

## UNIT OUTLINE

Degree	Graduate Certificate of Education Master of Education
Unit Title	Neurodiversity & the Nature of Learning
Unit Code	EDE911
Core/Elective	Elective
Prerequisite (if required)	Core units – EDE800 Foundations of Christian Education, ED801 Worldview Assumptions in Education, and ED990 Research Methods in Education (MEd)
Study Mode	Online
Credit Points	12 credit points
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	<p>Before enrolling in a course, a prospective student can apply for Morling College to consider granting advanced standing or crediting prior learning where that student’s evidence shows they have already achieved learning that is equivalent to the part of the course for which they are seeking credit. For more, see</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Advanced Standing &amp; Recognition of Prior Learning Policy: CCSC; Education</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure: CCSC; Education</a></li> </ul>
Time Commitment	150 hours across a 13-week semester
Unit Description	<p>The focus of this unit is on the neuroscience of learning and the concept of <i>neurodiversity</i>, demonstrated by the case of gifted and high-functioning students with autism (sometimes described as <i>Asperger syndrome</i>). These learners have not followed a <i>neurotypical</i> developmental pathway. While past assumptions about teachers’ knowledge of how students learn were based on the older learning theories of behaviourism and cognitive psychology, these are insufficient to characterise the learning needs of students experiencing autism. The advent of advanced brain imaging techniques in recent decades has stimulated new theoretical developments in education. In this unit, neuroscience, autism, and memory research literature will be drawn upon to formulate a fresh approach to understanding how students learn, which will account for learning characteristics of neurodiverse students, that is, students with, and without, autism.</p>

Unit Learning Outcomes (ULO)s

1. Describe the main features and development of a range of educational learning theories.
2. Evaluate educational learning theories from a biblical perspective and synthesise insights from these theories into a coherent view of learning that is consistent with a biblical worldview.
3. Evaluate the contribution of neuroscience to the development of educational theories of learning and assess the implications of neuroscience for teaching practice.
4. Synthesise and articulate the likely implications of neurodiversity for the learning characteristics of individual learners.
5. Apply theoretical insights of neurodiversity from neuroscience to classroom practice of teaching and learning.

Prescribed Text(s)\*

Fletcher-Watson, S., & Happé, F. (2019). *Autism: a new introduction to psychological theory and current debate* (2nd ed.). Routledge.  
 Blakemore, S.-J., & Frith, U. (2005). *The learning brain: lessons for education*. Blackwell.

Topics Covered

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| 1. Introducing neurodiversity and an educational problem | 6. The role of emotion in learning             |
| 2. What is the nature of knowledge and learning?         | 7. Neurodiversity: the case of autism          |
| 3. What is learning? (Learning theories)                 | 8. First-hand accounts from people with autism |
| 4. Neuroscience and education                            | 9. Thinking, memory, and learning              |
| 5. Memory and learning                                   | 10. Pedagogical implications                   |

Outline of Assessment Requirements

Assessment No. & Type	Length	Weighting	Unit Learning Outcomes
1. Mindmap	Diagram & 250-500 words	15%	Covers learning outcomes 1 & 2
2. Essay	3000 words	45%	Covers learning outcomes 1, 2, & 3
3. Critical reflection	2500 words	40%	Covers learning outcomes 2, 4, & 5