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Special Pedagogy, Master’s Degree, Modules: „Resource teacher” и „Intellectual Disability”

1. Qualifications and competencies
2. General and specialized training
3. General and specific skills
4. Opportunities for professional realization

1. Qualifications and competencies


The Master's programme is aimed at training staff with a high degree of academic education - broad general pedagogical, psychological, theoretical and practical-methodological competences for working with people with special educational needs.

The training of Master’s graduates includes knowledge, skills and competencies in the field of special pedagogy and related scientific fields, such as: biological and medical sciences, psychological sciences, pedagogical sciences, linguistics and psycholinguistics and other scientific fields.

The master's programme in special pedagogy includes basic general and specialized modular training in the modules: "Resource Teacher" and "Intellectual Disability". It prepares motivated and highly qualified specialists to meet the public needs for staff required to carry out the education reform and provide all the necessary conditions for the social and educational integration of children with special educational needs in conditions of equal access to quality education and independent way of living. In the process of education, specific knowledge is acquired about the cognitive and personal development of children with communicative disorders, intellectual disability, hearing and visual impairments, learning difficulties and multiple disabilities for their inclusive education and rehabilitation.

In the module "Intellectual Disability" the training is focused mainly on working with people with varying degrees of intellectual disability.

The content of the training in the educational and qualification degree "Master" in Special Pedagogy meets the needs for radical changes in the theory and practice of training and education of individuals with special educational needs on the basis of important contemporary principles of

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equality and the right for quality education in an inclusive educational and social environment for all children, regardless of their differences by means of:


- recognition of and tolerance for differences;
- teamwork and cooperation between specialists and parents of children; attracting parents as partners;
- placing the child at the centre of the educational process;
- preparation of an individual programme for education and development of each child based on the positive aspects of his/her development and strengths;
- learning material and discovering facts, objects and ideas and the connections between them both independently and through the use of interactive methods, as well as stimulating the creative abilities for objectification of qualitatively acquired knowledge.

Purpose of the training under the programme. The aim of the master's program with the modules: "Resource Teacher" and "Intellectual Disability" is significantly higher compared to the bachelor's degree in order to prepare qualified staff for the implementation of inclusive education of individuals with special educational needs. The purpose of the training of specialist under the second module is aimed primarily at training staff /special educators/ to work with people with intellectual disabilities.

The necessary logical connections and relations have been achieved in the various forms of training – in-class and out-of-class studies, as well as between the compulsory, elective and optional courses included in the curriculum, which is an important prerequisite for achieving the overall goal of the programme.

The educational goal of the specialty is relevant to the educational institution and the state educational requirements for acquiring higher education at the educational and qualification degree "Master".

The set educational goals in the implementation of the training of specialists in the educational and qualification degree "Master" in Special Pedagogy, modules: "Resource Teacher" and "Intellectual Disability" meet the regional and national requirements, the educational strategy of the

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Ministry of Education and Science, and are consistent with current national and European educational priorities.


2. General and specialized training

The programme Special Pedagogy, Master' degree with the modules: "Resource Teacher" and "Intellectual Disability" is characterized by socially adequate in-depth training and, accordingly - with the acquisition of the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies by graduates.

The tasks of the programme Special Pedagogy, Master' degree, are to build in students a system of:

- **knowledge** of the scientific status of special pedagogy, the nature of defectology, special pedagogy and special education, the different categories of people with special educational needs, the nature of the new educational policy regarding them, the basic concepts, methodological concepts of particular importance for the scientific field, the main differences between defectology and special pedagogy, the system of principles and effective methods and models in the context of different alternative approaches and means for communication, training and rehabilitation of different categories of individuals and the implementation of inclusive education.
- **skills** to determine the special educational needs of the individual, to select adequate individuals approaches, methods and ways of rehabilitation and training, to draw up individual or lesson-based plans and programmes, to critically evaluate their implementation, to determine the important components and to structure the supportive environment, to get involved in teamwork with regards to theoretical, practical and research activities.
- **competencies** in the field of special pedagogy. First of all, and to a much higher degree in comparison to the bachelor's degree, the graduates of the modules: "Resource Teacher" and "Intellectual Disability", master skills and competencies for identification and differentiation of disorders and disabilities, as well as improve the skills of planning and application of the revalidation process in the conditions of the resource, speech therapy and specialized office.

In the module "Resource Teacher", competencies are acquired for identification of disorders, for individual and group work in the special education advisory room and in specialized offices for rehabilitation, for assistance of individuals, and especially children, with special educational needs in

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a natural environment and at home, as well as for involving parents in the educational and rehabilitation process and for structuring a team-based supportive environment.

Graduates of the module "Intellectual Disability" acquire the above competencies in relation to persons with intellectual disability, included in a natural environment, as well as in specialized structures - special kindergartens, schools and centres.

3. General and specific skills

The preparation of students in the master's programme includes general basic training in special pedagogy and specialized training in one of their chosen modules.


The general basic training in special pedagogy is aimed at:

- Increasing the motivation for learning and continuous maintenance at a contemporary professional level, adequate to the changes in the educational and social sphere, aimed at children with special educational needs.
- Understanding the theory and practice of inclusive education.
- Orientation in the new roles and functions of the special pedagogue, and the specialist's ability to motivate individuals, parents, relatives and the public to accept differences, to communicate actively and to build positive relationships.
- Applying a socio-educational approach to people with special educational needs, removing the remnants of the medical model for identification of disorders and the differentiated approach to them, using new alternative approaches, forms and methods of work in integrated (inclusive) learning, creating a supportive environment and removing barriers to learning; mastering models for successful rehabilitation and socialization of people with special educational needs.
- Formation of skills and competencies to reduce or overcome educational and social isolation, as well as to improve differentiated learning, especially for students with intellectual disabilities or mixed disabilities. Creating practical skills for structuring a supportive environment.
- Selection of effective pedagogical technologies and skills for their application in the specific conditions of inclusive education.
- Mastering skills for identification of educational needs and creating individual programs for training and development.
- Acquisition of scientific and applied skills for research in the considered scientific field.

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The specialized training by modules includes:

1. Module: Resource Teacher

- In-depth knowledge of the principles, essence, alternative approaches, forms and methods of inclusive education;
- Formation of skills for choosing strategies when working with integrated children at home, in kindergartens, in general education schools and other institutions;
- Mastering specific means of communication with people with language and speech disorders.

2. Module: Intellectual Disability

- Mastering alternative approaches and methods of teaching children with intellectual disability in the conditions of school education and training;
- Mastering knowledge of innovative processes in the theory and practice of pedagogy for children with intellectual disability;
- Acquisition of skills and competencies for socio-pedagogical work with parents of children or relatives of adults with intellectual disability and their support.

4. Opportunities for professional realization


Successful graduates of the master's programme acquire a master's degree, with a professional qualification - "special pedagogue". They can fulfil their professional realization as:

- special pedagogues in kindergartens and schools providing integrated education for children and pupils with special educational needs; in hearing and speech rehabilitation centres; in centres for early impact, centres for personal development, in accordance with the regulations of the Ministry of Education and Science;
- resource teachers at resource centres to support the inclusive education of individuals with special educational needs;
- specialists in the rehabilitation of individuals with special needs;
- special pedagogues in day care centres for children with disabilities and in social institutions - homes for medical and social care of children; homes for raising and educating children deprived of parental care; homes for children and adults with disabilities;

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- special pedagogues in special kindergartens and special schools, specialists in NGOs and organized private offices and centres;
- specialists in expert commissions for assessing the needs of children, pupils and adults with special needs;
- managerial staff - experts in the state and municipal administration, in the Ministry of Education and Science, in the Regional Inspectorates of Education at the Ministry of Education and Science, directors of special schools.



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