

Special Needs Education: A step-by-step approach
Areadne, Lifelong Learning Centre, Kalamata, Greece

Students with special educational needs deserve the best education we can give them. The teaching methods have to be designed in such a way so that those students can benefit from their time in school. In most countries, teachers do not have the appropriate education to handle that kind of teaching. It leads to a Level 7 EQC Certificate, accompanied by a Europass Certificate Supplement with 10 transferable ECVET points.

This course seeks to fill the gap and give to the participants the skills and the knowledge to handle students with special needs in their classroom. In our approach the focus is on teacher attitude and activity in the school.

The participants will have the opportunity to visit a special needs school, talk and interact with the educational staff, observe the lessons and more.

Course Objectives

Training and building techniques of psycho-pedagogical approach for students with disabilities and / or special educational needs.

Providing knowledge and skills to trainees, both theoretical and practical.

Particular emphasis is given to:

Disability /Special need identification

Addressing the educational problems and psycho-pedagogical support of students who face problems such as:

Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia, Dyspraxia)

Communication Disorders (Language Expression, Phonological Disorder , Stuttering)

Intellectual Disability

Sensory Disabilities (Hearing problems, Vision problems, Mobility problems)

Attention Deficit – Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Pervasive Developmental Disorders (Autism, Asperger's)

Mental and Emotional disorders

Down syndrome

Methodology

The main aspect of the course is to promote collaboration between participants. Lessons will be held in our centre's classrooms and computer lab, as well as outside. Our approach is to base the learning process on practical rather than theoretical knowledge. The course is designed on active learning methods and, at the end of the course, each participant should be able to use the taught techniques effectively.

Preparation

Every participant will have to fill a questionnaire which helps the trainers to customize the course to better fit their needs.

Attendants will get instructions and material which will help them to be prepared for the courses needs.

Content

Overview

Structures and Special Education Programs

Integration of pupils with special educational needs in general or special schools.

Learning Disabilities – Specific Learning Difficulties

Characteristics of students with Learning Difficulties

General Principles and Teaching Methods

Common Speech Disorders in students

Speech Disorders prevention

Addressing speech and language problems in children

Intellectual Disability

Education of students with intellectual disability

Sensory Disabilities

Technology and Sensory Disabilities

Education of students with Sensory Disabilities

Visit to the Differential, Diagnostic and Support Center of students with special education issues

Training students with mental and emotional disorders

The Hyperactivity – The Attention Deficit

The teacher's role and the school community

Emotional and Social Development of pupils with Down's Syndrome

Structured study visits

During the course, we also organize study visits to local schools. Normally, we discuss with participants their needs and we organize study visits to cover these needs. Depending on the group, we organize from a minimum of one to a maximum of five study visits. Popular study visits include:

A special needs education school

A school for adults from disadvantaged backgrounds

A school with Roma mainstreaming classes

Vocational secondary and post-secondary schools

General primary and secondary schools

Each study visit is structured and accompanied by reflective activities. There is no extra cost for these study visits.

Outdoors learning

There are two outdoor learning activities: a gamified tour of the town and a visit to a local historical site. The onsite visit is accompanied by non-formal European history learning activities, as well as activities that link this history to the course topic. There is no extra cost for these activities.

Social programme

There is also an optional social programme for those interested. This programme may include an intercultural night, lunches and dinners at different restaurants, going out for a drink or coffee, or even an extra excursion – if there is time! These activities depend on participant needs and wants, and those participating in them will have to pay for what they choose to eat and drink. If there is an optional excursion, they will also have to pay van costs and any other expenses (e.g. museum tickets)

Follow up

The participants will get material which includes information about all the areas covered at the course, lesson plans, all the produced outcomes of the course, useful links and more.

The above material can be freely used by the participants at their school.

Target Group / Who is this course for

This course is for every teacher in primary, secondary, adult or vocational education and training.