School of Education

EDUC6160: Supporting Communication Skills
Online
Semester 2 - 2023

OVERVIEW

Course Description

This course provides students with knowledge about typical and atypical language development including the pre-intentional and intentional non-verbal communication stages. As well as developing knowledge of strategies to promote receptive and expressive language skills, the course also addresses the use of augmentative and alternative communication systems to support the social, linguistic and cognitive development of children who may be at risk for being unintelligible or non-speaking.

Assumed Knowledge

Two years of relevant professional experience and/or a relevant graduate qualification

Contact Hours

Online
Integrated Learning Session
Online
26 hour(s) per Term Full Term
Equivalent 2hrs per week face to face.

Unit Weighting

10

Workload

Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10 unit course.

CONTACTS

Course Coordinator	**Online** Dr Laura Roche Laura.Roche@newcastle.edu.au Consultation: Tuesday- Friday, 9am- 3pm
Teaching Staff	Other teaching staff will be advised on the course Canvas site.
School Office	**School of Education** V Building Callaghan Education@newcastle.edu.au +61 2 4921 6428

SYLLABUS

Course Content

Topics will include:
1. Typical and atypical expressive and receptive language development
2. Pre-intentional and early intentional communication
3. Increasing functional communication skills
4. Extending receptive and expressive language
5. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) systems
6. Promoting interactions with typically developing peers
7. Teaching peers to be effective communication partners

Course Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Have knowledge of typical and atypical language development as well as pre-intentional and early intentional communication stages

2. Have skills in identifying and responding to pre-intentional and early intentional communication and in extending expressive and receptive language skills

3. Have knowledge of the purposes for and types of augmentative and alternative communication systems

4. Have skills in implementing augmentative and alternative communication systems

5. Have knowledge and skills to support children's social interactions with typically developing peers

Course Materials

Required Text:
- Downing, J. & Flavey, M. (2015). In *Teaching Communication Skills to Students with Severe Disabilities* (3rd Ed.). Maryland: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

SCHEDULE

Week	Week Begins	Topic	Learning Activity	Assessment Due
1	17 Jul	Typical and atypical language development		
2	24 Jul	Typical and atypical language development		
3	31 Jul	Assessing communication skills		
4	7 Aug	Assessing communication skills		
5	14 Aug	Early communication and developing communication skills		Assessment 1 - Online Quizzes. Due 11:59pm Wednesday 16th August
6	21 Aug	Early communication and developing communication skills		
7	28 Aug	Extending receptive and expressive language		
8	4 Sep	Extending receptive and expressive language		
9	11 Sep	Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)		Assessment 2 - Due 11:59pm Friday 15th September
10	19 Sep	Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)		
Mid-Term Break				
Mid-Term Break				
11	10 Oct	Interactions with peers in inclusive contexts		
12	17 Oct	Interactions with peers in inclusive contexts		
13	24 Oct			Assessment 3 - AAC Case Study Due 11:59pm Friday 27th October, Peer response due Friday 3rd November
Examination Period				
Examination Period				

ASSESSMENTS

This course has 3 assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below.

	Assessment Name	Due Date	Involvement	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Online quizzes 30%	Wednesday 16th August	Individual	30%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2	Case Studies: Functional Communication 30%	Friday 15th September	Individual	30%	1, 2
3	Case scenario/PBL Exercises: Increasing communication skills 40%	Friday 27th October Online feedback to peers on Discussion Board due by 11:59pm Friday 3rd November.	Individual	40%	3, 4, 5

Late Submissions   The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this applies equally to week and weekend days.

Assessment 1 - Online quizzes 30%

Assessment Type	Online Learning Activity
Description	3 separate online quizzes worth 10% each
Weighting	30%
Due Date	Wednesday 16th August
Submission Method	Online via Canvas
Assessment Criteria	Multiple choice online quizzes with answers worth 1 or 2 marks each. There are three separate quizzes that can be completed at any time from the start of the course up until the due date of Monday 16th August. The quizzes assess the content of the first four weeks of the course. It is recommended that the first quiz is completed in week 3 as it reviews the content of the first two weeks of the course. Quiz questions have been designed to apply knowledge. Examples of the communication of children will be provided and the most appropriate communication description must be chosen from the answers.
Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	Online - . Specific feedback will be provided online via Canvas. General feedback will be provided to the whole course

Assessment 2 - Case Studies: Functional Communication 30%

Assessment Type	Case Study / Problem Based Learning
Description	The purpose of this assignment is to apply the concepts learnt in the first four modules to a case study. The case study for this assessment can be either a child from your workplace (pseudonyms must be used) OR a case study provided on Canvas. Choose one child to discuss in this case study. Either • a child at your workplace: (If a child from your workplace is chosen, you will be given an extra 250 words to provide case information. The case information will not be assessed but will provide the framework for your response). OR • a case study provided on Canvas 1. Detail the child's current communication ability and compare to typically developing communication 2. Chose a book appropriate to the child's level of communication to use in your intervention. Justify your choice. 3. Write three SMART goals. One for vocabulary (content), one for sentence structure (form) and one for social skills (use). 4. Describe the interventions you will use to develop the child's communication ability in each of these three areas (based on recent literature) 5. Detail a practical activity you will use to develop the child's communication ability in each of these three areas based on your book choice 6. Describe how your intervention supports literacy development (based on recent literature)
Weighting	30%
Length	1750 words. (±10%) excluding references
Due Date	Friday 15th September
Submission Method	Online Turnitin via Canvas
Assessment Criteria	Rubric for Assessment 2
Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	Online - . Feedback will be available through Turnitin and on a rubric which will be accessible via Grade Centre

Assessment 3 - Case scenario/PBL Exercises: Increasing communication skills 40%

Assessment Type Description	Case Study / Problem Based Learning Choose one child to discuss in this assessment. Either a child at your workplace: (If a child from your workplace is chosen, you will be given an extra 250 words to provide case information. The case information will not be assessed but will provide the framework for your response). OR one of the case studies provided on Canvas • Describe the communication ability of a child with whom you are working (pseudonyms must be used) OR one of the case studies provided on Canvas • Analyse the child's strengths and difficulties in terms of prelinguistic or linguistic skills, presymbolic or symbolic understanding and receptive/expressive language skills. • Devise an AAC system that is appropriate for the child's current communication level. • Devise two SMART goals for implementation of alternate communication AND augmentative communication • Describe strategies that could be implemented to extend the child's communication using the AAC system. • Describe strategies that could be used for coaching parents and peers to facilitate communication with the AAC system.. • Your responses should be based on the readings from the course and show evidence of wider research and reading from academic sources. • Upload a link to the AAC system you have chosen to the Discussion Board with a rationale explaining why you chose this system • No more than five days after submission, comment on two AAC systems your peers.
Weighting	40%
Due Date	Friday 27th October Online feedback to peers on Discussion Board due by 11:59pm Friday 3rd November.
Submission Method	Online Turnitin via Canvas for the main document. Discussion Board for components of the assessment task detailed above
Assessment Criteria	Rubric for Assessment 3
Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	Online - . Feedback will be available through Turnitin and on a rubric which will be accessible via Grade Centre

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grading Scheme

This course is graded as follows:

Range of Marks	Grade	Description
85-100	High Distinction (HD)	Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
75-84	Distinction (D)	Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
65-74	Credit (C)	Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
50-64	Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.

0-49	Fail (FF)	Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.

*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).

Communication Methods

Communication methods used in this course include:

Course Evaluation

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.

Oral Interviews

As part of the evaluation process of any assessment item in this course an oral examination may be conducted. The purpose of the oral examination is to verify the authorship of the material submitted in response to the assessment task. The oral examination will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the Oral Examination Guidelines. In cases where the oral examination reveals the assessment item may not be the student's own work the case will be dealt with under the Student Conduct Rule.

Academic Misconduct

All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University. These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and in all locations. For the Student Academic Integrity Policy, refer to https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=35.

Adverse Circumstances

The University acknowledges the right of students to seek consideration for the impact of allowable adverse circumstances that may affect their performance in assessment item(s). Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where:
1.   the assessment item is a major assessment item; or
2.   the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has specified in the Course Outline that students may apply the online Adverse Circumstances system;
3.   you are requesting a change of placement; or
4.   the course has a compulsory attendance requirement.
Before applying you must refer to the Adverse Circumstance Affecting Assessment Items Procedure available at:
https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=236

Important Policy Information

The 'HELP for Students' tab in UoNline contains important information that all students should be familiar with, including various systems, policies and procedures.

This course outline was approved by the Head of School. No alteration of this course outline is permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved, students will be notified and an amended course outline will be provided in the same manner as the original.
© 2023 The University of Newcastle, Australia

Rubric for EDUC6160 Assessment 2 – Supporting Communication Skills

Student: **Marker: Laura Roche**

	Inadequate	Pass	Credit	Distinction	High Distinction	
Criterion 1 Displays an understanding of typical and atypical communication development	**0-2** Incorrect or incomplete understanding of topic	**2.5** Limited understanding and explanation provided	**3-3.5** Main elements identified with sound explanation and understanding	**4** Main topic identified with a good explanation of typical and atypical communication	**5** Comprehensive understanding typical and atypical communication development	**/5**
Criterion 2 Appropriate book choice with rationale	**0** Inappropriate book choice with no/poor rationale	**1** Reasonable book choice with limited rationale	**1.5** Sound book choice and broad rationale provided	**1.75** Good book choice with clear rationale	**2** Excellent book choice with detailed and relevant rationale	**/2**
Criterion 3 3 SMART goals. One for vocabulary (content), one for sentence structure (form) and one for social skills (use).	**0-1** Incorrect or incomplete goals	**1.5** Some suitable components identified in the goals and some components of a SMART goal	**2** Sound goals developed with main elements of SMART goals	**2.5** Relevant and practical goals that are clearly explained. Mainly SMART format	**3** Excellent and appropriate goals in SMART format	**/3**
Criterion 4 Evidence of a theoretical understanding of the communication interventions	**0-3** Incorrect or incomplete understanding of topic	**4** Limited understanding and explanation provided	**5-6** Main elements identified with sound explanation and understanding	**7** Main topic identified with a good explanation of key elements	**8** Comprehensive understanding of all vocabulary, elements and issues discussed with clear explanation	**/8**
Criterion 5 Evidence of the practical applications of the communication interventions on functional communication with a detailed example	**0-2.5** Incorrect or incomplete practical application	**3** Limited practical application	**4-4.5** Sound application of the main communication goals. Some example provided	**5** Good practical applications identified and explained. Clear illustrative example provided.	**6** Excellent practical application of the theory with detailed example	**/6**

Criterion 6 Reflection on how the communication intervention supports literacy development	**0-1** Poor or no evidence of the links with literacy and no/ limited references	**1.5** Limited reflection of the links with literacy with limited referencing	**2** Clear insight to the main links with literacy and referencing to core literature	**2.5** Good insights into the main links with literacy based on the literature	**3** Outstanding insights into the links with literacy based on a comprehensive understanding of the theory	**/3**
Criterion 7 Ability to write clearly and concisely using appropriate referencing (i.e. APA referencing style). Evidence of reading beyond the core course readings provided	**0-1** Poor writing style. Limited referencing and many referencing errors. No additional references cited.	**1.5** Reasonable writing style, but could improve in structure. Contains several grammatical, spelling and/or referencing errors. Reasonable reference list	**2** Well written. Contains some grammatical, spelling and/or referencing errors. Reference list shows evidence of further reading beyond core course readings	**2.5** Good writing style and structure. Good use of APA referencing. Some minor writing and referencing errors. Good depth of relevance of reading	**3** An exemplary paper with logical structure. Excellent use of high quality and relevant references throughout	**/3**
Comments:					**Total Points**	**/30**

Rubric for EDUC6160 Assessment 3 – Supporting Communication Skills

Student: **Marker: Laura Roche**

	Inadequate	Pass	Credit	Distinction	High Distinction	
Criterion 1 Displays an understanding child's strengths and difficulties with reference to typical and atypical language development	**0-2** Incorrect or incomplete understanding of typical and atypical language development	**2.5** Limited understanding and explanation provided	**3-3.5** Main elements identified with sound explanation and understanding	**4** Main topic identified with a good explanation of key elements with child strengths and difficulties identified	**5** Comprehensive understanding of child strengths and difficulties compared to typical development with clear explanation	**/5**
Criterion 2 Identifies two appropriate goals in SMART format	**0-2** Incorrect or incomplete goals	**2.5** Some suitable components identified in the goals and some components of a SMART goal	**3-3.5** Sound goals developed with main elements of SMART goals	**4** Relevant and practical goals that are clearly explained. Mainly SMART format	**5** Excellent and appropriate goals in SMART format	**/5**
Criterion 3 Chooses an appropriate form of AAC for the child	**0-2** Incorrect or incomplete AAC design	**2.5** AAC design has some suitable components	**3-3.5** Sound application of the main communication goals in AAC. Some examples of use provided	**4** Relevant and practical AAC that is clearly explained and supported with clear examples	**5** Excellent practical application of the theory in AAC design with clear and concise examples	**/5**
Criterion 4 Details relevant intervention strategies to support the communication of the child	**0-2** Limited evidence of understanding of intervention and no/ limited references	**2.5-3.5** Sound reflection and analysis of the main intervention strategies with limited references	**4-4.5** Clear insight to the main intervention strategies with reference to the core course readings	**5-6** Good insights into intervention strategies based on the literature with examples	**6.5-7.5** Outstanding intervention strategies identified based on a comprehensive understanding of the theory with clear	**/7.5**

					examples	
Criterion 5 Details specific strategies to train the parents and include peers in intervention	**0-2** Limited evidence of understanding of intervention and no/ limited references	**2.5-3.5** Sound reflection and analysis of the main strategies for parents and peers with limited references	**4-4.5** Clear insight to the main strategies for parents and peers with reference to the core course readings	**5-6** Good insights into strategies for parents and peers based on the literature with examples	**6.5-7.5** Outstanding strategies based on a comprehensive understanding of theory with clear examples	**/7.5**
Criterion 6 Uploads link to AAC system. Comments on one peers AAC system	**0-2** Does not submit all components to the Discussion Board	**2.5** Submits all components, but limited contribution on the submissions of peers	**3-3.5** Submits all components with sound contribution on the submissions of peers	**4** Submits all components with good contribution on the submission of peer	**5** Submits all components with an excellent contribution on the submission of peer	**/5**
Criterion 7 Ability to write clearly and concisely using appropriate referencing (i.e. APA referencing style). Evidence of reading beyond the core course readings provided	**0-2** Poor writing style. Limited referencing and many referencing errors, No additional references cited.	**2.5** Reasonable writing style, but could improve in structure. Contains several grammatical, spelling and/or referencing errors. Reasonable reference list	**3-3.5** Well written. Contains some grammatical, spelling &/or referencing errors. Reference list shows evidence of further reading beyond core course readings	**4** Good writing style and structure. Good use of APA referencing. Some minor writing and referencing errors. Good depth of relevance of reading	**5** An exemplary paper with logical structure. Excellent use of high quality and relevant references throughout	**/5**
Comments:					**Total Points**	**/40**