

## Frequently asked questions about the **Habilitation Studies Courses** at the IOE, University of London.

### ***When do the courses start?***

The two qualifications - Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma programme, start on October 2009

### ***Who are the courses aimed at?***

#### **Graduate Certificate: Habilitation and Disabilities of Sight (Children and Young People)**

The Habilitation Assistant (HAs) programme is aimed at those who want to support the mobility of children and young people (CYP) who are blind or visually impaired. It focuses on school / educational settings. The work the Habilitation Assistant does is supervised by a qualified Habilitation Specialist (Mobility officer for children and young people).

The course is suitable for those who want to work to support children with visual needs in an educational setting (such as teaching assistants), in Services, Special or Mainstream Schools

#### **Graduate Diploma: Habilitation and Disabilities of Sight (Children and Young People)**

The Habilitation Specialist (HS's) route is aimed at those who will supervise and direct the specific habilitation programmes of CYP directly or through the work of an habilitation assistant or other support worker. They will do this by assessing, devising, implementing, directing, monitoring and advising on habilitation programmes for CYP who are blind or visually impaired. This covers work in the home, in educational settings and out in public spaces (such as route learning and public transport access and use). Habilitation specialists will work in collaboration with qualified teachers of the visually impaired and other professionals.

The programme is suitable for staff working in Services, Special or Mainstream Schools, who want to support children's development of their existing mobility, orientation and self care skills.

### ***What does the course cover?***

Graduate Certificate students take Module 1 and Module 2. Graduate Diploma students take Modules 1,2,3,4.

Here are the topics in each module:

Module1:

### **Policy and practice in habilitation studies**

Topics

- Becoming a Habilitation specialist
- Meeting needs: the current population of Habilitation children
- Vision and Function
- The legislative context
- Theories of child development
- Frameworks and structure: the Developmental Journal
- Developmental assessment
- Early social development
- Eye conditions and clinical visual assessment
- Vision and access- issues for Habilitation 1
- Vision and learning-issues for Habilitation 2
- Introduction to the sighted guide – Habilitation practice issues
- Basic mobility- habilitation work

Module 2:

### **Habilitation in educational contexts and the extended curriculum**

Topics

- Habilitation work in educational settings and the extended curriculum
- The range of pupils visual and other needs in educational settings
- Negotiating educational structures, procedures and contexts
- Working with others in educational settings: the mobility specialist and other professionals
- Risk awareness in educational settings: using environmental audits
- Children's independence in educational settings: accessibility
- Establishing children's working vision in relation to mobility and learning
- Developing children's self awareness: body protection and working with objects
- Developing children's confidence in sighted guide support
- Supporting children in educational environments
- Using sound to navigate and understand the environment; echo location
- Using touch and tactile experience to navigate the world: haptic development
- Working with mobility aids to support pupil independence in educational settings
- Working with ICT to support pupil independence in educational settings
- Developing children's self-care in educational environments
- Developing habilitation practices in educational environments: planning, activity, monitoring and evaluation

## Module 3:

### **Habilitation at home, in public contexts and during transitions**

#### Topics

- Habilitation work in different contexts: the home, educational and public spaces
- Habilitation work during transitions between environments
- Assessing risk and risk management in different environments: undertaking environmental audits
- Children's functional assessment for habilitation work in different environments
- Physical and sensory development: implications for movement in different environments
- Working with parents/carers around the visual needs of their child
- Developing habilitation practices in different environments: planning, activity, monitoring and evaluation
- Working with others for habilitation work in different environments: advice and guidance
- Developing and extending children's personal habilitation skills: personal care, exercise and diet
- Developing and extending children's physical navigation and mobility skills
- Developing and extending children's social interaction and independence skills
- Working with children crossing roads
- Developing and extending traffic awareness and road navigation
- Developing and extending children's public transport use and access to public spaces
- Working with children to access resources and services: libraries, telephones, shops, the internet and leisure opportunities

## Module 4:

### **Habilitation, professional practices and the Service setting: the extended assessed placement**

#### Topics

- Preparing for the extended placement: working in a Service context
- Working with parents/carers in a Service context
- Sharing information with colleagues: professional perspectives and practises
- Developing habilitation practices in different environments as part of Service activity: planning, activity, monitoring and evaluation
- Reporting and monitoring habilitation activities in a multi-professional setting
- Working with others to develop and extend children's independence work
- Managing risk in public activities: risk assessments and their use by others

- Managing and working with children in different road environments and activities
- Working with children in using public transport, services and during shopping
- Supporting children's extended independence during long distance travel, work and leisure activities
- Supporting children's accessing of career and pre-employment activities: supporting progression to further education, training and work

### ***How long is each course?***

#### **Graduate Certificate: Habilitation and Disabilities of Sight (Children and Young People)**

The Graduate Certificate (for Habilitation Assistants) is one day a week face-to-face teaching at the Institute here in London over one year plus at least ten days of one day attachment/placement/observation/shadowing activities tailored to the circumstances of the particular student. The aim is to give a range of opportunities for the student to experience habilitation work in a variety of settings; with a variety of CYP.

#### **Graduate Diploma: Habilitation and Disabilities of Sight (Children and Young People)**

The Graduate Diploma course is run over two years, one day a week direct teaching, the same pattern of attachments etc as for the Certificate course in the first year (Modules 1 and 2) and in the second year a further minimum of 10 days attachments and an extended minimum 20 day attachment in a school/service setting in Module 4.

Attachments are supervised by IOE Staff and field mentors.  
Course members use an online virtual learning environment for tutorial and work related activities and tasks.

### ***What are the entry requirements for the courses?***

For both programmes these are set at a minimum of two years post compulsory education or equivalent (e.g. A/S or A-levels, NVQ level 3 or professional vocational qualifications) and a clear interest in working with children and young people: those wanting to pursue the specialist route will need to be able to show relevant direct experience with CYP. In both cases there is an assessment of prior learning route available which includes written tasks as a preliminary to acceptance. Each application is reviewed individually. All applicants will have to undertake and gain CRB clearance at enhanced level (or equivalent in the appropriate revised accreditation processes)

### ***What will the courses cost?***

Fees will be approximately £1000 per module –final October fee rates have not yet been released by the IOE. This means that the Diploma (for Habilitation specialists) course of four modules which runs over two years will be about £4000 in total: the Certificate course for Habilitation Assistants lasting one year (two modules) will be about £2000 for the year.

### ***What are the qualifications?***

The qualifications are Graduate Certificates /Diplomas awarded by the IOE, University of London. They have been matched against the new National Standards for Habilitation work with CYP who are blind or visually impaired which, for the first time, offer a comprehensive baseline for work in this area. They have also been matched against the new National Occupational Standards for Sensory Services (CWDC).

The creation of the Habilitation Standards has been funded by the DCSF as part of its development of the Children's Work Force activities - it is anticipated that these will be used to establish qualification levels in this area.

### ***How are the courses assessed?***

There are a range of assessment strategies used; -Formal written work of varying lengths and forms and report writing for different audiences (a programme of writing and presentation skills' development work is part of the teaching programme)

- The creation of a working log book identifying activities undertaken, reflection and evaluation- candidates also leave the course with a further CPD development profile
- A variety of practice-based planning and actual practice assessments covering both learning and where applicable in the Specialist route, teaching of practical skills
- Assessment by mentors who are experienced habilitation specialists
- A variety of activity presentations

We hope these answer your initial queries - please do not hesitate to contact us if you need further information.

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