

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
UG Course Syllabus

Academic English for Engineering Studies

LANG1407

3 credits

Pre-requisites: LANG1402 unless exempt. Students exempt from LANG1402 are those who attained Level 5 (with all papers at or above Level 4) or above in English Language in the HKDSE, or [equivalent qualification](#).

Co-requisites: N/A

Name of Course Leaders: Anita Au and Derek Wong

Email of Course Leaders: icanita@ust.hk; lcderekwong@ust.hk

Office Hours of Course Leaders: Available by appointment only. Students should contact their section instructor directly with any questions.

Course Description

LANG 1407, *Academic English for Engineering Studies*, is a 3-credit, common-core course taken by all engineering students. Over one semester, students attend three hours of class per week, complete a variety of out-of-class activities and prepare for assessed tasks.

LANG 1407 aims to develop students' competence to communicate accurately and appropriately in engineering contexts in the university and beyond. LANG 1407 takes an active, collaborative, approach to learning. Every class includes at least one communicative task where students work together to share information, solve a problem or brainstorm ideas. Students are expected to take a proactive approach to meet with group members, find information and work together towards common goals. They are also expected to take responsibility for their own learning by reflecting on coursework performance and using self-reflection and feedback from others to improve.

Key topics:

- Module 1: principles of collaboration and communication for engineers.
- Module 2: communication skills for writing and academic literacy skills for research. These include finding, evaluating, critiquing and synthesizing sources, and developing coherent, persuasive texts for engineering-specific contexts.
- Module 3: communication skills for speaking. These include audience analysis, language use and communication strategies to engage academic audience in engineering topics.

Methods of instruction: interactive tutorials support active learning through group discussion, collaborative activities, peer learning, input, practice and feedback.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Identify, evaluate, select, critique, integrate, and cite relevant information from science-related sources to provide evidence-based arguments.
2. Develop ideas clearly and fully.

3. Organize ideas coherently, ensuring logical flow and focused development from sentence to text level.
4. Use written and spoken language that is accurate, fluent and contextually appropriate in science communication.
5. Demonstrate awareness of audience and reader needs and expectations and communicate with them appropriately.
6. Use different modes of communication appropriately to strengthen message delivery.
7. Work collaboratively in a team to achieve common goals.
8. Demonstrate effective learning skills by using appropriate learning strategies and evaluating progress through reflection and feedback.

Assessment and Grading

This course will be assessed using criterion-referencing and grades will not be assigned using a curve. Detailed rubrics for each assignment are provided on Canvas.

Assessments:

Assessment Task	Contribution to Overall Course grade (%)	Due date
A1: Design proposal report	35%	Approx. week 8*
A2: Engineering ethics case presentation and seminar discussion	35%	Approx. week 13*
A3: Check-point tasks (in-and-out of class)	20%	Spread through course – see course schedule
A4: PASSWORD test	10%	Exam period

* Specific due dates are posted on Canvas. Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be released within two weeks of the due date.

Mapping of Course ILOs to Assessment Tasks

Assessed Task	Mapped ILOs	Explanation
A1: Design proposal report	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO4, ILO5	This task assesses students' ability to critique and synthesize information from multiple sources (ILO1) to fully and clearly develop ideas (ILO2) that are communicated coherently (ILO3) to a specific target reader (ILO5) in appropriate written language (ILO4).
A2: Engineering ethics case presentation and seminar discussion	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO4, ILO5, ILO6, ILO7	This task assesses students' ability to critique and synthesize information from multiple sources (ILO1) to fully and clearly develop ideas (ILO2) that are communicated coherently (ILO3) across different group members (ILO7) to a specific target audience (ILO5) in appropriate spoken language (ILO4), accompanied by appropriate visual aids (ILO6).
A3: Checkpoint tasks (in-and-out of class)	ILO8	These tasks assess students' completion of a series of tasks which practice reflection, active

		learning from feedback, peer learning and self-directed study (ILO8).
A4: PASSWORD test	ILO4	The PASSWORD test assesses students' ability to identify appropriate linguistic features according to different contexts (ILO4).

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 and non-verbal communication 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 and non-verbal communication 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 and non-verbal communication 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 and non-verbal communication 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 assessed assignments and to prepare their presentations 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

Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be communicated via Canvas within two weeks 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.