1.	**Awarding Institution**	The University of Newcastle upon Tyne
2.	**Teaching Institution**	The University of Newcastle upon Tyne
3.	**Final Award**	BSc (Hons)
4.	**Programme title**	Speech and Language Sciences
5.	**Accrediting Bodies**	Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists; Health Professions Council
6.	**UCAS Code**	B620
7.	**QAA Subject Benchmarking Groups**	Health Care Programmes
8.	**Date of revision**	April, 2004

9.   **Programme Aims**

The aims of the programme are:

(i)   to provide students with academic and clinical knowledge that meets the accreditation criteria of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists and approval criteria of the Health Professions Council;

(ii)   to foster a synergy between research and teaching;

(iii)   to ensure that teaching provision meets the changing need of employers;

(iv)   to develop and improve students' ability to work both independently and in teams; to use initiative and solve problems; and to prioritise work and meet deadlines.

10.   Intended Learning Outcomes, Teaching and Learning Strategies and Methods, Assessment Strategies and Methods

A   Knowledge and Understanding (see section C in Health Care/Speech and Language Therapy Benchmark Statement)

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate:

A1 a knowledge and understanding of the symptoms, causes, and consequences of the range of human communication disorders;

A2 the clinical skills needed to assess and provide effective treatment, based on evidence-based practice, for individuals with communication disorders;

A3 emerging research skills that will allow them to build the knowledge base of the profession and meet employers' need for professionals able to critically evaluate clinical service provision;

A4 the conceptual and practical skills to enable them to adapt to advances in theory and clinical practice throughout their career. These include relevant knowledge from the disciplines of linguistics, psychology, biological sciences, education and social sciences, and the ability to apply this knowledge effectively;

A5 the knowledge and skill to act as advocates for their profession and the population they will serve as speech and language therapists, including an awareness of legislation and statutory codes affecting speech and language therapy practice.

Teaching and Learning Strategy

A1 & 2 Knowledge base and clinical goals are set for each year of the programme. Stage 1 involves foundation modules in the sciences that underlie the study and description of human communication, including psychology, linguistics, phonetics, human anatomy and physiology. This stage also introduces students to problem-based learning (PBL) in the form of case-based problem solving (CBPS), focussing on adult and child speech disorders. In addition, students are introduced to research methods and clinical processes and given the opportunity to observe patients with communication disorders. Modules in this stage are delivered through a combination of lectures, practical classes and case-based problem solving.

In subsequent stages, greater emphasis is placed on case-based problem solving, both in the classroom and in clinical placements. Increasingly complex problems are set in Stages 2-3, while clinical placements become more varied in service delivery and the populations served. Blocks of clinical experience towards the end of the programme help to prepare students for the workplace and develop the full range of skills required for a licence to practice.

A3 Research skills are taught in all four years of the programme. In Stages 1-2, students are introduced to quantitative methods, statistics and research design. In Stage 3, students begin to prepare for their dissertation by learning how to critically evaluate the research literature, develop a research proposal of their own and submit an application for ethical approval of their project. In Stage 4, students conduct, analyse and write up their own research project in the form of a dissertation.

A4 The rapidly changing knowledge base of the profession is explicitly acknowledged and students required, in CBPS exercises and assignments to efficiently seek relevant information on theoretical and practical issues.

A5 Awareness of the professional context in which speech and language therapists work, current issues, and relevant legislation and requirements are promoted through tutorials, group discussion and the production of a professional issues portfolio.

Assessment Strategy

A1 & 2 Foundation knowledge is assessed through essays, practical exercises, reports, classroom tests and formal exams. Practical skills (eg, phonetics) are examined by practical examination, as well as team reports and verbal presentations on researched

topics. CBPS is assessed by written case management plans and other assignments. Clinical competencies are assessed by examiners observing 'live' sessions, videotaped sessions, an 'unseen' video exam, clinical supervisor ratings and clinical viva voce examinations.

A3 Research skills are assessed by class test, practical data analyses, the presentation of oral and written research proposals, and an empirically-based research project (dissertation).

A4 & 5 Where relevant, professional aspects are assessed as part of clinical case reports, case presentations and 'unseen' exams. In addition, students submit a 'service provision report' in Stage 4.

B   Subject-specific/professional skills (see sections A & B in Health Care/Speech and Language Therapy Benchmark Statement)

Graduates should have:

B1 The ability to make appropriate case management decisions for developmental and acquired disorders of communication, justifying those decisions theoretically.

B2 The clinical competence to provide intervention for developmental and acquired disorders of communication using evidence-based practice.

B3 The ability to objectively and routinely evaluate clinical efficacy.

B4 The ability to critically evaluate service provision policy.

B5 The ability to keep evaluate new research and techniques that become available, and apply these appropriately in working practice.

B6 Good interpersonal skills and be aware of the importance of inter-professional working and how to promote it.

Teaching and Learning Strategy

B1 Speech and language pathology subjects are presented using a case-based problem-solving approach. Students plan case management in classroom exercises and are required to use the same format in their clinical practice placements, enhancing the links between theory and clinical practice.

B2 All case management decisions, including choice of intervention approach must be justified with reference to theoretical and clinical literature in both classroom exercises and clinical practice placements.

B3 & 5 Research skills, including evaluation, are taught in both of the programme. Students are required to evaluate their clinical efficacy in every case they treat, to ensure they have the research skills necessary for clinical practice (e.g., for quality assurance).

B4 Each of the case management plans problem solved, requires justified decisions concerning service delivery. The group treatment placement in semester 1, year requires students to evaluate an aspect of service provision in an SLT service. A mixture of workshops and self-directed learning develops students' ability to deal with professional issues.

B6 Students practise and are given feedback on appropriate interpersonal skills for each of their clinical placements. Awareness of inter-professional working is formally promoted, beginning in Stage 1, with the module, 'Introduction to Social Interaction and Contexts', and at various other points in the programme.

Assessment Strategy

B1 Students are required to complete a minimum of 8 case management plans which receive formative feedback and 7 written case management plans which as assessed in Stages 1-3 of the programme.

B2 All student clinical placements are assessed by clinical supervisor, who indicates whether students have mastered specific competencies set for each year of the programme. Students and supervisors agree learning contracts to ensure that students are exposed to experience needed to attain competencies.

B3 & 5 All clinical placements are also assessed by students presenting a case they have treated, in a *viva voce* examination. Students must demonstrate the ability to use an appropriate clinical efficacy design.

B4 Students submit a Professional Contexts Report in Stage 4, evaluating an aspect of SLT service provision.

B6 Interpersonal skills and awareness of inter-professional working are assessed through clinical supervisor reports (see B2 above) and case presentations.

C   Cognitive skills (see section C in Health Care Benchmark Statement)

The programme provides the opportunity for students to develop and demonstrate:
C1 The ability to search for information efficiently and effectively
C2 The ability to critically evaluate arguments and evidence
C3 The ability to encapsulate complex theoretical positions, drawing conclusions
C4 The ability to identify problems and develop strategies for their resolution

Teaching and Learning Strategy

C1 CBPS learning requires students to seek information.

C2 & 3 Planning case management requires students to weigh evidence, then make decisions that can be explicitly justified. Given the contradictory nature of the literature on many aspects of communication pathology, students must learn to critique evidence to draw conclusions.

C4 In the last two years of the course the problems set become more complex, so that students need to identify the nature of the problem before they attempt to solve it.

Assessment Strategy

C1, 2, 3. All assessed case-based problem solving assignments; also, group presentations in the 'School Age Child' module in Stage 2 and a professional in-service presentation in the 'Exceptional Development' module in Stage 3.

C4 A number of assessments tap students' ability to identify problems and develop strategies for their resolution: The Audiology Case Management Plan (Stage 3), the Professional Contexts Clinic Report and the 'unseen' clinical examination.

D   Key (transferable) skills (see section C2 in Health Care Benchmark Statement)

Graduates should have:

D1 Effective communication skills.

D2 IT skills.

D3 The ability to prioritise work and meet deadlines.

D4 The ability to work both independently and in teams.

D5 The ability to use initiative and solve problems.

Teaching and Learning Strategy

D1   Verbal presentations, tutorials and case presentations, participating in CBPS group learning, clinical placements.

D2   Students receive information from lecturers via email, seek information through the internet and on-line journal facilities, and use phonetic and language analysis hardware and software.

D3 & 4 The CBPS part of the course encourages self-directed learning, student groups negotiate individual research tasks, integrate information, discuss findings. Changes in the composition of CBPS student groups throughout the programme provide students with the opportunity to learn how to work with a range of personalities.

D5   CBPS exercises and clinical practica promote initiative taking and problem solving.

Assessment Strategy

D1 Case presentations.

D2 Written assignments, bibliographies, clinical equipment, use of PowerPoint in verbal presentations, clinical linguistics and Phonetics assessment.

D3 Penalties are in place for assessments that are submitted late. Students are required to be well prepared for clinical sessions when on placement and write reports and/or produce other materials at the required time.

D4 Group presentations in Stage 3 of the programme require teamwork, with all students in a group receiving a common mark. The Professional Issues portfolio is produced through group collaboration, and all students in the group receive the same mark.

D5   Both CBPS and clinical practicum are assessed throughout the programme.

11.   Programme Curriculum, Structure, and Features:

(i)   Programme Features

The programme is studied on a full-time basis over four years (8 semesters). Each year requires the study of compulsory modules with a credit value of 120. A 10 credit module consists of a notional 100 hours of student effort, including lectures, tutorials, practicals, CBPS group work, private study, completion of coursework, revision and assessment. Modules vary in size from 5 to 40 credits. Block clinical placements exceed the 10 credit point =100hours equation. The following tables show the structure of the BSc programme.

The following table summarises the relationship between student learning and clinical competencies which has closely informed the revision to the undergraduate curriculum:

stage	knowledge base	clinical goals
1	Understand basic concepts in related disciplines.	*Describers:* Observe, transcribe, report, seek information, participate clinically.
2	Integrate information from different disciplines and apply to communication disorder.	*Analysers:* • Apply theory to assessment; • Interpret, clinically question, evaluate skills of self and others; • Use assessment data to plan intervention; • Implement case management using problem solving approach under supervision.
3	Critically evaluate conflicting evidence, present reasoned argument.	*Integrators:* Integrate previous learning to: • select appropriate assessment and intervention approaches; • plan and implement case management using problem solving approach; • critically evaluate assessment and intervention.
4	Generate and justify (clinical) research questions and tasks, interpret data.	*Professionals:* • Apply case-based problem solving approach to novel diagnoses within different clinical contexts. • Demonstrate professionalism through clinically responsible behaviour. • Demonstrate awareness of professional and service provision issues.

(ii)   Curriculum and Structure

<u>Code</u>	<u>Module</u> [1]	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Semester</u>
Stage 1			
SPE106	Research Methods	10	1
SPE109	Introduction to Social Interaction and Contexts	10	2
SPE111	Psychology of Language and Communication	10	1
SPE112	Cases: Articulation Disorder and Dysarthria	10	2
SPE114	Anatomy for Speech and Language	10	1-2
SPE115	Physiology for Speech and Language	10	1
SPE123	Linguistics I	10	1-2
SPE124	Phonetics I	15	1-2
SPE125	Child Language and Development	15	1-2
SPE126	Clinical Education	20	1-2
Stage 2			
SPE211	Research Methods	5	1
SPE212	Clinical Practice	10	1-2
SPE221	Psycholinguistics and Literacy	10	1-2
SPE223	School-Age Child	5	2
SPE224	Phonetics II	25	1-2
SPE225	Linguistics II	15	1-2
SPE232	Memory and Cognition	20	1-2
SPE233	Cases: Phonology, Semantics, Sentence Processing	30	1-2
Stage 3			
SPE311	Clinical Practice	25	1-2
SPE312	Social and Abnormal Psychology (incl. Counselling)	10	1
SPE313	Research Methods	5	2
SPE315	Clinical Neurology & Neuropsychology	15	1
SPE324	Intensives: Voice, Dysfluency, Laryngectomy	15	2
SPE331	Cases: Exceptional Development [2]	30	1-2
SPE332	Cases: Motor-anatomic, Pragmatics, Discourse [2]	20	1-2
Stage 4			
SPE407	Dysphagia [2]	10	1
SPE411	Dissertation [2]	40	1-2
SPE412	Professional Issues [2]	20	1-2
SPE414	Clinical Practice [2]	40	1-2
	Option [2, 3]	10	2

[1] All modules are compulsory.
[2] Honours module.
[3] Options may be selected from modules offered by the Speech & Language Sciences Section or by other academic units and must be approved by the Degree Programme Director at the time of registration for Stage 4.

Clinical Practice

module	semester	clinic	assessment
SPE113	1	Lectures + workshops (12 hrs)	Assignment (25%)
	2	Workshops + clinical practicals (36 hrs) [1]	Observation portfolio (75%)
SPE212	1	Half-day child or adult clinic (36 hrs) [2]	Clinical viva (25%) Clinical evaluation report (25%)
	2	Half-day child or adult clinic (36 hrs) [2]	Clinical viva (25%) Clinical evaluation report (25%)
SPE311	1	Half-day child or adult clinic (36 hrs) [3]	Case presentation (40%) Clinical evaluation report (10%)
	2	6-week block placement (child/adult) (180 hrs) [3]	Written case report (40%) Clinical evaluation report (10%)
SPE414	1	Full-day professional contexts (72 hrs)[2,3]	Written service provision report (30%) Clinical evaluation report (10%)
	2	6-week block placement (child/adult) (180 hrs) [3]	Clinical viva (30%) Unseen case (20%) Clinical evaluation report (10%)

[1] Observation with Newcastle Paediatric Team, Aphasia Clinic, Stroke Club
[2] University clinic
[3] Off-campus clinic

Total practical: 588 hours (aim for half child, half adult); RCSLT requirements: 300 hours.

11 (B) Curriculum and structure of the programme

The learning outcomes are shown in Appendix A. (MOFS)

12.   Criteria for Admission

School/College Leavers
Generally, three A2 level grades required for entry at ABB;
Biology to at least AS level;
GCSE Mathematics at grade C or higher as evidence of adequate numerical skills.

Scottish Highers/Irish Leaving Certificate
AABBB, including Biology.

International Baccalauriate

Mature Students
Each case is considered on its own merits, although evidence of successful recent study is required (e.g. an Access to Higher Education course which includes a Biology module and to which a mark of Distinction is gained in all modules.) Relevant work experience is also useful. Mature students are also individually interviewed by two members of staff.

Overseas Students
Appropriate overseas qualifications are judged on an individual basis. The RCSLT requires an IELTS overall average scores of 7.5 with no mark in any component below 7.

Admissions Policy
Applicants who have received an offer are invited to attend an Open Day to meet staff and talk to current students.

13.   Support for Students and Their Learning:

Induction programme

Stage 1 students:
- an orientation to the Section
- an introduction to the structure of the programme
- a general orientation to the university
- tour of the library
- tour of the Section including laboratories, clinics and ICT facilities, including email
- meeting with personal tutor
- opportunities to meet other students in the Section
- an introduction to study skills

Returning students
Students in Stages 2-4 have an induction programme that focuses on their particular stage and clinical practice programme, including professional issues.

Support Common to All Students

- Student e-mail and personal access to Degree Programme Director and tutorial staff
- All students allocated a personal tutor to assist them with personal problems.
- In addition, personal tutors take an overview of student's academic performance.
- Student handbooks and module guides provided
- School website for reference
- Access to Disability Unit which provides assistance and guidance
- Access to Student Counselling Services
- Access to Careers Service
- Excellent University library facilities
- Access to up-to-date IT facilities
- Language and Phonetics Laboratory
- Working clinic for paediatric clients
- Working clinic for adult clients
- Section library of up-to-date clinical assessments and resources

14.   Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning:

Mechanisms for review and evaluation of teaching , learning, assessment, the curriculum and outcome standards

- Written student feedback of all modules
- Accreditation currently (2001) by Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists; approval in future from Health Professions Council
- The university's internal review process
- Peer observation of teaching
- External examiners' reports
- Continuing professional development courses for staff
- Staff personal development review process
- Training for all Clinical Supervisors (Introductory and Advanced courses each summer)

Committees with responsibility for monitoring and evaluating quality and standards

- Board of studies
- Staff-Student Committee
- Curriculum Review Committee (CRC)
- Clinical Co-ordinators Committee (CCC)
- Student Practical Experience Committee (SPEC; employers panel)
- Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee
- University Teaching and Learning Committee

Mechanisms for gaining student feedback on the quality of teaching and their learning experience

- Student feedback questionnaires for each module or module component
- Staff-Student Committee
- Student representative on Board of Studies, CRC and CCC

15.   Regulation of Assessment

Assessment rules and degree classification

Students are required to achieve a pass mark (i.e. 40% minimum) in each of the modules designated as 'non-honours'. All modules taken in the first two stages, and some stage 3 modules, fall into this category.

All 'honours' modules contribute to the determination of the degree classification. Stage 3 honours modules contribute 30% and stage 4 honours modules contribute 70% to the degree classification. The weightings of individual honours modules are as follows:

stage	code	module	weighting
3	SPE331	Cases: Exceptional Development	18%
	SPE332	Cases: Motor-anatomic, Pragmatics, Discourse	12%
4	SPE407	Dysphagia	6%
	SPE411	Dissertation	23%
	SPE412	Professional Issues	12%
	SPE414	Clinical Practice	23%
	various	Option	6%

In general, the degree classification will be determined by the weighted average of all honours modules. However, examination results and final degree classifications can be mediated by other factors as well. Results are a matter for the discretion of the Board of Examiners in any particular situation and students should be aware that the University is under no obligation to disclose judgmental evaluations leading to any particular result.

Honours degrees are classified in the following manner:

degree class	weighted average of honours modules
First	70% +
Upper Second (2:1)	60 – 69%
Lower Second (2:2)	50 – 59%
Third	40 – 49%

Role of external examiners

The external examiners are distinguished members of the academic community appointed by the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee. There role is:
- to approve assessment of modules,
- review examples of examination and coursework to check standards and assessment procedure,
- to evaluate clinical competencies and ensure that graduates meet the RCSLT/HPC's professional standards,
- to attend the examination board, and
- to report to the university.

16.   Indicators of Quality and Standards:

- Accreditation by RCSLT (2001). The role of degree course *approval* to now be that of the HPC.
- QAA Subject Review: 24/24 (2000). Next QAA – 2005.
- Graduate employment statistics.
- Satisfactory internal subject reviews.

17.   Other sources of information

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Sciences programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided. More detailed information can be found in the Degree Programme Handbooks for each stage of the course. The accuracy of the information contained is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

In addition, information relating to the course is provided in:

The University Prospectus
The School Prospectus
The University and Degree Programme Regulations
The Degree Programme Handbooks
QAA Subject Review Report
The WWW at www.ncl.ac.uk/speech