

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
UG Course Syllabus

English for University Studies
LANG1402
3 credits

Pre-requisites: N/A.

Students are pre-registered into different streams based on their English proficiency upon admission to the University (Pathway 1: for students who have met the English admission requirement – (Level 3 in HKDSE English Language with all papers at or above level 3) OR (Level 4 in HKDSE English Language) OR (Level 5 in HKDSE English Language with some papers but not all at or above level 4) OR (Overall bandscore of 6.0 in IELTS) OR (Overall bandscore of 6.5 in IELTS with some but not all subscores at or above 6.0) OR equivalence of the above)

Co-requisites: N/A.

Name of Course Coordinators: Fiona Ho, Jasmine Chen & Melissa Megan

Email of Course Coordinators: lcfiona@ust.hk, lcjasmine@ust.hk & lcmegan@ust.hk

If you have any questions, your first point of contact should be your section instructor. Please find the email address on Canvas.

Office Hours of Course Coordinators: Available by appointment only.

Course Description

LANG1402 is a Common Core course taken by first year students.

Course objectives: to develop your spoken and written English proficiency, academic literacy, and self-directed learning skills essential for success in university studies.

Course content: On this course, you practice academic writing, speaking, listening, and reading strategies, as well as critical thinking, to help enhance your ability to construct arguments, evaluate sources and ideas, and communicate effectively in academic contexts.

Key topics:

- Unit 1: Effective language skills and language learning habits and practices: evaluate useful resources and learning strategies; use appropriate spoken and written language for the audience and purpose.
- Unit 2: Constructive discussion skills: develop and support central ideas and theses; utilise multiple perspectives in academic discussions.
- Unit 3: Exploring different perspectives in writing and speaking: produce coherent texts; paraphrase and summarise sources; select appropriate language style for academic writing; produce organised and coherent short speeches; use appropriate vocal strategies.

Methods of instruction: Interactive lessons support active learning through group discussions and other collaborative activities. Input and feedback given by teachers and peers.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- 1. Demonstrate range and variety of language appropriate for the audience, context and purpose for spoken and written contexts
- 2. Express complex ideas precisely with range and complexity in vocabulary and sentence structures; and develop clear pronunciation
- 3. Support and organise logical ideas into strong arguments in speaking and writing
- 4. Identify and use strategies to interact with others' ideas to contribute and communicate in group contexts
- 5. Analyse different audiences for different purposes, and apply strategies to inform, interest, and persuade an audience
- 6. Critique ideas, analyse problems, and evaluate solutions in speaking and writing
- 7. Find, evaluate and use appropriate sources, and paraphrase those sources effectively
- 8. Apply learning strategies in self and peer assessment to become an effective learner, including goal setting, evaluating learning strategies and resources, and self-reflection

Assessment and Grading

This course will be assessed using criterion-referencing and grades will not be assigned using a curve.

Assessments

Assessment Task	Contribution to Overall Course grade (%)	Due date
A1: speaking task 1 (spoken monologue & group discussion)	25%	Weeks 6-7*
A2: writing task (essay writing)	35%	Weeks 9-12*
A3: speaking task 2 (short speech)	20%	Week 13*
Reflective writing task	5%	Week 13*
Self-directed learning tasks	15%	Throughout course

* Specific due dates are posted on Canvas.

Mapping of Course ILOs to Assessment Tasks

Assessed Task	Mapped ILOs	Explanation
A1: speaking task 1 (spoken monologue & group discussion)	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO4, ILO5, ILO6	This task assesses students' ability to interact with others' ideas (ILO4), express complex ideas clearly and fluently (ILO2), and select language appropriate for audience and context (ILO1), through both individual monologue and group discussion. It also evaluates students' ability to organize and develop central ideas (ILO3), respond to multiple perspectives (ILO6), and demonstrate audience awareness (ILO5).

A2: writing task (essay writing)	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO5, ILO6, ILO7	This task assesses students' ability to construct logical arguments and develop central theses (ILO3), express complex ideas clearly and coherently using appropriate academic language and structure (ILO2), and select suitable language and style for an academic audience (ILO1). It also evaluates their ability to integrate and paraphrase multiple sources and synthesize ideas effectively (ILO7), consider multiple perspectives (ILO6), and demonstrate audience awareness in writing (ILO5).
A3: speaking task 2 (short speech)	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO5, ILO6	This task assesses students' ability to deliver a coherent and well-structured speech (ILO3), select and use language appropriate to context and audience (ILO1), and apply vocal strategies to inform and persuade (ILO5). It also evaluates students' pronunciation and use of complex vocabulary and sentence structures (ILO2), as well as their ability to critique and express ideas from multiple perspectives (ILO6).
Reflective task	ILO8	This task assesses students' ability to reflect on their learning strategies and evaluate their effectiveness (ILO8).
Self-directed learning tasks	ILO8	These tasks assess students' completion of a series of activities which practice reflection, active learning based on feedback, peer learning and self-directed study (ILO8).

Grading Rubrics

Detailed rubrics for each assignment are provided on Canvas. These rubrics clearly outline the criteria used for evaluation. Students can refer to these rubrics to understand how their work will be assessed.

Final Grade Descriptors

Grades	Short Description	Elaboration on subject grading description
A	Excellent Performance	Content: Demonstrates sophisticated synthesis of well-developed ideas from quality sources with skilful coherence. Communication: Uses nuanced language with sustained awareness of target audience/reader, context, purpose.
B	Good Performance	Content: Demonstrates synthesis of well-developed ideas from quality sources with effective coherence. Communication: Uses effective language with very high awareness of target audience/reader, context, purpose.
C	Satisfactory Performance	Content: Demonstrates synthesis of relevant ideas from quality sources with mostly clear coherence. Communication: Uses appropriate language with some awareness of target audience/reader, context, purpose.
D	Marginal Pass	Content: Synthesizes relevant ideas with some analysis, somewhat coherently. Ideas may be superficial, repetitive, missing or inadequate. Communication: Use some appropriate language with little awareness of target audience/reader, context, purpose. Communication is often inadequate or awkward.
F	Fail	Content: Does not synthesize, develop or organize ideas sufficiently. Ideas are very superficial, repetitive, irrelevant, inadequate, and/or lacking. Communication: limited awareness of audience, context, purpose; limited control of language.

Course AI Policy

We encourage students to make use of all the tools available that can help them to communicate more effectively in English. We also expect students to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. There is no penalty for using or not using GenAI. However, GenAI and other tools cannot be used as a substitute for a student's own work. Students are expected to write their own essays and to prepare for assessed speaking tasks themselves.

GenAI tools can be very useful for:

- Brainstorming ideas and suggesting sources BUT the information provided may not be accurate or relevant to your assignment.
- Giving suggestions about improving the organization of your writing BUT GenAI tends to suggest very formulaic patterns of writing which may not fit your requirements.
- Giving suggestions about improving your language BUT GenAI may make suggestions for language changes which are not appropriate for the intended context and audience.
- Suggesting simple ways of expressing complex discipline-specific concepts BUT these explanations may be unfamiliar to your audience.
- Providing summaries of long texts BUT important information may be omitted, particularly if the original text is not well-written.

In short, GenAI provides opportunities to enhance your use of English and contains pitfalls which you need to be aware of.

Communication and Feedback

Marks for assessed tasks will be communicated via Canvas within ten working days of submission. Feedback on assignments will include strengths and areas for improvement, where relevant. Students who have further questions about the feedback including marks should consult the instructor within five working days after the feedback is received.

Resubmission Policy

Resubmissions are not accepted, except in exceptional circumstances.

Required Texts and Materials

Course materials and additional resources are provided via Canvas.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the university's academic integrity policy. Students are expected to uphold HKUST's Academic Honor Code and to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. The University has zero tolerance of academic misconduct. Please refer to [Academic Integrity | HKUST – Academic Registry](#) for the University's definition of plagiarism and ways to avoid cheating and plagiarism.

Plagiarism

Students should not copy from others nor submit the same work for multiple courses. Source materials must be explicitly acknowledged.

Assignments with evidence of plagiarism may score a zero and be followed up with your department's Dean. To demonstrate academic integrity and avoid plagiarism, you are expected to:

- paraphrase, summarize, reference and synthesize ideas from sources.
- refrain from copying expressions and ideas directly from any source (e.g. from another student, or from a video, or from an article, etc.) without proper acknowledgement.

Attendance Policy

As a responsible and proactive university student, it is assumed that you will attend all lessons. Each lesson helps develop and apply the skills needed for assessments.

Students must attend a minimum of 80% of the required in-class lessons for this course. This means that you can have no more than 5 absences over a full 13-week schedule.

If you miss a lesson, you are expected to:

- be professional and message your groupmates if they will be affected.
- be proactive to catch up on any work you miss.

Students will be made aware if they are in danger of failing due to attendance. They may be sent a 'warning email'. If you miss 6 lessons, you will be sent an email informing you that you have received a Fail grade for this course.

Absences due to extenuating circumstances: Please contact your teacher and provide relevant proof of absence (if applicable). Possible situations include (but are not limited to):

- representing HKUST, the Hong Kong SAR, or the nation in competitions or events.
- hospitalization or serious illness.
- bereavement following the loss of a close family member.