

... provide diagnostic assessment and rehabilitation services related to human hearing defects, and assess and treat people with communication disorders and physical problems associated with eating and swallowing.

Indicative Skill Level

Most occupations in this unit group have a level of skill commensurate with a Bachelor degree or higher qualification (ANZSCO Skill Level 1).

Skilled Occupation Criteria

Long-lead time

Speech Professionals and Audiologists meet the criteria for long lead time, as entry to this occupation requires a substantial training commitment.

- ▶ Employment as a Speech Professional or Audiologist generally requires the completion of a university qualification of at least four years study (full-time equivalent), such as a Bachelor of Speech Pathology.

High use

Speech Professionals and Audiologists meet the criteria for high use, showing that the skills which people have acquired through education and training are being deployed for the uses intended.

- ▶ Based on advice from Universities Australia, university courses in speech pathology and audiology have a strong degree of match with eventual employment as Speech Professionals and Audiologists.
- ▶ Of new graduates employed as Speech Professionals and Audiologists, 88% had studied in a related field, such as rehabilitation therapies or other health areas (*Australian Graduate Survey, 2009*).
- ▶ As professionals, Speech Professionals and Audiologists are expected to have a level of skill commensurate with a Bachelor degree or higher qualification. Of those employed as Speech Professionals and Audiologists, 100% were found to possess this level of skill (*ABS Survey of Education and Work, 2010*).¹

High risk

Speech Professionals and Audiologists also meet the criteria for high risk/high disruption. This indicates that the occupation is important for the effective operation of an enterprise and/or the broader economy.

- ▶ Speech Pathologists must be registered to practise in Queensland. There is no requirement for Audiologists to be registered in any state or territory.
- ▶ Speech Professionals and Audiologists are important to meet government policy priorities at both the Commonwealth and state level. These include meeting the recommendations of the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission, the Clinical Training Funding Initiative, and the Clinical Supervision Support Program.

¹ Analysis for the Skilled Occupations List (SOL) was conducted using the latest available data, including the 2010 ABS Survey of Education and Work (SEW). Percentages may therefore differ from those cited in the 'Occupation Trends' analysis (over the page), which uses alternative sources in some instances (e.g. the 2008 ABS Survey of Education and Work). Small sample sizes for some occupations may also result in fluctuations in the SEW data between 2008 and 2010. The specific data sources used for the Occupation Trends analysis can be found on the Skills Australia website: <http://www.skillsaustralia.gov.au/SOLsummarysheets.shtml>.

Occupation trends

ANZSCO: 2527

Speech Professionals and Audiologists

Employment level	4200 More than half of workers (55.9%) are employed full-time.
6 digit employment (2006 Census)	252711 Audiologist 1080 252712 Speech Pathologist 3860
Employment growth	Over the five years to August 2010, employment decreased by 3.6% (compared with growth of 12.1% for all occupations). Employment is expected to rise by 11.5% over the next five years (compared with projected growth of 9.5% for all occupations).
Unemployment rate	Below average (around 2.1%) compared with all occupations.
Educational profile	Almost all workers have a Bachelor degree or higher qualification.
Vacancies	The Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) rose by 39.9% over the 12 months to September 2010 to 258.2 (March 2006=100). Vacancies for all occupations increased by 19.4%.
Gender	Around 93.0% of workers are female (compared with 45.4% for all occupations).
Labour turnover	Around 6.4% of workers leave this occupation in a year compared with 13.1% for all occupations.
Age profile	The median age is 35.2 years and 32.3% are aged 45 years and over (compared with 38.5% for all occupations).
Earnings	Median full-time weekly earnings (before tax) are above average (\$1250).
Graduate outcomes	Graduate Careers Australia data is provided at the aggregated level for 'health', but it shows 97% of Bachelor degree graduates across the health field of study seeking full-time work were working four months after graduation, 46% of whom were employed as Health Professionals, 15% as Personal and Community Service Workers and 9% as Science Professionals.
Skill shortages	National shortages of Audiologist have been relatively persistent since 2005. National shortages of Speech Pathologists were also identified over the five years to early 2009 but research undertaken in late 2009 and mid 2010 suggests shortages have eased and are now evident mainly in regional locations.

Labour market

252711 Audiologist: This small labour market has only a small number of vacancies advertised. However, DEEWR's latest research, undertaken in 2010 confirms the continuation of previously identified shortages.

About a quarter of surveyed vacancies were filled in 2010 with only an average of 1.1 applicants per vacancy, and just 0.4 applicants per vacancy were considered by employers to be suitable.

Employers across the states noted Audiologists require a Master's degree which is offered at a limited number of universities, and student numbers tend to be small.

252712 Speech Pathologist: Shortages were relatively persistent in this profession over the five years to early 2009 but research undertaken in late 2009 and 2010 suggests the labour market has eased. Employers seeking to fill new graduate positions did not experience significant difficulty filling their vacancies and most reported attracting good candidate numbers from which to recruit.

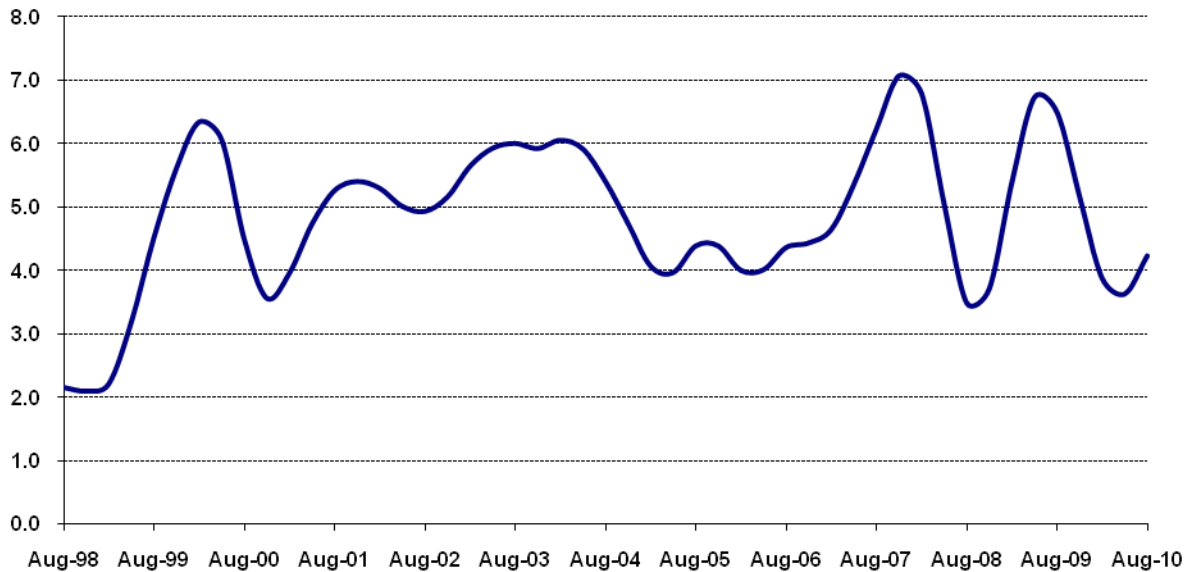
Employers recruiting experienced Speech Pathologists also reported that they generally filled their vacancies relatively easily compared with past years, although regional employers experienced

more difficulty than metropolitan employers and shortages are apparent in regional locations. Almost two thirds of surveyed vacancies which remained unfilled were in regional areas.

Summary

This occupational group experienced relatively persistent shortages to 2009 but research in 2010 suggests the labour market has eased slightly and shortages are mainly in regional locations. Employment has fallen a little over the past five years and expected growth is about the same as the average for 'all occupations'. Unemployment is below average and advertised vacancy levels are increasing.

Speech Professionals and Audiologists
Employed Persons ('000s) Aug 1998 to Aug 2010



Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) - 3 Monthly Average - Nov 2006 - Sept 2010
Speech Professionals and Audiologists (March 2006 = 100)

