Speech Pathology as a career

Speech pathologists work with individuals of any age who have special needs in communication and/or swallowing. These may be associated with diagnosed impairments, genetic and medical conditions or trauma, or result from socio-cultural, socio-economic or unknown causes.

This coursework program prepares professionals to practise speech pathology or to move on to advanced research in the field. Graduates will meet entry-level standards of Speech Pathology Australia, the national accrediting body, which will enable them to practise in Australia and many other countries around the world, including the UK, Canada, and throughout Asia.

Teaching and learning strategies

The course is offered by the Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology and is founded on principles designed to encourage life-long learning in the practice of speech pathology. This course involves an innovative, enquiry-based curriculum, incorporating a problem based learning format. This will be supported by a wide variety of other teaching and learning strategies, including lectures, practicals and student seminars and presentations.

Students experience work-based learning from the start of their course, practising their skills under the supervision of clinical educators.

Similarly, a variety of assessment methods is used, including peer and self assessment, performance within authentic tasks and competency based assessment of clinical work.

Employment Opportunities

Graduates of the Flinders Master of Speech Pathology program will be equipped to begin practice in a wide range of health and educational settings. The course fosters students' ability to respond effectively to the changing nature of professional knowledge and practice, ensuring their ability to provide quality services throughout their working life.

Speech pathologists practise in various contexts around the world. In Australia, they work in community and state agencies and institutions, charitable organisations as well as non-government organisations.

Some examples include:
- hospitals
- rehabilitation centres
- community health settings
- aged care facilities
- education settings, including special schools and special education units
- early intervention centres
- private practice
- universities and research facilities
- mental health settings

Employment prospects are good, although opportunities in the public sector are naturally influenced by government policy.
Program of study

The Master of Speech Pathology is a 72 unit graduate entry program completed over two full years, including intensive summer topics. There are three strands of study in the Masters.

1. Professional Studies and Communication Sciences

The content within this strand of study is delivered via problem based learning (PBL) in which students encounter a weekly case study in small groups facilitated by a tutor, and followed up with independent learning. The PBL case studies are supported by lectures and other learning resources. The focus of this strand is on the areas of professional practice, including speech, voice, language, fluency, swallowing and hearing.

Lifespan development and social context and its impact on health are also highlighted.

2. Speech Pathology Skills and Practice

In this strand of study students undertake placements in work settings under the supervision of clinical educators. The topic is reinforced by regular clinical skills tutorials on campus. In year 2, students undertake a block placement of 8-10 weeks duration which may be completed in Adelaide, rural or remote South Australia/Northern Territory, and in some instances, in the student’s country of origin.

3. Research

In the Research strand of study students are introduced to the notion of Evidence-Based Practice. They develop an understanding of test measurement and the use of statistics and learn how to critique research publications. An independent research project is completed over the second year of study and students conduct and analyze an investigation of their own design.

Elective

In addition to the topics described above, students undertake an elective in the summer of year 2. This allows students to pursue an area of particular interest. Students from Canada, or those with a particular interest in working in Canada, can choose an Audiology elective to ensure that they meet the audiology hours requirements for speech pathologists set out by the Canadian Association (CASLPA).

To apply

Applicants normally must hold at least a bachelor’s degree from a recognised higher education institution, and typically have achieved a minimum of a credit average.

There is no preferred undergraduate degree for admission

All suitable applicants will be required to participate in an interview as part of the application process. Phone interviews will be available for offshore applicants.

Applications will be considered as soon as they are received, with interview rounds held in April, July and September each year. Offers will be made after each round of interviews.

Applications should be received by no later than July 31st for study in the following year.

Contact us:

studyspeechpathology@flinders.edu.au
www.flinders.edu.au/speechpath
Flinders University
www.flinders.edu.au

Application forms
http://www.flinders.edu.au/international/students/apply.html

Unique in Australia

The Departments of Speech Pathology and Audiology of Flinders University and Flinders Medical Centre have amalgamated to provide clinical services, teaching and research.

This is unique in Australia and allows us to provide students with an outstanding learning environment.

There are no prerequisite subjects for study in the Master of Speech Pathology at Flinders University.

Small Class Size and PBL curriculum

There are 18 students in each year of the Master of Speech Pathology. These small class sizes enable students and staff to get to know each other, and provides a friendly supportive learning environment.

The PBL curriculum fosters students’ active learning and enquiry through small group investigation of case-based materials.

Why study in Adelaide?

Adelaide is a vibrant and attractive city with a relaxed lifestyle, high standard of living and is Australia’s most affordable city.

For further information:
www.southaustralia.com

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Master of Speech Pathology: CRICOS CODE:054304D

This information is accurate at the time of publication (June 2006). Flinders University reserves the right to alter any course or topic contained herein without prior notice.