



Benchmarks for Speech and Language Therapy Education in Europe

Network for Tuning Standards and Quality of Education Programmes
in Speech and Language Therapy/Logopaedics across Europe (NetQues):
A multilateral academic and professional network



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Key subject specific and generic competencies which form common standards for European SLT initial education (NetQues, 2013)

SUBJECT SPECIFIC COMPETENCES

The newly qualified SLT must be able to:

Scope of practice

- assess, diagnose and intervene in speech and language disorders
- assess, diagnose and intervene in eating, drinking and swallowing disorders

Assessment and identification of communication needs and swallowing problems - Planning and implementation of intervention

- establish rapport and facilitate participation in the assessment and differential diagnosis process
- identify the influence of different situations, environments or contexts on clients' problems
- analyze, and interpret assessment results accurately and integrate information from case history and other relevant sources into findings
- provide appropriate feedback on interpretation of assessment results to the client and significant others, in a way they can understand easily
- produce oral and written reports of assessment results, including analysis and interpretation of assessment information
- identify gaps in information needed to understand the client's disorders, and seeks information to fill those gaps
- recognize the effect of the disorders on the psychosocial wellbeing, social and medical status of the client and significant others
- when necessary, refer client to other professionals in a timely, appropriate manner
- integrate assessment results with other relevant information to set goals
- understand the rationales and principles that underlie specific therapy methods
- discuss long-term outcomes and decide, in consultation with the client, whether speech and language therapy is appropriate or required, by including key people in these discussions
- select and plan appropriate and effective therapy interventions involving key people in the client's environment
- understand the roles of other members of the inter-/ transdisciplinary team and produce intervention plans in consultation with them
- implement appropriate therapy techniques using the necessary materials and instrumental equipment
- make reasoned decisions to initiate, continue, modify or cease the use of chosen techniques, treatments or procedures, and record the decisions and reasoning appropriately
- document response to intervention and any changes in intervention plan
- keep legible and accurate contemporaneous records in accordance with professional and legal requirements and use only accepted terminology
- collect information, including qualitative and quantitative data, to evaluate the effectiveness of therapy
- prepare a client for discharge from therapy appropriately, agreeing a point of closure with the client and significant others, and follow relevant agency discharge procedures
- understand the concepts of efficacy and efficiency in relation to SLT intervention

Prevention

- prevent communication and swallowing disorders from occurring or developing, including early intervention in disorders

Professional development, continuing education and specific ethical responsibilities

- understand the professional roles and boundaries of a speech and language therapist
- observe the code of ethics of the national professional body and / or as prescribed by the employer, and / or the national / state government
- develop personal growth as a speech and language therapist through insight into, and further development of, a range of interpersonal and communication skills

GENERIC COMPETENCES

The newly qualified SLT must be able to:

Interpersonal and intrapersonal competences

- demonstrate a behavior which is honest, sincere and reliable
- demonstrate empathy with clients and colleagues
- extract information from informants efficiently and sympathetically
- provide accurate feedback in a comprehensible and sensitive manner
- demonstrate advanced social skills such as assertiveness, cooperation, negotiation
- appreciate diversity and multiculturalism
- show positive attitude and pro activeness
- be self-critical and reflect on their own performances
- demonstrate resilience in coping with the demand of the profession in a way which enables him/her to maintain self-esteem and manage stress

Systemic competences

- take responsibility for developing his/her own knowledge and skills throughout his/her lifespan
- work independently and autonomously
- adapt his/her own behavior and approach to fit new situations
- formulate creative and original solutions for novel situations
- conduct a search of the scientific literature to find the most relevant information to answer a question

Instrumental competences

- use appropriate, effective skills and materials in written, oral and visual communication of information and instruction
- gather data using various methods including literature review, interviewing, questionnaire and observation
- identify the important factor in a problem and suggest possible solutions
- express the preferred solution/decision in a comprehensible way and outline the concrete actions required
- identify the risks or pitfalls associated with each possible solution
- use this knowledge to select the most appropriate solution for the particular circumstances
- analyze information to draw appropriate conclusions and recognize the implications of these conclusions
- synthesize information from diverse sources to select an appropriate course of action or to answer a question
- apply legal and ethical principles in managing information and protect integrity, reliability and authenticity of records
- divide tasks into concrete steps and set time schedules with realistic aims, taking into account all other demands
- meet goals or deliver products of work on schedule

The benchmark document is the result of multinational collaborative work and extensive research and consultation in defining quality standards to support key stakeholders engaged in ensuring quality pre-qualification education of Speech and Language Therapists across Europe, including education providers, and all those who approve, monitor and deliver the programmes.

NetQues involved 65 partners from across all of the European community, demonstrating a profession united in its aspirations for competent and caring individuals with relevant up-to-date knowledge and skills, able to practise safely and effectively upon admission to the profession.

