

B.A. (Honours) in Contemporary English Studies

Course Title	: Professional Communication
Course Code	: ENG3303
Recommended Study Year	: 3 rd or 4 th Year
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Lecture-tutorial mode
Class Contact Hours	: 2-hour lecture per week 1-hour tutorial per week
Category	: Discipline Elective
Prerequisite(s)	: Nil
Co-requisite(s)	: Nil
Exclusion(s)	: Nil
Exemption Requirement(s)	: Nil

Brief Course Description

The course aims to help students to develop a high level of language awareness and communicative competence in professional English. It will help students develop a deep understanding of the role and importance of language and communication in business and other professional settings. It will also enable students to effectively apply their oral and written professional communication skills in their future employment.

Aims

Students will be able to use English communication skills effectively in professional contexts, such as business meetings and interviews, and write business texts, including business letters, minutes and reports, in an appropriate manner. They will also be able to develop problem-solving skills for professional communication.

Learning Outcomes

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

1. understand the use of English in professional contexts;
2. identify and analyze language features of different genres in English, particularly those used in business settings;
3. read and write appropriate and effective texts of different genres in English, particularly those used in business;
4. express views on a variety of subjects clearly, confidently and effectively in spoken English.

Indicative Contents

- Resume and Application Letter
- Business Report
- Business Letter
- Minutes and Agenda
- Notice and Memo
- Meeting and Negotiations Skills
- Interview and Discussion Skills

Teaching Method

Students are expected to actively participate in tutorials. They will be asked to perform situational tasks which resemble those which they are likely to encounter in business settings. A learner-centred approach will be adopted and activities like simulations and role-plays will be extensively used. Students are also encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and make use of the English learning materials available in the Self-Access Centre to improve their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

1. Students will submit three writing assignments in the course. Specifically, they will write three of the most common business genres, 1) agenda and minutes, 2) application letter, 3) business letter in an appropriate professional style. (LO: 1, 2, 3);
2. To prepare for the negotiation meeting, students need to read about complex professional situations and gather extra information on their own. They identify problems, set priorities and goals, and devise strategies to solve the problems individually and in collaboration with their group members. They will also prepare procedures and negotiation strategies with their group members. They will then negotiate on some business issues with members of another group in a business meeting. (LO: 1, 4);
3. Students will write a report on the outcomes of the negotiation meeting. They need to demonstrate their analytical ability, awareness of audience and purpose, and the ability to write in a professional style. (LO: 1, 2, 3);
4. Students will be asked a number of questions on a wide range of topics in an interview which resembles selection interviews in professional contexts. They will need to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of current affairs, independent thinking, analytical power and communication skills in English. (LO: 1, 4).

Assessment

100% continuous assessment (three writing assignments 20% each/60%; a report 20%; an interview 10%; a negotiation meeting 10%)

Required Readings

Materials specifically designed to achieve learning objectives will be distributed throughout the course, but students are referred to the following for a deeper/wider understanding of the subject matter and for further practice.

Supplementary Readings

- Bilbow, G.T. *Business Writing for Hong Kong*. Hong Kong : Longman Hong Kong Education, 2004.
- Comfort, J. & Utley. *Effective Presentations*. Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Corfield, R. *Successful Interview Skills: How to Present Yourself with Confidence*. London : Kogan Page, 2002.
- Gratus, J. *Give and Take v.2: Meeting to Negotiate*. London: BBC Training Videos, 1990.
- Jones, L. & Alexander, R., *New International Business English: Communication Skills in English for Business Purposes*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Kellar, R. E. *Sales Negotiation Skills that Sell*. New York : AMACOM, 1997.
- Kerbey, E. and Satterwhite, M.L. *Professional Business Writing*. lencoe/McGraw-Hill, 7th ed., 2002.
- Hollet, V. et al. *In At the Deep End*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Levitt, J. and Craig, J. *Power Tools for Business Writing*. Thomson, South-Western, 2006.
- Luntz, F., *Words that Work*, New York: Hyperion, 2007.
- Newbolt, B. & V. Hollet. *Meeting Objectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Pelham, L. & R. Phillips. *Business Meetings*. Hong Kong: Longman, 1993.

Important Notes:

- (1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
- (2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- (3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
- (4) To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>.