

Special Educational Needs & Disability Studies BA (Hons)

UCAS Code: X11C | Duration: 3 years | Full-time | Hope Park | 2025/2026

Placement year opportunities available



Course Overview

This course in Special Educational Needs & Disability Studies will equip you to become a passionate advocate for disability rights and equality in your chosen profession. There are 14.6 million disabled people in the UK, and graduates with expertise in special educational needs and disability are in demand in a wide range of areas including education, health, social work and social care, local government, and business. In recognising the contributions of disabled people, we encourage you to replace needs with knowledge.

A supportive team of disabled and non-disabled academics will enable you to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence you need to become a future leader in this area. You will learn about the historical, social and cultural factors that shape our understanding of special educational needs and disability. Your understanding of academic theories and models will be deepened by activities which challenge you to explore how this knowledge can be applied in professional settings. As well as tutors' extensive professional experience, course content is informed by input from a range of guest speakers, and from our partner organisations, which include disabled-led and self-advocacy groups, education and care providers, charities, and disability arts organisations.

The Special Educational Needs & Disability Studies course at Liverpool Hope is unique in that it is informed and enriched by the work of the Centre for Culture and Disability Studies, an internationally recognised centre of excellence in disability studies research, and the only UK research centre to focus on disability and culture.

Entry Requirements

This course follows the standard University entry requirements. Please see the website for further information.

Fees and Additional Costs

The tuition fees for 2025/2026 are £9,535 for full-time undergraduate courses.

As well as tuition fees, you will need approximately £200 to purchase any necessary texts during your three years of study. There will also be travel costs when you go on placement, this usually costs around £100.

You will also need to consider the cost of your accommodation whilst you study at university.

Visit our accommodation webpages for further details about our Halls of Residence: www.hope.ac.uk/halls

Applicants will need access to a computer if course delivery is switched to online. The University has a laptop lending service if remote study is necessary.



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Special Educational Needs & Disability Studies

BA (Hons) Curriculum

Year One

The first year provides you with a knowledge and understanding of the key ideas in Disability Studies that you will bring to your study of Special Educational Needs. You will study:

Disability History

This will enable you to develop an understanding of the relationship between disability and society and the different ways that this has been understood over time.

Disability and the Life Course

This will deepen your understanding of the relationship between disability and education throughout the life course.

Disability and Culture

This key focus in your first-year course relates to the ways that disability is represented in culture.

Disability and Society

You will develop an understanding of the relationship between disability and social practices.

Diverse Experiences

You will explore the specificity of experiences of disability and SEN in greater depth, challenging the notion of disabled people as a homogeneous group.

*If you study this courses as a Single Honours Degree, you will also study:

- Histories
- Cultural Representations
- ...isms
- Deconstructing Scientific Knowledge
- Politics
- Globalisation

Year Two

Social Theory of Disability

You will develop an understanding of the significance of this in terms of theory and practice in relation to Special Educational Needs.

Exploring Diversity, Disability and Education

You will engage with recent research that offers alternative readings of impairment

such as work on neurodiversity, dyslexia and sexism, as well as sensory, bodily and cognitive diversity.

Exploring Professional Values and Attitudes

ethics of professional practice will be explored with reference to a range of educational contexts and professional roles and practice-based research.

Researching Disability

This final element of your studies engages with ethical and philosophical as well as practical dimensions of researching disability.

- If you study this course as a Single Honours Degree, you will also study the following:
- Cultural Disability Studies, Theory, Research and Methods
- Professional Identity: Disability Studies in Practice
- International and Intersectional Perspectives on Disability.

Year Three

Theories of Disability

Your final year begins with a study of contemporary work in disability studies and includes a study of critical disability theory.

Inclusive Practice

The key work covered here relates to: cultural inclusion, inclusion and inclusive education.

Disability and Ethics

This final theme offers important insights into the relationship between disability and ethics.

*If you study this course as a Single Honours Degree, you will also study the following:

- Disability and Time
- Disability Activism
- Disability and Life-writing
- Disability (Studies) & Identity
- Dissertation Phase

In addition to this course of study, you will identify an aspect of study related to Special Educational Needs and develop a piece of independent research into your chosen area.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Teaching on this degree is structured into lectures, where all students are taught together, seminars of smaller groups of around 15-20 students, tutorials which typically have no more than 10 students, and workshops. You will also have the opportunity to have a one-to-one meeting with your tutor each week.

In your first year of study, there are approximately 12 teaching hours each week, which reduces to approximately 10 teaching hours each week in your second and third years. On top of teaching hours, you will be expected to spend 12-14 hours studying independently each week, as well as studying in groups to prepare for any group assessments that you may have. This degree also has a compulsory placement.

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

During your degree, there are a variety of different assessments to ensure you are given a range of opportunities to demonstrate your knowledge, skills and understanding of the academic and professional components of the degree. These include written exams, essays, portfolios, poster and other presentations, and case studies.

You will receive formative and summative feedback. This will include written feedback with opportunities for a one-to-one discussion of feedback with your tutors.



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