

PhD programme in Education and Social Sciences
 Academic year 2024/2025

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| Course title: | English for Academic purposes |
| Course year: | 1, 40th cycle |
| Semester: | 1st and 2nd |
| Course Code: | 15144 F |
| Scientific sector: | multidisciplinary |
| Lecturer: | Prof. Aggr. Martina Irsara, 7 hrs. Dr. Cecilia Lazzeretti, 7 hrs. Dr. Graham Francis Burton, 6 hrs. |
| Module: | Methodological courses 1st study year |
| Credit Points of the module: | 35 |
| Total lecturing hours: | 20 |
| Office hours: | from Monday to Friday on request |
| Attendance: | according to the regulations |
| Teaching Language: | English |
| Propaedeutic course: | |
| Course description: | <p>This course aims to familiarise PhD students with academic research conventions and academic discourse in English, in both spoken and written contexts. Participants will learn how to formulate research questions and a thesis statement, how to present an argument, how to structure paragraphs for coherence and cohesion, how to write an abstract in English for an academic audience and aspects of effective oral presentations. Genre and corpus approaches will be used to heighten learners' awareness of academic language in use, through such observation skills as validating, formulating and checking hypotheses about the rhetorical structures and language characterising academic genres. Corpus work will contribute to learning by 'noticing' or 'discovery', encouraging students to adopt an inductive approach in analysing academic language. At the end of the course, students will produce an abstract for a short oral presentation and give the presentation in front of an audience.</p> |
| Specific educational objectives: | <p>By the end of the 20-hour course on "English for academic purposes" students will be able to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and analyse the conventions for academic discourse with appropriate genre features • use corpus tools to improve their own writing • write an abstract in English demonstrating critical awareness of generic conventions and academic discourse style • deliver an effective oral presentation in front of an audience |
| List of topics covered: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic writing and its conventions • Linguistic features of academic writing in English • Aspects of reading for academic writing • Exploiting basic corpus techniques to explore academic language • Compiling a corpus representative of academic language use • Developing arguments • Structure of abstracts • Use of English in academic writing for educational research • Structuring oral presentations |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using effective linking phrases during oral presentations • Make effective use of presenting software such as PowerPoint |
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| Teaching format: | Lecture, workshop, seminar, discussion, individual work |
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| Learning outcomes: | <p>On completing the course, students are expected to achieve the following outcomes:</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate knowledge of spoken and written academic discourse and its conventions - demonstrate knowledge of the structure and language of abstracts <p>Applying knowledge and understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ability to identify the features of academic discourse in English and mobilise these in communication - ability to work out rules regarding the meaning and use of academic language items through corpus observation - ability to tailor communication through an awareness of audience, purpose and strategy - ability to analyse an abstract and compose one <p>Making judgments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ability to think critically about and evaluate the academic conventions in one's field of study - ability to analyse written academic discourse and evaluate its linguistic and stylistic features in order to evaluate communicative effectiveness - ability to make informed choices about individual writing and speaking strategies <p>Communication skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ability to discuss aspects of academic culture and academic discourse - ability to use appropriate register and style in English for specific academic audiences and communicative purposes - ability to structure an argument - ability to synthesise key points and discuss them - ability to use general lexis and discipline-specific lexis - ability to write a clear, well-structured text - ability to communicate effectively in an oral academic context <p>Learning skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ability to draw on knowledge and feedback from the course to improve English language awareness and competence for academic contexts - ability to identify a gap in research and present an argument - ability to use corpus tools at a basic level - ability to recognise generic patterns and reproduce them in writing and speaking |
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| Assessment: | <p>One formative assessment:</p> <p>Abstract: students will produce a short abstract (approximately 250 words) following guidelines provided.</p> <p>Presentation: students will deliver a short oral presentation (approximately 8–10 minutes) on a topic related to their PhD research</p> |
| Required readings: | <p>Selected chapters from:</p> <p>Burton, G. (2011). <i>Collins Academic Skills Series: Presenting</i>. London: HarperCollins.</p> <p>Swales, John M. & Feak, C. (2009). <i>Abstracts and the writing of abstracts</i>. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.</p> |

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| | <p>Swales, John M. & Feak, C. (2014). <i>Academic writing for graduate students: Essential tasks and skills</i>. 3rd ed. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.</p> <p>Readings and slides for the course will be available on OLE.</p> |
| <p>Supplementary readings:</p> | <p>Gilmore, A. (2009). Using online corpora to develop students' writing skills. <i>ELT Journal</i>, 63(4), 363-372.</p> <p>Graham, A. (2018). <i>English for academic purposes: A handbook for students</i>. St. Albans: Critical Publishing. Retrieved from: https://www.criticalpublishing.com/asset/211915/1/Graham_Web_Material.pdf</p> <p>Hyland, K. (2008). Genre and academic writing in the disciplines. <i>Language Teaching</i>, 41(4), 543-562.</p> <p>Karpenko-Seccombe, T. (2020). <i>Academic writing with corpora: A resource book for data-driven learning</i>. London and New York: Routledge.</p> <p>Swales, John M. & Feak, C. (2010). From text to task: Putting research on abstracts to work. In M. Ruiz-Garrido, J. C. Palmer-Silveira & I. Fortanet-Gomez (Eds.), <i>English for professional and academic purposes</i> (pp. 169-182). Amsterdam: Brill-Rodopi.</p> |