

Terms of Audiology Clinical Placements

1. Placements are a compulsory part of the MSc and BSc (Hons) Audiology programmes (the clinical pathway) and must be passed to graduate with either of those clinical degrees (as is required for professional registration). Standard tuition fees are payable for the three (BSc) and four (MSc) years of the programme, including Semester 1 of Part 3. There are no additional tuition fees for placements outside of normal academic weeks, including some of the Easter break of Part 1 and the summer of Part 2. Placements are not a part of the MSc and BSc Hearing Science programmes (the non-clinical pathway).
2. Placements take place within real audiology services in the National Health Service (NHS) and in the independent and private sectors, i.e. in organisations that are independent of the University of Southampton. They are subject to an initial accreditation process prior to accepting students and an ongoing quality assurance process thereafter.
3. We guarantee that all placements offered to students are in accredited placement centres, meaning that they have been judged by us to be fit for purpose (e.g. will enable you to meet the placement learning outcomes) and have agreed to be subject to our ongoing quality assurance processes. Therefore, we can only offer placements to students within our group of accredited centres. The list of accredited centres is subject to change at any time and without prior notification depending on the capacity, fitness and existence of placement centres.
4. We guarantee to oversee and support all students and organisations participating in placements as described in the Placement Handbook.
5. We will make every reasonable effort to source and allocate placements for students on the clinical pathway. While the likelihood of a student not being allocated a placement is very low, we cannot absolutely guarantee that it will not happen for two main reasons. Firstly, placements take place in organisations that are independent of the University. Our quality assurance processes are intended to monitor the quality of placements, identify concerns regarding quality and to protect students from unacceptable quality; they do not have the power to force an organisation to meet our requirements. Similarly, we do not have the power to force organisations to take students on placement. The number of accredited placements and number of students each one can accept can vary annually. To help mitigate this issue, we carefully manage the numbers of students who are recruited onto the clinical pathway given our overall placement capacity in advance of the University admissions cycle. Our placement capacity can still change after that point and prior to placement allocation for reasons beyond our control. We therefore also monitor our placement capacity carefully including by recruiting and accrediting new organisations where possible. Secondly, placement centres are involved in selecting students for the main (27-week) placement as part of our placement allocation process and may have the final say as to whether they will take any particular student on any placements. We will provide you with extensive opportunities to prepare yourself for the clinical and professional expectations of the selection process, for how to interact effectively with placement organisations and for the potential consequences of not maintaining an adequate record of professionalism during the programme. For example, students who have a placement terminated by one placement centre for ongoing concerns about their clinical or professional conduct, despite warnings and support from the university, will find it difficult to be accepted by other organisations for further placements.

6. We can only offer placements to students within our group of accredited centres. We cannot guarantee to offer placements in particular locations or with particular features other than being fit for purpose, appropriate for the learning outcomes associated with the particular placement and appropriate for the individual student (e.g. with a disability). As part of the allocation process, you will be invited to submit *preferences* and reasons for them. Students with specific special circumstances (supported by evidence) are prioritised.
7. If you are unable to undertake or complete placements, or if we are unable to allocate you placements, for reasons *within* your control (e.g. by not engaging in the allocation process, not engaging in the placement centre's human resources processes, or not completing the statutory and mandatory training), you will be deemed to have failed the placement and the associated module. For Audiology Clinical Placements 2 and 3, that can mean not being able to continue on the clinical pathway or failing Part 3.
8. As part of Audiology Clinical Placement 1, we will endeavour to arrange up to three weeks of placement in audiology or related services during Part 1 of the programme. Please note that one of these placement weeks falls within the Easter break. The allocation process starts during Semester 1 of Part 1 and completes by the end of February in Semester 2. If you are unable to undertake or complete (e.g. due to ill health) a placement, or if we are unable to allocate you a placement, for reasons *outside* of your control, we will provide you with an alternative experience in-house that will enable you to meet the learning outcomes of the module within the normal assessment time frame. You will also have to option of asking us to seek a placement for you during the summer before starting Part 2.
9. Audiology Clinical Placement 2 and 3 together require you to complete a minimum of 27 weeks on placement between the end of semester 2 of part 2 and the start of semester 2 of part 3. The allocation process for that placement will start after you have successfully completed Part 1 and be completed around the start of Semester 2 of Part 2. The allocation process may require you to attend an interview with representatives of the placement centres. Part 1 contains extensive opportunities for you to learn the skills to excel at this interview; together, these opportunities and the interview form part of your professional training. If you are unable to undertake or complete (e.g. due to ill health) a placement, or if we are unable to allocate you a placement, for reasons *outside* of your control, you will have several options. You will be able to apply to our extension or special considerations processes in order to seek to complete your placements outside of the normal placement period (i.e. after Semester 2 of Part 3). That would usually mean a delay in formally completing Part 3 by one year. Other options for completing the placements within the clinical pathway might be possible depending on your specific circumstances. You would also have the option of transferring to the non-clinical pathway in order to complete your degree; that would mean not doing the placements as part of the degree. We would be able to advise you on the options for completing your clinical training separately from the degree before you made that decision.
10. If you cannot complete the 27 weeks of placement required for Audiology Clinical Placement 2 and 3 for reasons outside of your control, you will need to apply for Special Considerations. If granted, alternative arrangements will be found for completing your placement and Part 3 of the clinical pathway. This may involve additional placement weeks during Easter of Part 3 or after Part 3 depending on the number of weeks remaining, your progress while on placement, the availability of placements, the time gap between placements and your circumstances. If indicated or required by a Fitness to Practise process, you could be required to repeat the entire 27 weeks of placement regardless of how many weeks you completed previously.

11. Clinical & Professional Practice in Audiology 3 requires you to attend short clinic visits during Semester 2 of Part 3 in order to obtain experience and basic assistant-level competence in paediatric and vestibular practice. As a general guide, you will need to complete about three days of each, although it depends on your progress. The module also offers you additional optional clinic visits and optional assessments of competence to enable you to extend your experience, skills and employability. If you are unable to undertake or complete (e.g. due to ill health) the clinic visits required to meet the learning outcomes of the module, or if we are unable to arrange them for you, within the normal period for reasons *outside* of your control, you will have similar options to that of Audiology Clinical Placement 2 and 3. For example, you will be able to apply for an extension in order to complete the clinic visits over the summer of Part 3, which would mean a delay in formally completing Part 3 until September and a delay in graduating with the BSc by one year.
12. Placements often involve visiting out-station clinics (e.g. community clinics in nearby locations, domiciliary visits (accompanied by a supervisor) and contributing to evening or weekend clinics. You are required to attend these as requested by your Placement Supervisor in order to achieve the necessary quantity, breadth and richness of clinical experience. It is extremely important that you recognise that you will be working as part of a team and contributing to a real clinical service, and so are expected to act as if you were fully employed by the service; this is all part of the training we provide for you to become a highly employable professional.
13. The placements are usually unpaid, and students must self-fund accommodation, living and travel expenses. Specific employers might provide financial support to those students that they select for placements with them. We cannot guarantee paid placements to any or all students.
14. It may be necessary to move you to a different placement centre after the initial allocation or during your placement in unusual circumstances (e.g. to benefit your progress or welfare, or because the centre has unexpectedly become unable to provide a placement that is fit for purpose).
15. Our offer of placements does not extend to students who are deemed unfit to practise by our Fitness to Practise process or who do not have satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (i.e. criminal records) or Occupational Health checks. Those students will not be able to continue on the clinical pathway but might be able to transfer to the non-clinical pathway.
16. It is a standing condition that you must have satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (i.e. criminal records) and Occupational Health checks throughout the programme. Any delays in arriving at an outcome of these checks could delay the start of the placement; you are liable for any costs to you from a delayed start of placement related to delays in criminal records or Occupational Health checks. You are expected to maintain a clean criminal record and must inform us immediately if your Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS; i.e. criminal records) and Occupational Health status changes at any point during the programme. You might be required to undertake an additional criminal records or occupational health check immediately before starting their main placements, as required by the placement centre and at your cost.
17. You are expected to have read and understood the Health & Care Professions Council's "Guidance on Conduct and Ethics For Students", before enrolling on the programme and abide by it throughout the programme both in your academic and personal life. Breaches of that guidance may lead to you being referred into the University's Fitness to

Practise process, which could result in you being excluded from placements or having your enrolment on the programme terminated. Breaches include a breach of the University regulations on academic integrity related to any module (e.g. passing another student's work off as your own) and the failure to immediately disclose a change in health state or criminal record.

18. While on placement, you will have a member of clinical staff who will be your local supervisor and will coordinate your placement training, called a 'Placement Supervisor'. The Placement Supervisor will have undertaken specific training provided by the University and will liaise with the University regarding your progress, behaviour and wellbeing.
19. Your placement centre will have an absence policy (e.g. covering attendance, leave and illness) which you must abide by. You will have a leave allowance and your Placement Supervisor must approve any leave before it is taken. Any additional leave beyond that allowance must also be approved by the University and you would usually be expected to make up for it by working additional days or using what would have been your study sessions. The University has a formal process for special considerations in the case of prolonged sickness or other circumstances that have interfered with your studies, which can allow for extensions. If you miss a significant amount of time on placement due to prolonged sickness you may not be able to complete the minimum required 27 weeks and will be required to make up this time at the end of placement or at a later time in part 3.
20. You must successfully complete a programme of Statutory & Mandatory training in its entirety during Semester 1 of Part 1 prior to starting the placement associated with Audiology Clinical Placement 1 in Semester 2 of Part 1. If you do not, you will not be allocated a placement and you might be referred to the Fitness to Practise process. You will also have a small number of Statutory & Mandatory updates to complete in Semester 2 of part 2. These must be completed in order to start Audiology Clinical Placement 2 at the end of Semester 2 of part 2. If you do not complete these at the required time you will not be allocated a placement, and you might be referred to the Fitness to Practise process.
21. You must engage with all human resources processes required by your placement centre in a constructive and timely manner. Many student will be required to sign an honorary contract before starting placements, as required by the placement centre. If you have a paid placement, you may be required to sign a contract of employment. It is your responsibility to check this contract before signing.
22. You will need to start Audiology Clinical Placement 2 before having received confirmation that you have passed all other assessments in Part 2, due to time constraints. The consequence of failing one or more modules in Part 2 after you have started placement depends on the details of which and how many modules you have failed. If you need to repeat Part 2, you must repeat Audiology Clinical Placement 2 regardless of how much of the placement you have already completed.
23. You must pass the assessment of Audiology Clinical Placement 2 in order to continue on the clinical pathway in Part 3 and continue the placement in Audiology Clinical Placement 3. There are no referral rights for Audiology Clinical Placement 2 so it must be passed first time.
24. If you suspend your studies in Part 3 prior to completing Audiology Clinical Placement 3, you will normally be required to repeat the full 27 weeks of placement when you

recommence your studies as part of Audiology Clinical Placement 3. You will also normally be reallocated to a new placement centre.

25. Audiology Clinical Placement 3 is assessed by an end-of-placement assessment visit, your IRCP and some written assessments. Remedial attempts are available for the written assessments and the end-of-placement visit. No remedial opportunity is available for your IRCP.
26. If you fail the Audiology Clinical Placement 3 on your first attempt of Part 3 and still wish to leave with a clinical degree, you will be required to repeat Part 3 in its entirety. You will normally be required to repeat the full 27 weeks of placement as part of your repeat of Audiology Clinical Placement 3. You will also normally be reallocated to a new placement centre. You are entitled to one repeat of Audiology Clinical Placement 3 only.
27. You will be expected to adhere to the dress code when on placements, which can be found in the Placement Handbook.
28. We have robust, tried-and-tested processes for providing support to you and Placement Centres. This includes placement evaluations, progress reviews and Fitness to Practise and Fitness to Study policies. We will work to keep you within your placement wherever possible. We reserve the right to suspend or terminate your placement if absolutely necessary as part of a Fitness to Practise process. Under that situation, you will be deemed to have failed the module associated with the placement.
29. Placement Centres reserve the right to exclude you from clinics if it is in the best interests of their service users or if your conduct does not meet the expectations as indicated in the Health & Care Professions Council's "Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students", the Learning Placement Charter and in the Placement Handbook. This includes expectations regarding dress, attendance, use of mobile phones, language and preparation. Exclusions on the basis of conduct will be communicated to the University immediately and may trigger a Fitness to Practise process.
30. Placement Centres reserve the right to suspend or terminate placements if they deem it absolutely necessary. This forms part of a formal agreement between the Placement Centre and the University, called the Practice Placement Agreement.
31. Placement Centres also reserve the right to suspend or terminate placements if they become unable to provide a placement that is fit for purpose.