



**University of
Nottingham**
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Language Education

Oral Communication Skills A (OCSa)

Module Handbook

2024



BALEAP accredited

CELE's core Preliminary Year courses Oral Communication Skills A and Reading and Writing in Academic Contexts are accredited by the British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes (BALEAP).

UNNC is one of only a handful of institutions outside of the UK to have had English for Academic Purposes (EAP) modules accredited through the BALEAP Accreditation Scheme.



[CELE Provisions Receive BALEAP Accreditation](#)

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Welcome to OCSa



Dear Preliminary Year Students,

Welcome to CELEN069: Oral Communication Skills A (OCSa)!

The first semester at university can be an exciting but challenging time. As you begin your journey at UNNC, it may be comforting to know that the preliminary year is carefully structured to equip you with the academic skills you will need and provide you with support at every stage.

*The OCSa course is designed to develop your **speaking** and **listening** skills in academic contexts. This essentially means preparing you with skills to make the most of lectures and preparing you to be able to actively participate in seminars. As part of this, you will learn to **critically engage** – to use information to form your own opinions and share them with others. You will also develop as an **autonomous learner**. This means taking control of your own learning, which is quite a big responsibility, but is crucial to success not only at university, but throughout your life.*

*How will you achieve these objectives on the OCSa course? Well, the course has very specific learning outcomes – competencies we want you to develop throughout the course. These outcomes are achieved through **lessons** and **self-study**. Lessons are designed to be **communicative**, which means you are an active class participant. You will be a valuable group member and will help to create a supportive and engaging environment where you and your classmates can develop confidence in your speaking and listening abilities and other important academic skills. In addition to lessons, you will be expected to develop through self-study. This will be a collaborative effort: You will be provided with structure, guidance and support, but the emphasis is on you to organise your learning effectively.*

We are very excited to help you through your journey, and hope that you will find the OCSa course a highly motivating and rewarding experience!

John Burrows
OCSa Module Convenor



This module handbook contains important information about OCSa. Please read it in full at the beginning of the semester to ensure you have a clear understanding of the course and expectations. You should then refer to it whenever you need information about course organisation and assessment requirements.

For further help you should contact the following:

- General enquiries related to the course, lessons or assessments: Your class tutor
- Scheduling or absence issues: The CELE Professional Services Office (CPSO)
- More serious issues or concerns: The Module Convenor

Information	Details
Module Code & name	CELEN069 Oral Communication Skills A
Module Credits	10 Credits
Module Convenor	John Burrows john.burrows@nottingham.edu.cn
Module Co-Convenor	Michaela Seserman michaela.seserman@nottingham.edu.cn
CELE Professional Support Office (CPSO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office Location: Trent Building 315 • Telephone: (0574) 8818 0000 ext.8664 • Email: cpsos@nottingham.edu.cn

Values and principles

1. UNNC vision and values

Our vision is to be a university without borders, where we embrace the opportunities presented by a changing world, and where ambitious people and a creative culture will enable us to change the world for the better.

In all we do, we value...

Inclusivity	We are a community where everyone can contribute and be appreciated for who they are.
Ambition	We set the highest standards for ourselves and our work and support each other to achieve them.
Openness	We adopt a straightforward and transparent way of communicating with each other and with the world, championing the free exchange of ideas.
Fairness	Our decisions and actions are consistent, impartial and ethical.
Respect	We have regard for each other's rights and feelings, and demonstrate this in our behaviour, treating each other with kindness.

[University strategy – University of Nottingham Ningbo China](#)

2. CELE EAP principles

Guided by the BALEAP accreditation, CELE has English for Academic Purposes (EAP) principles to recognise the centre's distinct character. These are shaped by our unique context and the explicit educational values and beliefs that underpin our pedagogical practice.

1. Developing potential and raising the bar:

- Aim high, assess tolerantly
- Focus on Process (not product)
- Differentiation
- Tolerance of ambiguity

2. Looking forward:

- Transferability and relevance
- Authenticity and meaningfulness: text-based, genre-based, task-based approaches.
- Criticality and creativity
- Digital literacy

3. Working together and independently:

- Social constructivist learning approach
- Learner autonomy and student agency (assessment for learning, peer review, self-assessment)
- Developing metacognition
- Dialogic feedback practices

4. Belonging to the Academy:

- Needs-based course design and pedagogy
- Collaboration between Content and EAP in Y1, and with the faculties beyond Y1 (embedded EAP provision)
- Transparency and constructive alignment
- Evidence-based practice (connecting theory and practice)
- Cultural sensitivity

Course materials

To support your academic studies in the OCSa Module, you will be provided with the following course materials and channels for communication:

- **Module Handbook**

The module handbook provides a general overview and essential information (including assessment).

- **Module Workbook**

The module workbook is the main booklet for teachers and students to refer to in classes. It is available in both e-version and in print.

- **Moodle**

Moodle is UNNC's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). There is a specific page for each module, where you will find course materials (including lesson PPT slides), self-study materials and assignment submission boxes.

OCSa Moodle page: [*Oral Communication Skills A \(CELEN069 UNNC\) \(AUC1 24-25\)*](#)

Moodle support: [*learning-technologies@nottingham.edu.cn*](mailto:learning-technologies@nottingham.edu.cn)
[*Student Moodle Help - StudentMoodle - Workspace \(nottingham.ac.uk\)*](#)

- **UNNC Email**

Email is the official method of communication. All emails should be written in English and delivered via a UNNC account. Students should not expect any emails to be read, replied to, or acted upon outside working hours.

- **Microsoft Teams**

Each class group has its own dedicated MS Team which can be used for online communication and sharing of materials with your classmates.

Module intended learning outcomes

1. General educational aims

To create/ develop/ enhance:

- 1.1. confidence in oral communication skills through opportunity to practice in a supportive and engaging environment.
- 1.2. an understanding of the role of the student and teacher in a communicative language classroom and classroom norms that allow for other aims and objectives to be achieved.
- 1.3. learner autonomy for general study, and specifically the development of speaking and listening.
- 1.4. an awareness of issues related to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Sustainability (EDI+S).
- 1.5. demonstrate critical thinking.
- 1.6. work independently as well as collaboratively (understand the value of group tasks).

2. Seminar skills

To create/ develop/ enhance:

- 2.1. the ability to understand, respond to and develop the ideas of other speakers.
- 2.2. language and skills for orally giving opinions and ideas, and supporting them with explanations, evidence and examples.
- 2.3. pronunciation for greater clarity and incorporation of key spoken features such as intonation and stress.
- 2.4. appropriate turn-taking and collaborative language and behavior within an academic discussion.
- 2.5. ability to understand and fulfil the requirements and stages of an academic collaborative task.
- 2.6. ability to engage fully in discussion rather than providing artificial contribution.
- 2.7. the ability to critically engage in academic topics presented through external academic channels (lectures, written sources etc.).

3. Lecture skills

To create/ develop/ enhance:

- 3.1. understanding of the structure and organization of ideas in a lecture.
- 3.2. the ability to identify and differentiate between main and supporting points.
- 3.3. the ability to listen for overall meaning and specific information.
- 3.4. the ability to discriminate between relevant and irrelevant information.
- 3.5. the ability to take and further develop effective notes.
- 3.6. an awareness of meta-listening strategies for before, during and after a lecture.

Module overview

	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Independent work
i-Week w/c 16 th Sep	No lesson	OCSa Module Convenor Lecture	
Week 1 w/c 23 rd Sep	Introduction to the course - Icebreakers - Course introduction - Introduction to EDI+S	Group discussion skills - Introduction to Group Discussions - Starting a discussion	
Golden Week (w/c 30 th Sep)			
Week 2 w/c 7 th Oct	Pronunciation workshop 1 - Review of <i>Pronunciation Quiz</i> - Connected speech (for listening)	Live lecture 1 (D.H. Lawrence Auditorium) - <i>Skill focus:</i> Introduction to note-taking in lectures - Introduction to <i>Listening Portfolio Task 3</i>	
Week 3 w/c 14 th Oct	Core Unit 1: The transition from high school to university		
	Speaking & listening skills - <i>Lecture 1A:</i> 'Common issues faced by students' - <i>Listening strategy:</i> recognizing overall structure of a lecture	Group discussion skills - Giving and supporting opinions - Asking for others' opinions	<i>Listening Portfolio Practice Task:</i> Submit notes for Lecture 1B by Friday 18th Oct, 3pm <i>Lecture 1B:</i> 'Strategies for overcoming common issues faced by students'
Week 4 w/c 21 st Oct	Core Unit 2: Mental wellbeing at university		
	Speaking & listening skills - <i>Lecture 2A:</i> 'Understanding stress' - <i>Listening strategy:</i> recognizing transitions	Group discussion skills - Asking questions for clarification and elaboration - Asking follow-up questions	<i>Lecture 2B:</i> 'Technology and mental health'

	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Independent work
Week 5 w/c 28 th Oct	Core Unit 3: Language learning		
	Speaking & listening skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lecture 3A: 'Language learning: Affective factors' - <i>Listening strategy</i>: recognising explanations/ key terms/ definitions 	Group discussion skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building on others' ideas - Agreeing and disagreeing 	<i>Listening Portfolio Task 1 (assessed)</i> : Notes on Lecture 2B by Monday 28th Oct, 3pm <i>Lecture 3B</i> : 'Learning differences'
Week 6 w/c 4 th Nov	Core Unit 4: Language change		
	Speaking & listening skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lecture 4A: 'Language change: Good, bad or inevitable?' - <i>Listening strategy</i>: differentiating between relevant and irrelevant examples 	Group discussion skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ranking - Summarising 	<i>Lecture 4B</i> : 'Endangered languages'
Week 7 w/c 11 th Nov	Independent Learning Week		
Week 8 w/c 18 th Nov	Pronunciation workshop 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stress - Pausing and chunking - Intonation 	Live lecture 2 (D.H. Lawrence Auditorium) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Listening Portfolio Task 2 (assessed)</i> - <i>Topic</i>: Soft skills 	
Week 9 w/c 25 th Nov	Core Unit 5: Technology and society		
	Speaking & listening skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lecture 5A: 'Social media in education' - <i>Listening strategy</i>: listening for a specific purpose 	Group discussion skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managing the stages of the discussion task - Using the preparation time 	<i>Listening Portfolio Task 2 (assessed)</i> : Notes on Live Lecture 2 by Monday 25th Nov, 3pm <i>Lecture 5B</i> : 'Technology and sedentary lifestyles'

	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Independent work
	Core Unit 6: Artificial intelligence		
Week 10 w/c 2 nd Dec	Speaking & listening skills - <i>Lecture 6A: 'The current state of artificial intelligence'</i> - <i>Listening strategy: identifying the lecturer's stance</i>	Group discussion skills - Contributing ideas and opinions (review) - Using collaborative behaviour	<i>Lecture 6B: 'Issues with AI'</i>
Week 11 w/c 9 th Dec	Review - Reflection on <i>Listening Portfolio Task 2</i> - Topic review	Group discussion skills - Review and practice	
Week 12 w/c 16 th Dec	Mock Group Discussion Exam + Feedback	Mock Group Discussion Exam + Feedback	<i>Listening Portfolio Task 3 (assessed):</i> Notes on two Content lectures by Monday 16th December, 3pm

Assessment overview

Listening Portfolio	40%	Component 1
Group Discussion Exam	60%	Component 2

Note: students must pass **both** components of the course

Listening Portfolio	
Weighting	40%
Testing period	Submitted during the semester: 1. Week 5 2. Week 9 3. Week 12 (notes on two lectures)
Method	The Listening Portfolio consists of three assessed note-taking tasks. The notes are based on video lectures provided and/ or face-to-face lectures, depending on the task. The tasks take place throughout the semester, and students are required to submit their notes via Moodle.
Notes	Please see Appendix 1: <i>Listening Portfolio information</i> for further details.

Group Discussion Exam	
Weighting	60%
Testing period	CELE exam weeks
Method	Students participate in a group discussion in a group of 3-4. One examiner is present and discussions are recorded for 2 nd & 3 rd marking.
Length	2 minutes preparation, 9 minutes (group of 3 students) or 12 minutes (group of 4 students) speaking.
Notes	Please see Appendix 2: <i>Group Discussion Exam information</i> for further details.

Appendix 1:

Listening Portfolio information

1. Task description

The Listening Portfolio consists of three assessed note-taking tasks. The notes are based on video lectures provided and/ or face-to-face lectures, depending on the task. The tasks take place throughout the semester, and students are required to submit their notes to Moodle. Teachers give brief feedback (except Task 3). As well as the three assessed tasks, there is one practice task. Students are given guidance on different note-taking styles but may take notes in the style they wish. The exception to this is notes on a transcript of the lecture, which is not allowed.

An outline of each task is as follows:

Task number	Lecture(s)	Description
<i>Practice Task</i>	Core Unit 1, 1B	These are video lecture tasks. Students watch these lectures found in the weekly sections on Moodle and take notes of main ideas and important detail.
Task 1	Core Unit 2, 2B	
Task 2	Live Lecture 2	Students attend Live Lecture 2 and take notes. After the lecture, they can develop their notes and have access to a recording of the lecture in the Moodle Week 8 section.
Task 3	Content Lectures	Students take notes on any two officially timetabled lectures from CELE Content modules during 2024-25 semester 1. Any module on the approved <u>List of CELE Content Modules for OCSa Listening Portfolio Task 3</u> is acceptable (see Appendix 1, point 6). Students must use the <u>OCSa Listening Portfolio Task 3 Template</u> (available on Moodle in the Assessment section). The notes are marked without feedback.

2. Rationale

This on-going assessment aims to provide students with opportunities to develop their listening skills outside of the OCSa classroom and to practise note-taking in authentic contexts. As well as developing effective note-taking skills, an important element is fostering an understanding of the importance of note-taking in lectures. Students are taught how to take effective notes and have multiple opportunities to practise doing so. A combination of peer, group and individualised tutor feedback enables students' notetaking abilities to develop through experiential learning cycles.

3. Main skills tested

- Listening for main points and supporting detail
- Understanding organisation of ideas
- Discriminating between relevant and irrelevant detail
- Recognising transition signals
- Having the ability to create clear, concise and well-organised notes based on the above
- Applying the taught skills in different scenarios across CELE Content modules

4. Submissions

Submitted notes can be handwritten or typed. There is space near the back of the *OCSa Student Workbook* specifically for taking notes on Listening Portfolio Task 1 and Task 2 should the student wish to use it.

For Task 3 students must use the *OCSa Listening Portfolio Task 3 Template* provided. They can use the template as they wish (e.g. type notes, print/ take handwritten notes/ scan, insert photos of notes).

The notes must be submitted to the appropriate submission box on the OCSa Moodle page.

- Late submissions will be accepted up to 48 hours after the deadline. Penalties of 5% (first 24 hours) and 10% (second 24 hours) will be applied.

Only **.pdf** files are accepted.

The recommended file name for the submission is **Student Name - Group number - Submission title** (e.g. *John Burrows - A01 - LP Task 1*).

5. Marking & feedback

Method:

Tasks 1 – 2:

When grading, one score is given for ‘**organisation**’ and one for ‘**content**’. The student’s overall mark is determined by the lowest of the two scores given (e.g. if the tutor gives a 4 for organisation and a 2 for content, then the overall mark is **2**).

Feedback is given for these tasks.

Task 3:

Students must use the *OCSa Listening Portfolio Task 3 Template*.

A maximum mark of 4 is applied to this task. A mark of 0-2 is given for each set of notes (1 point for lecture notes, 1 point for summary and required details, i.e. module info and lecture date).

There is no feedback for this task.

Deadlines:

Task	Type of feedback	Submission deadline
<i>Practice</i>	Peer	Week 3: Friday, 18th Oct, 15:00
Task 1	Tutor	Week 5: Monday, 28th Oct, 15:00
Task 2	Tutor	Week 9: Monday, 25th Nov, 15:00
Task 3	N/A	Week 12: Monday, 16th Dec, 15:00

6. List of CELE Content Modules for OCSa Listening Portfolio Task 3

Notes from the modules on the list below can be used for Listening Portfolio Task 3. Notes from any other modules will not be accepted.

Module Code	Module Name
CELEN120	Foundation Algebra
CELEN107	Introduction to Mathematics for Business and Economics A
CELEN109	Introduction to Statistics for Business and Economics A
CELEN036	Foundation Algebra for Physical Sciences & Engineering
CELEN038	The Scientific Method
CELEN039	Foundation Physics
CELEN042	Introduction to Business Economics
CELEN044	Media and Texts: Society
CELEN121	Critical, Creative, and Reflective Thinking
CELEN122	Foundation Electromagnetism and Mechanics
CELEN059	Architectural Drawing and Graphics A
CELEN061	Essentials of Linguistics
CELEN063	Introduction to Economics I
CELEN068	Introduction to Politics and International Relations
CELEN083	Advanced Foundation Maths 1
CELEN086	Introduction to Algorithms
CELEN088	Foundation Maths for Economics 1

Appendix 2:

Group Discussion Exam information

1. Task description

Groups of 3 or 4 students are given a prompt and must use this as the basis for a discussion. Once they have been given the prompt, they are given 2 minutes preparation time, and then either 9 minutes (group of 3) or 12 minutes (group of 4) to carry out the discussion.

The students are assessed individually, but must work cooperatively, demonstrating appropriate turn-taking behavior and language. The discussion will be in the form of a task, and the students are required to work together to complete it.

Group Discussion Exams take place in the end-of-semester exam weeks.

2. Rationale

The group discussion exam is the culmination of a central focus of OCSa, which is the development of speaking and listening abilities in interactive situations. It serves to test the abilities of students to understand and use the information from lectures in critical ways in the context of a seminar. Having discussions assessed is likely to both motivate students to improve and to allow them to see how vital communicative skills are to their success at UNNC and in wider contexts.

3. Marking

A score from 1 to 10 is given to each student in three criteria:

- Task response
- Interaction
- Delivery

4. Procedure

- 1) 3-4 students enter the exam room, making sure electronic items are switched off beforehand.
- 2) The examiner checks IDs and students put their items in a designated area of the room.
- 3) Once the students are seated, the examiner starts recording.
- 4) The examiner reads out the exam information, then reads the prompt before distributing one copy of the prompt to each student.
- 5) Students are given 2 minutes to prepare for the discussion.
- 6) Students then participate in the discussion: 9 minutes (group of 3 students) or 12 minutes (group of 4 students).
- 7) The examiner ends the discussion and the recording, then allows students to leave.

5. Prompts

The prompt requires students to identify certain features based on a given topic and rank them using a given criterion. Students must try to reach a consensus as a group.

Topics will be based on Lecture A and/ or Lecture B of the six Core Units of OCSa (taught in weeks 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10).

Example prompt:

Agree on 2-3 **benefits** of speaking English outside the EAP classroom.

Rank them starting with the most significant.

Appendix 3:

Relevant CELE policies

CELE Preliminary Year (UNNC) (24-25)

[Module: CELE Preliminary Year \(UNNC\) \(24-25\) | moodle.Nottingham](#)

CELE Student Handbook (24-25)

[CELE-CELECS-UNNC-2425: UG Preliminary Year Student Handbook 2024-25 | moodle.Nottingham](#)

Attendance & Extenuating Circumstances (EC) Policy

[Module: CELE Preliminary Year \(UNNC\) \(24-25\) | moodle.Nottingham](#)

CELE Email Policy

[CELE Email Policy](#)

Preliminary Year Academic Misconduct Policy

[Module: CELE Preliminary Year \(UNNC\) \(24-25\) | moodle.Nottingham](#)

Quality Manual

[Quality Manual - The University of Nottingham](#)

Appendix 4:

In-session support

The Writing Lab@UNNC provides English-language and academic study support and guidance for all students. Through 1-1 advising, workshops, lectures, discussion groups, and bespoke modules, experienced specialists help students improve as writers, speakers, listeners, readers and more.

Website: [The Writing Lab@UNNC - University of Nottingham Ningbo China](#)

The Writing Lab provides:

- one-to-one advising which is individual and personalized. Students can book this in advance and can have a maximum of five advising sections per semester. Students can ask for advice on any academic or university life-skill topic.
- academic workshops that are related to the learning objectives of the three major English for Academic Purposes courses that all students in the Preliminary Year take.
- self-study online support for students who wish to review or extend their knowledge and skills.

To contact the Writing Lab, students should email Writinglab@nottingham.edu.cn

Information about booking one-to-one advising, the topics of the weekly workshops, and online self-study materials is available on the Writing Lab Moodle page.

Moodle page: [Module: The Writing Lab@UNNC – Y1 \(UNNC\) | moodle.Nottingham](#)

Appendix 5:

Academic calendar

Academic Calendar 2024-2025					
Sem	Timetable Week	Semester Week	Week Beginning Date	Year 1 Students	2nd, 3rd, 4th Year & Masters
1	1	1	16/09/2024	Registration & Induction	Registration & Induction
	2	2	23/09/2024	Teaching	Teaching
	3	3	30/09/2024	National Holiday (No teaching)	National Holiday (No teaching)
	4	4	07/10/2024	Teaching	Teaching
	5	5	14/10/2024	Teaching	Teaching
	6	6	21/10/2024	Teaching	Teaching
	7	7	28/10/2024	Teaching	Teaching
	8	8	04/11/2024	Teaching	Teaching
	9	9	11/11/2024	Mid-sem Exams & Tutorials	Teaching
	10	10	18/11/2024	Teaching	Teaching
	11	11	25/11/2024	Teaching	Teaching
	12	12	02/12/2024	Teaching	Teaching
	13	13	09/12/2024	Teaching	Teaching
	14	14	16/12/2024	Teaching	Teaching/Revision
	15	-	23/12/2024	Self-Study Week	Self-Study Week
	16	Exams	30/12/2024	Exams*	Exams*
	17	Exams	06/01/2025	Exams	Exams
	18	Exams	13/01/2025	Exams	Exams
	19	-	20/01/2025	Student Vacation	Student Vacation
	20	-	27/01/2025	Student Vacation	Student Vacation
	21	-	03/02/2025	Spring Festival	Spring Festival
	22	-	10/02/2025	Spring Festival	Spring Festival
2	23	1	17/02/2025	Teaching	Teaching
	24	2	24/02/2025	Teaching	Teaching
	25	3	03/03/2025	Teaching	Teaching
	26	4	10/03/2025	Teaching	Teaching
	27	5	17/03/2025	Teaching	Teaching
	28	6	24/03/2025	Teaching	Teaching
	29	7	31/03/2025	Teaching	Teaching
	30	8	07/04/2025	Mid-sem Exams & Tutorials	Teaching
	31	9	14/04/2025	Teaching	Teaching
	32	10	21/04/2025	Teaching	Teaching
	33	11	28/04/2025	Teaching	Teaching
	34	12	05/05/2025	Teaching	Teaching/Revision
	35	Exams	12/05/2025	Exams	Exams
	36	Exams	19/05/2025	Exams	Exams
	37	Exams	26/05/2025	Exams	Exams
	38	-	02/06/2025		
Summer Period	39	-	09/06/2025	Start of Summer Period	Start of Summer Period
	40	-	16/06/2025	-	-
	41	-	23/06/2025	-	-
	42	-	30/06/2025	-	-
	43	-	07/07/2025	-	-
	44	-	14/07/2025	-	-
	45	-	21/07/2025	-	-
	46	-	28/07/2025	-	-
	47	-	04/08/2025	-	-
	48	-	11/08/2025	-	-
	49	-	18/08/2025	Resits	Resits
	50	-	25/08/2025	-	Resits
	51	-	01/09/2025	-	-
	52	-	08/09/2025		

*Autumn Semester Exams start from Monday 30 December 2024. Wednesday 1 January 2025 will remain as holiday with no exams.

University Regulations stipulate that "Students are expected to remain in residence throughout the full period of each semester, as published, including the first and last days which are full working days."

Key Colours: Teaching Weeks Exam Weeks Vacation Weeks Registration and Induction

References

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