BSc (Hons) Human Communication Science

Programme Specification

Primary Purpose

Course management and quality assurance.

Secondary Purpose

Detailed information for students, staff and employers. Current students should refer to the related Course Handbook for further detail.

Disclaimer

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information given in this Programme Specification. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification; however, changes may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, review and update of units and courses. Where this activity leads to significant changes to units and courses, there will be prior consultation of students and others, wherever possible, and the University will take all reasonable steps to minimize disruption to students. It is also possible that the University may not be able to offer a unit or course for reasons outside of its control, for example; the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible. Where appropriate, the University will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

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Course Details

1. Named Awards

BSc (Hons) Human Communication Science

2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

C2448F (C852)

3. Awarding Body

University of Portsmouth

4. Teaching Institution

University of Portsmouth

5. Accrediting Body

None

6. QAA Benchmark Groups

Linguistics (2007)

Psychology (2010)

Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies (2007)

7. Document Control Information

Version 5 2018

8. Effective Session

September 2018-2019

9. Author

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10. Faculty

Science

11. Department

School of Health Sciences & Social Work

Curriculum

12. Educational Aims

The BSc (Hons) Human Communication Science aims to develop students' knowledge and understanding of human communication, alongside their advanced intellectual and academic skills. Specifically this includes:

- Developing the students' intellectual capacity, imaginative and analytical abilities through a rigorous course of study specifically related to human communication science.
- To develop effective skills of personal development and lifelong learning, enhancing employability and assisting with the requirements for continuing professional development (CPD) in accordance with University employability policy and encompassing the needs of relevant potential employers.
- To provide students with the skills and knowledge required to maximise career and postgraduate study opportunities.
- To develop skills of critical analysis, reflection, evaluation, professional decision making and problem solving in order to be able to apply the evidence base to human communication and related disorders.

13. Reference Points

- University of Portsmouth's Education Strategy (2016-2020)
- University of Portsmouth Examination and Assessment Regulations (2015)
- University of Portsmouth Employability Strategy (2009)
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document (2014)
- School of Health Sciences and Social Work, UoP, Strategic Plan (2013)
- QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education (2010)
- QAA Subject Benchmark Statements for Linguistics (2007), Psychology (2010) and Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies (2007)
- QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (2008)
- Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists: Guidelines for pre-registration speech and language therapy courses in the UK, incorporating curriculum guidelines (2010)

14. General Learning Outcomes

Level 6

Bachelor's degrees/Bachelor's degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:
- a systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline
- an ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  - to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline
  - to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline
- an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge
- the ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline)

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:
- apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects
- critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem

- communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to specialist and non-specialist audiences

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
  - decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts
- the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature

15. Learning Outcomes

As there are no specific benchmark statements for Human Communication Science, the course has been developed using the most appropriate subject benchmark statements from Linguistics (2007) and Psychology (2010). In addition, the benchmark statement for Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies (2007) has been consulted.

The key elements drawn from all the benchmark statements are to develop knowledge and understanding of the subject area, research methods, ethical frameworks, decision making and critical thinking. Cognitive skills of analysis, evaluation, problem solving, reflection and application will also be developed. Opportunities to develop transferrable skills in information retrieval and management, project development and management and management of own time and learning will be incorporated.

Learning and teaching methods reflect the specific aims, emphasis and learning outcomes of the programme, including development of critical thinking, problem solving, applied skills, reflection and self-directed study and personal development. Teaching and learning strategies and methods will take a student-centred approach in concordance with the University of Portsmouth's Education Strategy (2016-2020).

A. Knowledge and Understanding:

A.1   an appreciation of the multiple perspectives underpinning the understanding of human communication.

A.2   a scientific understanding of mind, brain and behaviour in relation to human communication.

A.3   recognise the inherent variability and diversity of human communication.

A.4   demonstrate a good knowledge and critical understanding of a range of influences on human communication, in particular social, psychological and physiological perspectives.

A.5   knowledgeable about a number of specialised areas and / or applications of the science of human communication.

A.6   demonstrate knowledge of a range of research paradigms, research methods and measurement techniques, including statistical analysis and how to apply these to the study of human communication.

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to:

B.1   demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between data and theory, in particular the role of hypotheses and testing of them in relation to critical evaluation of the evidence base.

B.2   solve problems by determining and collecting the type of data relevant to their solution.

B.3   follow and develop coherent arguments and recognise and give a critique of flaws in arguments

B.4   cite evidence appropriately and evaluate its contribution to a topic.

B.5   demonstrate an understanding and engage in critical discussion of the relationship between social, psychological and biological perspectives of human communication.

B.6   synthesise existing knowledge and evaluate where there are gaps in the evidence base.

B.7   design, justify, evaluate and report on a programme of independent research (final project).

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills, able to:

C.1   reason scientifically and demonstrate the relationship between theory and evidence.

C.2   accurately record communicative data according to linguistic conventions.

C.3   detect meaningful patterns in communication behaviour.

C.4   pose and operationalise specific and relevant research questions.

C.5   demonstrate competence in linguistic data analysis through practical activities.

C.6   manage, conduct and disseminate an empirically-based research project, under appropriate supervision.

D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills, able to:

D.1   communicate ideas and research findings by written, oral and visual means.

D.2   demonstrate computer literacy, particularly using databases, word processing and statistical packages.

D.3   approach problem-solving in a systematic way.

D.4   show an awareness of contextual and interpersonal factors in groups and teams.

D.5   undertake self-directed study, project and time management in a supportive environment.

D.6   recognise the need to assess their own skills and to harness them for future learning.

16. Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

Classroom based lectures, simulation, group work and independent learning will be employed to provide the required underpinning knowledge (LOs A1-A6). Group and individual tutorials will support the development of underpinning knowledge and formative assessment will also be used to aid learning development for LO A6. Supervised independent learning will also be employed to support LO A5.

Students will be taught to think logically and evaluate evidence and ideas with critical insight. This will be achieved through the use of lectures, seminars, tutorials and directed study (B1, B3, B5-6). Workshops and simulation will also be used to support activities aimed at developing skills in outcome B2. Learning outcome B4 will be supported during seminars and personal tutorials.

Lectures, seminars and tutorials will be used to support students' development of the ability to reason and create answerable questions and then develop strategies to answer these questions (C1, C2, C4-6). Tutorials, seminars and directed study will be used to support the development of the ability to create reports of problem solving activities using both creative thinking and academic convention (C5 & C6). Lectures, workshops and simulation will be used to develop the applied psycholinguistic skills in outcomes C2 and C3.

Moodle, the university's virtual learning platform, will be utilised to support student learning. Direct links to learning and development resources including online study skills and PDP units and the library catalogue will be provided. The platform will also be used to signpost students to a range of selected and multimedia artefacts designed to provide examples and applications of knowledge and skills.

Group work, seminars and tutorials are used to develop personal awareness and communication skills, whilst working in a collegiate environment (D1, D4-6). Tutorials and seminars with personal tutors and project supervisors will be used to encourage practical information technology skills, Personal Development Planning, independent working, problem solving and project management skills (D2, D3, D5, D6).

17. Assessment Strategy

Evaluation of knowledge and understanding is through coursework assignments such as an essay, group presentation, study report and final project (A1, A2, A4). Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), alongside coursework (for example, portfolio, scientific poster) are used to evaluate (A3 & A5) and the final project principally evaluates LO A6. Formative assessment and feedback will be provided through a variety of methods including data analysis workshops, tutorials and self-directed study to facilitate learning outcomes A2, A3, A5 and A6.

Evaluation of intellectual and thinking skills is through written coursework reports and essays (B5), submission of a dissertation (B1,B4, B6) and oral presentations (B2, B3, B6). Formative assessment will be provided in a variety of ways, including the use of student led seminars (B1, B3, B4 & B5). Students will meet regularly with their personal tutor and supervisor to review their progress.

OSCE, a study report and dissertation thesis are used to evaluate students' ability to apply knowledge and skills to human communication data (C2-3). Coursework, such as a study report, portfolio and a final project, also evaluate students' ability to reason, operationalise ideas and problem solve through research (C1, C4-6).

Moodle, is utilised to support student development, in particular in the provision of online formative assessment and also to provide generic and individualized student feedback for formative and summative assessments.

Oral presentations have a focus on students' reflection on their learning and personal development and ability to communicate ideas coherently (D1, D4, D5-6). Coursework, in particular a final project, is used to support LOs D2, D3 and D5.

18. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

See Unit Web Search[1] for full details on the course structure and units

This is a 120 credit, level 6 top-up programme leading to the award of BSc (Hons) in Human Communication Science. Study route is one year of full time study. Students on this course will enter with an appropriate undergraduate qualification having already achieved 120 level 4 and 120 Level 5 academic credits (or RP[E]L equivalent) in relevant subject areas. Students will be expected to successfully complete 120 credits of study at level 6. There are 4 core units which total 100 credits (3 x 20 credit units & a 40 credit project unit) and there is a requirement to choose one optional unit, from the two 20 credit options offered.

Exit awards include:
* BSc Human Communication Science (300 credits)
* BSc (Hons) Human Communication Science (360 credits)

19. Employability Statement

Students will be given the opportunity, through the curriculum, to:
* manage a range of tasks
* manage others
* manage information
* manage themselves and their learning

A rich variety of teaching, learning and assessment approaches throughout this course have been designed to encourage students to work collegiately on a range of syllabus items. Students' ability to develop these employability skills will be overtly supported through a programme of Personal Development Planning (PDP).   PDP will principally be delivered through the Personal Tutor system

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[1] www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch

using central and departmentally produced and context specific materials. This will include students maintaining a self-managed, individual reflective portfolio of activities and achievements. Students have the opportunity to record achievements on the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR).

The course employability strategy includes the following activities, taken from the UoP Employability Audit tool:

- Key employability skills from relevant QAA benchmarking statements have been included in the curriculum
- Opportunities to increase work-related learning activities are encouraged through unit assessment strategies that encourage project work with local employers.
- Unit syllabi rely on case studies and evidence taken from the clinical arena to offer an insight into potential work situations.
- The course team has established relationships with numerous local employers, including the Stroke Association, local primary schools and NHS services to encourage voluntary work by students, and the undertaking of relevant projects within these applied settings.
- Seminars from Purple Door on career management skills are part of the extracurricular timetable.
- Former BSc (Hons) Human Communication Science graduates are available to provide personal experience in Associate Practitioner and related roles when invited to attend dedicated Careers Support workshops.

Course Management

20. Support for Student Learning

The Course is managed by a Course Leader, with support from other members of SHSSW staff, part-time hourly-paid staff, and invited guest speakers who are experts in their field.

- Collaborative programmes are managed on a day-to-day basis by the University Contact who may or may not be the Course Leader
- An extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course
- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing, counselling etc.
- The Academic Skills Unit (ASK)
- Faculty Learning Support tutor
- The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC)
- Excellent library facilities
- The University of Portsmouth has consistently been awarded an excellent rating for student support and guidance in a number of Quality Assurance Agency inspections
- Student course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations etc.
- Feedback is provided for all assessments
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) for all awards
- Unit content is fortified by speakers from the workplace
- The course has access to the resources and expertise of the Centre for Simulation in Healthcare, based in the School of Health Sciences and Social Work

21. Admissions Criteria

A. Academic Admissions Criteria

This course is accessible to students who:

- Have a Diploma H.E. or Foundation Degree, or equivalent, in a relevant subject area (English Language, Psychology, Linguistics, Anthropology, Health Care, Education and Childhood Studies): **OR**
- Have achieved RP(E)L equivalent in relevant subject areas, such as English Language, Psychology, Linguistics, Anthropology, Health Care; Education and Childhood Studies. Subject areas and qualifications not mentioned here are considered on a case by case basis.
- Interviews may be conducted for direct entry applicants.
- All applicants are required to have proficiency in the English language of IELTS Grade 7.0 (or equivalent), with no less than 6.5 in any individual component of the IELTS assessment.

B. Disability

The University makes no distinction in its admissions policy with regard to disability and will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments in order to make it possible for students to study at Portsmouth on a course of their choice.

22. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation
- Course Leader's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review
- Head of Department's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review
- Unit and Course Level student feedback considered at Board of Studies
- Unit Assessment Board consideration of student performance for each programme
- Annual Standards and Quality Reports to Board of Studies, including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports
- Periodic Programme Review (completed 16.03.2017)
- Student Representatives and Student/Staff Consultative Committees
- University of Portsmouth unit and course level surveys
- Staff Performance and Development Review
- Peer Review and Development Framework
- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee

B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation
- Unit Co-ordinators for unit content and delivery
- Course Leader for day-to-day running of course
- Board of Studies with overall responsibilities for operation and content of course
- Head of Department
- SHSSW Education Committee
- Associate Dean (Academic)
- Associate Dean (Students)
- Quality Assurance Committee
- Unit, Award and Progression Board of Examiners

C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback
- Student Representation on Board of Studies
- Student Staff Consultative Committees
- Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires
- University participates in external student surveys, e.g., National Student Survey (NSS), and International Student Barometer (ISB)

D. Staff Development Priorities

- Academic staff undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support and guidance
- Annual staff performance and development reviews match development to needs
- Managers undertake a variety of management development programmes
- New academic staff required to achieve Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy through the APEX Fellowship Pathway (D2) organised by the DCQE.
- All academic staff encouraged to seek Higher Education Academy membership
- Academic staff new to teaching required to undertake the Academic Professional Excellence Framework (APEX)
- Support staff are encouraged to attend short courses in areas such as minute taking, and specific IT packages

23. Assessment Regulations

The current University of Portsmouth academic regulations will apply to this programme (*see [Assessment and Regulations](#)*[2]).

24. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:
- Oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards
- Review unit assessment strategy
- Sample assessment artefacts
- Present report to Unit Assessment Boards

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) who will:
- Oversee and attend Award/Progression Boards
- Scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of assessment
- Ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a level comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere in the United Kingdom

25. Indicators of Standards and Quality

A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition

N/A

B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

The course received confirmation of its fitness for purpose through a Periodic Programme Review in March 2017.

C. Quality Assurance Agency

QAA Higher Education Review, March 2015, judgements about standards and quality meet UK expectations (*for full report see [Higher Education Review of the University of Portsmouth, March 2015](#)*[3]).

D. Others

None.

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[2] www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qualitymanagementdivision/assessmentandregulations/

[3] www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf

26. Further Information

Further information may be found in:

- Student Handbook
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- University of Portsmouth Prospectus
- [University of Portsmouth](#)[4] and [School](#)[5] websites

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[4] www.port.ac.uk/

[5] www.port.ac.uk/school-of-health-sciences-and-social-work/