# Programme Specification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Title and Name of Award</th>
<th>Postgraduate Certificate in National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Qualifications / Accreditation</td>
<td>National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Level</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCAS Code</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria for Admission to the Programme</td>
<td>The University’s standard criteria for admissions apply. Please refer to the Applicant Information pages of the University website for more information. For APL, please refer to the University website. The following additional requirements apply for entry to this programme: Applicants must be qualified teachers employed in their educational setting and have access to the opportunity to perform the duties of a SENCo and/or shadow the role. Applicants must also have the full support of the Headteacher or Principal of their educational setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Institution</td>
<td>University of Cumbria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owning Department</td>
<td>Postgraduate Programmes and Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme delivered in conjunction with</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Mode of Delivery</td>
<td>Face to face blended with distance learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pattern of Delivery</td>
<td>Part time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery Site(s)</td>
<td>Lancaster; the Business Innovation Centre, Sunderland, plus other sites in accordance with UoC Procedures for the Approval and Management of Offsite Delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Length</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR)</td>
<td>Upon successful completion of this programme, you may receive a Diploma Supplement/Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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You may be awarded one of the following Exit Awards if you fail to achieve the requirements of the full programme.

- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (in the absence of the qualificatory portfolio element)
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination)

**Programme Features**

This programme is built upon the success of our previous programme whereby hundreds of SENCos have qualified to hold the National Award for SEN Coordination. Many of those qualifying with the University of Cumbria have come to us by word of mouth recommendations from our alumni. They particularly valued the face to face teaching elements of the course, the extensive and supportive formative feedback process and the encouragement they received, not only from their tutors, but, crucially, from one another, as they entered into, and worked within, new networks of enduring support.

The assessment used is innovative and highly relevant to the role of the SENCo, based upon real tasks and useful in demonstrating best practice. A highly structured and appropriate bank of further tasks, prepare you in achievable steps for the assessment process, the portfolio of evidence, which will be built up incrementally, and for the role you are undertaking.

Those teaching, leading and managing the programme are highly experienced, not only as former SENCos themselves, but also in teaching and supporting participants over a number of years since the inception of the National Award. They are approachable, supportive and care deeply about supporting you as you juggle the competing demands of the course, your work and your life.

Whilst there are opportunities for you to step out of role and immerse yourself in the course during the face to face components, there is a sense of continuity between the course and your work and your network of colleagues and tutors, supported by the personal professional reflective development portfolio.

Applicants who have successfully completed the National Award for Special Educational Needs with the University of Cumbria shall be permitted to gain entry with advanced standing onto the programme. The NASC award carries 60 M level specialised credits which could be APL’D into the Inclusionary Practice named pathway.

**Aims of the Programme**

The overall aims of the Programme are to enable SENCos to:

1. know and understand the statutory and regulatory context for SEN and disability equality and the implications for practice in their educational setting. SENCos will also develop their understanding of how SEN and disabilities affect pupils’ participation and learning, strategies for improving outcomes for these pupils and consider how best to draw upon external sources of support and
expertise. They will consider how to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate systems to identify affected pupils, set challenging targets for them, plan and intervene to secure positive outcomes for pupils. SENCoS will develop and demonstrate the personal and professional qualities to shape an ethos and culture based upon person-centred, inclusive practice in which the interests and needs of children and young people with SEN and/or disabilities are at the heart of all that takes place.

2. understand the characteristics of effective personal and team leadership, the processes and tools needed to lead and manage change in schools and promote continuous professional development-led improvement. They should be equipped to work strategically with, lead, coach, mentor and challenge colleagues and, as needed, senior colleagues and governors, advising, influencing and promoting best inclusive practice through expectations, policy, systems development and evidence-based practices in teaching and learning.

3. deploy and manage staff effectively, ensuring efficient use of resources, generate and critically evaluate evidence about learning, teaching and assessment to inform practice and enable others to select, use, and adapt approaches, strategies, and resources to personalise provision and improve practice. They should feel confident to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate systems to identify pupils, inform staff about needs and achievement, set challenging targets, plan and intervene to meet needs, record, review progress, make effective use of data to evaluate and report impact on progress and outcomes for pupils with SEN, securing appropriate arrangements for assessments.

**Level Descriptors**

Level Descriptors describe in general terms the expected outcomes you will achieve at each level of study as you progress through your programmes. They describe the relative demand, complexity, depth of learning and learner autonomy associated with a particular level of learning and achievement. The University’s Level Descriptors are aligned to the national Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and are a key mechanism for ensuring the academic standards of the University’s provision.

At Level 7 (Master’s level), you will be able to demonstrate that you have the ability:

- To display a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of your academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice.
- Employ advanced subject-specific and cognitive skills to enable decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations.
- Generate new ideas and support the achievement of desired outcomes.
- Accept accountability for decision making including the use of supervision.
- Analyse complex concepts and professional situations by means of synthesis of personal and workplace reflection and data drawn from scholarship and research in the field.

**Programme Outcomes – Knowledge and Understanding**

The programme provides opportunities for you to develop and demonstrate the following:

[Part A refers to the categorisation of the learning outcomes required by the NCTL at the time of validation]
K1. [Part A:1] The statutory and regulatory context for SEN and disability equality and the implications for practice in their educational setting

K2. [Part A:2] The principles and practice of leadership in different contexts


Programme Outcomes – Skills and other Attributes (including Employability Skills)

The programme provides opportunities for you to develop and demonstrate the following:

[Parts A, B and C refer to the categorisation of the learning outcomes required by the NCTL at the time of validation]

S1. [Part B:5] Working strategically with senior colleagues and governors, advising, influencing a person-centred and inclusive ethos, policies, priorities and practice (5.1); promoting a whole school culture of high expectations and best practice (5.2); ensuring SEN policy is embedded in setting’s performance management, self-evaluation and improvement planning (5.4); commissioning and deploying appropriate resources, evaluating and reporting upon their impacts, outcomes and effectiveness (5.5)

S2. [Part B:6] Leading, developing and challenging senior leaders, colleagues and governors to meet their statutory responsibilities (6.1); promoting improvement in teaching and learning to identify and meet the needs of pupils with SEN/D within a person-centred approach (6.2); modelling effective practice including coaching and mentoring colleagues (6.3); leading staff professional development to improve practice and take responsibility for removing barriers to participation and learning (6.4); deploying and managing staff effectively ensuring efficient use of resources and improving progress of pupils with SEN/D (6.5)

S3. [Part B:7] Critically evaluating evidence about learning, teaching and assessment in relation to pupils with SEN to inform practice and enable senior leaders and teachers to: select, use and adapt approaches, strategies and resources for assessment, personalising it for children with SEN/D (7.1); drawing upon relevant research and inspection evidence about teaching and learning in relation to pupils with SEN/D to improve practice (7.2); undertake small-scale practitioner enquiry to identify, develop and rigorously evaluate effective practice in teaching children with SEN/D (7.3)

S4. [Part B:8] Developing effective working partnerships with professionals in other services and agencies to support a coherent, coordinated and effective approach to supporting pupils with SEN/D (8.1); promoting, facilitating and supporting effective multi-agency working through approaches such as person-centred planning, ‘team around the child/family’, the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and the Education Health and Care Plan (EHC) (8.2); interpreting specialist information and demonstrating how it has been used to improve teaching, learning and outcomes (8.3); ensuring continuity of support and progression at key transition points (8.4)

S5. [Part B:9] Developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating systems to: identify pupils (9.1); inform staff about learning, emotional, social, mental health needs and achievement of pupils with SEN/D (9.2); set challenging targets (9.3) plan and intervene to meet the needs of (9.4) record and review the progress of (9.5) pupils with SEN/D; make effective use of data to evaluate and report upon the effectiveness of provision and impact upon progress and outcomes (9.6); ensure appropriate arrangements are put in place for pupils with SEN/D undertaking national tests, assessments or accreditation (9.7)

S6. [Part C:1] High expectations for all pupils with SEN/D

S7. [Part C:2] Person-centredness of approach to build upon and extend the experiences, interests,
skills and knowledge of pupils with SEN/D

S8. [Part C:3] Enabling the voices of children and young people, ensuring that they are heard and influence decision-making about their learning and well-being

S9. [Part C:4] Encouraging parents and carers to take the lead and work in partnership in securing their children’s achievement, progress and well-being.

External and Internal Reference Points

The following Subject Benchmark Statements and other external and internal reference points have been used to inform the Programme Outcomes:


The course is also informed by The Quality Code of the QAA (available at: https://gateway.cumbria.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/DanaInfo=.awxyCufgGiJ5w+the-quality-code)

And the benchmarks of the QAA for masters degree characteristics (available at: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Masters-Degree-Characteristics-2010.pdf)

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies employed to enable the Programme Outcomes to be Achieved and Demonstrated

1. We place student learning at the heart of what we do:

   We develop programmes which facilitate learning that is experiential, creative and sustainable; that brings together theory and practice in a powerful combination to provide an educational experience that is inspirational for students and relevant to their future aspirations. Collaborative and experiential learning methods are used face to face and these link strongly to practice. Networking and critical friendship is encouraged actively. This is mediated further through the use of Blackboard as a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

2. We promote learning partnerships:

   Our programme has been developed in partnership with students, professional organisations and services and academic teams to ensure that they are relevant and valuable to our participants, the children and young people in their care, their colleagues, region and wider society.

3. We embrace innovative approaches to learning and teaching:

   We encourage high quality flexible learning opportunities that meet the needs of our students and our institutional context. Programmes are designed to be accessible and inclusive through flexible delivery and the appropriate use of learning technology to support a high quality student experience. Using proven and innovative teaching methods we encourage students to develop the skills necessary to the contemporary professional environment.
4. Your programme is devised and taught by well qualified, high quality staff:

Our teaching staff create, share and disseminate new knowledge through their disciplinary research, teaching, academic enterprise and partnerships and use their pedagogical and professional expertise to promote an environment for students to realise their full potential. Staff who support student learning provide high quality, student focused services which, in combination with their taught programmes, provide a holistic student experience. Tutors begin from a person-centred philosophy which is reflected throughout their interactions with programme participants. They believe in scholarly activity, evidence-based practice and modelling the compassion and professional concern which is characteristic of those who become SENCos. The programme is lead and taught by tutors who have been SENCo themselves.

5. We devise assessments of relevance and support you in completing them:

Assessments are devised which enable SENCos to respond to needs within their own settings. Three assessments – two small tutorial group-based presentations (case study and change project); one report on research conducted are supported mutually by participants. Tutors provide formative feedback and are accessible through email and for tutorial support. A bank of tasks is provided which form the evidence needed to produce a qualificatory portfolio to meet the nationally recognised outcomes for the award in operation at the time of the course. These will be kept current in the light of relevant legislative changes, frameworks and guidance in operation.

**Student Support**

- **Initial induction** will be undertaken by the team, supported by staff from the Course Information Point (CIP) and from LiSS to ensure that you are able to access Blackboard (our VLE). Our intention will be to invite a member of your school’s senior leadership team, or your designated SEN governor, to at least part of the induction process, to invite them to become familiar with the considerable demands of the course and to seek reassurances about the levels of support which you are able to expect from them. You will be provided with clear information about the course requirements and offered the change to clarify any uncertainties. Throughout the course, there will be a personal tutor allocated to you with whom you may discuss any concerns, and from whom you may receive support in navigating our university systems (such as those for extensions and extenuating circumstances, should those need to be activated). For your part, we need you to undertake to let us know of any difficulties which are affecting your progress and to provide us with the opportunity to help you. In the very unfortunate event that life events mean that you are unable to continue with the course, a key conversation will be with your personal tutor who can advise you and assist you with your decision.

- **LiSS** have taken a strong supportive role in devising the core and extended reading lists for the Award. They will lend support throughout the course from the first induction to our VLE, through to ‘virtual librarian’ and personal responses to requests for help with locating reading for assignments and accessing our library information systems. Support with IT systems is available though the IT helpdesk (01228 888888; ITservicedesk@cumbria.ac.uk).

- During the course of the three modules leading to the National Award, you will create a reflective **personal & professional development portfolio** in three parts. This portfolio will contain an eclectic collection of personal and professional audits, planning tools, structured exercises, responses to wider reading, records of activities, reflective writing and action plans. This will also contain ethical and other requirements for the conduct of your small-scale practitioner research. The creation of this series of portfolio parts is compulsory and each element must be present in order to equip you to demonstrate the NCTL Learning Outcomes for the Award. The portfolio will provide useful evidence of professional activity relating to your setting and be valuable during inspection and performance management.
- **Teaching** will take place in rooms with wi-fi access. The Library at Lancaster has 24hr computer access. Blackboard will form a repository for all the materials needed for the coursework and assessment and contain leads to extended reading for the course. It will also hold a bank of crown copyright free-to-download government guidance and other sources and links to resources permitted to be held.

- **Tutorials** form a key element of the course with two of the assessments taking place within a small group tutorial setting. There will be opportunities for participants to form their own tutorial groups and peer tutoring will be a valued process by which critical friendships are established. These tutorial groups will be able to operate remotely and outside the face to face teaching context and they are encouraged to meet in one another's schools or settings. Groups are invited to include a tutor in a suitably arranged meeting. Individual tutorials can be arranged face to face, or, where geography or circumstances indicate, by telephone, or by video calling. These can be with a module tutor or the personal tutor.

- Especially since this is a programme with **blended learning**, every effort will be made to ensure that, between the face to face elements of the course, a prompt response is given to any requests for support, emails and with formative feedback. Blackboard sites will be structured clearly and sympathetically to provide access to information needed. A course handbook will be provided for all participants. Although we cannot discuss individual participants’ progress with others than themselves, we also rely upon participants, or, if they are unable, the senior leaders in their schools or settings to let us know of any significant period of absence which may have an impact upon the course. The team would always wish to support and aid navigation of the support systems of the university including access to counselling and well-being services and, in matters of assessment, the extenuating circumstances and the appeals process.

As a student of the University of Cumbria, you are able to access extensive support. Library and Student Services (LiSS) offer a wide range of support, including; access to library learning resources, academic skills, careers and employability, financial help, counselling, health and wellbeing and support for disabled students and those with specific learning requirements. We know that you want to make the most of your programme, make the best use of your time and extend your professional development and skills. Access university support and facilities easily and quickly via our help is at hand search.

The Skills@Cumbria service can help support your academic skills and success throughout your programme. The service is delivered by a team of professional Learning Enhancement Advisers within LiSS. It includes a suite of online self-help resources accessible continuously via the University's website and Blackboard site. It also provides group and individual advice and guidance, accessible through and alongside your course, and by face to face, email or virtual means.

Module leaders have collaborated with LiSS advisers to ensure that your reading lists are current and items are available via the library collections. In order to maximise access, availability and usefulness, ebooks and peer-reviewed electronic journal titles will, in most cases, be prioritised. You can access a wide range of electronic content using our Quest discovery system. Where appropriate, module reading lists will be made available to you electronically using the university’s online reading list system.

In addition to the above, you will also be allocated a Personal Tutor. This tutor will be involved in the teaching of your programme and will have contact with throughout your time with the University. They will have responsibility to support your learning and development and will make themselves available should you require tutorials or other support.
# Programme Curriculum Map

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Level</th>
<th>Module Code</th>
<th>Module Title 2</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Module Status 3</th>
<th>Map to Programme Outcomes 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>MASC7001</td>
<td>The SENCo, The Child and the Family</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>K1, K3, K4 S4, S6, S7, S8, S9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>MASC 7002</td>
<td>The SENCo : Leader of Change</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>K2 S1, S2, S6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>MASC 7003</td>
<td>The SENCo : Innovating and Evaluating Practice</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>S1, S2, S3, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>MASC9001</td>
<td>Reflective Personal &amp; Professional Development Portfolio</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Qualificatory</td>
<td>K1, K2, K3, K4 S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Notes

1. This programme operates in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and Academic Procedures and Process.

2. Please refer to the relevant programme webpage on the University’s website for summaries of the individual Module Aims.

3. **Core Modules** must be taken and must be successfully passed. 
**Compulsory Modules** must be taken although it may possible to carry as a fail (if the award permits). 
**Optional Modules** are a set of modules from which you will be required to choose to study. Once chosen, unless indicated otherwise in the table above, an optional module carries the same rules as a compulsory module (ie it may be possible to carry as a fail). 
**Qualificatory Units.** These are non-credit bearing pass/fail components that are used to satisfy relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body professional requirements that are associated with the programme.

4. This column references the Programme Outcomes that will be achieved through successful completion of each module (i.e. through successful completion of the module’s summative assessment)
Since the course prepares participants for the National Award for SEN Coordination, applicants must be practising, graduate teachers with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) (or QTLS). They must be employed as a teacher in their educational setting and have the opportunity to practise as a SENCo, assistant SENCo or equivalent.

According to the SEN Code of Practice (2014), the National Award ‘must be a postgraduate course . . . at least equivalent to 60 credits at postgraduate study’ (p.108)

All three modules must be completed successfully and in all components. It is not possible to aggregate marks in order to offset a failing mark since all components of assessment are considered ‘core’. This relates specifically to the need for participants to have demonstrated all of the relevant, current NCTL Learning Outcomes (a nationally accepted requirement for conferment of the Award).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module Code</th>
<th>Module Title</th>
<th>Delivery Pattern</th>
<th>Method(s) of Assessment</th>
<th>Approximate Assessment Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MASC 7001</td>
<td>The SENCo, the Child and the Family</td>
<td>Over two consecutive semesters</td>
<td>Individual presentation of Contextualised Learning Activity</td>
<td>End of semester 2 of programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASC 7002</td>
<td>The SENCo : Leader of Change</td>
<td>Over two consecutive semesters</td>
<td>Individual presentation of Change Project</td>
<td>End of semester 2 of programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASC 7003</td>
<td>The SENCo : Innovating and Evaluating Practice</td>
<td>Over two consecutive semesters</td>
<td>Research report</td>
<td>End of Semester 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASC 9001</td>
<td>Reflective Personal &amp; Professional Development Portfolio</td>
<td>Over three consecutive semesters each part of the portfolio to be submitted synchronously with the assessment for the associated module</td>
<td>Professional Development Portfolio (I) – series of tasks, reflective logs, audits of practice and examples of the participants’ (anonymised) work relating to the subject matter of the module MASI 7A Professional Development Portfolio (II) - series of tasks, reflective logs, audits of practice and examples of the participants’ (anonymised) work relating to the subject matter of the module MASI 7B Professional Development Portfolio (III) - series of tasks, reflective logs, audits of</td>
<td>Aim to complete all requirements by the end of semester 3 (but regulations provide for additional time to complete up to a total of three years from commencement of role as SENCo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practice and examples of the participants’ (anonymised) work relating to the subject matter of the module MASI 7C</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Methods for Evaluating and Improving the Quality and Standards of Learning

#### Mechanisms used for the Review and Evaluation of the Curriculum and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Methods

Regular meetings will be held with participants on the programme on their face-to-face days. There will be opportunities for individual evaluation of the teaching and the curriculum, both formal and informal. Assessment methods will be quality assured using University regulated processes such as second marking, moderation, External Examiner involvement and consultation. The programme team will regularly review and adapt accordingly, maintaining a commitment to respond as flexibly as possible when participants face challenges and adversities.

#### Mechanisms used for gaining and responding to feedback on the quality of teaching and the learning experience – gained from:

- Students, graduates, employers, WBL venues, other stakeholders, etc.

Participants are invited to offer their evaluation of their teaching and learning experience, both formally and informally through module and programme evaluation and by individual comment to tutors. Tutors meet regularly with the group in less formal circumstances and respond to concerns, adapting and developing approaches and support responsively.

This revise programme has been developed following tutor engagement with people who have experienced the

| Date of Programme Specification Production: | 31 October 2014 |
| Date Programme Specification was last updated: | 6 November 2014 |

For further information about this programme, refer to the programme page on the University website.