

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

CREDIT UNIT STATEMENT

Bachelor of Science in Speech and Hearing Sciences

The new structure of the Bachelor of Science, Speech and Hearing Sciences Programme facilitates the application of theory to practice (translational learning) in all components of the degree. The new programme introduces concepts of lifespan development, evidence-based practice and person-centred service delivery in speech therapy early in the degree. The structure ensures students develop a firm foundational knowledge base of medical sciences, audiology, behavioural sciences, speech sciences and clinical linguistics before developing critical understandings of the nature of communication and swallowing impairments in discipline-specific courses and professional practice. The structure of the degree and the content of the courses maximises the bridging between theory and practice. The new structure differs from the old in three ways (please refer to Tables 1-2 of Annex I). First, electives are removed and discipline-specific credits are increased, in line with other professional degrees at HKU and similar SHS degrees elsewhere. Second, large-credit courses are decomposed into 6-credit courses to provide students with more focused learning opportunities and to increase the opportunity for students to receive feedback on learning. Third, clinical courses commence earlier in the degree. The new structure is supported by the adoption of a blended technology-enhanced learning environment.

The academic courses are 6-credit courses, with professional/clinical practice courses of 6- and 12-credits in years 3 and 4, and the capstone research and clinical courses in year 5 retain the prior 30-credit structure. Courses involve classroom activities (lectures, workshops, group enquiry-based case discussion), online interaction (recorded lectures, clinical demonstrations and case examples), reading, discussing, problem-solving, research and clinical practice. Summative assessment of student learning is assessed by diverse measures including online quizzes, group reports, written essays, written case reports of diagnosis and management, clinical performance ratings, and written examination. Formative assessment of student learning is via online quizzes, interim clinical performance ratings, and verbal comments on group discussions delivered in-situ. Self-assessment of learning is via reflective logs.

1. Classroom activities (6 credits): 36 contact hours; 120-150 hours of study load including preparation for in-class activities, written assignment, and/or examination.
2. Clinical practicum courses (6, 12 or 30 credits):

Setting. Clinical training takes place in a wide variety of settings. Internal clinics in the division evaluate and treat clients with a range of communication and swallowing disorders. External settings include hospitals, rehabilitation centres, early education training centres, special schools, as well as private clinics.

Supervision. Students work under the supervision of qualified, experienced speech therapists and audiologists. Supervision is gradually decreased to foster independent work as the students approach graduation.

Placement. Year 2 students start by attending clinical skills lectures and workshops and observation of internal speech and language clinics and community adult clinics. Clinical practica for Years 3 and 4 students is 6 credits in Semester 1, scheduled as one-half day of hands-on practice, supported by reflective practice. For Years 3 and 4, 12-credit clinical courses in Semester 2 are scheduled as two x half day placements for hands-on practice.

The clinical practicum of Year 5 students is scheduled throughout the academic year, and student take 4 of 5 practicum options, one of which is an international practicum. A minimum of 450 hours of clinical experience will be acquired according to the guidelines of the Royal RCSLT (The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists) 2000.

Assessment. In third, fourth, and fifth years, the assessment of clinical skills is based on supervisor's rating at the middle and at the end of each placement. For third and fourth year students, the mid-placement rating is formative and the end of placement rating is summative. In addition to the supervisor's report, fourth year students will be assessed through a written case study submitted at the end of the year. Similarly, fifth year students are assessed through two written case studies, one submitted at the end of each semester, together with the formative and summative supervisor evaluations.

3. Capstone research course (30 credits)

The student carries out a 9-month research project under the supervision of a teaching staff member. It is supported by regular meetings with the supervisor and a series of dissertation seminars. The contact hours are relatively few, 12-18 hours of meetings and 12 hours of seminars. Students spend most of their time working independently on data collection, data analysis, and thesis writing. Assessment is based on a research report with a main text of no more than 6,000 words.

Tables 1-2 in Annex I illustrate the change in credit structure and foundation and discipline-specific courses.