

Communication Skills for University Success

Academic Skills for University Success Specialization

The University of Sydney Centre for English Teaching

Learning Outcomes

1. Recognise the importance of communication in communities of practice at university
2. Understand contexts of communication at university and associated expectations
3. Communicate clearly across a variety of different contexts and to a wide range of audiences by adapting communicative styles appropriately
4. Demonstrate, negotiate, and further understanding through spoken, written, visual, and conversational modes.
5. Effectively formulate arguments and communicate research findings through the process of researching, composing, and editing
6. Confidently engage in constructive and critical dialogue with respect and professionalism

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Week 1 - Introduction to communication in academic culture

Module	Topic Focus	Learning Objectives (You will be able to...)
1.1	Introduction to the course	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand the learning objectives and structure of the course• understand the expectations for participation in the course• understand assessment requirements of the course
1.2	Introduction to academic culture and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand the definition of academic culture• understand the core values & expectations of academic culture• understand the role of communication in academic culture
1.3	Survival skills for university	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• gain insight into key skills for success at university
1.4	Academic integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand the definition of academic integrity• demonstrate awareness of ethical issues related to academic integrity surrounding communication

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Week 2 - Participating in university discussion contexts

Module	Topic Focus	Learning Objectives (You will be able to...)
2.1	Contexts of communication at university	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand the 'rhetorical situation' as a framework for analysing shifting expectations for communication in different contexts• analyse rhetorical situations at university• analyse rhetorical situations and expectations for communication in different parts of university courses• understand the rhetorical aims and purposes of different texts and their impact on communication• interpret course outlines and learning objectives to understand the contexts and expectations of communication at university
2.2	Participating in different university contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand strategies and common challenges associated with communication in different contexts
2.3	Participating in lectures, tutorials, and discussion boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand the purpose and components of lectures, tutorials, and online discussion forums• effectively use readings, course materials, note-taking, and communicative strategies in lectures, tutorials, and online forums
2.4	Participating in group work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand the purpose of group work for achieving mutual goals• use effective communication and leadership skills to move from group work to teamwork• use and interpret interactional resources such as eye-contact, gesture, body language, and tone of voice

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Week 3 – Interpreting, researching, and planning written assignments

Module	Topic Focus	Learning Objectives (You will be able to...)
3.1	Introduction to understanding, researching, and planning written assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand expectations of communication in written assignments at university• compare different types of written assignments• use strategies for understanding expectations and planning written assignments
3.2	Understanding and interpreting written assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand essay and report types• interpret the purpose and rhetorical aims of each type• use effective questioning to further understand expectations
3.3	Conducting research for written assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• conduct research to explore the written assignment topic• carry out informed planning of written assignments• focus and refine your research to build arguments
3.4	Planning written assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand different options to structure your arguments• create outlines for different types of written assignments• plan citations and evidence to be used in support of arguments

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Week 4 – Writing effective and concise written assignments

Module	Topic Focus	Learning Objectives (You will be able to...)
4.1	Introduction to drafting, refining, and incorporating visual aids in written assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand techniques for early drafting of written assignments • understand what is involved in refining and editing drafts of written assignments • understand how visual aids are used in written assignments
4.2	Drafting written assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use techniques for early drafting of essays and reports • appropriately use academic language to compose different types of written assignments • synthesise researched sources and evidence with arguments • arrange early drafts into a complete first draft
4.3	Polishing and refining written assignments and incorporating visual aids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate and refine text-level structures of argumentation in written assignments • evaluate and refine paragraphs and sentences • write effective titles for different types written assignments • compose and incorporate visual aids to present complex information in written assignments
4.4	Formatting and proofreading written assignments for submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply consistent formatting in written assignments • proofread written assignments effectively • finalise referencing style and accuracy in written assignments

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Week 5 - Giving persuasive and engaging presentations

Module	Topic Focus	Learning Objectives (You will be able to...)
5.1	Introduction to academic presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand types of presentations at university • understand qualities of an effective presentation • understand strategies for understanding expectations for presentations
5.2	Understanding, researching, and planning presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpret the purpose and rhetorical aims of presentations • use effective questioning to further understand expectations • conduct research on your presentation topic • create and refine your presentation structure
5.3	Preparing visual aids and script writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriately incorporate visual aids in presentations • write scripts and notes for presentations • use strategies to practice effective presentation delivery
5.4	Presentations as performance – delivering your message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use presentation strategies to deliver a polished performance • effectively and appropriately facilitate audience interaction and field questions • identify your personal presentation style