

Speech and Language Therapist

Speech and language therapists work with children and adults who have speech, language or communication problems, or who have difficulty swallowing, chewing or eating. They help their clients to speak and communicate with others as well as they can.

The Work

You could be:

- talking to a client, observing them and doing tests to assess the difficulty
- assessing the cause of the problem, for example cleft palate or an injury
- planning a programme of treatment for the client
- using word repetitions, rhymes and reading exercises to help patients
- guiding and supporting the client through treatment
- meeting the client alone or as part of a group
- listening to the concerns of families and carers, and giving advice
- working closely with other health professionals such as doctors, psychologists and nurses, or teachers and occupational therapists
- writing reports and keeping client records.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of the company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

Within the NHS Agenda for Change scales speech and language therapists' salaries start at Band 5, £33,247 to £41,424 a year. With experience this can rise to Band 6, £41,608 to £50,702 a year.

Advanced level speech and language therapists are on Band 7, £50,861 to £59,159 a year. The current pay scales are from April 2025.

Conditions

- You may work in a hospital, clinic, health centre or school.
- You may need to travel when visiting clients in schools or in their own homes.
- Your hours are mostly regular at around 37.5 hours a week.
- Part time work is becoming increasingly common.

Getting In

- You need a degree (SCQF Level 10) in speech and language therapy or speech and language pathology,

which must be approved by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT).

- The University of Strathclyde and Queen Margaret University offer suitable BSc Honour degree courses. Entry requirements are 4-5 Highers, including English and a science subject, with Maths and a second language and science subject at National 5 for some courses.
- If you have an Honours degree in a subject such as biology, linguistics or psychology, you could take the 2 year postgraduate course (SCQF Level 11), Speech and Language Therapy (Pre-Registration) at Queen Margaret University.
- It is recommended that you spend some time with a registered speech and language therapist before applying for your course as you must show you have an understanding of speech and language therapy, and have knowledge of the types of people you may be working with.
- After completing your course, you are eligible to register with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), which you need to work in the National Health Service (NHS).
- You will require a satisfactory criminal record check from Disclosure Scotland to show that you are suitable for this type of work. Contact [Disclosure Scotland](#) for details on the type you would need.
- A knowledge of Gaelic or community languages maybe an advantage in some parts of the UK.
- A driving licence is also useful and may be necessary.

There are around 19,500 practising speech and language therapists in the UK, with an estimated 1,300 working in NHS Scotland. You may also find work with voluntary organisations, education services or in private practice.

What Does It Take

You should be:

- able to get on well with people from all backgrounds and of all ages
- sensitive, patient and understanding
- able to gain the client's trust
- an excellent listener and communicator
- good at solving problems
- a good organiser
- able to work in a team
- able to work alone, without supervision.

Training

- Once you have qualified, training is on the job.
- You will keep your skills and training up to date with short courses as part of your continuous professional development (CPD). This is required to stay on the HCPC state register.
- Relevant short courses are run by the RCSLT.

Getting On

- With experience, and sometimes after taking a post-registration course, you could specialise in, for example, working with children, with people who have hearing impairments, or with stroke victims.
- You could become a team leader or move into management.
- You might go on to teach or do research work.

- You might set up your own business.

Contacts

Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)

Tel: 0300 500 6184

Email: education@hcpc-uk.org

Website: www.hcpc-uk.org

X: [@The_HCPC](https://twitter.com/The_HCPC)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/hpcuk

NHS Scotland Careers

Website: www.careers.nhs.scot

Website (2): jobs.scot.nhs.uk

Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT)

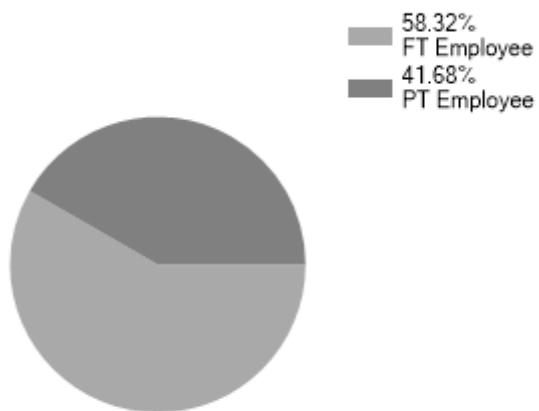
Tel: 020 7378 3012

Website: www.rcslt.org

X: [@RCSLT](https://twitter.com/RCSLT)

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

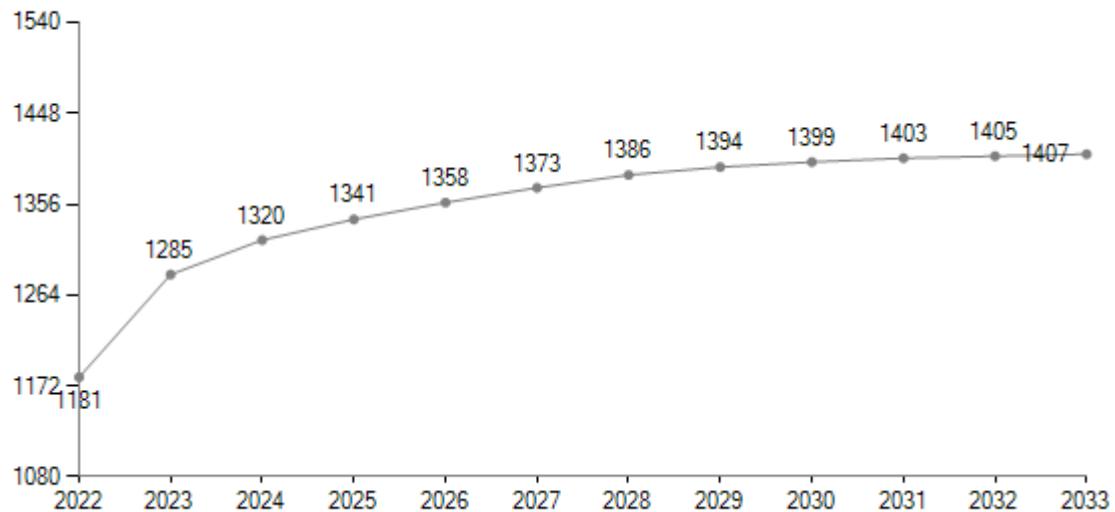


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)