

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
UG Course Syllabus

Effective Communication in Business

LABU2060

3 credits

Pre-requisite: LANG1003

Exclusion: LABU2020 (prior to 2019-20)

Name of Course Coordinators: Doreen Chong

Email of Course Coordinators: lcdchong@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

LABU2060 is a three-credit, one-semester course that aims to help students build on the language and communication skills they have previously acquired in LANG1003 as they work under specific simulated business scenarios throughout the term. Students will learn how to communicate effectively to accomplish written and oral tasks in the workplace and be able to develop a useful business communication toolkit targeted at external and internal audiences.

The course is designed and structured to address students' learning needs in job-seeking and in their early careers. The course introduces students to strategies for handling the communication challenges which fresh graduates can expect in diverse work environments. They will have opportunities to learn and practice how to succeed in business writing, presentations, interviews, meetings, and collaborative assignments with the essential interpersonal communication skills such as active listening, cogent argumentation, and clear expression in writing and speaking. The course is required for students of School of Business and Management (except for students in the GBUS program and the RMBI program) and students in the MAEC program of School of Science.

Key topics:

LABU2060 will use simulations and role-plays contextualized within workplace scenarios to enhance learning relevance and effectiveness. The two phases of the course are designed and sequenced to address students' learning needs in job-seeking and in their early careers.

- Phase I Effective Communication in Job-Seeking (Weeks 1 – 5)

Students will learn how to apply theories and strategies of effective communication to create a positive first impression through building their digital portfolios and participating in performance-based assessments in a job-seeking context.

- Phase II Effective Communication in Business Presentation and Writing (Weeks 6 – 13)

Students will learn and practice how to write to achieve business objectives and communicate persuasively to an internal and external business audience.

It is hoped that the simulation mode and the learning-by-doing approach will make in-class and out-of-class learning activities relevant and meaningful to the students.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. recognize how communication takes place through different channels and in different directions within an organization;
2. understand the importance of communication to career success in a multi-cultural work environment;
3. think and analyze business-related issues in a critical manner;
4. demonstrate competence in selecting, synthesizing and using information to inform discussion and decision-making;
5. create a positive first impression on the prospective employers with their CVs and their performances in a job interview;
6. give effective oral presentations to business audiences to address needs and concerns; influence decisions and choice; and achieve business objectives;
7. write professional business documents to analyze issues, summarize views and practices, discuss implications; and propose solutions;
8. demonstrate leadership and team skills in teamwork; and
9. give and take feedback in a team.

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: Business Pitch	35%	Week 11/12
A2: Business Plan	35%	First Monday after Week 13, June 1, 5pm
A3: Peer Evaluation	5%	Monday, June 1, 5pm
A4: Learning Portfolio	25%	First Wednesday after Week 13 June 3, 5pm

* Specific due dates are posted on Canvas.

Mapping of Course ILOs to Assessment Tasks

Assessed Task	Mapped ILOs	Explanation
A1: Business writing	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO4, ILO7, ILO9	You will be working in a team of 3 on a group project. You will:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respond to GenAI, peer, and teacher feedback on 3 short writing tasks (Business Idea Proposal, Market Analysis Section, and Financial Section) (ILO2, ILO4, ILO9) • submit a 2,800-word business plan after giving the business pitch (ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO4, ILO7)
A2: Pitch Presentation	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO4, ILO6, ILO8, ILO9	Your team will give a 15/ 20 minutes' pitch on the group 35% Team + Individual project to a mixed business audience.
A3: Peer Evaluation	ILO2, ILO8, ILO9	You will evaluate your team members' contributions to the group project.
A4: Learning Portfolio	ILO1, ILO2	<p>You will evaluate and reflect on your learning progress as you seek to become an effective business communicator.</p> <p>You will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a first draft for teacher feedback • submit a 4-page final draft

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	<p>Content: Demonstrates sophisticated synthesis of well-developed ideas from quality sources with skilful coherence.</p> <p>Communication: Uses nuanced language and non-verbal communication with sustained awareness of target audience/reader, context, purpose.</p>
B	Good Performance	<p>Content: Demonstrates synthesis of well-developed ideas from quality sources with effective coherence.</p> <p>Communication: Uses effective language and non-verbal communication with very high awareness of target audience/reader, context, purpose.</p>

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

LABU2060 approach to the use of GenAI

- GenAI is not a substitute for completing assignments.
- All use of GenAI as a source of information should follow established conventions for referencing. If a particular referencing style has not yet developed a convention, the APA convention should be used (and/or adapted to fit the wider style if needed).
- All students should complete the CLE GenAI Literacy Module.
- Students could use GenAI, but with conditions:
 - Use of GenAI by students should be declared, but no specifics about the nature of the use is needed.

Communication and Feedback

Assessment marks for individual 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

In CLE assignments, 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