



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

## Faculty of Humanities

Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe  
Lefapha la Bomotho

Centre for Augmentative and  
Alternative Communication  
(CAAC)

Postgraduate Degrees



# Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

Mrs Serudu is worried about her 7-year-old son, Sibusiso. She has noticed that he is developing more slowly than the neighbour's boy of the same age. Although he can sit and walk, her major concern is that Sibusiso is not talking well. He only says "eee" to indicate "yes", calls her by saying "Mama" and shows his empty plate when he has finished eating. She thinks that he understands more than what he is able to say.



For many therapists, providing services to children with severe communication disabilities like Sibusiso, can be daunting. To ensure that such children have access to appropriate and affordable intervention, the Centre for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (CAAC) at the University of Pretoria has developed the honours and master's degree programmes in Augmentative and Alternative Communication.



Both are distance learning degrees although it is compulsory for students to attend the week-long onsite contact periods arranged on the Hatfield Campus of the University twice each year. The CAAC also offers a 2-year, distance learning master's degree in Early Childhood intervention as well as a consultation service for children and adults who have severe communication difficulties.

For more information contact:

The Centre for AAC  
University of Pretoria  
Email: [saak@up.ac.za](mailto:saak@up.ac.za),  
Tel: +27 12 420 2001  
Fax: 086 510 0841  
[www.caac.up.ac.za](http://www.caac.up.ac.za)

# Honours Degree Augmentative and Alternative Communication

## Course code: 01242131

Not being able to speak is devastating. It destroys the independence of those who suffer from it and puts them at great risk of being abused or neglected ... a silent victim is the perfect victim!

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) strategies play an important role in facilitating communication. A variety of AAC strategies are available, including unaided strategies and aided strategies. The former are based on the use of gestures, signing, pointing, facial expressions and other learned behaviour, while the latter employ low tech media such as communication boards and books to display objects, pictures, symbols or written words, or high tech devices that generate speech output.

### For whom is the degree intended?

The degree has been developed for therapists and teachers who wish to enhance their knowledge and skills in the field of AAC.

### Requirements for prospective students

To qualify for admission, prospective students need to have a relevant 3-year bachelor's degree, be working in the field of severe disabilities, satisfactorily complete an admission assignment and have internet access at home, as educational material is primarily delivered online.

### Degree structure

This is a part-time, blended learning degree programme (online and in situ contact sessions). Day-to-day communication is conducted via email. Study guides and readings are available online as study aids and it is compulsory for students to attend the week-long lecture series presented on the Hatfield Campus of the university.



Modules	Credits
AAK 713 Introduction to AAC	10
AAK 701 AAC symbol systems	20
AAK 702 AAC assessment procedures	20
AAK 703 AAC communication technology	15
AAK 715 Implementation of AAC	25
AAK 717 Research methodology	30
<b>Total credits</b>	<b>120</b>

### Additional information, applications and registration

The closing date for applications is 31 October of the year preceding the study. For international students, it is 30 June of the preceding year of study.

**Please note that contact with the programme manager is essential before application!**

### Financial information

For information on fees, bursaries and loans related to the degree programme, contact the University of Pretoria Client Service Centre. Email: [csc@up.ac.za](mailto:csc@up.ac.za), Tel 012 420 3111, [www.up.ac.za/fao](http://www.up.ac.za/fao)

### Academic information

For more information on the degree, applications or registration, please contact the programme manager on: Email: [saak@up.ac.za](mailto:saak@up.ac.za), Tel 012 240 2001, Fax 086 510 0841, [www.caac.up.ac.za](http://www.caac.up.ac.za)

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## Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

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The way human beings communicate distinguishes them from other species. Each of us has a unique identity which is reflected in the way we express our thoughts, feelings, desires, dreams and ambitions. In a sense, the way we communicate reflects our DNA.

Inability to express oneself in words can be devastating, whether the cause is congenital or traumatic.

At its worst, it means that life is sealed up inside.

At the Centre for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (CAAC), we hold weekly team consultations to find communication solutions for people who have little or no functional speech. In collaboration with a client's family and service providers (therapists, doctors, teachers), we explore communication methods and the use of devices to engender or to supplement speech, and match these with the client's abilities, needs and context. We also offer training on specific aspects of AAC, tailored to the needs of specialised groups such as ICU nurses, therapists, teachers and doctors.



For more information contact:

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University of Pretoria  
Email: [saak@up.ac.za](mailto:saak@up.ac.za),  
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[www.caac.up.ac.za](http://www.caac.up.ac.za)



# Master's Degree Augmentative and Alternative Communication (MAAC)

## Course code: 01252133 (Research), 01252134 (Course work)

Are you involved in interventions with individuals with severe speech disabilities? Do you wish to gain more specialized knowledge and skills in communication intervention and become an AAC specialist? If so, the Master's Degree in Augmentative and Alternative Communication is for you!

### What does this degree offer?

- The opportunity to obtain a strong theoretical foundation in AAC-related issues;
- The opportunity to gain cutting edge AAC knowledge equipping you to become internationally competitive;
- The opportunity to receive input from professionals with different backgrounds (teachers and therapists) with professional training in AAC;
- The opportunity to conduct research on an AAC-related area of interest.

### Requirements for prospective students

To qualify for admission, prospective students are required to have a BCommunication Pathology, BA(Hons) with specialisation in AAC, or any other relevant honours degree. Candidates may be required to write an admission examination. Students must have full and consistent access to their own computers as well as broadband internet and email facilities since educational material is primarily delivered online.

### Degree structure

This is a 2-year, blended learning degree programme (online & in situ contact sessions). It is compulsory for students to attend the week-long onsite contact periods arranged on the Hatfield Campus of the University twice each year. Students can choose between the research oriented and course work oriented options offered in this degree.

Research option	Credits	
AAK 890	Dissertation: AAC Students are required to complete a dissertation on a topic related to the field of augmentative and alternative communication, selected in collaboration with supervisor(s).	180

Coursework option	Credits	
AAK 811	Theoretical constructs in AAC	45
AAK 895	Mini-dissertation: AAC	90
AAK 812	Implementation science in AAC	45
<b>Total credits</b>		<b>180</b>

### Additional information, applications and registration

The closing date for applications is 30 November of the year preceding the study. For international students, it is 31 October of the preceding year of study.

**Please note that contact with the programme manager is essential before application!**

### Financial information

For information on fees, bursaries and loans related to the degree programme, contact Client Service Centre, Email: [csc@up.ac.za](mailto:csc@up.ac.za), Tel: 012 420 3111, [www.up.ac.za/fao](http://www.up.ac.za/fao)

### Academic information

For more information on the degree programme, applications or registration, please contact the programme manager on: Email: [saak@up.ac.za](mailto:saak@up.ac.za), Tel: 012 420 2001 Fax: 086 510 0841, [www.caac.up.ac.za](http://www.caac.up.ac.za)

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# Early Childhood Intervention in South Africa

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All too often medical professionals, teachers and counsellors are faced with the daunting task of providing early childhood intervention (ECI) for children who are at risk due to developmental delays. They can often not see their way forward because the challenges and obstacles they face seem to be so overwhelming. The following case study typifies the overwhelming task that awaits any interventionist. However, just because cases such as these are complex and challenging does not mean that we do not have the obligation to support families and assist them to achieve the best possible outcomes for their children.

## **CASE STUDY: BABY B**

A baby girl, 13 months old, is found abandoned in an informal settlement just outside of Witbank. She is admitted to hospital with severe malnourishment and weighs 4.5 kg. She struggles to gain weight and it is suspected that she is also HIV positive.

There is little information about her parents but she has been visited on occasion by a neighbour. Baby B receives occupational therapy to address significant developmental delays but is a quiet little girl and does not interact very well. Her future is unsure.

There is no social worker on the hospital staff to give her the care she requires.

If the scenario is familiar to you and you feel that you would like to acquire added knowledge and skills in the field of ECI, please contact:

The Centre for Augmentative and Alternative Communication, University of Pretoria  
Tel: +27 12 420 2001, Email: [saak@up.ac.za](mailto:saak@up.ac.za)



Fragmentation, duplication and the lack of an integrative approach to ECI at all levels, compromises the quality of healthcare service delivery in South Africa. This is exacerbated by manpower constraints as too few professionals qualify each year to be able to provide for the vast number of children who require early intervention services in our country. It is therefore imperative that we think creatively and make use of available resources in the most effective manner possible.

A “transdisciplinary” teamwork approach to early childhood intervention has been proposed by leading researchers in the field as a means of addressing the constraints on intervention in our country. This approach requires professionals, family members and members of the community to work together, collaborating closely and sharing roles, responsibilities and information.

Unfortunately, professionals have not always been equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary for them to be able to work effectively and sustainably as team members in the field, where resources come under such pressure. Against this background, the Centre for Augmentative and Alternative Communication at the University of Pretoria has developed the multi-professional Master's Degree in Early Childhood Intervention (MECI), to ensure that students are better qualified to address challenges in the field in a more comprehensive manner.

This degree is the culmination of the collaboration that has evolved between disability stakeholders, government departments and various departments at the University of Pretoria.

It is a distance learning, coursework master's programme and is presented primarily via the world wide web. Students are also required to attend two onsite contact periods each year, on the University of Pretoria's Hatfield Campus.

# Master's Degree Early Childhood Intervention (MECI)

Administered through the Faculty of Health Sciences

## Course code: 10258240

This degree equips professionals from various disciplines with specialised knowledge and skills in the field of early childhood intervention, enabling them to function optimally in a changing and challenging social context by:

- Working in teams with other professionals and community members to facilitate social development.
- Understanding their own roles in the team of early childhood professionals
- Developing comprehensive strategies for intervention
- Critically evaluating accountability in service provision and its appropriacy and sustainability.

## For whom is the degree intended?

Medical practitioners, therapists, teachers, educational psychologists, nutrition specialists and social workers who work with children from birth to six years of age, and their families.

## Requirements for prospective students

To qualify for admission, prospective students need to have an honours degree or an equivalent 4-year degree. Students must have full and consistent access to their own computers, as well as broadband internet and e-mail since educational material and lectures are primarily delivered on-line.

## Degree structure

This is a 2-year blended learning degree programme (online and in situ contact sessions). It is compulsory for students to attend the week-long onsite contact periods arranged on the Hatfield Campus of the University twice each year. The degree is presented primarily via an online, web-based medium with support material like CD-Rom. Group work is required in collaboration with students from other professions.

First year	Credits	
ECI 801	Critical Theoretical Analysis in ECI, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Theoretical framework and issues in Early Childhood Intervention</li><li>• ECI in the community: Team building and management</li><li>• Family- focused community intervention in ECI</li><li>• Applied Research in ECI</li></ul>	90

Second year	Credits	
ECI 860 - 868	Profession specific elective module	30
ECI 874	Evaluation and Intervention	20
ECI 873	Measurement in ECI	20
ECI 872	Collaborative problem- solving	20
<b>Total credits</b>		<b>180</b>

## Additional information, applications and registration

The closing date for applications is 31 October of the year preceding study.

**Please note that contact with the programme manager is essential before application!**

## Financial information

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## Academic information

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# PhD in AAC Severe Disabilities and Early Childhood Intervention

**Course code: 01264613**

## **For whom is the degree intended?**

This is a multi-professional degree tailored to accommodate students from varied disciplines such as speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, psychology and special education. Background in AAC, severe disability or early childhood intervention is essential.

The training approach is collaborative and students and lecturers engage in ongoing interaction on the web, as well as during the week-long onsite contact periods arranged on the Hatfield Campus of the University twice each year. Interaction with international experts is an integral part of PhD training, exposing students to a broad range of methodologies and approaches to research in their respective fields.

## **Additional information, applications and registration**

The closing date for applications is 31 October of the preceding year of intended study.



Applications have to be accompanied by a letter of intent. The format for this letter can be obtained from the programme manager.

***Please note that contact with the programme manager is essential before application!***

## **Financial information**

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Email: [csc@up.ac.za](mailto:csc@up.ac.za), Tel: 012 420 3111, [www.up.ac.za/fao](http://www.up.ac.za/fao)

## **Academic information**

Please note that all degree programmes offered by the CAAC are accredited

To speak to one of the programme managers please contact  
Tel: 012 420 2001  
Fax: 086 510 0841  
Email: [saak@up.ac.za](mailto:saak@up.ac.za)

