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Speech and language therapist

Speech and language therapy is an exciting and varied career. It offers you the chance to make a difference, a high degree of flexibility and excellent employment prospects. You'll work with patients every day to help improve their care and their lives.

If you enjoy science, education, languages, linguistics or medicine - speech and language therapy could be the profession for you.

Working life

Speech and language therapists provide life-changing treatment, support and care for children and adults who have difficulties with communication, eating, drinking and swallowing. You'll help people who, for physical or psychological reasons, have problems speaking and communicating.

Patients range from children whose speech is slow to develop, to older people whose ability to speak has been impaired by illness or injury. It also includes treatment for those who have difficulty with eating or swallowing.

Can't see the video? You'll need to accept all cookies [1]. Alternatively, visit our YouTube Channel to view our videos [2]

What you'll do as a speech and language therapist

Variety is one of the most exciting things about being a speech and language therapist. As well as helping patients with a variety of conditions, you'll work in a multi-disciplinary team in different settings from hospitals to community clinics to patients' homes.

You'll help children with a variety of conditions including:

- mild, moderate or severe learning difficulties
- specific difficulties in producing sounds
- hearing impairment
- cleft lip and palate
- stammering
- voice disorders
- selective mutism

- developmental language disorder [3].

You'll help adults with:

- communication or eating and swallowing problems following neurological impairments and degenerative conditions, including stroke [4], head injury, Parkinson's disease and dementia
- voice problems
- mental health issues
- learning difficulties
- physical disabilities
- stammering
- hearing impairment

You would also work closely with teachers and other health professionals, such as doctors, nurses and psychologists. You may also supervise the work of speech and language therapy assistants.

Max Elswood

Speech and language therapist on an acute stroke unit

> Speech and language therapy combines the science of medicine with building meaningful human relationships. That’s why I love it

Read Max's story [5]

How to become a speech and language therapist

To become a speech and language therapist, you’ll need to train and study at degree or postgraduate level. A degree apprenticeship has also been approved.

Entry requirements

To get on to an speech and language therapy degree course you usually need:

- two or three A levels, along with five GCSEs (grades A-C [6]), including English language, maths and science

or alternative qualifications, including

- BTEC, HND or HNC which includes science
- relevant T level
- relevant NVQ
- science-based access course
- equivalent Scottish or Irish qualifications

If you already hold a relevant first degree, you can apply for an accelerated postgraduate programme in speech and language therapy. These courses usually last two years.

Each institution sets its own entry requirements, so it’s important to check carefully.

Annual payments

If you're eligible, you’ll receive at least £5,000 a year to help fund your studies while at university. Your personal circumstances may mean you could receive more. And the good news? You'll never have to pay it back. Find out more. [7]

Degree apprenticeship

There are a growing number of degree apprenticeships. Apprenticeships give you the chance to earn a living while gaining your qualification. Your employer and the government will pay the tuition fees, so apprenticeships aren’t eligible for student grants.

Must-have skills

Don’t forget – academic qualifications aren't everything. You'll need to be able to motivate and reassure people of all ages using your excellent communication skills. You'll also need to be able problem solve and show real leadership and organisational skills. You'll also need to be happy working alone and as part of a team.

Training and career development

Once you’ve qualified, you’ll have annual Continuing Professional Development (CPD) check-ins, where we’ll discuss your career aspirations and plan how we can help you to achieve them, so you’re always moving forward. You may choose to specialise in a particular area of practice such as cleft and lip palate, people with swallowing difficulties or learning disability. Other options include teaching or research.

You could also do further training and an advanced clinical practitioner or move into management. As head of a local speech and language therapy service you would be responsible for a team of staff and for managing a budget.

Pay and conditions

Your standard working week will be around 37.5 hours. As an speech and language therapist, you’ll be paid on the Agenda for Change (AFC) pay system [8], typically starting on band 5.

You’ll also have access to our generous pension scheme and health service discounts, as well as 27 days of annual leave plus bank holidays.

Find your course to become a speech and language therapist

Region
- Any -

Type of qualification
- Any -

Full or part time
Search

Displaying 1 - 5 of 42 matches

Speech and Language Therapy

University of Greenwich

View course [9] Opens in a new window

- Qualification
  Bachelor of Science - BSc
  Study mode
  Full-time
  Duration of the course
  3 Years
  Leading to a career in
  Speech and Language Therapy
- Contact details
  courseinfo@gre.ac.uk [10]
  020 8331 9000
- Region
  South East
  Admissions address
  Central Avenue
  Chatham
  ME4 4TB
  United Kingdom

Speech and Language Therapy (Including Placement Year)

University of Essex

View course [11] Opens in a new window

- Qualification
  Bachelor of Science (with Honours) - BSc (Hons)
  Study mode
  Full-time
  Duration of the course
  4 Years
  Leading to a career in
  Speech and Language Therapy

- Contact details
  admit@essex.ac.uk [12]
  01206 873666
- Region
  East of England
  Admissions address
  University of Essex
  Wivenhoe Park
  Colchester
  CO4 3SQ
  England

Speech and Language Therapy

University of Essex

View course [11] Opens in a new window
- Qualification
  Bachelor of Science (with Honours) - BSc (Hons)
  Study mode
  Full-time
  Duration of the course
  3 Years
  Leading to a career in
  Speech and Language Therapy
- Contact details
  admit@essex.ac.uk [12]
  01206 873666
- Region
  East of England
  Admissions address
  University of Essex
  Wivenhoe Park
  Colchester
  CO4 3SQ
  England

Speech and Language Therapy (with foundation year)

Manchester Metropolitan University

View course [13] Opens in a new window
- Qualification
  Bachelor of Science - BSc
  Study mode
  Full-time
  Duration of the course
  4 years
  Leading to a career in

Speech and Language Therapy
- Contact details
  courses@mmu.ac.uk [14]
  0161 247 69 69
- Region
  North West
  Admissions address
  Academic Division
  Oxford Road
  All Saints
  Manchester
  M15 6BH
  United Kingdom

Speech and Language Therapy

De Montfort University

View course [15] Opens in a new window
- Qualification
  Bachelor of Science (with Honours) - BSc (Hons)
  Study mode
  Full-time
  Duration of the course
  3 Years
  Leading to a career in
  Speech and Language Therapy
- Contact details
  admissions@dmu.ac.uk [16]
  0116 2078443
- Region
  East Midlands
  Admissions address
  The Gateway
  Leicester
  LE1 9BH
  England
- Load more Load more results [17]

- **Live vacancies**

Find a vacancy

Enter your location or postcode

Show results within

Search

Other roles that may interest you

- Speech and language therapy assistant [18]
- Podiatrist [19]
- Occupational therapist [20]
- Occupational therapy support worker [21]

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[1] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/privacy-and-cookies/#CookieDeclarationChangeConsentChange [2] https://www.youtube.com/NHSCareers [3] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#developmental_language_disorder [4] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Stroke [5] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/speech-and-language-therapist/real-life-story-max-elswood [6] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Grades_A-C [7] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/study-and-training/considering-or-university/financial-support-university [8] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/working-health/working-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates [9] https://www.gre.ac.uk/undergraduate-courses/eduhea/speech-and-language-therapy-bsc-hons [10] mailto: courseinfo@gre.ac.uk [11] https://www.essex.ac.uk/courses/UG01110/1/BSc-Speech-and-Language-Therapy?startdate=2024/25 [12] mailto: admit@essex.ac.uk [13] https://www.mmu.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/how-to-apply/foundation-year#ai-2917-11 [14] mailto: courses@mmu.ac.uk [15] https://www.dmu.ac.uk/study/courses/undergraduate-courses/speech-and-language-therapy-bsc-hons-degree/speech-and-language-therapy-bsc-hons.aspx [16] mailto: admissions@dmu.ac.uk [17] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/printpdf/215?page=1 [18] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-support-worker/roles-healthcare-support-worker/speech-and-language-therapy-assistant [19] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/podiatrist [20] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/occupational-therapist [21] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-support-worker/roles-healthcare-support-worker/occupational-therapy-support-worker