

# Entry requirements and training (speech and language therapist)

This page has information on the entry requirements and training needed to become a speech and language therapist.

To practise as a speech and language therapist, you must be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC [1]). To register with the HCPC [1], you first need to successfully complete an approved degree (which takes three or four years full time or up to six years part time). There are also some postgraduate programmes which usually take 2 years. A degree apprenticeship standard in speech and language therapy has also been approved.

## University course

Courses in speech and language therapy may have different names, including:

- speech and language pathology
- speech science
- human communication - speech and language therapy

Courses differ but all involve a lot of practical work with patients.

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 [2]), including English language, maths and science

or alternative qualifications, including

- BTEC, HND or HNC which includes science
- 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. Wherever you study, you will need to show that you have an understanding of speech and language therapy. It is a good idea to spend some time with a registered speech and language therapist to see what the work is like.

Once you've successfully completed a programme approved by the HCPC [1], you are then eligible to apply

for registration with the HCPC [1]. Once registered as a practitioner, you'll be required to retain your name on the register by keeping your knowledge and skills up to date and paying an annual retention fee.

## Financial support while studying at university

You'll be entitled to receive at least £5,000 a year towards 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 about financial support while at university. [3]

## Degree apprenticeship

A degree apprenticeship in speech and language therapy has been approved. This will offer an alternative route to registration with the HCPC [1]. There are no nationally set entry requirements for degree apprenticeships - this will be down to the employer offering the apprenticeship - but you will typically need level 3 qualifications as you will be studying at degree level. Apprenticeships will be with employers, with study at university and vacancies will appear on the NHS Jobs website [4] and the Government's Find an Apprenticeship website [5].

## Want to learn more?

- Find speech and language therapy courses on our course finder [6]
- Find out how to become a speech and language therapy assistant [7]

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|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Personal characteristics | Expand / collapse |
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Personal characteristics needed by speech and language therapists include:

- be able to work with people of all ages
- enjoy using language and communication to help people
- be able to motivate people
- be able to reassure people
- enjoy working alone or as a member of a team

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|-----------------|-------------------|
| Skills required | Expand / collapse |
|-----------------|-------------------|

Skills needed by speech and language therapists include:

- excellent communication
- ability to motivate people
- organisation
- ability to explain treatment to patients
- business skills for private practice
- problem solving
- leadership.

## **Links**

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#HCPC>

[2] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Grades\\_A-C](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Grades_A-C)

[3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/study-and-training/considering-or-university/financial-support-university>

[4] <http://www.jobs.nhs.uk>

[5] <https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch>

[6] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/course-finder?field\\_leading\\_to\\_a\\_career\\_in\\_tid=205&field\\_qualification\\_type\\_tid=All&field\\_study\\_mode\\_tid=A](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/course-finder?field_leading_to_a_career_in_tid=205&field_qualification_type_tid=All&field_study_mode_tid=A)

[7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/clinical-support-staff/speech-and-language-therapy-assistant>