The School of Special Educational Needs Disability (SSEND)

Professional Learning Catalogue

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of Education

School of Special Educational Needs Disability

SSEND

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SSEND's Mission, Vision and Values

Mission

Partnering with schools to provide collaborative support and resources that promote learning environments where every student's potential is realised.

Vision

Valuing difference, equity in learning, empowering all.

Values

Inclusion and equity | Integrity and honesty | Commitment and professionalism | Collaboration and communication | Innovation and independence

SSEND PL catalogue - Overview

SSEND Professional Learning (PL) is a key plank of its model of service. SSEND provides PL opportunities for Department schools in multiple delivery formats.

SSEND PL is developed through extensive research, consultation and co-design. SSEND employs a robust design and development process to ensure consistent, high-quality PL that is based on school need. Data collected through the SSEND Request for Assistance database, and through multiple data points such as surveys and independent evaluations, is analysed to determine school need. Need is also determined through the network of Consulting Teachers and through discussions with Department branches, regions, networks and schools.

SSEND PL formats

SSEND PL is offered in five formats. The four Guided formats share the same pre-produced core content (videos, workbook activities and defined session outcomes), so the messaging stays consistent whichever format is used. They differ in who facilitates and in the depth of engagement they offer, not in quality.

Guided online

A Consulting Teacher facilitates the session live through remote delivery technology. Participants join in real time, with the Consulting Teacher guiding discussion and activities and contextualising the content to the group.

Guided on demand

A highly structured series of video recordings, workbook activities and discussion and reflection questions, made available online for Department school staff to present to fellow educators. For example, a school leader might present it on a staff development day.

Guided self-paced

Modules that participants work through individually at a time of their own choosing, using highly structured video recordings and workbook reflection activities.

Guided in person

A Consulting Teacher delivers the session face-to-face at the school, facilitating discussion and activities and contextualising the content to the school's staff.

PL workshop

An extension of an existing Guided PL session, led by a Consulting Teacher with a defined cohort, such as a school team or a group of education assistants. Participants build on their earlier engagement with the session, exploring its key ideas in depth and applying them to their own context.

Autism Session 1 - Understanding Our Students

Session description

This session explores crucial understandings about autistic students that support schools to set the conditions for student success. Through a neurodiversity-affirming lens, participants will be given practical strategies to get to know their students. A planning tool supports participants to put their learning into action.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- consider how their context will play a role in their support of students
- be introduced to neurodiversity perspectives
- consider how student voice can inform their practice
- establish a foundational knowledge of autism

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
120	Guided online, Guided on demand, Guided self-paced	Autism, Communication, Emotional regulation, Neurodiversity-affirming, Prevalence, Special interests, Student voice, Visual supports	Education assistants, School leaders, School psychologists, Student services, Teachers

Autism Session 1 - PL workshop

Session description

This workshop extends Autism Session 1 – Understanding Our Students. It focuses on two themes from that session: student voice and affirming language. Through group activities, participants hear how different voices shape our understanding of a student, practise reframing how students are described, and explore practical tools for gathering student voice to inform planning. Completion of Autism Session 1 – Understanding Our Students is a prerequisite.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- consider how student, family, educator and allied health voices shape understanding of a student
- explore practical tools for gathering student voice
- practise reframing descriptions of students using neurodiversity-affirming language
- identify voice and language shifts to apply in documented planning and communication with others

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
60	PL workshop	Autism, Communication, Neurodiversity-affirming, Student voice	Education assistants, School leaders, School psychologists, Student services, Teachers

Autism Session 2 - Learning Environment

Session description

This session explores how the learning environment impacts autistic students. Participants will learn practical approaches to adjusting the environment to promote inclusion of all students.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- consider ways of understanding autism
- understand the impact of the learning environment on students' educational experience
- look at ways of understanding behaviour
- look at ways of implementing universal supports into the learning environment

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
120	Guided online, Guided on demand, Guided self-paced	Autism, Behaviour, Emotional regulation, Policy, Student voice, Visual supports	Education assistants, School leaders, School psychologists, Student services, Teachers

EA Toolkit Session 1 - Foundations of Practice

Session description

This session explores the three foundations of EA practice that promote active engagement, rigorous and relevant learning and belonging for all students. Participants will learn practical strategies that promote independence, support access to the classroom teacher and foster peer relationships and will be supported to examine their existing practice in relation to the foundations.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- understand the importance of basing professional practice on strong foundations
- explore foundations of effective education assistant practice
- explore strategies that promote student independence, facilitate access to the teacher and foster peer connection
- reflect on their current practice in relation to the foundations

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
Guided online: 180 Guided on demand: 120 Guided self-paced: 120	Guided online, Guided on demand, Guided self-paced	Disability Standards for Education, Education Assistants, Inclusive practices, Peers, Roles and responsibilities, Strength based, Student independence, Student voice	Education assistants, School leaders, Teachers

EA Toolkit Session 2 - Pillars of Practice

Session description

This session explores the governance that ensures education assistant practice is undertaken effectively and safely. Participants will learn practical ways to understand their role, enact policy and legislation and move towards cultural responsiveness.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- understand the importance of basing professional practice on strong pillars
- explore pillars of education assistant practice
- explore ways to apply the pillars in their daily work
- reflect on their current practice in relation to the pillars

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
Guided online: 180 Guided on demand: 120 Guided self-paced: 120	Guided online, Guided on demand, Guided self-paced	Disability Standards for Education, Education Assistants, Inclusive practices, Legislation, Peers, Policy, Roles and responsibilities, Strength based, Student independence, Student voice	Education assistants, School leaders, Teachers

EA Toolkit in Action

Session description

This professional learning builds on the three foundations of practice introduced in EA Toolkit Session 1: promoting independence, facilitating access to the teacher and fostering peer connection. Participants will explore how these foundations can be applied across a range of existing classroom strategies, including those that support student regulation. Through practical examples and reflection, participants will consider how everyday practices can be strengthened to support student engagement, participation and inclusion.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- revisit the three foundations of practice and their importance in supporting diverse learners
- explore how the foundations connect to existing classroom strategies, including those that support regulation
- consider how everyday practices can be strengthened through the application of the foundations

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
120	Guided online	Education Assistants, Emotional regulation, Inclusive practices, Neurodiversity-affirming, Peers, Student independence	Education assistants

Effective Utilisation of Education Assistants Session 1 - Shared Understandings

Session description

This session explores effective deployment, preparation and practice of EAs. It explores the shared understandings that are at the heart of strong and positive relationships between teachers and education assistants. It explores practical ways to share information in order to lead to effective support of students.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- be reminded of the value education assistants contribute to Western Australia's schooling system
- understand the impact of deployment and preparation on effective utilisation of education assistants
- clarify key information that teachers and education assistants need to share with each other to promote student learning
- reflect and/or collaborate on ways that teachers and education assistants can work together effectively in a school

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
120	Guided online, Guided on demand, Guided self-paced	Education Assistants, Evidence-based practice, Whole school approaches	Education assistants, Principals, SEN education assistants, SEN teachers, School leaders, Student services, Teachers

Effective Utilisation of Education Assistants Session 2 - Roles, Responsibilities and Relationships

Session description

This session explores the parameters of education assistant roles and responsibilities, common misconceptions about these roles and why an understanding of role is so important. Participants will also learn approaches to working effectively with colleagues.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- explore some similarities in the roles and responsibilities of teachers and education assistants
- take a closer look at some shared responsibilities
- focus on the qualities of effective teacher and education assistant relationships

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
120	Guided on demand, Guided self-paced	Education Assistants, Whole school approaches	Education assistants, Principals, SEN education assistants, SEN teachers, School leaders, Student services, Teachers

Proactive Planning - Early Years

Session description

Within this session, participants will explore proactive planning in the Early Years to support diverse learners. The session considers how beliefs and knowledge of students inform intentional planning, and how universal supports, learning environments, visual supports and explicit teaching can promote regulation, engagement and learning. Participants will reflect on practical ways to apply proactive planning within their own context.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- explore how beliefs and knowledge of students inform proactive planning in the Early Years
- understand how universal supports can support a range of learners
- identify proactive approaches to the learning environment, visual supports and explicit skill teaching
- apply proactive planning principles within their own Early Years context

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
180	Guided online	Curriculum access, Developmental delay, Early Years, Family voice, Strength based, Visual supports	Education assistants, School leaders, School psychologists, Teachers

Robust Communication Systems Session 1

Session description

Participants are introduced to augmentative and alternative communication and familiarise with the different types that may be currently used by students in their classrooms. They learn about the communication Bill of Rights and the importance of AAC use in providing a voice for all students.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- become familiar with the definitions of Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) and Robust Communication Systems
- learn about the different types of AAC
- discuss language acquisition and its implications on teaching using AAC
- understand the myths associated with AAC

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
60	Guided on demand, Guided self-paced	Augmentative and Alternative Communication, Autism, Disability Standards for Education, Family voice, Inclusive practices, Peers, Student voice, Supportive learning environments	Early Years educators, Education assistants, SEN education assistants, School leaders, Teachers

Robust Communication Systems Session 2

Session description

Participants will gain an understanding of the role of a robust communication system in language development and learning. Gathering tips on how to incorporate a robust communication system into a classroom/school setting, participants will understand the role of an effective communication partner.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- gain an understanding of the role of a robust communication system in language development and learning
- gather tips for how to incorporate a robust communication system into a classroom/school setting
- understand how a robust communication system can contribute to a welcoming and inclusive school culture
- understand the role of a communication partner

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
60	Guided on demand, Guided self-paced	Augmentative and Alternative Communication, Autism, Inclusive practices, Strategies, Student voice, Supportive learning environments	Early Years educators, Education assistants, SEN education assistants, School leaders, Teachers

RTP-SEN Foundations

Session description

This session assists educators to get started with the RTP-SEN (Reporting to Parents - Special Educational Needs) online tool. Within this session, participants will be introduced and guided through the many features of RTP-SEN that enable educators to easily and efficiently plan for and report on students with additional needs.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- understand the purpose and application of Reporting to Parents - Special Educational Needs (RTP-SEN)
- recognise the benefits of a high-quality student plan for both students and educators
- understand how RTP-SEN is a user-friendly tool for developing student plans
- be guided in the next steps schools and educators can take to utilise RTP-SEN

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
120	Guided online	Curriculum, Documented plans, Goals, Record keeping, Reporting, Strategies	SEN teachers, SSEND staff, School leaders, Teachers

Self-Regulation and Social Cognition

Session description

Self Regulation and Social Cognition focuses on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) designed to benefit all students. The module highlights the needs of neurodivergent learners, who may require extra support with social cognition and SEL skills. It is built on the understanding that strengthening social and emotional capabilities can play a significant role in improving student engagement, wellbeing and academic success.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- understand the importance of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) as part of the school curriculum
- have a greater understanding of how explicit teaching of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) can support students to thrive in our schools
- explore strategies to teach self regulation and social cognition including strategies to facilitate a safe and supportive environment
- investigate the next steps to embedding effective SEL practice in schools

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
120	Guided on demand, Guided self-paced	Behaviour, Communication, De-escalation, Disability Standards for Education, Legislation, Student voice, Whole school approaches	Early Years educators, Education assistants, Principals, SEN education assistants, SEN teachers, School leaders, Student services, Teachers

Supporting Regulation

Session description

Supporting regulation is a crucial part of promoting the engagement, participation and wellbeing of our students. Within this session, educators build their understanding of key concepts that can influence a student's regulation. Educators also explore proactive, neurodiversity-affirming strategies to support student regulation.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- explain how supporting regulation can promote student engagement, participation and wellbeing
- identify the role of behaviour as communication in understanding student regulation
- understand fluctuating capacity and executive functioning and how it can influence student regulation
- explore proactive, neurodiversity-affirming strategies to support student regulation

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
120	Guided online	Behaviour, Emotional regulation, Neurodiversity-affirming, Strategies	Education assistants, School leaders, Student services, Teachers

Specific Learning Disorders Session 1 - What is a Specific Learning Disorder?

Session description

Participants will develop an understanding of what specific learning disorders (SLDs) are. Participants will explore in depth how underlying processing weaknesses(such as working memory) affect learning and how to take these into account when planning.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- understand what SLDs are
- recognise the varying terminology used for SLDs
- identify the differences between SLDs and learning difficulties
- understand the role cognitive processing plays in SLDs

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
120	Guided self-paced	Mathematics, Orthographic processing, Phonemic awareness, Phonological processing, Prevalence, Reading, SLDs, Working memory, Written expression	Education assistants, Principals, SEN teachers, SSEND staff, School leaders, Student services, Teachers

Specific Learning Disorders Session 2 - Three Specific Learning Disorders

Session description

Participants will explore the defining features of three types of specific learning disorders: reading (dyslexia), written expression (dysgraphia) and mathematics (dyscalculia). Additionally, components of the Response to Intervention (RTI) model will be introduced.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- develop an accurate understanding of the defining features of reading disorders (dyslexia)
- develop an accurate understanding of the defining features of written expression disorders (dysgraphia)
- develop an accurate understanding of the defining features of mathematics disorders (dyscalculia)
- learn the components of the Response to Intervention (RTI) model

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
120	Guided self-paced	Anxiety, Mathematics, Processing, Reading, Response to Intervention (RTI) Model, SLDs, Written expression	Education assistants, Principals, SEN education assistants, SEN teachers, SSEND staff, School leaders, Student services, Teachers

Specific Learning Disorders Session 3 - Interventions and Accommodations for Students with SLDs

Session description

Participants will learn a range of interventions, targeted strategies and accommodations for students with SLDs across the three waves of the RTI model. Participants will apply key concepts acquired from the module to a case study.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- develop knowledge of the three waves of intervention within the RTI model
- identify effective second and third wave interventions for students with gaps in their knowledge
- identify effective accommodations for students with SLDs to ensure they can access the curriculum
- apply key concepts acquired in this module to a case study

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
120	Guided self-paced	Accommodations, Explicit instruction, Response to Intervention (RTI) Model, Screening, Targeted strategies, Wave 1 intervention, Wave 2 intervention, Wave 3 intervention	Education assistants, Principals, SEN teachers, SSEND staff, School leaders, Student services, Teachers

Supporting Successful Transition

Session description

The Supporting Successful Transition module equips schools with the understandings and tools to transition students with additional needs between school environments. Built around the principles of effective transition, it is designed for school and middle leaders.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- be introduced to principles that underpin successful transition
- consider how a school's context shapes the way they support students through transition
- identify major transition points, and how to support them
- access practical advice, tools and supports to plan transitions

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
120	Guided online	Disability Standards for Education, Documented plans, Family voice, Student voice, Whole school approaches	School leaders, School psychologists, Teachers

Tier 1 Supports - Overview

Session description

This session supports educators to unpack the Tier 1 Supports resource and explore practical ways to apply it within their own context. Through guided discussion and collaborative activities, participants will build their understanding of the what, why, and how of Tier 1 practices and take a deeper look at selected components of the checklist. The session emphasises evidence-informed, neurodiversity-affirming approaches that strengthen everyday teaching and learning for all students.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- build a shared understanding of Tier 1 practices
- explore the purpose and key features of the Tier 1 Supports resource
- examine selected strategies from the checklist and how they can be implemented in their context
- identify practical next steps for embedding Tier 1 approaches within their school

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
60	Guided online, Guided in person	Inclusive practices, Neurodiversity-affirming, Strategies, Student voice, Supportive learning environments, Tier 1, Universal Design for Learning, Whole school approaches	Education assistants, School leaders, Student services, Teachers

Tier 1 Supports M3 - Structured and predictable transitions

Session description

This microlearning explores how structured and predictable transitions reduce cognitive load and support engagement for all students. Participants consider transitions between activities and classes and around out-of-routine events such as incursions and excursions, and learn to design transitions using visual, auditory and verbal cues that combine real-time cueing with pre-taught routines.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- understand how structured and predictable transitions reduce cognitive load and support engagement
- consider what a student's response to a difficult transition might be telling them
- explore how visual, auditory and verbal cues can be used to design transitions
- plan neuroaffirming transition supports for their own context

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
30	Guided online, Guided in person	Neurodiversity-affirming, Strategies, Structure and routine, Supportive learning environments, Tier 1, Visual supports	Education assistants, School leaders, Student services, Teachers

Tier 1 Supports M7 - Cultivate and teach acceptance of diversity

Session description

This microlearning explores the difference between acknowledging diversity and actively teaching acceptance of it. Through video and discussion, participants consider why teaching diversity matters and how it can be embedded as a Tier 1 universal support, and explore a self-advocacy tool that helps students share how they learn best.

Session outcomes

During this session, participants will:

- understand the difference between acknowledging diversity and actively teaching acceptance of it
- consider why it is important to teach diversity
- explore how acceptance of diversity can be embedded as a Tier 1 universal support
- explore a self-advocacy tool that supports students to share how they learn best

Session duration (Min.)	Delivery modes	Key words	Audience
30	Guided online, Guided in person	Inclusive practices, Neurodiversity-affirming, Peers, Strategies, Student voice, Tier 1	Education assistants, School leaders, Student services, Teachers