

COURSE OUTLINE

MSc: Human Communication Sciences

Course Structure

The Programme runs for a calendar year from September to August of the following year. This extended academic year enables you to spread your studying over a longer year, and to take advantage of the best times for you personally to study.

Students take the following modules:

a) The following core units with a total value of 75 credits:

HCS6001	Research Methods in Human Communication Sciences	30 credits
HCS6003	Methods in Clinical Linguistics	15 credits
HCS6005	Professional Research Skills in Human Communication Sciences	15 credits
HCS6006	ICT applications in Human Communication Sciences	15 credits

b) A choice of optional modules units to the value of 45 credits

c) Research Project

HCS6007	Research Project (Dissertation)	60 credits
---------	---------------------------------	------------

TOTAL: 180 credits

Core Module Outlines

HCS6003: Methods in Clinical Linguistics

Students will receive a grounding in methods relevant to the linguistic study of communication disorders. (1) Introduction to clinical phonetics and linguistics. (2) Analysing atypical speech, including: phonetic transcription and perceptual analysis; acoustic and instrumental analysis; speech perception and recognition; phonological analysis. (3) Analysing atypical language and communication, including: Analysis of syntax, morphology, semantics and pragmatics; Conversation Analysis and cognitive-linguistic analysis. Students will focus on analytical methods relevant to their own research, and will be encouraged to reflect on the theoretical assumptions underlying the methods in question, and to be aware of alternative approaches.

Course aims:

- Inform students of the key theoretical and practical issues involved in undertaking research into atypical speech and language, including those related to the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative phonetic and linguistic data.
- Assist students in developing practical skills in analysing atypical speech and language at different linguistic levels.

HCS6005: Professional Research Skills in HCS

This module addresses the capabilities that are necessary for working effectively as a researcher in human communication sciences. These include effectiveness in the following areas: writing; teaching; presentation skills for conferences; interpersonal and communication

skills; teamworking. The course will address the range of spoken and written outputs from a research project, and in the area of teaching skills, issues in small and large group teaching will be addressed.

Course aims:

- To develop the skills necessary to operate effectively as a researcher in human communication sciences.
- To provide students with the opportunity to understand the range of spoken and written outputs from the research process, and key characteristics of different styles and outputs.
- To assist students in developing the appropriate attitudes and skills in communication to facilitate effective performance in team-working, presenting research, and teaching.

HCS6006: ICT Applications in HCS

Students are encouraged to develop their knowledge and skills in a broad range of ICT applications, with particular emphasis on those relevant to research in HCS. These include applications to support study, research and presentation (including word-processing, spreadsheets, reference management, and presentation software); information resources (bibliographic databases and other networked resources); augmentative communication; capture of audio and video of speech and language data; speech and language corpora and specialized software for acquisition and analysis of phonetic and linguistic data.

Course aims:

- Enable students to develop their knowledge and skills in the use of information communication technology (ICT) applications software and internet-based resources.
- Establish competence in information literacy and develop information management skills.
- Provide students with understanding and skills in specialist applications software for research in human communication sciences (HCS).

HCS 6001 Research Methods

This module exposes students to critical issues of research methodology in human communication sciences. It combines a range of teaching approaches and activities to help students develop the practical skills needed to design and conduct a research study. Topics include formulating hypotheses, study design, data collection, and selected issues in statistical analysis. A key skill that will be developed is the ability to search for and critically evaluate relevant research methodologies. Students will compile a learning log which will be used to write a final piece of coursework outlining their dissertation methodology and its rationale.

Aims are to:

- to support students to become competent in reading about and using scientific evidence and to undertake research.
- to inform students of key issues in design and implementation of research across the range of relevant methodologies.
- to develop understanding of key concepts of descriptive and inferential statistics
- to develop the ability to interpret the output from statistical data analysis.
- to develop understanding of qualitative methodologies and analysis of qualitative data.

HCS 6007 Research Project

Students will design, implement and write up a research project on a topic of their choice, under the guidance of their academic supervisor.

Aims are to:

- to enhance students knowledge and understanding of the process of research
- to provide further research training and experience of carrying out an original research project to develop students as research practitioners

- to provide opportunities for students to advance their knowledge and understanding in their chosen area of study within the field of language and communication impairment.
- to provide opportunities to undertake data analysis in the methodology selected.
- to develop research presentation skills
- to develop skills in critical analysis of research findings in the field.

Teaching and Learning Methods

There will be a range of learning opportunities, lectures, workshops and tutorials.

Independent study

Teaching is supplemented by independent study using a range of online learning material via MOLE, the University's online learning environment. These will include readings and associated learning activities, links with appropriate web-based material and participation in virtual seminars online. Students should be confident in their IT skills and in using a computer and the internet.

Tutorial Support

Regular group tutorials will be held through the year. You will also be allocated a personal tutor who will also meet with you individually from time to time.

Assessment: Each module is assessed by written assignments.

If you require any further information about the course, please contact the Course Secretary: Kathryn Sharpe, k.sharpe@sheffield.ac.uk, 0114 222 2402 or the Programme Director: Dr Sara Howard, s.howard@sheffield.ac.uk, 0114 222 2448.