



ABN 15 211 513 464

Speech Pathology Frequently Asked Questions

Welcome to Speech Pathology at The University of Sydney. Our graduates are leaders of the profession around Australia and around the world.

We offer two speech pathology courses – a [Bachelor of Applied Science \(Speech Pathology\)](#) (4 year program) and a [Master of Speech Language Pathology](#) (2 year program) which qualify graduates to work as a Speech Pathologist and a major in Hearing and Speech which can be included in your Arts, Science or Commerce degree.

For more information visit the [Discipline of Speech Pathology website](#) OR Contact the Speech Pathology Course Administrator: speech.info@sydney.edu.au or (02) 9351 9447

Frequently asked questions.

1.	Speech Pathology: Is it for me?	<p>Do you want to work in a people-focused profession? Do you want to work in the area of human communication? Would you like to work with children and/or adults? Do you want a career that allows you to specialise? Do you want a career that extends your life skills? Do you want a career that offers diverse career opportunities in public and private practice? Do you want a qualification which can take you around the world to work? <i>If the answer to all of these is yes, you should consider a career in speech pathology.</i></p>
2.	What is a Speech Pathologist?	<p>Speech Pathologists are health professionals who work with children and adults with communication difficulties caused by congenital or developmental problems, illness and disease, and emotional or physical trauma. These difficulties include problems with speaking, understanding what people say, reading, writing, voice problems and stuttering. Speech Pathologists also work with children and adults who have swallowing difficulties or need alternative, non-verbal ways to communicate.</p> <p>Watch the video about the profession on Speech Pathology Australia's (SPA) homepage http://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/</p> <p>The Fact Sheets on SPA's website may also be helpful: http://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/SPAweb/General_Information/SPAweb/General_Information/General_Information.aspx?hkey=6a736759-e001-41ee-9df1-efcb0a206450</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a Speech Pathologist? • What is a communication disability? • Who has a communication disability? • How do Speech Pathologists work in a multilingual and culturally diverse society?
21.	Why study Speech Pathology at the University of Sydney?	<p>Speech Pathology at the University of Sydney has a long history of leading the profession locally and across Australia. Our graduates fill many senior roles in Health, Disability and Public Policy and are highly influential in the profession. The Discipline of Speech Pathology comprises world leading teachers and researchers who are committed to improving the lives of people with communication and swallowing disorders. This commitment extends to providing cutting edge learning and teaching. We are proud that our staff are teachers who have national awards for excellence and innovation in university teaching. This innovative learning and teaching leads to graduates who are prepared for speech pathology jobs well past graduation.</p> <p>We lead the world in speech pathology research in understanding and treating voice disorders, traumatic brain injury, childhood apraxia of speech, communication development in Indigenous Australian children, and vocabulary acquisition in toddlers.</p>

		<p>As part of our research and their learning, students learn to use cutting edge equipment and facilities including high speed video analysis of laryngeal movement; fibre endoscopic evaluation of swallowing, telehealth, ultrasound visualisation of the tongue and larynx and acoustic and language analysis software. The Discipline also boasts the on-campus Communication Disorders Treatment and Research Clinic which encourages integration of theory with practice and also provides opportunities for talented students to become involved with research.</p> <p>The Discipline of Speech Pathology at the University of Sydney is not only the first and largest program in NSW, it is among the largest in the world. Our history goes back to the first training of speech pathologists in Australia at Sydney's Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children under the leadership of the founder of Australian Speech Pathology, Elinor Wray, in 1938. Our future is in the hands of our graduates.</p>
3.	Where do Speech Pathologists work?	Speech Pathologists work in hospitals, community health centres, special schools and classes (such as for children with hearing impairment or autism), in rehabilitation centres, and in private practice. The largest employer of speech pathologists in NSW is the Department of Health.
4.	Where can I see what a Speech Pathologist does?	Some private Speech Pathologists will accept visits by prior arrangement, for a couple of hours, from people interested in finding out more about what Speech Pathologists do. They will show you the clinic and talk to you about their job. Telephone a clinic near you to see if this is possible. See the Speech Pathology Australia website for your nearest clinic. Most large hospitals employ Speech Pathologists as do many community health centres. They may let you observe for an hour or two.
5.	Availability of work experience before you enter the degree?	Because of considerations like client confidentiality, it is quite difficult to get work experience in a speech pathology clinic except through prearranged schemes such as offered through schools.
6.	Job Prospects?	It is difficult to predict what the employment situation will be several years from now. At present, most graduates obtain jobs in speech pathology within a few months of graduation. It is generally easier to get a job in the country than in the city. Graduates in the city wanting to specialise may have to wait longer for "the right job". Many graduates start their career in temporary 'locum' positions. This can be a great way to get started.
7.	Private Practice?	Private practice is increasingly an option for speech pathologists. We recommend that a new graduate work for someone else for at least a year before starting their own private practice.
8.	How difficult/busy is the course?	<p>We offer two speech pathology courses – a Bachelor of Applied Science (Speech Pathology) (4 year program) and a Master of Speech Language Pathology (2 year program). For students, both courses can present different levels of difficulty, depending on your previous study, particular interests and life skills/experience.</p> <p>They are demanding courses in terms of time and the professional commitment required to successfully complete the clinical practicum/ placement.</p> <p>Lecture attendance and clinical practice is scheduled for Mondays to Fridays during semester and clinical placements can be scheduled outside the semester period. There may be some 8am starts as well as some 5pm or 6pm finishes to the university day. At least one clinical practicum will be rural NSW and these types of placements would typically be 4-8 weeks in duration.</p> <p>In most semesters, there are approximately 15-17 contact lecture hours per week, plus clinical practicum commitments once you start your clinical units of study. The further into the course you get, the fewer lecture hours you have and the more clinical hours you will have.</p>
9.	Can the course be done part-time?	<p><i>Undergraduates?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part-time study involves a reduced number of hours per week - there are no evening classes/lectures offered or available • Part-time is classified as being enrolled in less than 18/24 credit points worth of units in a semester. All units of study (subjects) are 6 credit points and therefore full time enrollment is 3 or 4 units of study. • AFTER you have accepted a place and enrolled in the full-time course, you can apply to the Undergraduate Course Director to reduce your enrolment / workload. • Important Note: All Year 1 units of study must be successfully completed within the first 2 years (4 semesters). Year 1 has 8 x 6 credit point units spread over two semesters.

		<p><i>Postgraduate Coursework?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants for the Master of Speech Language Pathology course can nominate to study part-time, but only daytime lectures are offered. <p><i>All students</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum recommended number of units to enrol in is two. FYI - this can still involve you being on-campus 3-4 days per week to attend lectures or clinical placement. Important Note 1: The maximum time allowed to complete the course is 10 years from the initial academic year of enrolment. Important Note 2: The curriculum can change over the course of completing the degree part-time. Units can be added, deleted, or moved between semesters or years, before you have a chance to complete them as a part time student. Important Note 3: Students who receive government help (Youth allowance, Austudy etc) or scholarships should check with the provider, as these often require students to be enrolled in a fulltime load - 18 to 24 credit points per semester
10.	Is the Course offered externally / via distance?	Currently many subjects will run online or in mixed online and face-to-face format due to Covid-19 restrictions. In 2021, we will be located at the Camperdown Campus.
11.	Speech and Drama Background?	Applicants sometimes ask if their background study and/or qualifications in speech and drama or elocution (or AMEB) will enable them to do the course in a shorter time. There is insufficient overlap in any of the subjects studied to gain credits in either the Bachelor of Applied Science (Speech Pathology) or Master of Speech Language Pathology. So while this background certainly means these students are well informed about some aspects of speech, the speech pathology course will still take the same amount of time.
12.	Credit Transfer?	<p><i>Undergraduates:</i></p> <p>You can apply for Credit Transfer when you enroll. You must submit copies of all the necessary documentation at that time. You will need information about the subject content you have completed, plus week by week lecture content, plus details of all assessments and a copy of your academic transcript. You will not get an answer immediately. The discipline will have to review your submission and will respond via the Student Administration team.</p> <p><i>Postgraduate Coursework:</i></p> <p>Subjects completed as part of an Undergraduate Degree do not qualify for Credit Transfer, however credits may be available for equivalent postgraduate subjects.</p>
13.	Specialisation during the course?	<p>Both courses provide a thorough generalist, clinical experience in speech pathology. This is required in order for you to graduate. If you are interested in a particular disorder area (such as children with hearing impairment) you may be able to request a clinic placement in this area during the course, but your total clinic placements will cover, as much as possible, the full range of disorders in both adults and children.</p> <p>Up to 20% of undergraduate students may pursue Honours in the final 18 months of their course. This involves conducting research in a particular area of interest with the mentorship of one of our researchers.</p>
14.	Prerequisites for the undergraduate degree?	<p><i>Please refer to the course pages for this information:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor of Applied Science (Speech Pathology) Master of Speech Language Pathology

15.	Science components of the undergraduate degree?	<p>Speech Pathology is an applied science. Speech Pathologists need to understand the physical and physiological mechanisms underlying normal and disordered speech. Students in both degrees will examine anatomy using bodies which have been donated to the University for student learning.</p> <p>Topics such as anatomy, physiology and neurology are included in the undergraduate degree. These Biomedical Sciences are studied during the first 2 years of the course. For instance, in the first year of undergraduate study, there is quite a lot of Biomedical Science (lectures, labs, practicals, etc.). Some chemistry is also included as part of the basis for understanding body system functioning and physiology. Physics of sound is studied in relation to its role in speech and hearing. No assumed knowledge is expected in Physics or Chemistry beyond the common year 10 curriculum.</p>
16.	Recommended Prior Studies?	<p><i>Please refer to the course pages for this information:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Applied Science (Speech Pathology) • Master of Speech Language Pathology
18.	What subjects are studied in the course?	<p>Speech Pathology covers diagnosis and management of normal and impaired speech, voice, fluency, hearing and language and swallowing in children and adults. Student in both degrees have supervised clinical practice in adult and child clinics. Students spend several hours a week in clinics, both on campus and off-campus.</p> <p><i>Undergraduates:</i> There are three main academic strands in the course:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Behavioural Sciences include psychology, sociology and research methods 2. Biomedical Sciences covers anatomy, physiology and neurology. 3. Speech pathology subjects Phonetics and linguistics, stuttering, speech disorders in children and adults, language disorders, voice, swallowing, hearing impairment and speech pathology professional topics such as ethics and evidence based practice. <p><i>Postgraduate students only study this third strand of content.</i></p>
19.	Clinical work in the course?	<p>In both degrees, the University organises clinical attachments for students across their degrees. Students <u>are not</u> permitted to organise their own placements.</p> <p><i>Undergraduates:</i> Clinical observations occur in first year. Supervised clinical practice in adult and child clinics commences in the 2nd year of the course. In 2nd and 3rd year, students spend several hours a week in clinics, both on-campus and off-campus. Off-campus block placements can also occur during 3rd year. In the final year students will do two off-campus 6-week blocks in child and adult clinics. These may be done in city, country or interstate clinics. Students also have two placements in metropolitan Sydney or on campus. Students may be requested to do this block at a country clinic.</p> <p><i>Postgraduate Coursework:</i> Clinical units of study start in Year 1, Semester 1 for fulltime students. Clinical placements are scheduled from January-July for Semester 1 and July-December for Semester 2 and hence may commence prior to the official start of semester and/or may extend beyond week 16. Students may be placed in metropolitan or rural settings.</p> <p>Students are supported with information provided in orientation/briefing sessions prior to their attendance at placements.</p>
22.	Is there a Mid-Year Intake?	No

Hearing and Speech Major or Minor in BA, BSc or BCom

The Hearing and Speech Major focusses on normal speech, language and hearing acquisition, development and change in human communication across the lifespan, and the underpinning theoretical disciplines.

Graduates will therefore have an integrated understanding of the linguistic, psychological, acoustic, neuroscience and anatomical bases of human communication. Graduates will also acquire technical skills in speech and language analysis and hearing assessment.

The Hearing and Speech major prepares students for postgraduate study in Speech Pathology or Audiology. Graduates with a hearing and speech major may also consider work in the disability support sector, technical writing in medicine and health, audiometry, TESOL, and in special education support roles.

Prospective students should enroll in their preferred University of Sydney undergraduate degree (Arts, Science or Commerce) and select the units of study which make up the major or the minor. Completion of the major or minor provides all the qualifying units to enroll in the MSLP. Prospective students should note Hearing and Speech will be a second major and they will need to choose a complementary first major. Prospective students who wish to enroll in Science or Commerce should also note the mathematics requirements of those degrees.

Major	Semester 1		Semester 2	
Year 1	Speech Science	Linguistics and Phonetics		
Year 2	Hearing Science		Human Communication Development	Audiology 1
Year 3	Neuroscience for Hearing and Speech		Cognitive Neuropsychology	Audiology 2

POSTGRADUATE COURSEWORK

The [Master of Speech Language Pathology](#) allows people who already have a degree, to qualify to work as a speech pathologist and is accredited by Speech Pathology Australia. Graduates are eligible for full practicing membership of the Association.

Award	<i>Master of Speech Language Pathology</i>
Location	<i>Camperdown campus</i>
Duration	<i>4 Semesters full-time; 8 Semesters part-time</i>
Credit Points	<i>96 (24 per semester for full time enrolment)</i>
Note	<p><i>Applicants should note that each year of the academic program is offered within semesters of varying length. For example, Year 1 Semester 1 starts two weeks earlier than the typical start of semester 1. The earlier start involves intensive classes on foundation topics relevant to all first and second year speech pathology subjects. This means that semester 1 comprises 19 weeks (15 teaching weeks, 1-week mid-semester break, 1-week Study Vacation and 2 weeks of examinations). Year 1 semester 2 includes an intensive orientation week, 12 weeks teaching weeks, a 1-week mid-semester break, 1-week Study Vacation prior to exams, and 2 weeks of examination.</i></p> <p><i>The clinical program will involve students on placements across the entire year.</i></p> <p><i>Students enrolling full time should note that the workload is heavy and it is strongly recommended that students not engage in paid work outside their studies for more than 8 hours per week.</i></p>

Admission Requirements, Prerequisites and Assumed and Expected Knowledge

Please refer to the course page for this information:

[Master of Speech Language Pathology](#)

MSLP Course Structure

The curriculum is designed around the competency requirements for Speech Pathology professional practice. The curriculum incorporates 16 core units of study, totaling 96 credit points. These units provide students with the competencies expected of a beginning practitioner in speech pathology. The MSLP is structured around 4 academic blocks and 4 clinical blocks. The clinical blocks occur both during semester and during the breaks. The academic program will require students to attend clinic orientation week and up to 16 teaching weeks in each semester.

Students must be prepared and available for clinical placements and some lectures that are delivered outside set semester dates.

Application Procedures

All applications must be lodged directly with the University of Sydney. Applications open in the middle of the year and close in October. Late applications are not accepted. Please refer to the course page for more information: [Master of Speech Language Pathology](#)

Timetabling

All lectures are held during the day, Monday to Friday between 8am and 6pm. In first and second semester of year 1, full-time students should expect to be on-campus for 4-5 days per week and part time students for 2 to 3 days per week. Block teaching and clinical Intensives/placements can occur outside of the semester dates.

If you have any questions you can:

Contact the Program Administrator: speech.info@sydney.edu.au or (02) 9351 9447