

## COURSE OUTLINE

### MSc / PGDip / PGCert: Speech Difficulties

#### Course Structure

The Programme runs for a calendar year from September to August of the following year, although students on the PG Certificate and Diploma will usually have submitted all of their written assignments by the middle of July. 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. Some students will study full-time by attendance and there is also the option to study part-time and by distance learning.

**Postgraduate Certificate** students will take the following 4 modules part-time in one year (Total **60 credits**):

HCS 6027	Developing an Evidence Base for Practice	15 credits
HCS 6025	Spoken and Written Language	15 credits
HCS 6021	Speech Difficulties 1 : Nature and Investigation	15 credits
HCS 6022	Speech Difficulties 2 : Intervention & Management	15 credits

**Postgraduate Diploma** students will take the above 4 modules plus the following either full-time in one year or part-time in 2 years (Total **120 credits**):

- a) HCS 6001 Research Methods 30 credits
- b) 1 or 2 option modules to the value of 30 credits

**MSc** students will take the above modules plus the following either full-time in one year or part-time in 2 years (Total **180 credits**):

HCS 6007	Research Project	60 credits
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#### Module Outlines

##### ***HCS 6027 Developing an Evidence Base for Practice***

This module develops knowledge, understanding and skills for the promotion of evidence based practice for practitioners in education, health and social welfare contexts. Students will be introduced to levels and types of evidence, develop skills in framing questions about their practice, searching and reading the literature, and in critical analysis. Principles of assessment practice and psychometric interpretation will be explored. Students will develop skills in evaluating their own practice.

Aims are to:

- Examine the need for evidence-based practice for children with speech, language and communication impairments.

- Equip professionals with the knowledge and skills to develop an evidence-base for practice.
- Develop the understanding and skills to frame appropriate questions.
- Explore commonly used types of evidence in education, social welfare and health.
- Develop understanding of principles of assessment practice and psychometrics.
- Develop information literacy and skills for searching the literature.
- Develop the ability to critical analyse research literature that uses a range of methodologies.
- Support practitioners to develop as reflective practitioners who are evaluating their own practice.

### ***HCS 6025 Spoken and Written Language***

This module focuses on the development of spoken and written language, with specific references to phonological and literacy development. The relationship between speech and literacy is explored. Individual differences in speech and literacy skills are discussed. Theoretical perspectives and research findings about dyslexia and common types of developmental speech difficulty will be evaluated. Implications for practice are explored, including intervention strategies.

Aims are to:

- Outline the development of spoken and written language.
- Present a psycholinguistic approach to the study of speech and literacy, and exploration of the relationship between the two.
- Explore the theoretical underpinnings of the nature of dyslexia and developmental speech disorder and how these can be applied to management.
- Explore appropriate intervention and management issues.
- Develop skills in critical analysis of research findings in the field.
- Develop collaborative practice.
- Develop academic writing to include use of research evidence to support discussion.

### ***HCS 6021 Speech 1: Nature and Investigation***

This module offers a lifespan study of the nature of developmental speech difficulties from a range of perspectives: historical, medical, developmental, linguistic/cross-linguistic, phonetic, acoustic, psycholinguistic, psychosocial, educational. It then examines how developmental speech difficulties can be investigated drawing on knowledge and skills from each of these perspectives. These investigations include qualitative analysis of speech data; psychometric testing and application of ICT. Students will study current research into both theoretical aspects of speech difficulties and application to practice in a range of contexts.

Aims are to:

- Develop students' understanding of the nature of developmental speech difficulties across the lifespan.
- Emphasise the associated difficulties which accompany speech difficulties, in particular, literacy and psychosocial aspects.
- Introduce students to a range of techniques used for investigating speech.
- Skill students in carrying out investigations of speech and its difficulties.
- Develop students' knowledge of how theoretical models and frameworks can be applied to the study of developmental speech difficulties

### ***HCS 6022 Speech 2: Intervention and Management***

This module draws on current research into the management of clients with developmental speech difficulties in a range of contexts (e.g. schools, clinic, units) and situations. It adopts a range of perspectives (e.g. historical, medical, developmental, linguistic/cross-linguistic, psycholinguistic, psychosocial, educational, computer sciences) in order to plan intervention programmes for preschool children, school-age children, adolescents and adults with

developmental speech and associated literacy and psychosocial difficulties. Intervention programmes for individuals and groups are evaluated by applying critical analysis skills to the research methodologies adopted. Different approaches to management, e.g. hands-on intervention, consultative role, working through others (e.g. parents / carers and assistants) are explored.

Aims are to:

- Develop students' understanding of how theoretical models and frameworks can be applied to the management of developmental speech difficulties
- Emphasise the associated difficulties which need to be taken into account when working with children/adults with speech difficulties, in particular, literacy and psychosocial aspects.
- Introduce students to a range of intervention and research techniques used for working with children with speech difficulties.
- Skill students in how to evaluate intervention studies
- Skill students in interaction skills when carrying out intervention with children/adults with speech difficulties.
- Examine critically the management of developmental speech difficulties by working through others, e.g. assistants/carers/parents.

### ***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

### **Study Blocks**

There is a 2 – 3 day study block for each module. While not mandatory, students are expected to attend these if at all possible, as these are an integral part of the course. Although, we do understand that this may not be possible for students based outside of the UK, or who have particular circumstances. The lectures and workshops will support your independent study.

### **Independent study**

Teaching on study blocks 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. Some core reading will be supplied electronically via the University Library. Students should be confident in their IT skills and in using a computer and the internet.

### **Tutorial Support**

For full-time students regular group tutorials will be held through the year. For part-time / distance learning students, contact with tutors and other students is maintained through MOLE in virtual seminars and other activities and by email. This will support your independent study and assignment preparation.

**Assessment:** Each module is assessed by a written assignment.

## Progression Through the Course

Students are able to transfer flexibly between the awards.

A student may:

enrol on the PG Certificate and decide to move to the PG Diploma

enrol on the PG Diploma and decide to move to MSc

enrol on the PG Diploma or MSc & decide to finish with the PG Certificate

enrol on the MSc & decide to finish with the PG Diploma

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