



Department
for Education

Specification for Mandatory Qualifications

**For specialist teachers of deafblind
children and young people**

For courses starting from September 2023

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Introduction

This specification applies to mandatory qualification (MQ) courses starting from September 2023. It has been revised and updated to allow it to remain a high quality qualification that continues to:

- reflect the changing landscape.
- be sufficiently flexible to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the profession and children and young people with sensory impairment.
- align with DfE priorities, to ensure that schools, Higher Education Institutions and others across the sector work collaboratively on the design and delivery of training in an increasingly school-led system.
- raise aspirations for children and young people with visual impairments (VI), hearing impairments (HI) and multi-sensory impairments (MSI).

So that children and young people¹ with sensory impairments receive the best quality education and care, teachers of classes of children and young people who have HI (deafness)², who have vision impairments (VI)³ and who are deafblind⁴ are required⁵ to hold an additional specialist qualification in addition to qualified teacher status (QTS) or qualified teacher learning and skills (QTLS)⁶. This qualification is known as the mandatory qualification for specialist teachers of pupils with hearing impairment, vision impairment or multi-sensory impairment/ deafblind (MQ). It is designed to prepare teachers⁷ to work effectively with children and young people who are deaf, who have VI or who are deafblind.

There are three versions of the qualification: one for teachers of deaf learners, one for those teaching learners with VI, and one for those teaching deafblind learners. Teachers

¹ Up to age 25

² Deaf children are defined as all children with sensorineural and permanent conductive deafness, using the descriptors provided by the British Society of Audiology and BATOD. The term 'deaf' includes all levels of deafness, from mild to profound'.

People with hearing impairments may have some functional hearing. Hearing impairment is sometimes referred to as 'deafness' or 'hearing loss'.

³ Vision impairment is sometimes referred to as 'blindness', 'partial sightedness' or 'sight loss'.

⁴ Deafblind people may have some functional sight and/or hearing. Deafblindness is sometimes referred to as 'multi-sensory impairment' (MSI) or 'dual-sensory loss'

⁵ Statutory Instrument 2003 No.1662, the Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (England) Regulations 2003.

⁶ Since 1 April 2012, further education teachers who have been awarded QTLS by the Institute for Learning (IfL) and are members of the IfL are recognised as qualified teachers in schools.

⁷ The regulations apply to teachers employed in schools and not specialist peripatetic teachers working with pupils with sensory impairments employed in special educational needs support services. However, the DfE has stated that it is their expectation that such teachers would have the relevant MQ. See text below.

employed to teach classes of children and young people with a sensory impairment who do not already hold an appropriate MQ are required to gain the qualification within their first three years in post.

‘A qualified teacher may be employed to teach a class of pupils who are hearing impaired, visually impaired, or both hearing and visually impaired if the headteacher is satisfied that the person in question is in the process of obtaining the relevant MQ and provided that the aggregate period for which the teacher teaches a class of pupils does not exceed three years.’ [Statutory instrument 2003 No.1662. The Education (School Teachers’ Qualifications) (England) Regulations 2003, 9]

Although the requirement to hold an MQ applies only to teachers in specific roles, the appeal of the MQs is much wider. Qualified teachers in support and advisory roles, and those working with deafblind children and young people in home⁸, early years and post-16 settings, are also strongly advised to complete MQ training, in the best interest of the children and young people with whom they work.

*‘Those teaching classes of children with sensory impairment **must** hold an appropriate qualification approved by the Secretary of State. Teachers working in an advisory role to support such pupils should also hold the appropriate qualification.’⁹*

All MQ training programmes must meet the minimum specification set out on pages 10 - 31. However, it is expected that some providers will wish to develop additional criteria so as to tailor MQ courses more closely to the needs of participants and other stakeholders.

To be awarded an MQ, the Department for Education (DfE) requires that participants are assessed against – and demonstrate that they meet – the course outcomes. The academic level at which the qualification is validated is entirely a matter for providers. It should not compromise the purposes or quality of the MQ and should be consistent with the expertise required to carry out the role of a Qualified Teacher of the Deafblind.

Providing training leading to the award of an MQ

To deliver a course leading to the award of an MQ, training providers must gain the approval of the Secretary of State. Although the type of provider is not stipulated MQ courses have traditionally been delivered by higher education institutions, working in partnership with others, including local authorities, schools and voluntary bodies.

To become an approved provider of MQ courses, the Department for Education will periodically invite training providers to seek approval and, if they are interested, submit

⁸ From birth

⁹ DfE (September 2014) Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0-25 years

an application demonstrating how their provision will meet the requirements of the specification and how their course will assist teachers in meeting the course outcomes, including the minimum MQ outcomes.

It is envisaged that successful providers will receive approval from the Secretary of State to deliver courses leading to the award of MQ for an initial period of three years, with the option for this to be extended annually for a further 3 years. Approved MQ provision may be inspected by Ofsted.

The MQ specification

This specification was revised following a review of the previous specification led by the National Sensory Impairment Partnership (NatSIP) in 2018/19, and subsequent co-production with the sensory impairment sector in 2019/2020, which then reported to DfE. This is to bring the specification up-to-date with recent developments in the teaching of children and young people with sensory impairments. The review contributors included the University providers of the courses, Local Authority sensory impairment services, professional associations and individual specialists in the field, voluntary organisations and parents. The revised specification is set out below (pages 10 - 31).

The specification sets out six overarching criteria. In delivering the qualification MQ course providers must meet each of the criteria.

Criterion 1

MQs should have as their main objective and outcome the raised achievement of deafblind children and young people through improving participants' professional knowledge, understanding and skills

Provision should give participants the knowledge, understanding and skills to maximise the opportunities open to deafblind children and young people so as to improve their life chances and enable them to fulfil their potential. In this criterion, and throughout the specification, references to the 'achievement' of children and young people should be taken to be broadly defined to include not just academic attainment, but achievement in relation to, for example, physical, mental and emotional well-being; developing confidence and independence; and making a successful transition to adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training, and independent living. The course should also prepare participants to listen to the views of children and young people and to work together with others, including other professionals, parents, carers and families, to protect children and young people, help them to achieve and influence practice.

MQ courses **must** be strongly rooted in practice and providers should make strong links with mainstream settings, special schools and settings, and sensory support services to

help keep provision up to date and relevant to practice. There should be opportunities, in work contexts, for participants to apply, practise and demonstrate what they have learnt.

MQ courses should help prepare participants to work effectively in their current roles (in any phase or context, including in early years and post-16 settings, within mainstream and specialist provision and in support and advisory roles) and must give them opportunities to gain experience of other relevant work contexts, eg through visits, work shadowing and teaching placements.

Criterion 2

MQs should offer high quality training that makes best use of available resources through being tailored to meet participants' training and development needs

The purpose of this criterion is to make the best possible use of the resources available to deliver MQ courses so that they have the maximum impact on participants' practice and the outcomes achieved by the children and young people they teach. Those teaching children and young people with sensory impairments will come from different backgrounds, work in a range of different contexts and have varying knowledge, skills and experience. As a result, participants will have different strengths and training needs in relation to the course outcomes. To ensure that all participants gain maximum benefit from MQ training and that providers make the best use of the resources available to them, provision should be matched as closely as possible to individual needs.

It is important that everyone who joins a course leading to the award of an MQ is able to benefit fully from it. Providers should, therefore, assure themselves that those accepted to join MQ courses have sufficient knowledge, understanding and skills on joining the course to be likely to meet all the course outcomes by the end of the course. Where prospective participants fall below an acceptable entry level in one or more areas, providers should offer them guidance about what they need to do to achieve the required entry level.

Provision should incorporate an initial needs assessment in relation to the course outcomes in order to ensure well-targeted and cost-effective professional development for participants. An initial needs assessment against the course outcomes can help providers to tailor the course to participants' needs. Courses should take full account of participants' prior knowledge and achievement. If a provider is satisfied, at the beginning of an MQ course, that all the participants in the group already meet a particular group of outcomes, then the course need not cover these in great detail, and the time released can be spent looking at other aspects in more detail.

Ultimately, however, all participants must demonstrate that they meet all the course outcomes, and assessors should look for evidence against all the course outcomes throughout the course as an additional check on the accuracy of the needs assessment.

MQ courses cannot cover everything that teachers of deafblind children and young people will need to know throughout their careers. As with all professional development, completing an MQ is a stepping-stone. MQ providers have a responsibility to ensure that, at the end of the MQ course, participants are helped to identify areas for further development. This does not mean that the MQ provider has to set specific objectives. Objective setting is done in discussion with line managers in the workplace, as part of the appraisal process. But providers should emphasise the importance of participants setting objectives for further development, eg by building opportunities to set objectives into the end of courses, providing planning tools, discussing further possibilities and opportunities, and giving participants ideas they can consider and discuss with their managers.

Criterion 3

MQs should be delivered flexibly, without compromising appropriate progression and quality of outcome, to maximise access for participants

This criterion covers aspects of accessibility for all candidates to make it possible for all those needing or wishing to take an MQ to be able to do so.

Providers offering MQ courses should promote equality of opportunity and good relations by meeting the requirements of relevant equality legislation, including the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA), and the Equality Act 2010. For example, they should:

- meet the DDA 'anticipatory duty' by anticipating the needs of disabled candidates/participants and making provision for them
- encourage and support candidates/participants to disclose disabilities so that reasonable adjustments can be made
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- reflect the needs of disabled candidates in promotional and pre-course materials for MQ candidates, and
- comply with relevant duties under equalities legislation to enable all participants to access and participate fully in the course

Since the majority of MQ participants study part-time, provision should be as flexible as possible without compromising appropriate progression and quality of outcome. DfE is aware that there are limits to the amount of flexibility that one provider can achieve, especially where numbers are very small. However, those offering the MQ courses should make their provision as flexible as possible. Even very small changes can make a considerable difference. For example, providers could publish information about course dates well in advance to enable participants to attend training without missing important events at their workplace. They could also put key content from taught sessions online so

that participants who miss sessions unavoidably are able to catch up, or advertise any crèche provision that might be available.

Criterion 4

MQs should be informed by the needs of stakeholders and involve them in development, delivery, evaluation and improvement of the provision

Stakeholders might include teachers, schools/other settings, employers, local authorities, parents/carers, children and young people, and others such as the relevant SEND associations and groups of disabled people, as well as current and former participants on MQ courses.

Providers of MQ training must collect and take account of evidence about the needs of stakeholders. This does not mean that stakeholders can determine the content of MQ courses. That is largely dictated by the MQ outcomes and the identified needs of participants. However, providers should be clear about what stakeholders feel is important and, wherever possible, should allow this to influence course content.

MQ course providers should also involve stakeholders, directly or indirectly, in their provision, e.g. as guest speakers, as hosts for visiting participants, as tutors or mentors for participants in the workplace, as moderators or assessors, or by giving evidence about the impact of MQ courses.

Criterion 5

MQs should be of a consistently high quality and subject to rigorous quality assurance procedures, and be supported by mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating and improving the impact of provision on teachers' competence and the achievement of deafblind children and young people.

MQ course providers should subject all aspects of provision to rigorous quality assurance, including:

- recruitment and selection
- needs assessment and setting objectives
- course content, including workplace-based elements
- assessment against the course outcomes, and
- evaluation

They should have good sources of evidence, and mechanisms for ensuring that information gleaned will be applied to future planning and development of the content and delivery of provision.

The main purpose of MQ provision must be to raise participants' competence and the achievement of deafblind children and young people. The DfE recognises that it may be difficult to gather evidence on the impact of MQ provision on the achievement of children and young people over the short time that the course runs. Providers should, however, take every opportunity to gather such evidence. They could, for example, encourage participants carrying out assignments to take baseline measures before interventions, and to measure the impact on the achievement of deafblind learners following those interventions and over time.

It is essential that candidates are suitable for work with children and young people. As part of their recruitment and selection procedures, providers should assure themselves that those accepted onto MQ courses have had the appropriate background checks to allow them to work with children and young people.¹⁰ The majority of MQ candidates are likely to be employed in posts where they are already working with children and young people at the time of taking the course and, as such, are likely to have undergone the appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) enhanced disclosure check. However, if a candidate with QTS or QTLS has not worked in a school or FE college in a post that involves regular contact with children or young people within the past three months, it will be necessary for a DBS enhanced disclosure to be obtained.

Criterion 6

MQs should have, as a minimum requirement for successful completion, the outcomes set out in Annex A of the MQ specification, so that those holding the qualification(s) make maximum impact on practice

Providers will ensure that the MQ is awarded only to candidates who have shown that their knowledge, understanding and skills match the outcomes in Annex A of the specification. These are minimum requirements. Providers may wish to include other outcomes.

¹⁰ As stipulated by The School Staffing (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2006, School Staffing (England) (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations 2006, and Further Education (Providers of Education) (England) Regulations 2006.

Specification for courses leading to the mandatory qualification for teachers of deafblind children and young people

The national specification is set out below. It has, at its heart, three purposes.

These are that mandatory qualifications should:

- be of a consistently high quality
- have an impact on raising the achievement and improving the well-being of children and young people, and
- be easily accessible to those wishing to take them

Mandatory qualifications should:

1. Have as their main objective and outcome the raised achievement of deafblind children and young people, through improving participants' professional knowledge, understanding and skills.

MQ courses will demonstrate that provision will:

- 1.1 Have a clear focus in course aims, objectives, content and assessment on raising the achievement of deafblind children and young people to close the attainment gap and improve their well-being by working from their aspirations to determine wider outcomes.
- 1.2 Make strong links to effective practice in schools, homes and other settings.
- 1.3 Require participants to apply, practise and demonstrate what they have learnt in a range of appropriate work contexts.
- 1.4 Be evidence-based, reflecting recent research and inspection evidence and important developments and innovations relating to vision impairment, including current specialist equipment.
- 1.5 Develop participants' understanding of current legislation and government policies and initiatives in relation to sensory impairment, and the implications of these for deafblind children and young people and the settings in which they are cared for and/or educated.
- 1.6 Develop participants' skills in consulting deafblind children and young people about issues that affect them individually and collectively and helping them express their views to others.

- 1.7 Develop participants' skills in advising, supporting, coaching and collaborating with colleagues and families. Working in partnership with multi-agency teams to meet the needs of children and young people with HI, and their families.
- 1.8 Provide specialist support, as appropriate, for participants teaching deafblind children and young people in any phase or context, including in home, early years and post-16 settings, within mainstream and specialist provision including those in support and advisory roles.
- 1.9 Equip participants with the knowledge, understanding and skills to enable them to apply what they have learned more widely, i.e. in different phases or contexts.
- 1.10 Enable participants to make an impact on practice by meeting the course outcomes.
- 1.11 Involve rigorous assessment of participants against all of the course outcomes.

2. MQs should offer high quality training that makes best use of available resources through being tailored to meet participants' training and development needs.

MQ courses will demonstrate that:

- 2.1 Arrangements are in place to recognise that participants will have a range of levels of knowledge and experience.
- 2.2 Provision, including visits and teaching placements, is of high quality, cost-effective, tailored to individuals' circumstances and their training and development needs and offers specialist supervision to provide optimal support.
- 2.3 Arrangements are in place for those achieving the MQ to be helped to consider further professional objectives and identify further opportunities.

3. Be delivered flexibly, without compromising appropriate progression and quality of outcome, to maximise access for participants.

MQ courses will demonstrate that provision will be accessible and flexible, without compromising appropriate progression and quality of outcome, through:

- 3.1 Complying with relevant duties under equalities legislation to enable all participants to access and participate fully in the course, eg making reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates/participants.

3.2 Flexible course delivery , for example, opportunities for participants to be taught in different modes, eg direct face to face teaching, blended or e-learning, full-time and part-time.

3.3 Using ICT effectively in teaching and learning, and to facilitate effective communication, eg to facilitate:

- communication between providers and link schools, settings and services
- direct tutor support for participants, eg telephone calls, e-mail, forums, videoconferencing, web chat, and
- communication and collaborative learning between participants, eg through email, forums or online work groups.

4. Be informed by the needs of stakeholders and involve them in development, delivery, evaluation and improvement of the provision.

MQ courses will demonstrate:

4.1 Clear evidence that provision has been developed in consultation with stakeholders and that they will be involved, directly or indirectly, in evaluation.

5. Be of a consistently high quality and subject to rigorous quality assurance procedures, and supported by mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating and improving the impact of provision on participants' competence and the achievement of deafblind children and young people.

MQ courses should demonstrate:

5.1 The range of internal and external evaluation measures available, including quality assurance of teaching placements, and how the evidence gathered will be used to improve the quality and impact of provision.

5.2 That systems are in place to ensure that participants recruited onto the course have up to date DBS check as well as sufficient prior knowledge, understanding and skills to enable them to benefit from the course, and to meet the course outcomes by the end of the course.

5.3 Have quality assurance measures in place to guarantee that the course is delivered by those with appropriate experience, up to date specialist knowledge and skills and ensures that those involved in delivery and assessment, including on teaching placements, understand their roles and responsibilities and carry them out to a high standard.

5.4 That participants have access to a range of appropriate high-quality teaching placements including peripatetic services and special schools.

- 5.5 That there are sufficient, up to date, specialist teaching resources available that are relevant to training teachers of deafblind children and young people, to enable all participants to reach the course outcomes.
- 5.6 That means are in place to ensure that assessment judgements across provision are consistent, reliable and accurate and that these will be moderated.
- 5.7 Specific evidence and explanation of the methods and measures to be used for evaluating the quality, standards and impact of provision on participants' competence and confidence and, where appropriate, the achievement of deafblind children and young people for e.g. by requiring participants to evaluate improvements in pupils' achievement as a result of particular aspects of their practice.
- 6. Have, as a minimum requirement for successful completion, the mandatory qualification outcomes (Annex A) so that those holding the qualification(s) make maximum impact on practice.**

Annex A – Minimum mandatory qualifications outcomes

Introduction

The mandatory qualifications (MQs) for qualified teachers of Sensory Impairments (QTSIs) include the qualifications for teachers of learners with hearing impairment/deafness (HI), or multi-sensory impairment/ deafblindness (MSI), or vision impairment (VI). These MQs demand high expectations of both course providers and qualifying teachers. Central to the role of the QTSIs is enabling learners with SI to have equal access to education and to have opportunities to develop their independence and personal agency.

The in-depth knowledge base and specialist skills required are extensive and incorporate all aspects of the sensory impaired learner's development across education and family contexts, from 0 to 25 yrs. The courses recognise that a sensory impairment is ever present and has an impact on every aspect of life.

Supporting families is crucial to the role of a QTSI and families need specific information about sensory impairment in order to be able to make informed choices about approaches to learning.

The QTSI qualifications covers the roles of specialist teachers in special schools, resource bases and as visiting teachers in all provision, including preschool. Therefore, the course content provides the grounding for those wishing to practise in any of these settings.

Because of the level of expertise and knowledge required the course equips the QTSIs to become a critical and reflective practitioner who will be able to pursue personal career development and improve practice through research and self-reflection.

Learners with VI, MSI/deafblindness or HI/deafness may also have an additional special educational need or disability. These standards will equip the QTSI to work together with other professionals as required.

Whilst being part of an overall category of sensory impairment (SI) the three courses recognise the essential differences between HI, MSI/deafblind and VI learning and the children and young people they represent, which are reflected in current legislation.

Generic Standards

There are a number of key knowledge and skills that are common across the three different SI qualifications. These are outlined below before we outline the specific knowledge and skills relevant to QTMSI.

Standard 1: The current legislative and educational framework

Specialist teachers must have detailed knowledge and understanding of current educational legislation and practice and recognise that this will change over time (both in terms of legal frameworks and guidance/codes of practice at national and local levels). QTSIs, as determined by their specialism, must be able to apply this knowledge and understanding when working with learners with sensory impairment 0-25 years, in a range of educational contexts, and working with other professionals and families.

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
<p>1K1a Understand national legislation and the range of policies/guidelines that inform provision for learners with SI and which defines their entitlements.</p> <p>1K1b Have an overview of the differences in policy and process in different parts of the UK.</p> <p>1K1c Have an understanding of the specific terminology around education, health and care of children and young people SEN and disability-specific terminology related to SI.</p>	<p>1S1a To source and critically evaluate and implement legislative guidance and policy with respect to the role of an SI specialist teacher (UK wide and locally).</p> <p>1S1b To work with professionals to determine the implication of legislation and guidance for local policy and practice including support for those with and without Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).</p> <p>1S1c To support families in their understanding of the national legislation and guidance which relates to their child.</p>
<p>1K2 Understand current statutory and non-statutory curriculum frameworks and their associated assessment criteria (e.g. Early Years Foundation Stage, National Curriculum, and education and training for learners from 18 to 25).</p>	<p>1S2 To be able to work with all education providers to facilitate the delivery of the appropriate curriculum for SI learners in their settings.</p>
<p>1K3 Understand safeguarding policy and practice and understand the specific vulnerabilities of learners with SI.</p>	<p>1S3 To advise on and support the implementation and execution of safeguarding procedures.</p>

<p>1K4 Understand early identification of sensory impairment protocols, including the role of the specialist teacher in all settings.</p>	<p>1S4a To work with parents/carers and other professionals to implement early identification protocols.</p> <p>1S4b To support parents/carers in making an informed choice on appropriate provision for their child or young person and be able to signpost them to other resources.</p>
<p>1K5 Understand school/setting self-evaluation and improvement processes, including the mechanisms for setting priorities, objectives and targets and translating these into policies and strategies.</p>	<p>1S5 To work with schools to evaluate and adapt their provision for learners with SI to optimise SI learners' engagement, inclusion and attainment in line with national guidelines for education including those of external evaluation bodies such as Ofsted.</p>

Standard 2: Personal professional development

The QTSIs are key role models who can influence the attitudes, values and behaviours of learners with sensory impairment as well as others involved in their education and development. Holding high expectations of all learners with sensory impairment and communicating these expectations to stakeholders to effect positive change, are important professional qualities which are central to the work of a specialist teacher. These qualities are evident in the professional identity and behaviours of specialist teachers. Given the heterogeneous nature of the learners with SI and the complex and varied educational contexts in which they are situated, specialist SI teachers must be practitioner-researchers who, in collaboration with key stakeholders, are able to design and critically evaluate educational interventions.

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
2K1 Understand the role of a reflective and critical teacher in supporting all aspects of a learner's development.	2S1a To be critical and reflective (e.g. through observation, analysis, and evaluation). 2S1b To have the confidence and skills to ensure that recommendations are implemented so SI learners can achieve their potential.
2K2 Understand the importance of an evidence-based understanding of current thinking, research and practice within SI and general education.	2S2a To access and critically evaluate evidence-based research and professional publications. 2S2b To continually reflect on and develop skills to support SI children and their families. 2S2c To plan and maintain ongoing (and post-qualification) professional development including changes to legislation and policy as well as in other areas pertinent to the SI sector.
2K3 Understand that their own perspectives and cultural understanding will influence their work with learners and their families.	2S3a To take account of cultural, linguistic and family differences when working with all families and their children 2S3b To monitor own emotional resilience and know where to go for support.

	2S3c To establish respectful and constructive relationships with children and young people with SI and their families.
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Standard 3: Working in partnership with families

A fundamental part of the QTSI's professional role is working in partnership with learners with sensory impairment, their families, and colleagues in education, health and social care. The key aim of these partnerships is to improve the educational outcomes, social and emotional development and well-being of the learner with sensory impairment. QTSIs must show knowledge and understanding of a wide range of roles undertaken by fellow professionals working across education, health and social care, signposting to other services where appropriate. They must show skill and sensitivity in communicating with families and other professionals to ensure a shared understanding and consistency of approach in supporting learners with sensory impairment and promoting their independence.

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
3K1 Understand the potential impact of the diagnosis of SI upon the family.	3S1a To provide effective, timely and sensitive support to families. 3S1b To work in partnership with families to understand and implement effective strategies to communicate with their child.
3K2 Understand the importance of early intervention.	3S2a To work in partnership with families to understand and implement strategies to support the development of their child. 3S2b To work in partnership with families to adjust to family life with their child. 3S2c To work in partnership with families to understand and navigate the systems and transitions they engage with to support their child.
3K3a Understand the range of education, training and employment opportunities available to SI learners, as well as the support available to them as they leave school. 3K3b Have up to date knowledge of services and supporting organisations available for families at both a local and	3S3 To work with families in making an informed choice on appropriate provision for their child or young person.

national level. Including local charities, national professional bodies.	
3K4 Understand the key elements of successful transition through stages and school settings.	3S4 To work in partnership with the SI learner, parents/carers to ensure informed and effective transitions across different settings.
3K5 Understand the key principles of effective partnership working to achieve optimal outcomes for SI learners.	3S5a To establish a professional relationship that can meet the needs of the SI learner and family recognising that this may change as the learner grows and include representatives from the voluntary sector. 3S5b To establish a team approach that includes clear roles and responsibilities, communication pathways and a means of evaluating the team's effectiveness.
3K6 Understand the key roles and expertise of the range of specialists supporting the SI learner and family.	3S6a To be able to locate and work closely with a range of different professionals to optimise a SI learner's engagement, inclusion and attainment.

QTMSI specific standards – Introduction

The term ‘deafblind/MSI learners’ is used throughout this document to refer to learners with multi-sensory impairment between the ages of 0 and 25 years.

Standard 4: High expectations and respectful relationships

Have high expectations of deafblind/MSI learners despite challenges and build effective relationships.

Knowledge and understanding (‘learn that...’)	Skills (‘learn how...’)
<p>4K1 The behaviour of staff and the nature of the environment affects deafblind/MSI learners’ ability to communicate, learn and manage their behaviour.</p> <p>4K2 Deafblindness and multi-sensory impairment affects access to learning and development but with appropriate high expectations, and with a suitable environment and delivery, effective learning can be promoted.</p> <p>4K3 There is a range of opportunities to learners at 19+ and 25+ including work, college and that transition planning needs to be appropriate for the specialist needs of deafblind/MSI school and college leavers.</p>	<p>4S1 To enable deafblind/MSI learners to have their voices heard by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making use of many opportunities for them to contribute, including by choice making, joint setting of targets, and planning of activities. • Enabling contributions through a variety of means of symbolic communication and representing their perspectives if not possible. • Supporting learners in setting and monitoring their own targets and outcomes to the extent possible • Supporting learners to make informed choices in line with the MCA and their communication capabilities. • Establishing positive, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with deafblind/MSI learners. <p>4S2 To demonstrate high expectations for learners with deafblindness and multi-sensory impairment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing access to learning (through using other sensory channels and alternative communication) rather than limiting learning. • Setting targets which challenge and outlining the provision which learners will need to achieve these.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting learning, communication and development within and across curricular boundaries. <p>4S3 To ensure appropriate placements by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrating high expectations for what deafblind/MSI learners can achieve.• Demonstrating understanding of the implications of vision and hearing impairment on future career and life choices• providing appropriate information about relevant choices.• helping to develop work and life skills.
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Standard 5: Deafblindness – a unique disability

Understand the nature and effect of deafblindness and multi-sensory impairment and its place in the UK Education context.

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
<p>5K1 Deafblindness and multi-sensory impairment affect all developmental and learning processes and secondary effects can cause delay to learning, in particular to the areas of sensory access, orientation, mobility and communication.</p> <p>5K2 While deafblindness and multi-sensory impairment can occur alongside other developmental needs, sensory access, orientation and mobility and communication remain key to their learning needs.</p> <p>5K3 Progressive conditions which include or lead to deafblindness and multi-sensory impairment present learning, emotional and other effects to learners and their families).</p> <p>5K4 A range of provision, appropriately adapted to individual need, can support the learning of deafblind/MSI individuals from early years to adult learning and across mainstream and more specialist settings.</p> <p>5K5 Deafblindness has a distinct and specific place in UK legislation, guidance and educational policy and understand the appropriate policy and procedure, documents and terminology in relation to deafblindness.</p>	<p>5S1 To develop learning in deafblind/MSI children and young people or learners by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing accurate assessment for planning, in particular for EHC plan assessments using Person Centred Planning approaches and relating to sensory access, orientation, mobility and communication as well as learning needs, • Ensuring that the key areas of need (sensory access, orientation and mobility and communication) are identified. and prioritised when setting targets and planning activities. • Identifying social and emotional support as a key need for children and young people with progressive deafblindness and multi-sensory impairment and their families. • Making educational plans that reflect the nature of progressive conditions; consolidating skills and providing compensatory skills as required. <p>5S2 Evaluate provision for deafblind/MSI learners by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating social and physical environments, communication context, provision and use of specialist techniques and equipment for deafblindness and multi-sensory impairment. • Evaluating provision for children and young people across the 0-25 age span. • Observing and analysing the work of colleagues and providing expert and sensitive advice and feedback in

	relation to deafblindness and multi-sensory impairment.
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Standard 6: Adapt teaching and assessment for deafblind/MSI learners

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
<p>6K1 Adaptations to the environment and delivery of the curriculum can enable or enhance progress for learners with deafblindness and multi-sensory impairment.</p> <p>6K2 Lighting, acoustics, provision of equipment and resources, space and safety are key to providing an appropriate environment.</p> <p>6K3 A range of curriculum models can be appropriately used and adapted for deafblind/MSI individuals to promote progress and both formal and informal assessments can be adapted to monitor achievement (including access arrangements for standard examinations where appropriate) as appropriate from 0-25.</p> <p>6K4 Assessment for learning and target setting which includes provision to promote achievement and wellbeing in helping to compensate for the difficulties caused by deafblindness and multi-sensory impairment.</p>	<p>6S1 Provide an appropriate learning environment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing the environment in relation to sensory access and linking this to adapting to maximise sensory access and monitoring outcomes in relation to individual needs. • Providing and modifying materials to match sensory, communication and mobility needs and advising on the use and adaptation of materials. • Providing, adapting and advising on a range of appropriate equipment, including ICT to provide access related to sensory, communication and mobility needs. <p>6S2 Provide appropriate learning experiences for deafblind/MSI learners by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matching provision to needs and providing or advising on appropriate steps for adapted delivery to take account of sensory loss and communication methods as well as cognitive and developmental levels. • Monitoring the success of specialist approaches, techniques, equipment, support and other provision in relation to sensory and communication access and outcomes. • Using techniques and approaches suitable for the age of individuals 0-25. <p>6S3 Promote good outcomes and learning success by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing appropriate curriculum advice and support, especially regarding outcomes which meet individual needs across the age range.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advising on curriculum structures and assessments especially for those working on life and daily living skills at 18+.• Facilitating appropriate access and support arrangements to enable deafblind/MSI learners to have their achievements recognised. <p>6S4 Develop appropriate clear and agreed outcomes by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writing accurate and understandable reports from assessments which provide clear guidance as to recommendations for teaching and learning.• Using assessments, advice from other specialists, and information from families and the young person to set appropriate targets to maximise access and achievement. <p>6S5 Implementing effective approaches, strategies and interventions to support the deafblind/MSI individual to acquire literacy and mathematics skills.</p>
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Standard 7: Develop specialist skills in working with deafblind/MSI learners

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
Assessment	Assessment
<p>7K1 Accurate and comprehensive assessment of sensory skills and skills in communication and mobility and orientation support enabling provision.</p> <p>7K2 Assessment tools and means need to be carefully selected and matched to an individual deafblind/MSI learner from the wide range available.</p> <p>7K3 Reports from clinical and other specialists can support functional assessment in relation to sensory skills, development, communication, mobility and orientation and learning needs.</p> <p>7K4 Understanding of clinical and other specialist reports and assessments supports better functional assessment and skills development.</p> <p>7K5 Individuals' use of vision and hearing differs, and an understanding of each individual's function is needed to support learning.</p>	<p>7S1 To assess deafblind/MSI learners appropriately within the context of their skills and development by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choosing and using appropriate assessments of development and function, and using these to make recommendations for provision. • Choosing and using appropriate assessments of functional vision, and using these to make recommendations for provision. • Choosing and using appropriate assessments of functional hearing, and using these to make recommendations for provision. • Choosing and using appropriate assessments of communication, and using these to make recommendations for provision. • Evaluating their orientation and mobility skills including risk assessments of safety to make recommendations for provision. • Using structured observation techniques to gain understanding of the needs and monitor the success of deafblind/MSI learners. • Using techniques including discussion and testing appropriately to inform assessments.
Sensory skills	Sensory skills
<p>7K6 Vision and hearing systems are complex and involve multi-layer processes to enable access to visual and auditory stimuli.</p>	<p>7S2 Support individuals' use and development of skills in vision, hearing and tactile use by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintaining, supporting and monitoring use of hearing aids and glasses, and of individual technology such as

<p>7K7 Tactile systems require specialist development and application to assist in compensating for lack of vision and hearing and the teaching of specialist skills.</p> <p>7K8 Sensory access for deafblind/MSI learners can be promoted by use of aids and technologies, including hearing aid technologies and visual aids prescribed for individuals, and through visual support and auditory support technologies.</p> <p>7K9 Other sensory systems (proprioception, kinaesthetic vestibular, and interoception senses) contribute to the learning process and are particularly important for learners with deafblindness and multi-sensory impairment.</p>	<p>video magnification, FM systems and other ICT, and advising others on how to use them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing opportunities for learning to use visual and auditory access tools throughout the curriculum and advising others on how to do this. • Providing opportunities for tactile and haptic learning within activities and as additional learning as required, advising others on how to do this. • Providing teaching opportunities through visual, auditory, tactile, motor and linguistic means to meet individual needs.
<p>Communication</p>	<p>Communication</p>
<p>7K10 Communication affects all aspects of learning and development. The impact of deafblindness and multi-sensory impairment on communication development includes effects on wellbeing, behaviour, cognitive skills, mobility and orientation and social relationships.</p> <p>7K11 There is a wide range of means of communication which can be effective for deafblind/MSI people and a wide range of approaches to developing communication.</p> <p>7K12 Communication teaching and learning must be matched to deafblind/MSI learners' needs in relation to sensory, cognitive and communication development.</p> <p>7K13 Appropriate choices of communication including pre-symbolic, symbolic, visual, auditory, tactile and haptic and ICT support and enable communication development in deafblind/MSI people</p>	<p>7S3 Use appropriate means of communication with deafblind/MSI individuals in relation to their sensory, developmental and communication levels by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using and recommending communication methods which are appropriate to individuals considering their sensory, cognitive and other levels, understanding that methods may be different in relation to receptive and expressive. communication and context, wellbeing and relationships. • Using and recommending a range of approaches to develop communication both in particular and infused across activities. • Understanding the functions and uses of communicative behaviour, including challenging behaviour.

Mobility and orientation	Mobility and orientation
<p>7K14 Mobility and orientation are a key learning goal for deafblind/MSI people, which needs to be included and developed across learning stages.</p>	<p>7S4 To include and promote progress in orientation and mobility by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infusing opportunities for specific orientation and mobility learning across learning. • Providing specific guidance and support on developing skills in orientation and mobility, alongside specialists.

Standard 8: Support emotional, social and behavioural development for deafblind/MSI learners

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
<p>8K1 Self-esteem and resilience support deafblind/MSI learners to make progress academically and socially and in life skills.</p> <p>8K2 Progressive conditions causing deafblindness and multisensory impairment affect learning and mental wellbeing and special provision needs to be made to help adapt learning, living and wellbeing.</p> <p>8K3 Deafblind/MSI learners need specialist support to understand and develop appropriate personal relationships and need specialist sex and relationship education.</p>	<p>8S1 To enable deafblind/MSI learners to develop relationships through communication by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing and supporting opportunities to make friends with peers including others who are deafblind/MSI. • Teaching and supporting social skills behaviour in alternative ways related to sensory impairments. • Developing peer awareness through programmes or other means. <p>8S2 Enable deafblind/MSI learners to understand their sensory loss and develop their independence and self-esteem by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching them to manage their own equipment, communication and other needs. • Encouraging deafblind/MSI learners to manage and monitor their behaviour through structuring learning to meet their sensory needs. • Promoting independence as an expectation with all staff who work with them from an early age. • Teaching or planning teaching for independence, daily living and self-help skills within a context which may include supported independence. <p>8S3 Support learners with changing sensory profiles by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for learning which supports learners with changes in sensory and other skills, including specialist programmes to understand the changes in their sensory or other systems supporting families and learners in decision making related to changes.

8S4 Enable deafblind/MSI learners to develop relationships through communication by:

- Providing and supporting the opportunities to make friends with peers including others who are deafblind/MSI.
- Teaching and supporting social skills behaviour in alternative ways related to sensory impairments.
- Developing peer awareness through programmes or other means.

8S5 Enable deafblind/MSI learners to understand their sensory loss and develop their independence and self-esteem by:

- Teaching them to manage their own equipment, communication and other needs.
- Encouraging deafblind/MSI learners to manage and monitor their behaviour through structuring learning to meet their sensory needs.
- Promoting independence as an expectation with all staff who work with them from an early age.
- Teaching or planning teaching for independence, daily living and self-help skills within a context which may include supported independence.



Department
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