectives in Disability, Constitutional provisions for Special Education, Constitutional rights of Disabilities for Education, Current Trends and Service options.
- **Critical appraisal of contributions made to special education:** Prominent educational thinkers, Asia and Western
- **Social aspects of Special education:** The family as a social agent of a child with SEN, the school and its role, peer group identity
- **Social development and the society:** Social change towards Disability in the world and with special reference to Sri Lanka Barriers for social development.

3. SNPA903 - Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment in Special Needs Education: (Compulsory)

- **Curriculum design for SEN children:** The Concept of Curriculum, principles of curriculum development in special education. Possible curricula models, Deciding curriculum content, Flexibility of provision, Accessing mainstream curricula, Universal Design for learning
- **Curriculum, implementation and Strategies:** Theoretical and practical approaches and research validated intervention strategies, Curriculum adaptation strategies, Differentiated instructions, teaching and learning innovations/programmers for children with special needs, Methods of instruction and strategies for addressing the needs of students with special educational needs. The

individual education plan for a student with special educational needs

- **Assessment of Students with Disabilities:** Techniques and methods used for assessing students with disabilities. Administration and interpretation of formal and informal assessment procedures. Address assessment issues in Sri Lanka.

4. SNPA904- Managing Special Needs Education within the existing Education System- (Compulsory)

- **Leadership for Inclusive School Improvement:** School improvement and the characteristics of effective inclusive schools. Key factors that contribute to school improvement. The vision for the future development of school. The needs, demands and aspirations of the various stakeholders
- **School development planning:** School enrolment policy, Code of behaviour and discipline, and measures to prevent the bullying or harassment of students with special educational needs, Accommodations in the physical environment, Resource-teaching support for students with special educational needs, learning support for students with SNE, Manage the Inclusive Education, Special Education units and Resource Centers in schools and Special Schools
- **Classroom management:** Class placement arrangements for students with special educational needs, Arrangements for the provision of additional teaching support to students with special educational needs, Developing a whole-school policy on assessment, Record-keeping Partnerships and Collaboration - Partnership in special education, The special educational needs support team. Roles and functions of mainstream teachers, the resource teacher, the learning-support teacher, the guidance counselor, Parents and home-school links, Bodies outside the school

5. SNPA605 - Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs- (elective)

- **Introduction:** Historical and contemporary legislation, Policies, methods, and service delivery for educational and transitional programming for students with disabilities.
- **Different transition models:** Transition into school, transition from school, Transition to Industrial work, Transition to self-base incomes, transition for skills development, transition for talented development, job shadow/ job try outs etc.
- **Transition for Adolescents with SEN:** Challenge of independent living; higher education, career exploration and choice; the changing role of family, adult service agencies, and other support services in the adolescent and adult with special needs.

- **Comprehensive vocation assessment of SEN children:** Transition planning, vocational assessment methods, supported employment concepts and issues, and vocational training strategies

6. SNPA606 - Assistive and Adaptive Technologies in Special Needs Education – (elective)

- **Course introduction and overview of Assistive and Adaptive Technologies for children with SEN:** Introduce to the field of assistive technology, common technologies that support students in the classroom settings.
- **Assistive technology that Supports Learning:** Listening, reading, writing, organizing, memory, concept development
- **Assistive technology that Supports Participation:** How overcome the sensory impairment & physical disabilities with assistive technology, availability technology, benefits for sensory impairments access to the curriculum and classroom activities. Access technologies such as alternate keyboards, vision technologies such as screen enlargers and close captioned televisions.
- **Assistive technology that Supports Communication:** Software and hardware that supports receptive and expressive communication in the classroom.
- **Assistive technology Implementation Process:** Effective AT implementation from creating technology-enhanced lesson plans and following up or planning student transitions.

7. SNPA007 – Multidisciplinary approach in Special Needs Education – (Optional)

- **Fundamental concept of special needs education:** Concepts of special education and special needs education, segregation phase, integration phase.
- **Rights of the people with disabilities:** International conventions, National documents
- **Rights for education:** educational right of children with SEN Inclusive education concept, change in school
- **Special education needs in a classroom:** Identification primary education needs, sensory impairments, physical impairment, Autism, intellectual disability, learning Disabilities
- **Alternative Evaluation for SEN children:** Issues in regular assessment & evaluation system in schools, alternative system for them

8. SNPA608 - Quantitative Research Methods in Special Education- (Compulsory)

- **Research in Education and Special Needs Education:** Nature of Research, Education Research, Characteristics of Special Needs Education Research
- **Research Process:** Identification of a Research Problem, Review of Literature, Formulating Research Objectives/ Questions/ Hypotheses, Sampling Techniques, Development of Data Collection Instruments and Collecting Data, Analysis of Data and Deriving Conclusions
- **Research Approaches and Designs:** Survey Research Design, Experimental Research Design, Quasi- Experimental Research Design, Co relational studies,
- **Data Collection and Analysis:** Methods of data Collection such as Observation, Interviews, Focus group Discussions, Questionnaire survey etc. and Research instruments such as Observation Schedule, Questionnaire, Interview Schedule, tests, Rating Scales, etc. Methods of quantitative data analysis: Chi-Square, ANOVA, *t*Test, FTest, Software for data analysis
- **Writing a Research Proposal, writing a report and communicating Research Findings:** Articles and Reports, Formats of the above communications, Research Ethics

9. SNPA609 - Qualitative Research methods in Special Education (Compulsory)

- **What is Qualitative Research:** Brief introduction to Qualitative Research
- **Methods of Qualitative Research in Special Needs Education:** Grounded theory, Case study, Action research, Ethnographic, Phenomenology and symbolic interactions
- **Process of Qualitative Research in Special Needs Education:** Circular Process which include Setting the scene, entering to the field, Progressive Focusing, Gathering and Recording Qualitative Information, Drawing Conclusions and Methodological Notes
- **Multiple methods of Data Collection in Special Needs Education:** Participant Observation, Qualitative Interviewing, Focus group discussions, Autobiographies, Diaries, Portfolios etc.
- **Data Analysis in Qualitative Research in Special Needs Education:** Coding, Categorizing, Narrative Analysis, Discourse Analysis, Classical Content

10. SNPAI10 - Research Dissertation – (Compulsory)

Research Dissertation: Finalization of the research proposal with the Supervisor Presentation of the research proposal with the work plan and critical evaluation of others' proposals, Meetings with the supervisor to finalize Sample, Data Collection Methods and Data Analyses Techniques, Submission of first three Chapters and feedback from Supervisor, Meetings with Supervisor to finalize rest of the Chapters, Submission of the draft of the whole dissertation to Supervisor and feedback from supervisor, Submission of the Temporary bound Dissertation, After evaluation by two examiners Viva voce examination

5.0 MyOUSL Facility

Students can access MyOUSL, Open University student Portal, to view information regarding the Study Programme that they have registered for. This site will be used by the academic staff to share information about the courses, dayschools, examinations etc. with the students. Therefore, each student is encouraged to log into MyOUSL frequently in order to be updated about the Study Programme.

1. You can log into **MyOUSL** with the following URL:
<http://myousl.ou.ac.lk/>
There is also a link from OUSL webpage at:
<http://www.ou.ac.lk/home/>
2. Type your User Name and Password. Your **User Name is the Student ID** given on the Personal Information page of your Record Book and the **Password is the National ID number including the letter at the end.**
3. Do not forget to change your Password at first login to protect your information.

Administrative Division Providing Support

Student Affairs Division

The Student Affairs Division located in the administrative building of the Nawala Central Campus is responsible for maintaining all personal and academic records of the OUSL students. In case of loss of students record books and change of addresses, students should immediately inform the Student Affairs Division. To drop courses in the permitted drop period or obtain studentship, students

6.0 Important Contact Details

Nature of problem	Whom to Contact	Contact Details
Registration, Studentship, Change of Centre	Senior Assistant Registrar, Student Affairs Division, OUSL, Nawala, Nugegoda.	0112881342/374 sarsa@ou.ac.lk
Withdrawal from a course	Senior Assistant Registrar, Student Affairs Division, OUSL, Nawala, Nugegoda. (with a copy to the Head/Dept. of Secondary & Tertiary Education)	0112881342/374/301 sarsa@ou.ac.lk
Final Examination results & certificates	Senior Assistant Registrar, Examinations Division, OUSL, Nawala, Nugegoda.	0112881350 website for results: http://www.ou.ac.lk/home/index.php/exam-results sarexam@ou.ac.lk
Problems/queries related to the Programme	Programme Co-ordinator	0112881492 kketh@ou.ac.lk
Course content	Academic members of the programme/Lecturers Dept. of Special Needs Education	0112881492

*We wish you all a very productive and pleasant learning journey!
Dept. of Special Needs Education*