



## Programme Specification

A statement of the knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin a taught programme of study leading to an award from  
The University of Sheffield

1	<b>Programme Title</b>	Speech and Language Therapy
2	<b>Programme Code</b>	HESU001
3	<b>JACS Code</b>	B620
4	<b>Level of Study</b>	Undergraduate
5a	<b>Final Qualification</b>	Bachelor of Medical Science (BMedSci)
5b	<b>QAA FHEQ Level</b>	Honours
6	<b>Intermediate Qualification(s)</b>	None
7	<b>Teaching Institution (if not Sheffield)</b>	Not applicable
8	<b>Faculty</b>	Medicine, Dentistry and Health
9	<b>Department</b>	Human Communication Sciences
10	<b>Other Department(s) involved in teaching the programme</b>	Dentistry/Biomedical Sciences
11	<b>Mode(s) of Attendance</b>	Full-time
12	<b>Duration of the Programme</b>	3 years
13	<b>Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body</b>	Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, Health and Care Professions Council
14	<b>Date of production/revision</b>	November 2016, March 2026

### 15. Background to the programme and subject area

The BMedSci Speech and Language Therapy is a three year undergraduate degree programme and provides a professional education for students wishing to gain a qualification in speech and language therapy. The course is accredited by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) and approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). Successful completion of this programme provides eligibility to apply for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). It is a legal requirement that anyone who wishes to practice using a title protected by the Health and Social Work Professions Order 2001 is on the HCPC Register. For more information, please see the HCPC website at [www.hcpc-uk.org](http://www.hcpc-uk.org). Students self-fund their places on the programme and complete a range of speech and language therapy placements across the local regions and in the Philippa Cottam Communication Clinic (PCCC) which is the in-house clinic in the Department of Human Communication Sciences (HCS).

The Department of Human Communication Sciences at the University of Sheffield is an active teaching and research department. It has a multidisciplinary staff, made up of speech and language therapists, psychologists, and linguists. It is able to cover a wide range of specialisms within speech and language pathology, including developmental and acquired communication impairments, clinical linguistics, cognitive neuroscience, developmental psychology and education. It offers a range of degrees at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, providing a stimulating learning environment for students who benefit from a wide range of teaching and learning methods. Teaching is informed by the research activities of staff. In the 2014 Research Excellence Framework, 100% of our research impact was world-leading or internationally excellent and we were in the top 10 of Russell Group Universities for research outputs. Students benefit from learning at the forefront of current knowledge and are encouraged to develop a critical and reflective attitude to theoretical hypotheses and their application to clinical practice.

The Department has its own clinic with observation and video recording facilities. The equipment includes computerised technology for the recording, analysis and management of all aspects of speech communication. Further information is available on the departmental website at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/hcs>

## 16. Programme aims

The BMedSci (Speech and Language Therapy) has the following programme aims, consonant with the Mission Statement of the University of Sheffield:

- To provide an engaging and stimulating learning environment that includes high quality learning resources and a curriculum based on current research and scholarship;
- To develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the graduate to work as a speech and language therapist;
- To enable the graduate to develop the necessary competencies in order to assess and manage a range of communication and swallowing disorders at the appropriate entry-level to the profession;
- To equip students with the academic and professional skills needed to foster a positive attitude towards evidence-based practice and lifelong learning.

## 17. Programme learning outcomes

<b>Knowledge and understanding:</b>	
<b>K1</b>	Core knowledge and understanding of communication pathology, and of its contributory disciplines, including biomedical sciences, psychology and linguistics.
<b>K2</b>	Understanding of the impact of communication impairments on a person's activity and participation in society.
<b>K3</b>	Knowledge and understanding sufficient to evaluate and contribute to the evidence base for effective practice in speech and language therapy.
<b>K4</b>	Knowledge and understanding sufficient to assess communication impairments and to provide effective intervention.
<b>K5</b>	Knowledge and understanding of the social, cultural, educational and healthcare contexts relevant to the practice of speech and language therapy.

<b>Skills and other attributes:</b>	
<b>S1</b>	Effective use of written and oral modalities to discuss, describe and evaluate concepts, theories and information in the subject area of communication disorder.
<b>S2</b>	Ability to undertake differential diagnosis of communication disorders across the lifespan.
<b>S3</b>	Ability to implement appropriate management plans for the range of communication disorders encountered in adults and children.
<b>S4</b>	Ability to work effectively as part of a multi-professional team.
<b>S5</b>	Effective interpersonal and communication skills to work with patients, carers, colleagues, and others.
<b>S6</b>	Ability to evaluate swallowing behaviours and to manage disorders of swallowing at the appropriate entry level to the speech and language therapy profession.

## 18. Teaching, learning and assessment

**Development of the learning outcomes is promoted through the following teaching and learning methods:**

A range of teaching and learning methods are employed including lectures, seminars, practical workshops and tutorials, guided reading, and clinical placements, according to the nature of the material being addressed:

*Formal lectures* are used to convey essential information in speech and language pathology and its related disciplines; lectures are linked to *small-group tutorials* which explore lecture material through discussion and which enable the application of theoretical knowledge to the clinical setting;

Further *small-group tutorials* develop practical skills, including the linguistic, phonetic and statistical analysis of speech and language data;

*Seminars* are used to facilitate exchange of ideas through discussion and to promote skills in oral expression. They encourage active and group learning strategies;

*Practical workshops* offer the opportunity for practical data analysis; demonstrations of speech analysis equipment; discussion and evaluation of a range of aspects of behaviour in individuals with communication disorders;

*Case-based learning* exercises allow students to develop and integrate their theoretical and clinical knowledge and skills by focusing on the issues and problems identified in by specific clinical cases;

*Guided reading* allows students to clarify and extend their understanding of the issues covered in lectures, tutorials, seminars and workshops, and allows them to further explore areas of particular interest.

*Work-based clinical placements* take place in the University clinic, in schools and nurseries, and in NHS clinical settings. These provide students with practical experience in the assessment and management of communication disorders and impairments in swallowing. Clinical placements are carefully structured to provide students with experience of a range of communication impairments in both adults and children, moving from observational placements in the first instance to supervised practice and to more autonomous clinical work.

**Opportunities to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes are provided through the following assessment methods:**

The programme employs a variety of assessment methods, which are matched to the objectives and learning outcomes of individual modules;

*Formal examinations* consist of a number of different types: *unseen written examinations*; “*seen*” *examinations*, where students study some data or other material in advance of a written examination based specifically on that material; *practical examinations*, which test specific skills such as phonetic and linguistic analysis; *clinical practical examinations* which test the application of knowledge and skills in the clinical setting.

*Written assignments* also take a number of different formats: *essays* test knowledge in specific areas and the integration of knowledge across areas; *portfolios* allow the student to build up an evidence-base of knowledge and skill accumulated over the entire course as well as in specific modules; *projects* and, in particular, the final year project/dissertation allow students to demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the evaluation of the evidence base in speech and language therapy and/or human communication and its disorders.

The proportion of formal examinations versus other forms of assessed work is approximately 35% and 65% respectively across the degree.

**19. Reference points**

**The learning outcomes for the BMedSci (Speech and Language Therapy) have been developed to reflect the following points of reference:**

Subject Benchmark Statements for Healthcare Programmes

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Subject-benchmark-statement-Health-care-programmes---Speech-and-Language-Therapy.pdf>

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies (2014)

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/qualifications-frameworks.pdf>

University Strategic Plan

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ourplan/>

Learning and Teaching Strategy (2016-21)

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/als/strategy>

The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists’ guidelines for pre-registration speech and language therapy courses

[https://www.rcslt.org/about/Courses\\_and\\_training/curriculum\\_guidelines\\_2011](https://www.rcslt.org/about/Courses_and_training/curriculum_guidelines_2011)

The Health Professions Council Standards of Education and Training for Health Professionals: <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/publications/standards/index.asp?id=183>

The Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency for Speech and Language Therapists:

<http://www.hcpc-uk.org/publications/index.asp?id=52>

## 20. Programme structure and regulations

The degree forms a professional qualification in Speech and Language Therapy and therefore all components of the degree must be successfully completed for the award of BMedSci (Speech and Language Therapy).

Work-based placements occur through the three years of the degree, taking place within the normal semester periods and student vacation time. An additional block placement occurs at Level 2 (one week).

Detailed information about the structure of programmes, regulations concerning assessment and progression and descriptions of individual modules are published in the University Calendar available on-line at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/calendar/regs>

## 21. Student development over the course of study

The curriculum for the BMedSci Speech and Language Therapy is organised around six interrelated subject themes: Communication; Participation and Society; Research Methods; Biomedical Sciences; Key Clinical Topics; and Professional Practice, which structure the teaching and learning experience throughout the course.

Modules studied at Level One provide an introduction to the broad range of material which a Speech and Language Therapist requires in order to be able to practice. The Communication theme introduces the student to a range of aspects of and approaches to the study of both typical and atypical communication drawing on the disciplines of speech pathology, linguistics and psychology. The Biomedical Sciences theme introduces the student to the anatomical and physiological foundations of communication. In the Participation and Society theme students are provided with a broad based understanding of the influence of social, educational and health contexts of individuals with communication impairments. The Professional Practice theme introduces the student to the work of a speech and language therapist, providing opportunities for the development of observation skills in the clinical context and facilitating the development of basic clinical and professional skills.

Level 2 extends and consolidates the students' knowledge and skills in the areas introduced at Level One as well as introducing new material. Modules from the Communication theme promote a detailed theoretical understanding of a broad range of different impairments as demonstrated in breakdown at different levels of speech and language processing and develop the students' skills in the practical analysis and assessment of communication impairments. The Research Methods theme supplies the student with a basic understanding of the tools required in research and develops critical analysis skills required for evidence-based practice. In the Biomedical Sciences theme specific subject areas, including audiology and dentistry are introduced and their relevance to speech and language pathology is explored. The Key Clinical Topics and Professional Practice themes provide the student with a learning experience which allows them to develop skills in the area of evaluation and intervention both in the classroom and in the clinical setting.

Level 3 further develops students' theoretical knowledge and application to their clinical practice as well as preparing them for the transition from education to the workplace. The Biomedical Sciences theme focuses in particular on the study of neurology and its application to speech and language therapy. In the Research Methods theme students gain specific knowledge and skills in evaluating the evidence base in speech and language therapy. The key Clinical Topics theme enables the student to focus in detail on the study of specific impairments of communication and swallowing. Through the Professional Practice theme students become increasingly autonomous in their clinical experience via work-based placements and particular attention is paid to the successful transition from education into the workplace. Students learn more about workplace issues, including multidisciplinary team working, ethical issues in healthcare, and working within contemporary healthcare and education structures and contexts. An important aspect of Level 3 are the two units which focus on evaluating the evidence base in speech and language therapy and/or human communication and its disorders in the Research Methods theme, which provides the student with critical analysis skills relevant for use in their future employment in an evidence-based healthcare and education context.

## 22. Criteria for admission to the programme

Detailed information regarding admission to the programme is available at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/study>

Applicants are required to gain some experience of the speech and language therapy profession prior to applying. A wide range of experience is considered. Short-listed applicants are invited to interview and offers are made based on academic ability, interest and commitment to the speech and language therapy profession, and the demonstration of satisfactory interpersonal and communication skills.

### **Admissions Criteria – BMedSci (Speech and Language Therapy)**

*ABB – Based on 18 Units at GCE Advanced Level (may include a maximum of 6 units at VCE Advanced Level)*

*AB + AB – Based on 12 Units at Advanced Level (may include a maximum of 6 units at VCE Advanced Level) and 6 Units at Advanced Subsidiary Level*

### **Core Requirements**

Grade B in GCE Advanced Level Science (e.g. Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Psychology)

***The above are the standard entry requirements for students taking one science subject at A level. However, in the interests of widening participation, we also consider applications deemed to be of equivalent standard from applicants with a variety of academic and vocational qualifications.***

### **Additional Requirements**

Satisfactory Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Check (or EU equivalent).

Satisfactory report from Occupational Health.

Key Skills are desirable but not mandatory.

Detailed information regarding admission to the programme is available in the University's On-Line prospectus at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/prospectus/courseCategory.do?category=azlist> and within the departmental web pages of the Department of Human Communication Sciences at [http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/hcs/prospective\\_ug/courses](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/hcs/prospective_ug/courses)

## 23. Additional information

For further information students are directed to the departmental web pages at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/hcs>

This specification represents a concise statement about the main features of the programme and should be considered alongside other sources of information provided by the teaching department(s) and the University. In addition to programme specific information, further information about studying at The University of Sheffield can be accessed via our Student Services web site at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/ssid>.