

# **BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (SPEECH PATHOLOGY), BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (SPEECH PATHOLOGY) (HONOURS), MASTER OF SPEECH PATHOLOGY (MG-SPPATH)**

## **Introduction**

The Speech Pathology courses at Curtin University are professionally accredited and graduating students will need to meet the requirements of the professional body to register to work in this profession. Students should be familiar with the requirements set out by the following accrediting body which may impact their progression throughout their studies and in entering the profession:

[Speech Pathology Australia](#)

## **How to read the inherent requirement statements**

A series of inherent requirement statements have been developed which are specific to this course. To be successful in your studies all course requirements need to be met, which includes the academic/ theoretical content and practical application (industry placement). The requirements ensure students understand what is expected of them to complete their studies and therefore make an informed decision about their chosen course of study.

### **Each inherent requirement is made up of the following sections:**

1. Introduction to the inherent requirement
2. Justification for the inherent requirement
3. Examples you must be able to demonstrate to meet each inherent requirement.

Curtin will endeavour to meet all students' needs to ensure success with their studies. Students with a disability or health conditions may be able to have reasonable adjustments made to support them to meet the inherent requirements. For further support please contact [Curtin's AccessAbility Services](#)

## **INHERENT REQUIREMENT STATEMENTS**

### **ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR**

1. The Speech Pathology profession is governed by the codes, guidelines and policies ensuring Speech Pathologists and student Speech Pathologists are accountable and responsible for professional and ethical behaviour.
2. Compliance with these standards (including codes of ethics), guidelines, and policies facilitates safe, competent interactions and relationships for students and others with whom they engage, and ensures the physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of the individual is not placed at risk.
3. Examples:

- Complying with academic and non-academic codes of conduct and professional standards, including those relating to academic integrity, informed consent, privacy, and behaviour that respects personal and professional boundaries and acceptable Speech Pathology service quality and competency standards.
- Work with others effectively, co-operatively, and in a professional manner in diverse and changing academic and practical experience settings (classrooms and workplace settings).
- Having and aspiring to maintain, an academic record with no breaches of the Student Charter.
- Practising within Speech Pathology standards.

## BEHAVIOURAL STABILITY

1. A range of personal, interpersonal, and social interaction skills are required to function and adapt effectively and sensitively in this role. The student needs to demonstrate these skills to support their ability to work constructively in a diverse and changing academic and clinical environment.
2. Speech Pathologists are required to conduct themselves professionally and safely, and be mindful of maintaining such professionalism even in stressful situations. Personal, interpersonal, and social skills are required to work individually and in teams in changing and unpredictable environments.
3. Examples:
  - Manage multiple tasks and complex demands with composure and focus.
  - Effectively prioritise competing demands to manage workload.
  - Accept and fulfil responsibilities for consumer (e.g., patient and client) care.
  - Manage own physical and mental health effectively, ensuring appropriate others are aware of conditions that may fluctuate and impact performance.
  - Be receptive and respond appropriately to constructive feedback.
  - Be able to work effectively in the face of uncertainty and adapt to changing environments.

## LEGAL

1. Speech Pathology practice is mandated by legislation and regulatory requirements to enable the delivery of safe, quality services
2. The student must comply with Australian Law, professional regulations and scope of practice. Compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements and scope of practice ensure that the student is responsible and accountable for their practice and reduce the risk of harm to self and others.
3. Examples:
  - Meet the requirements for student registration with Speech Pathology Australia [https://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/SPAweb/Join\\_Us/Students/Student\\_Application.aspx](https://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/SPAweb/Join_Us/Students/Student_Application.aspx)
  - Comply with child protection and safety, work health and safety, and anti-discrimination legislation and policies.

- Practise within contemporary Federal and State Speech Pathology laws and regulations.
- Adhere to immunisation and health screening requirements for the course.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

1. Effective verbal English communication with consumers of speech pathology services and university and clinical staff is required for effective learning and safe and effective practice.
2. Communication is critical to developing respect, empathy and trust.
3. Some interactions may be limited to verbal communication because of physical limitations of the individual (e.g. injury, disease or congenital conditions).
4. Timely, accurate and effective delivery of instructions is critical to individual safety, treatment and management.
5. Throughout the course, Speech Pathology students need to develop and demonstrate:
  - Proficiency in verbal English to allow for comprehensible two-way discussions, at conversational speed, audible speaking volume, and appropriate tone of voice:
  - Sensitivity to individual and/or cultural differences.
  - Ability to understand and respond to verbal communication accurately, appropriately and in a timely manner.
  - Ability to provide clear instructions in the context of the situation.
  - Provide timely, clear feedback and reporting.
6. Examples:
  - Detect when speech sounds or words are not produced correctly.
  - Understanding questions when working with a group of children in a classroom
  - An elderly patient in a hospital is able to understand your instructions
  - Provide a verbal report about a patient's progress to a nurse.
  - Build conversational rapport with a patient to encourage their trust and cooperation in the healthcare consultation.
  - Effectively communicate and confirm instructions in noisy environments.
  - Question directions and decisions that are unclear.
  - Provide timely and audible responses to classes and groups in classroom, laboratory and workplace settings.
  - Present information to an audience of health professionals.

### **NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

1. Ability to recognise, interpret and respond to non-verbal cues is essential for effective communication, empathy and gaining trust and respect as a developing health professional.
2. Throughout the course students will need to develop and demonstrate:
  - Sensitivity to individual and/or cultural differences (and recognition of their own cultural and linguistic background)

- Consistent and appropriate facial expressions and eye contact, being mindful of space and time boundaries.
  - Ability to observe, understand and respond appropriately to non-verbal cues assists with building rapport and gaining trust and respect in academic and professional relationships.
  - Being sensitive to individual and/or cultural differences demonstrates respect and empathy and helps develop trusting relationships.
3. Examples:
- Respond appropriately when a person indicates discomfort or a similar emotion.
  - Ensure professional expression of emotion.
  - Communicate effectively with people in distress.
  - Communicate respectfully with people of different gender, sexuality and age, and from diverse cultural, religious and socio-economic backgrounds.
  - Use appropriate eye contact, gestures, facial expression and an open body language to build rapport and demonstrate understanding and empathy.

## **WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**

1. Written English proficiency is required to produce cohesive academic arguments and demonstrate academic writing conventions, including paraphrasing.
2. Students need to develop and demonstrate:
  - Construction of coherent written communication appropriate to the circumstances and level for the audience,
  - Construction of text reflective of the required academic standards conveys knowledge and understanding of relevant subject matter for professional practice.
  - Accurate written communication, including record keeping and client notes (vital to provide consistent and safe patient care).
3. Examples:
  - Write session plans, reports and notes.
  - Summarise and appropriately reference a range of literature in written assignments.
  - Construct written arguments using grammatically correct and meaningful sentences.
  - Produce accurate, concise, clear, legally compliant patient notes in both handwritten and electronic formats, in a timely manner.
  - Produce accurate, concise and clear reports from laboratory and practical work.

## **COGNITION**

### **KNOWLEDGE AND COGNITIVE SKILLS**

1. An appropriate level of knowledge and cognitive skills must be demonstrated to provide safe and competent Speech Pathology services.
2. The student needs to develop and demonstrate:
  - an ability to locate appropriate and relevant information.
  - the ability to process information relevant to practice.
  - the ability to integrate and implement knowledge in practice.
  - Acquisition, recall and application of knowledge, consistent and effective processing of information,
  - attention to detail,

- theoretical deliberation (problem solving, critical evaluation and professional decision making)
  - life-long learning behaviours are required for safe and competent patient care.
3. Examples:
- Present assignments for assessment that involve finding, reading combining and evaluating information.
  - Read, understand and apply scientific research to the health problems of individuals.
  - Consider carefully all available information when considering recommendations about eating and dinner after stroke.
  - Test the language skills of a 2-year-old child.
  - Complete a paediatric assessment on a 13-year-old over a 90 minute session.
  - Make safe and appropriate clinical decisions from retained knowledge and sourced credible evidence.
  - Notice and respond effectively to small but critical changes in instructions, measurements or reported symptoms.
  - Engage in scientific, clinical and ethical reasoning.
  - Engage appropriately with colleagues and team members from other disciplines (recognise and understand various scopes of practice and roles across practice contexts)
  - Complete professional practice tasks in a safe and reasonable time frame.
  - Competently use information and communication technology, including search engines, common software and online forms, and professional practice systems.

## **LITERACY (LANGUAGE)**

1. Competence in reading and comprehension, and attention to detail in English, are required for effective development as a student Speech Pathologist.
2. The student needs to develop and demonstrate:
  - The ability to accurately acquire information and convey appropriate, effective messages,
  - The ability to read and comprehend a range of literature and information and the understanding and implementation of academic conventions to construct written text in a scholarly manner.
  - The ability to acquire, read, decode, interpret and comprehend information and accurately convey messages is fundamental to assessment, diagnosis, and management of service users.
3. Examples:
  - Reading and comprehending handwriting, online and printed materials.
  - Reading and interpreting charts, spreadsheets and graphs.
  - Understand hazard signs and warnings.
  - Comprehension of technical documents including risk assessments, standard operating policies, and procedures; and,
  - Integrating and summarising information accurately in a meaningful manner.

## **NUMERACY**

1. Accurate mathematical processing and reasoning are essential for safe and effective practice as a student speech pathologist.

2. Examples:
  - Accurate scoring of assessment tasks and comparison of scores to normative or criterion-referenced data.
  - Correctly interpret statistical values when engaging in research in speech pathology

## **REFLECTIVE SKILLS**

1. Speech Pathology practice requires self-awareness and a capacity for reflection and reflexivity in order to consider the effect of one's own issues, actions, values and behaviours.
2. A student therefore needs to demonstrate:
  - The ability to purposefully reflect on their academic and professional performance,
  - The awareness of own thinking
  - The ability to evaluate and adapt to challenges in learning and clinical practice environments.
3. Examples:
  - Understanding and respecting the points of views of others.
  - Respect personal and professional boundaries – understand the role of the student speech pathologist.
  - Manage uncertainties in scientific and professional decision making.
  - Be aware of, and take responsibility for, own role in inter-personal and team interactions. Recognise when one's own thinking differs from another person's perspective and respond respectfully.
  - Receive and respond appropriately to constructive feedback, including learning from academic and professional practice setbacks.

## **STRENGTH AND MOBILITY**

### **GROSS MOTOR SKILLS**

1. Speech Pathology practice involves physical demands and requires gross motor function.
2. Students will need to develop and demonstrate:
  - Gross motor skills to function within scope of practice, including sufficient strength, range of motion, coordination and independent mobility (using mobility aids if necessary) to meet practice needs in a time-constrained environment.
  - Functional capacity to manage in the university and workplace learning environments, for safe and effective practice.
3. Examples:
  - Sit, stand and walk for periods of 2-4 hours at a time.
  - Maintain an upright position while using both upper limbs to perform a task.
  - Manoeuvre around equipment and in confined spaces (e.g. workstations, clinical rooms, and store rooms).
  - Independently carry and manipulate equipment and materials (testing materials, food trial materials, paperwork) on varying surfaces and levels, to complete tasks within constrained timeframes.

- Have the physical capability to provide emergency life support.
- Travel to, and participate in, Speech Pathology placements and other fieldwork, and meet the physical demands of those sites.

## **FINE MOTOR SKILLS**

1. Speech Pathology is a profession that requires manual dexterity and fine motor skills to perform practical procedures to deliver safe and effective treatments.
2. Students must use fine motor manual skills and dexterity to manage in the university and workplace learning environments, and for safe and effective practice.
3. Examples:
  - Cleansing hands and forearms using disinfecting products.
  - Using computer equipment (mouse, touchscreens, pointers, keyboards).
  - Independently carry and manipulate instruments, materials, and equipment necessary for clinical care (e.g., use a tongue depressor, manipulate small cutlery, quickly manipulate small objects when testing children).

## **SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE**

1. Speech Pathology requires functional and sustainable physical, cognitive and psychosocial performance to complete complex and extended practice tasks safely and effectively in time-constrained environments.
2. Through the course students will need to develop and demonstrate:
  - Consistent and sustained level of physical energy to complete specific tasks in a timely manner and over time.
  - Ability to perform repetitive activities with a level of concentration until completion of the task.
  - Capacity to maintain consistency and quality of performance throughout the designated period of time.
  - Sufficient physical and mental endurance is required to perform multiple tasks in an assigned period to provide safe and effective care.
3. Examples:
  - Use a tongue depressor, manipulate small cutlery, quickly manipulate small objects when testing children.
  - Maintain a level of concentration to focus on an activity to completion.
  - Perform repetitive tasks (e.g. typing, walking) for periods of 2-4 hours, with appropriate breaks.
  - Sustain study practices and workplace performance to ensure effective learning and application of that learning.
  - Work within own limits of personal and professional competence.



Inherent Requirements <http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/ir>

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