

# Autonomous Projects

***This is a module of 30 hours minimum per student.***

Students work in pairs or in groups of three to produce a written report and perform an oral presentation in front of an audience of fellow students and a jury of teachers.

Students must attend at least two other project presentations (Autonomous and/or Scientific) and provide a written summary/minutes of one of them.

Prior to beginning work on their project, the students should agree on a theme, which must then be validated by the English department. The choice of theme is extremely broad, but should (at least loosely) be connected with the English language and/or Anglo-Saxon culture.



**PLAGIARISM in any form -written report or oral presentation- will NOT be tolerated and will result in an automatic fail (Insuffisant) and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken by the Head of Studies.**

## The Tutor's role and meetings

The pair or group is then assigned a tutor who oversees the work while in progress and who reads and grades the final report and is member of the jury for the oral presentation.

Students are responsible for making **regular contact** with the tutor for advice and guidance regarding research and content and for supplying regular work for the tutor to correct and criticise.

All students should meet with their tutor **a minimum of three times** during the semester.

**Meeting 1** Discussion of the theme, students' intentions regarding research, direction and end product. Students also suggest a plan (or send a plan by email following the meeting) of the final report for the tutor to comment on.

**Meeting 2** Mid-term oral progress report. Students present their work in progress with the help of Powerpoint slides. This is informal and performed in the presence of the tutor only. The content of the oral progress report and its organisation should be discussed with the tutor beforehand so that both students and tutor are in agreement and that the meeting is beneficial to both parties.

**Meeting 3** Tying in loose ends regarding the final version of the written report and preparing the content and organisation of the oral presentation.

This is **the minimum number of meetings** (as stated above) and other meetings will be necessary if students are encountering any difficulties (in terms of research, content, writing or organisation). Students may also ask for a meeting to rehearse their final oral presentation and benefit from their tutor's advice.

**Remember** regular contact by email is required and students should regularly send work to their tutor for correction and advice. A tutor will correct and help with the English language during the semester, but the English of the final report will be evaluated (see **Evaluation** below).

Regular contact with your tutor will keep you on track!

## Content & Quality – the written report

While students will be relying on the help of research, the written report must be personal and the fruit of discussion and careful reflection on the part of those involved in the project. Students should ask themselves what they feel the reader should gain and learn from their report. What questions do the content and conclusion of the report answer?

## The Rules

1. The report **must not** be a summary of material read and collected by the students. The body of the report must deliver the reflection and analyses of the students involved and reach a well-argued and significant conclusion.
2. The report must contain a table of contents and be completed by an informative and ambitious bibliography (Wikipedia may be a useful starting point, but is insufficient on its own). The references of ALL sources of information used must be included in the bibliography. Relevant appendices may be added, but are not a part of the students' written report.
3. Any material included that is not written by the students themselves must be marked as such with the sources and authors clearly indicated. Students may use indexed footnotes (ask your tutor for instructions and advice).
4. The report must count a minimum total of twenty pages for two students and thirty pages for three students and use Times New Roman (or its equivalent) font, size 12 with a 1.5 inter-spacing. The pages must be numbered.

### Content & Quality – the oral presentation

Students must be aware that this is a performance in front of an audience – pronunciation and intonation, delivery, role distribution, quality of slides, transitions, attitude and behaviour, relevance and clarity as well as ambition and excellent timing are all extremely important.

Performing the oral presentation without having received advice and guidance from the tutor on all the above is a mistake. “Going-it-alone” makes the task more complicated and highlights a lack of organisation among the students concerned. It is equally a mistake to arrive at the presentation without having practised together.

### The Rules

1. The presentation should include a concise, but clear, summary of the written report (which must not be recited).
2. It should also develop a theme or aspect linked to or mentioned in the report, but which was not developed or, perhaps, not even dealt with in the report.
3. Students should present a critical assessment of their work on the project over the semester – the difficulties encountered, organisation, progress, what they have learned, where they have improved...
4. Students should distribute their participation as equally as possible and interact accordingly.
5. Timing is essential and the presentation should last a maximum of 25 minutes for a group of 2 with an extra five minutes for questions and 35 minutes for three students, plus an extra 10 minutes for questions. **Groups will be interrupted if they exceed the time limit.**

The following is an approximate guide:

| Part                                   | Timing for a pair | Timing for a group of three |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Introduction/Summary                   | 5 minutes         | 5-10 minutes                |
| Body – development of linked theme     | 15 minutes        | 20 minutes                  |
| Critical assessment of semester's work | 5 minutes         | 5+ minutes                  |

### Evaluation

Most frequently a common mark is awarded to the members of a same group, however, this is not a rule and if there is a clear distinction to be made between the quality of work of one group member and another, different marks will be given.

The mark is based on the following:

1. The written report:
  - quality and ambition of research
  - presentation
  - organisation (clear, relevant introduction, well-argued and thoughtful conclusion, bibliography...)
  - content/analysis

- personal investment and effort
  - respect of deadlines and contact with the tutor
  - quality of English (respecting the student's level and the desire to improve)
2. The oral presentation:
    - quality, organisation and ambition of content
    - quality of slides, delivery and audience focus
    - respect of timing
    - pronunciation, quality of English (respecting the student's level and the desire to improve).
  3. Attendance at a minimum of two other presentations.
  4. Written summary/minutes of one of the presentations attended.