



Our motivation is to help develop not only knowledge and skills, but also understanding and empathy.

Rita Jordan,
Professor in Autism Studies



Autism Spectrum (Webautism)

Via Internet, web-based
Uni Cert, Cert Higher Ed

For more information please contact:

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Frequently Asked Questions

'As the course was distance learning, it enabled me to work at my own pace but not in isolation. I was able to share opinions and knowledge with others on the course, from a good cross section of service providers.'

Jan McCarthy, Webautism Student

'There would have been no way I could have continued to work and study without the unique way this course is delivered. It has impacted so positively on my service development and has underpinned what I believed I already knew to be true of ASD, giving me much more confidence.'

Jane Sedgwick, Webautism Student

'Thanks seems such a little word but it is heartfelt. With the information I gained from you all, I hope to use it to improve my practice and this hopefully will help the children and families I work with.'

Bernadette Roe, Webautism Student

What qualifications can I gain?

There are two qualifications available – a University Certificate, and a Certificate of Higher Education.

The **University Certificate (Autism Spectrum)** is a part-time web-based course lasting one year. It's a practical programme earning you 60 credits at undergraduate level (equivalent to the first six months of an undergraduate degree).

Subject to approval, students can progress to a full **Certificate of Higher Education (Autism Spectrum)** for a further year of part-time study. When completed, students will have earned a total of 120 credits at Level C, which could serve as a springboard for higher-level studies.

What are the entry requirements for joining the University Certificate course?

For an overview of the entry requirements, please refer to the "Admission requirements" page: <http://www.education.bham.ac.uk/programmes/cpd/admissions.shtml>

We consider practical experience of working or supporting someone on the autism spectrum is more important than formal qualifications.

Therefore, what we normally require is:

- A minimum of two years' current experience of working or supporting someone on the autism spectrum
- access to a multimedia computer (at home, or an out-of-hours workplace)
- an Internet connection
- a personal email account

How is the course delivered?

The Webautism course is unique in that it weaves the interactive power of the Internet with audio and video material. This doesn't just make learning more engaging, it makes it more accessible too.

The programme has been carefully designed to enable you to learn in a variety of ways. These include viewing video, discussion practice with your fellow students, accessing online course materials, reading printed material to name but a few. The programme offers real flexibility that allows you to study around your work and family.

To help guide you through the course, you'll also be allocated a Regional Tutor. If they live relatively close you'll be able to benefit from face-to-face tutorials. If, on the other hand, you're not too close, or you're unable to travel, we can allocate an 'online only' tutor.

What course materials will I receive?

Each module includes its own selection of online and paper-based course materials – including audio-visual clips and essential reading. The materials combine to form what we call ‘Blended Learning’. You’ll work your way through the online materials referring at times to essential reading and the AV clips.

As well as the online content, you’ll have access to online discussion forums (bulletin boards). Here you can interact with your tutor and the students in your tutor group, with all the other students on the programme, or with us here at the University.

How much studying will I have to do?

We would normally recommend that you spend about nine hours a week. That’s three hours online, and six hours self-study (background reading, note taking, tutorial time, etc). However, because the Webautism course is so flexible, you’re free to work around your other commitments.

There are also timetabled elements to the course, where we expect you to participate regularly and meet certain deadlines – but don’t worry, we’ll give you clear instructions.

I know the course is web-based, but how ‘techie’ do I have to be?

Don’t worry, you don’t have to be a computer whizz to use our web-based techniques. Everything is written for ordinary people. And where we do have to use the odd techie word, we’ll put a clear explanation of what we mean right next to it.

Here are the kinds of things that we’re looking for:

- You know how to use a computer
- You can find information on the web
- You can use your web browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari, etc)
- You can send and receive emails
- You can download and install software from the web

What technical equipment do I need?

We don’t expect users to have the latest, greatest computers and blistering-fast, high-speed broadband Internet connections.

However, once again, there are a few things we’d like you to have:

- You need to have Administrator access to a computer. Or in other words, you’re able to download and install software, make changes to your web browser etc.
- A fairly modern computer running Windows 2000 or later (or a comparable Mac or Linux operating system), and with web browsing software.

- Broadband Internet connection – if possible. While dial-up connections do work, they take longer to access our systems and may not be as reliable.

How is the programme structured?

The programme runs from September to September.

Module 1: September – January

Module 2: January – April

Module 3: May – September

Each module is divided into three units, with each unit further divided into six sections. Each section usually consists of elements such as an introduction, audio or video clip, pause for thought, presentation and summary.

What will I learn in each of the modules?

Year One (University Certificate: Autism Spectrum)

Module 1: Understanding and responding to the autism spectrum

Credits: 20

Study Level: C

This module explores what it means to be on the autism spectrum. It reflects on how the world may be perceived by the individual with autism. Students are encouraged to examine their own practice and look at ways in which they can meet the specific needs of the person with whom they work. The module identifies and explores specific restrictions in communication, socialisation and rigidity of thought of a person on the spectrum and discusses implications for meeting those needs. It encourages students to reflect on how the person with autism best learns within the framework of using the strengths of the individual to manage weaknesses.

Module 2: Working with individuals with on the autism spectrum

Credits: 20

Study Level: C

This module introduces students to key approaches in the education of people with autism. It examines the importance of partnership with parents and carers and explores the meaning of multidisciplinary and collaborative practice. Students are encouraged to look at how they can create conditions that enable people with autism to predict their world with a degree of confidence. This includes ways of approaching challenging behaviour.

Module 3: Models for Practice when working with people on the autism spectrum

Credits: 20

Study Level: C

Students are encouraged to look at the wider world in which people with autism live. The module covers an overview of the lifelong education of people on the autism spectrum. It examines the background to the development of services and including understanding the

context of an inclusive society. The implications of new legislation and inclusion to the design and organisation of service provision in both children and adult services are covered.

Year Two (Certificate of Higher Education: Autism Spectrum)

Module 4: Guiding principles for Practice

Credits: 20

Study Level: C

The aim of this module is to focus on identifying guiding principles for practice in the care and lifelong education of individuals with autism. It includes up-to-date information about good practice and an audit of current innovative practice. Students are encouraged to develop analytical strategies enhancing their capacity to evaluate their own practice. The module is particularly focused on enabling students to evaluate their own practice.

Either Module 5A or 5B:

Module 5A: Meeting the needs of people on the autism spectrum who have additional learning difficulties

Credits: 20

Study Level: C

The aim of this module is to identify some of the specific learning needs resulting from an individual having autism and additional learning difficulties. Students are enabled to develop appropriate observation, assessment and intervention skills. The module looks in depth at approaches to observation and recording of behaviour, with a focus on the action research model and participant observation. The emphasis is on the student researching and evaluating strategies in partnership with families and/or professionals and situating those in the context of the environment in which they work.

Module 5B: Meeting the needs of high functioning individuals on the autism spectrum

Credits: 20

Study Level: C

The aim of this module is to identify some of the specific learning needs of high functioning individuals with autism. Students are enabled to develop appropriate observation, assessment and intervention skills. The module looks in depth at approaches to observation and recording of behaviour, with a focus on the action research model and participant observation. The emphasis is on the student researching and evaluating strategies in partnership with families and/or professionals and situating those in the context of the environment in which they work.

Either Module 6A or 6B:

Module 6A: Caring for and working with adults on the autism spectrum

Credits: 20

Study Level: C

The aim of this module is to identify specific issues related to meeting the needs of adults with autism. There is a particular focus on the notion of quality of life. The module examines aspects of interpersonal relationships that are key for adults with autism, for example attachment and loss, sexuality, transition and dealing with challenging behaviour.

Module 6B: Caring for and working with children on the autism spectrum

Credits: 20

Study Level: C

The aim of this module is to focus on meeting the needs of children with autism in a variety of settings. It identifies key issues in the education of children with autism and examines these within the framework of family/practitioner partnership. The notion of challenging behaviour is defined and strategies for dealing with challenging behaviour in a non-threatening way are identified.

How will I be assessed?

You'll complete a portfolio of work at the end of each module. Each portfolio consists of an assignment with three parts (3 X 1500 words), a short essay based on course material, individual study evidence of caring or work-based practice and summaries of web-based discussions.

Work from this programme can contribute to NVQ/LDAF qualifications, and is at a level that is equivalent to NVQ Level 4 or above.

How much will the course cost?

Latest information about tuition fees can be found online:

http://www.education.bham.ac.uk/programmes/cpd/courses/autistic_spectrum_disorders.shtml#fees

Please note that if you are studying on a part-time programme that has a registration period of more than 12 months (for instance, you continue onto the Certificate of Higher Education (Autism Spectrum)) the fees for the second year may rise with costs.

Is there financial support available?

Should you require it, you can find further information about financial support on the Student Funding website:

www.as.bham.ac.uk/study/support/finance/

Tel: 0121 414 7391

Email: financialsupport@bham.ac.uk

Could I take my studies in autism higher?

The University of Birmingham offers a range of distance education programmes in the field of autism. Details of other available programmes can be found at:

www.education.bham.ac.uk/programmes/cpd/courses/autism_adults.shtml

www.education.bham.ac.uk/programmes/cpd/courses/autism_children.shtml

How do I apply?

Paper-based:

To request a paper-based application form for the University Certificate (Autism Spectrum), please email your name and address to: education@bham.ac.uk

Online:

Alternatively, you can apply online: www.apply.bham.ac.uk/cp/home/loginf (once we receive a copy of your online application from the Admissions Office, we will ask you to provide a supporting personal statement, which isn't available online).

Please ensure that:

- you provide details of any school/college/university qualifications that you have;
- you provide completed reference statements (on headed paper, or with an official card/stamp) and any other supporting documentation as soon as possible.

The deadline for receipt of applications is Friday 13th August 2010. However, we do tend to get full quickly, so we would recommend that you apply early to avoid disappointment.

FAO Overseas/Non-UK National Applicants

I live in the UK but I'm a non-UK national, can I claim 'Home' student fees?

In order for non-UK nationals to be considered as 'Home' students for fee purposes, you must have the right to remain in the UK indefinitely, as well as meeting three years ordinary residence.

The University adheres to Government legislation when making fee status classifications, so all students are treated equally and according to this legislation.

For further information, please see the UKCISA website (UK Council for International Student Affairs), www.ukcosa.org.uk. For guidance regarding fee status classifications, please see the UKCISA 'Will I Pay the Home or Overseas Rate' guidance notes: http://www.ukcosa.org.uk/student/information_sheets.php#tuition_fees

Are there any minimum English language requirements for overseas/non-UK national applicants?

Overseas/Non-UK National applicants may be asked to provide TOEFL or IELTS certification (less than two years old) to prove English language standards.

Minimum scores are:

IELTS: 6.5 with no less than 6.0 in any band

TOEFL (old): 580 paper-based or 237 computer-based, plus TWE 4.0

TOEFL (internet-based test): 93 with no less than 20 in any band

Alternative English language qualifications may fulfil the University's minimum entry requirements - please contact the Admissions Office for further information (admissions@bham.ac.uk).