



Wollongong College Australia

A College of the University of Wollongong

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ITC Education Ltd trading as
Wollongong College Australia
CRICOS 02723D
ABN 14105312329

Foundation Studies 3-Session Program

(CRICOS course code: 023266F)

Subject Outline Summer 2009/10

FSP 001 Academic Skills - English

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WCA-FSP 001-SO/2

Academic Skills - English

Subject description

In Academic Skills- English you will develop your knowledge and understanding of English academic skills which will help prepare you for tertiary studies. The subject will focus on typical academic text types that are used to assess student progress; the report, the oral presentation, the discussion essay and the argument essay. Each of these text types has a particular structure and requirements in terms of research, referencing and use of language. Your academic progress in all subjects will be assisted by the progress you make toward mastering them. You will also learn the essential grammar and word choice that is appropriate to academic expression and how to apply these to improve your own texts. You will also strengthen your skills in researching for your major assessment tasks. In class participation will involve you strengthening your speaking and oral comprehension skills.

Subject structure

Academic Skills - English is an 8 credit point, single-session subject delivered as 8 hours of scheduled classes per week. The session is of 14 week's duration with face-to-face classes scheduled for the first 12 weeks and a study/examination period in Weeks 13 and 14.

In addition to scheduled class sessions, students are expected to spend additional time in individual study and research. As a general guideline students will need to spend at least 1 hour in private study (including completing homework and revision) for every hour of scheduled class time.

Teachers will be available for a consultation time each week. Students will be notified of the time and location of the consultation session during Week 1 of the Session. It is recommended that students experiencing difficulty with this subject arrange to consult with the teacher as difficulties are encountered.

Some students may require tutorial support to improve language/literacy skills. Where this is recommended, students will be advised to use the College's self-access facilities in the Multimedia Centre in their own time. These facilities are located upstairs in building 30. Where this is recommended, your attendance at and use of these facilities may form part of your participation mark.

Learning resources

It is recommended that you purchase the latest edition of a *Cobuild* or *Oxford Dictionary* or a dictionary of equivalent standard.

There is no set text for this subject. Lessons will be supplemented by handouts from the class teacher. It is important that these handouts and any notes made during classes are organised properly. You will require a folder to store and organise these so that this material is available for revision purposes.

Subject outcomes

Successful completion of Academic Skills- English will enable students to:

- Extend your language skills through thinking, reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- Communicate ideas, observations and information effectively.
- Present and justify your own points of view coherently.
- Evaluate points of view expressed by others.
- Plan your written and oral work
- Reflect critically on your own written and oral work.
- Edit and revise your own written work independently and in response to your teacher's suggestions.
- Read accurately to locate, understand and analyse information.
- Use researched information to answer specific questions.
- Use the conventions of academic English appropriately and correctly.
- Develop an awareness of the ethics of academic research and written and oral presentation.
- Set goals for your own language, skills and knowledge development, taking responsibility for your own progress.

Subject outline in weeks

The following guide to lessons and activities may be adjusted to suit the needs of the group as long as subject outcomes and assessment criteria are met.

Week 1 - Subject orientation and introductory tasks

Overview of subject and assessment requirements

Needs analysis: oral comprehension and writing skills

Speaking exercise –groups

Time management

Selection of topic for research essay – brainstorm issue

Week 2

Library seminars on use of catalogue and data bases

Student research – internet/library research on essay topic (Lab)

Vocabulary/grammar exercises

Critical reading – using information about a source to estimate usefulness

- title, author and institution, date, abstract

Listening: note-taking skills outline and practice

Week 3

Critical reading – identifying main idea, structure of text and supporting material, purpose of text – newspaper article

Summarising – strategies for avoiding plagiarism

Listening: note-taking skills and practice

Paragraph writing – topic sentences, paragraph development, grammar

Week 4

Critical reading – book review

Vocabulary/grammar exercises and writing

Listening: Note-taking skills and comprehension

Introduction to analysis and organisation; classifying information - concepts and ideas – issues map

Week 5

Critical reading – ABS document

Vocabulary/grammar exercises, note taking and /or summary from written sources

Listening: Note-taking and comprehension skills.

Assessment Task: In-class test

Week 6

How to review a source

Vocabulary/grammar exercises and comparing texts

Listening skills

Bibliographies

Week 7

In-text referencing Vocabulary/grammar exercises - Academic English – main features for use in reports and essays

Writing and editing review

Listening comprehension skills

Assessment Task: Review due

Week 8

Writing: how to write discussion essay – examples and analysis of structure

Evaluating sources – logic, evidence, authority – apply to ideas collected on theme.

Essay planning. Sequencing ideas

Oral presentation skills

Week 9

Annotations

Introduction and conclusion practice

Paragraph writing practice

Debate – oral presentation exercise

Week 10

Oral presentation skills exercises

Reading: comprehension and evaluation

Listening comprehension skills

Writing: Paragraphing for the argument essay

Assessment Task: Discussion essay due

Week 11

Reading: comprehension – simpler academic article

Speaking: oral presentations of students' extra reading, film or personal experience

Video documentary – comprehension – analysis

Assessment Task: Listening

Week 12

Assessment Task: Oral Presentation

Weeks 13 & 14 Final examination Period

Please note that there is no final examination for Academic Skills - English in this study period.

Assessment

Assessment and plagiarism policy

All written assessment tasks, with the exception of examinations and in-class tasks, must be word-processed unless students are otherwise advised.

Students must keep copies of all assessment tasks submitted for marking with the exception of class tests and examinations.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating or stealing that happens when a student uses someone else's work and presents it as his/her own without showing where it comes from. To avoid this, students are expected to submit their own original work for assessment and to accurately acknowledge all references and sources used in essays and assignments.

For information regarding assessment, plagiarism, acknowledging sources and examination rules, please refer to the Wollongong College Australia Student Handbook

<http://www.wca.uow.edu.au/handbook>

Assessment schedule

Task	Due	Weighting	Length/Time
In-class test	Week 5	10%	1 hour
Literature Review (in-class)	Week 7	20%	2 hours
Discussion Essay	Week 10	25%	850 words
Listening Task	Week 11	15%	1 hour
Oral presentation	Week 12	20%	5-10 mins
Quizzes	Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8 & 10	10%	20 mins

Marking Guidelines

WCA best practice is that students can normally expect to have assessment tasks handed back within two weeks, and before the next assessment task is due. On occasion there may be exceptions to this time frame due to, for example, the size of the task, the size of the class, teacher illness or teacher leave.

Where there are several teachers marking a major assessment task, tasks will be handed back by all the teachers within the same week.

Assessment criteria and explanation of components

All assessment components are marked according to set marking criteria. Some assessment tasks may undergo check-marking by a panel of tutors.

In-class test	10%
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This assessment will contain questions that test reading ability and comprehension. The writing component will test grammar and vocabulary.

Literature Review	20%
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This in-class test will critically compare two texts on your research topic.

Discussion Essay	25%
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You will write a discussion essay based on a topic researched throughout the session. Your essay will need to be structured according to the outline and the criteria taught in class.

Listening task	15%
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You will listen to a spoken text and use note-taking skills to take notes. These notes will be used to answer questions about the listening text.

Oral Presentation	20%
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The oral presentation is based on the research for your essay. It will be presented in class using the skills taught in the presentation lessons.

Quizzes	10%
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During session 4 quizzes will be held in weeks 2, 4, 6, 8 & 10. These will be informal assessment tasks of approximately 20 minutes duration and will cover spelling and vocabulary from class vocabulary development lists and items of grammar that have been taught in the preceding two weeks. Quizzes may cover some or all of these areas.