

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Subject Description Form

Subject Code	ELC501
Subject Title	English for Postgraduate Studies
Credit Value	3
Level	5
Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion	Nil
Objectives	<p>This course aims to enable postgraduate students to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. successfully complete their studies through the medium of English, and 2. develop the skills required for postgraduate students to be able to fully participate within the international research community associated with their chosen field of studies and future professions.
Intended Learning Outcomes	<p>By the end of the subject, students should be able to present their project work to academic audiences effectively through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. introducing the background, rationale and objectives of the research orally b. reviewing the literature c. explaining the methodology of the research d. describing and discussing findings orally e. summarising and discussing the significance of the research orally f. organising and structuring the dissertation orally <p>To achieve the above outcomes, students are expected to use language and text structure appropriate to the context, select information critically, and present and support stance and opinion.</p>
Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus	<p>This syllabus is indicative. The balance of the components, and the corresponding weighting, will be based on the specific needs of the students.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research and writing Definition of a research paper; introduction to the language, style and structure of research texts; accessing research resources; compiling and listing an accurate bibliography; taking notes, outlining, and writing drafts. 2. Writing research papers, reports and dissertations Stating the objectives; providing background information about the research; outlining the paper, report or dissertation; describing the research methodology; discussing the limitations; writing the literature review; avoiding plagiarism, citing sources, summarising and paraphrasing; reporting and discussing findings; using graphics; writing conclusions and recommendations; writing an abstract; writing acknowledgements; organising the text.

	<p>3. The mechanics of research writing Consistency in spelling, punctuation, fonts, capitalisation, abbreviations, numbering, and lay-out; use of referencing styles; design and use of tables, graphics and illustrations; editing and proofreading.</p> <p>4. The format of research papers and reports Introduction to the international research writing conventions of specific disciplines; practice in preparing the various sections of a research paper and research report.</p> <p>5. Oral presentations of research Purpose of the presentation; terms of reference and audience; presentation of conference papers, progress reports and theses; selection and sequencing of information and materials; use of support materials; rehearsing and timing control; use of voice and body language; variety in pace and style of delivery; techniques for handling questions and discussions.</p> <p>Emphasis will be placed throughout the course on appropriate use of language, including accuracy, coherence and cohesion, and register.</p>																																														
<p>Teaching/Learning Methodology</p>	<p>The subject is designed to enable postgraduate students to use English in the kinds of contexts that they may be expected to experience within their studies and professional careers. It provides students with opportunities to practise the advanced language skills needed to express original and complex ideas. Throughout this subject, continuing attention will be paid to grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. The assignments given to students are, as far as possible, based on the interim reports and presentations required at various stages of the postgraduate research project.</p> <p>The study method is primarily based on seminars and tutorials. Activities include teacher input as well as individual and group work involving drafting and evaluating texts, discussions, mini-presentations, and analyses of published texts. Students will be referred to information on the Internet and the ELC's Centre for Independent Language Learning.</p> <p>Learning materials developed by the English Language Centre are used throughout this course. Additional reference materials will be recommended as required.</p>																																														
<p>Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Specific assessment methods/tasks</th> <th rowspan="2">% weighting</th> <th colspan="6">Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>a</th> <th>b</th> <th>c</th> <th>d</th> <th>e</th> <th>f</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Introducing the thesis introduction Oral presentation</td> <td>30%</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Reviewing the literature Written assignment</td> <td>30%</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Peer evaluations of thesis literature review</td> <td>5%</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. Peer evaluation of thesis methodology</td> <td>5%</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)						a	b	c	d	e	f	1. Introducing the thesis introduction Oral presentation	30%	✓						2. Reviewing the literature Written assignment	30%		✓					3. Peer evaluations of thesis literature review	5%		✓					4. Peer evaluation of thesis methodology	5%			✓			
Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting			Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)																																											
		a	b	c	d	e	f																																								
1. Introducing the thesis introduction Oral presentation	30%	✓																																													
2. Reviewing the literature Written assignment	30%		✓																																												
3. Peer evaluations of thesis literature review	5%		✓																																												
4. Peer evaluation of thesis methodology	5%			✓																																											

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>5. Describing and analysing research findings Oral presentation</td> <td>30%</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>100%</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> </table>	5. Describing and analysing research findings Oral presentation	30%				✓	✓	✓	Total	100%						
5. Describing and analysing research findings Oral presentation	30%				✓	✓	✓										
Total	100%																
	<p>Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes:</p> <p>This subject adopts the method of 100% continuous assessment. Students' writing skills are evaluated through assessment tasks related to the learning outcomes and students' research project. Students are assessed on the accuracy and the appropriacy of the language used in fulfilling the assessment tasks, as well as the selection and organisation of ideas.</p>																
Student Study Effort Expected	Class contact:																
	▪ Seminars	39 Hrs.															
	Other student study effort:																
	▪ Classwork-related, assessment-related, and self-access work	78 Hrs.															
	Total student study effort	117 Hrs.															
Reading List and References	<p>Coursebook Learning materials specifically developed by the English Language Centre.</p> <p>Recommended resources You can update the links in the reading list - copy them from below: Students are encouraged to use the range of services and initiatives provided by the ELC including our Speaking Assistance Programme, Writing Assistance Programme, workshops, and Open Online Courses</p> <p>Recommended readings Breach, M. (2009). <i>Dissertation writing for engineers and scientists</i>. Harlow, England; New York: Pearson Prentice Hall. Clark, I. L. (2007). <i>Writing the successful thesis and dissertation: Entering the conversation</i>. Prentice Hall. Feak, C. B. & Swales, J. M. (2009). <i>Telling a research story: Writing a literature review</i>. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Gibaldi, J. (2009). <i>MLA handbook for writers of research papers</i> (7th ed.). New York: The Modern Language Association of America. Kornuta, H. M. & Germaine, R. W. (2019). <i>A concise guide to writing a thesis or dissertation: Educational research and beyond</i>. Routledge. (2nd ed.) McCormack, J. & Watkins, S. (2012). <i>English for academic study speaking</i> (AV Audio CD); University of Reading. International Study and Language Centre. Reading England: Garnet Publishing Ltd. Reinhart, S. (2013). <i>Giving academic presentations</i>. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press (2nd ed.).</p>																

Swales, J. & Feak, C. (2012). *Academic writing for graduate students: Essential tasks and skills* (3rd ed.). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Online sources

Scribbr. Academic writing dos and don'ts:

<https://www.scribbr.com/category/academic-writing/>

Scribbr. Checklist for writing a thesis

<https://www.scribbr.com/dissertation/dissertation-checklist/>