Over the last few years the quality of provision for individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) has become a national concern. A large body of research highlights a lack of staff training in autism as a key barrier to the inclusion of children, young people and adults with ASD. We seek to address this barrier by offering an interprofessional PG Certificate/Diploma/MEd in Autism and Learning.

The programme aims to give practitioners an in depth understanding of the condition and the working of the autistic mind. It will equip participants with a range of practical approaches and interventions that will enable children, young people and adults on the autism spectrum to access learning, participate actively, experience success, gain independence, and fulfil their potential. Establishing a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach is a central feature of all courses.

The programme is designed for parents, teachers, therapists, care workers and other practitioners supporting individuals on the autism spectrum across key services including Education, Health, Social Work, Social Care and the Voluntary Sector. Entry is open to participants with a relevant degree (or equivalent), an ability to study at postgraduate level, and relevant experience.

Aims of the Programme

- To develop knowledge & understanding of the concept of inclusion.
- To develop knowledge & understanding of autism.
- To develop collaborative partnerships with individuals on the autism spectrum, parents, colleagues and other agencies.
- To engage critically with theory, literature and research.
- To use acquired knowledge & understanding of autism to reflect critically upon practice.
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- To apply acquired knowledge & understanding of autism to formulate effective support for children, young people and adults on the autism spectrum.
- To apply acquired knowledge & understanding of autism in order to contribute to staff development and workplace improvement.

Programme Structure  180 SM Point pathway

Certificate Level

Course 1a: Understanding Autism in an Inclusive Context  (30 SM Points)
The course will cover a range of conceptual issues fundamental to an understanding of autism spectrum disorders and inclusion.

Course 1b: Enabling Learning and Participation: Approaches and Interventions
Participants will gain experience in translating concepts and principles acquired in course one into effective practice.

Course 2a: Making Sense of Behaviour  (30 SM Points)
This course explores the links between the Triad of Impairments, sensory issues and behaviour, and offers practical strategies for identifying solutions.

Course 2b: The Autism Friendly Workplace
This course will explore policy, practice and provision and examine the development of the autism friendly workplace.

Diploma Level

Course 3: Professional Enquiry  (30 SM Points)
This course provides the opportunity to acquire research skills and to explore different research paradigms. Students will plan, design and implement a small scale research project.

Course 4: Controversies and Dilemmas in Autism and Learning  (30 SM Points)
This course will critically explore the current controversies and dilemmas in Autism and Learning. Topics will include: Causation and Diagnosis/Autism and Inclusion/Autism Specific Service Provision/Self-Understanding and Independence/Relationships, Sexuality & Mental Health.
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MEd Level

Course 5: Work Based Project and Dissertation (60 SM Points)
The masters course involves systematic investigation of a specific area of study in Autism and Learning, within an appropriate theoretical framework.

Costs (correct at time of publishing)

Double Course (30 SM Points) £450
MEd (60 SM Points) £900

Delivery Arrangements

All courses are delivered face to face at the University of Aberdeen, School of Education.

For further details about this programme please contact:
Email: autism@abdn.ac.uk  Tel: +44 (0) 1224 274578

For information about other postgraduate opportunities within the School of Education, please visit www.abdn.ac.uk/education