

Speech and language therapy courses in the UK (1913-2021)

1913-1945

The Central School of Speech Training and Dramatic Art (Central School) was established in 1906 by Elsie Fogerty and by 1913 she was offering some formal training in remedial speech to elocutionists from a theatrical or teaching background. Other pioneers allied with the medical profession worked in hospitals within a medical model, rather than within an educational model. After 1918, speech therapy education developed rapidly. Central School established a separate Department of Speech Therapy in 1925, two hospital-based schools of speech therapy were established (also in London) in 1926 and 1932 and speech therapy education began in Glasgow in 1928, becoming formalised as the Glasgow School of Speech Therapy by 1935. Also in 1935, the Central School began to offer a Certificate of Proficiency in Speech Therapy.

1945-2021

Up until the end of 1945, speech therapy courses were of two years' duration, but from this date the College of Speech Therapists had a three-year curriculum leading to a diploma. Courses have gradually been established across the UK. Many areas (for example Liverpool, Nottingham, Southampton) attempted to establish new courses in the wake of the 1972 Quirk Report and several attempts have been made to set up a course in North Wales using the Welsh language (most recently at Bangor University), although none of these have yet come to fruition.

Since 2000 most longer (4, 3.5 or 3.3 year) undergraduate courses have gradually been shortened to three years. Most recently (2021) two new courses will launch in the north of England: Preston (January) and Huddersfield (September), with possibly more in planning. The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists is also exploring degree-level apprenticeships as an alternative route to entry into the profession.

The time-line for initial establishment of speech (and language) therapy pre-registration education courses in the UK appears below. Most of the universities now also offer post-qualifying short courses, masters and PhD/professional doctorate supervision.

Jois Stansfield, January 2021

Date established	Institution (current name)	Notes		Course(s) as at 2021
1913	Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London (CSSD)	Training by lectures and visits to Miss Fogerty’s clinic rather than a formal course in the early days. From establishment of formal course in 1935, students of speech therapy teaching and acting had a common first year followed by two years of discipline specific training. Course closed 1989. Final students transferred to University of Wales, Cardiff, or City University to complete their studies.		n/a
1930	University College London (UCL)	West End Hospital Speech Therapy Training School, (founded 1929/30 by Dr Worster-Drought and run by Winifred Kingdon Ward)	The National Hospital School (founded by Beryl Oldrey, 1932) Oldrey-Fleming School of Speech Therapy (1935)	2 year MSc
		National Hospitals College of Speech Sciences (amalgamation of the two previous colleges, 1974) University College London (1995)		
		UCL ran a 4 year undergraduate course with a last intake in 2010		
1935	University of Strathclyde, Glasgow	From 1919, informally. 2-year training pre-WW2 Glasgow School of Speech Therapy; Jordanhill College of Education; 25 Athole Gardens, Glasgow; Jordanhill College of Education Diploma from establishment of the College of Speech Therapists (CST) in 1945; BEd degree offered from 1973 and Honours degree from 1979 (validated by University of Glasgow) (BSc Hons from 1982)		4 year BSc (Hons)

1942	City University	<p>London Hospitals School of Speech therapy (founded 1942 by Kingdon Ward) Kingdon Ward School of Speech Therapy (1945) School for the Study of Disorders of Human Communication (1970) City University (1982)</p> <p>Currently appearing on the HCPC web site of approved programmes appears: 4 year MSLT (Hons) however this is not on the City University website.</p>	<p>3 year BSc (Hons)</p> <p>2 year MSc</p>
1946	Queen Margaret University Edinburgh	<p>From 1933, informally.</p> <p>Edinburgh School of Speech Therapy approved by CST 1946. Moved to Queen Margaret College (1975) Queen Margaret University College (1999) Moved to Musselburgh campus (2007) Queen Margaret University (2007)</p>	<p>4 year MSLT (integrated masters)</p> <p>2 year MScPGDip/ 2.5 year MSc</p>
1951	De Montfort University Leicester	<p>City of Leicester Education Committee School of Speech Therapy (1951) City of Leicester College of Education (1957) Leicester Polytechnic (1976) De Montford University (1992)</p>	<p>3 year BSc (Hons)</p>
1961	Manchester Metropolitan University	<p>Elizabeth Gaskell College of Domestic Science (1961) Elizabeth Gaskell College of Education (1977) Manchester Polytechnic (1988) Manchester Metropolitan University (1992)</p> <p>Previously BSc was 3.3 years. Also ran 4 year BSc joint hon (psychology and speech pathology) subsequently replaced by MSc.</p>	<p>3 year BSc (Hons) 4 year BSc (Hons) including pre-degree foundation year</p> <p>2 year MSc</p>
1964	University of Newcastle	<p>Established by Dr Muriel Morley</p> <p>Initially Kings College, Newcastle was part of Durham University,. Newcastle became an independent University in 1963. Planning began in 1959. First degree in UK (BSc three years); Honours degree from 1975. Great deal of concern initially that students would be too academic and not sufficiently practical.</p>	<p>3 year BSc (Hons)</p> <p>2 year MSc</p>

1965	Leeds Beckett University	<p>Leeds College of Technology Leeds Polytechnic (1970) Leeds Metropolitan University (1992) Leeds Beckett University (2014)</p> <p>First three year Honours degree, which CST Academic Board required to have extended academic years in order to be assured all clinical and academic content could be covered.</p> <p>HCPC has approved both degrees as part-time as well as full-time, but this does not appear on the LBU website</p>	<p>3 year BSc (Hons)</p> <p>2 year MSc</p>
1967	Birmingham City University	<p>Matthew Boulton College Birmingham Polytechnic (1972) University of Central England (1991) Birmingham City University (2007)</p> <p>For many years had sandwich course approach with long block placements which were considered to be highly effective in preparing students for employment.</p>	<p>3 year full time, 6 year part-time BSc (Hons)</p> <p>2 year MSc (from Jan 2022)</p>
1972	Cardiff Metropolitan University	<p>Cardiff School of Speech Therapy, Llandaff Centre of South Glamorgan Institute of Higher Education South Glamorgan Institute of Higher Education (1976) Cardiff Institute of Higher Education (1990) University of Wales Institute Cardiff (1996) Cardiff Metropolitan University (2011)</p> <p>CST diploma until 1979, then four year Honours degree</p>	3 year BSc (Hons)
1974	University of Manchester	Degree course established by Betty Byers Brown. Concern at the time that the existing speech therapy diploma course at Elizabeth Gaskell would be threatened.	<p>3 year BSc (Hons)</p> <p>4 year MSpchLangTher (integrated masters)</p>
1972	Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen (RGIT)	Robert Gordon Institute of Technology, Aberdeen. Short-lived course, designed to meet the needs of northern Scotland. Closed 1978, in controversial circumstances. RGIT became Robert Gordon University in 1992.	n/a

1975	University of Reading	First course director David Crystal Originally set up as BA degree	4 year MSci (integrated masters) 2 year MSc
1975	University of Ulster at Jordanstown, Belfast	Ulster Polytechnic Originally established as a four year ordinary degree; four year Honours degree in 1987, reduced to three years in a whole university rationalisation in 2007. Jordanstown campus is due to close and a consultation was held in 2020 regarding a possible move to the Coleraine or the Magee campus. Currently only students from N Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are accepted onto the course.	3 year BSc (Hons)
1976	University of Sheffield		3 year BMedSci (Hons) 2 year MMedSci
1983	Middlesex Polytechnic	A Diploma in Remedial Speech was proposed, but this was never recognised by CST and did not commence.	
1994	Plymouth Marjon University	Course originally a BA. Established to meet the needs of the south west of England. College of St Mark and St John University College of St Mark and St John 2007 University of St Mark and St John (Plymouth Marjon University) 2013	3 year full time, 6 year part-time BSc (Hons)
2004	University of East Anglia, Norwich	Undergraduate programme established to meet the needs of East Anglia.	3 year BSc (Hons) 4 year MSci (integrated masters)
2006	University of Essex, Colchester	Short-lived initial attempt to establish an undergraduate course in the 1980s was unsuccessful in gaining CST accreditation. The current Masters programme was established to meet the needs of Essex, followed by the BSc. HCPC also has approved a PGDip, but this is not advertised on the university web site.	3 year BSc (Hons) 2 year MSc

2006	Canterbury/Greenwich: Christchurch Canterbury Medway campus, Kent	New programme established specifically to meet the needs of Kent. Innovative in being offered jointly by two universities on the Chatham campus shared by them and University of Kent. Original programme was a two year PGDip.	3 year BSc (Hons)
2021	University of Central Lancashire (Preston)	First intake Jan 2021.	2 year MSc
2021	University of Huddersfield	Advertised for first intake Sept 2021. Not yet (January 2021) appearing on the HCPC approved programmes list.	3 year BSc (Hons)