INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

**SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES**

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**SAMPLE MIDTERM EXAMINATION**

**Test paper**

Date: **\_/\_/2023** Time: **\_:\_ Offline** **Closed book Exam**

Duration: **60 minutes Semester 1, 2023 – 2024**

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| **SUBJECT: WRITING AE2 (ID: EN011IU)** | |
| **Approval by the School of Languages**  Signature  Full name: Dr. Nguyen Huy Cuong | **Checked by Writing AE2 coordinator**  Signature  Full name: Assoc.Prof. Pham Huu Duc  **Checked by Head of the Testing board**  Signature  Full name: Dr. Vu Hoa Ngan |
| **Proctor 1**  Signature  Full name: | **Proctor 2**  Signature  Full name: |
| **STUDENT INFORMATION** | |
| **Student name:**  **Student ID:** | |

**INSTRUCTIONS (100-score scale, equivalent to 30% of the course)**

1. ***Purposes:***

* Test students’ skill in recognizing categories and classifications (CLO 2)
* Test students’ competence in applying appropriate style in academic writing (CLO 1)
* Evaluate students’ knowledge and skills in writing a comparison/ contrast essay (CLO 3)

1. ***Requirements and Instructions:***

* Write your **FULL NAME** and **STUDENT ID** below the Student Information. Missing name and ID may end up with file loss and a zero in result.
* Read the instructions for each part/ section carefully and write the answer(s) on the provided Answer sheet.
* All electronic devices, reference materials, discussion and material transfer are strictly prohibited. **Plagiarism in any form is strictly punished.**
* Students are required to submit both the Test paper and the Answer Sheet at the end of the test.

**EXAM QUESTIONS**

* **Task 1: (30 points)**

**Read the following text and create a graphic display or an outline that categorises the two-level classifications made in the text.**

**SOFT SKILLS**

Soft skills relate to how employees work. They are among the top skills employers seek in the candidates they hire because soft skills are important for just about every job. Soft skills can be divided into four categories: communication skills, creative thinking, time management, and adaptability skills.

Firstly, the ability to communicate effectively with superiors, colleagues, and staff is essential. Workers in the digital age should know how to effectively convey and receive messages, which are useful for employees to get hired, land promotions, and be a success throughout their career. Three top communication skills consist of nonverbal, verbal communication skills and public speaking. Nonverbal communication refers to gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, eye contact (or lack thereof), body language, posture, and other ways people can communicate without using language. Nonverbal communication skills can create a positive (or a negative) impression. Crossed arms can seem defensive and poor posture may appear unprofessional. Moreover, almost every job requires workers to use verbal communication skills. That is why verbal skills are highly ranked on the candidate evaluation checklists used by many job interviewers. Verbal communication in a work setting takes place between many different individuals and groups and occurs in many different contexts. Finally, public speaking is a soft skill that requires excellent communication skills, enthusiasm, and the ability to engage with an audience. Public speakers are often required to make presentations to a group. Presentations could range from speaking to a small number of employees to presenting to a large audience at a national conference or event. The same skill set and ability to be comfortable speaking in public are required regardless of the size of the group.

The second most important soft skill is creative thinking, which means thinking outside the box, bringing a fresh, and sometimes unorthodox, perspective to one’s work. Often, creative thinking involves analytical skills, and open-mindedness. Before thinking creatively about something, a person first has to be able to understand it. This requires the ability to examine things carefully to know what they mean. As for open-mindedness, to think creatively, a person should set aside any assumptions or possible biases and look at things in a completely new way. Coming to a problem with an open mind can allow for the chance to think creatively.

To obtain the third soft skill, employees who manage their time well are more productive, more efficient, and more likely to meet deadlines. They focus on the most important and time-sensitive tasks and limit the amount of time wasted on non-essential duties. Effective time management requires staff to assign priorities and schedule tasks. It might be impossible to do all the tasks at once. An employee should prioritise the expected tasks so that the most important tasks can be completed in an order that makes sense. When a person assigns priority, some factors should be considered such as when each task needs to be done, how long it might take, how important it might be to others in the organisation, what could happen if a task is not done, and whether any task might be interrupted by bottlenecks in the process. Scheduling is another important time management skill because some tasks have to be done at specific times. Scheduling may affect other people’s workflow. Most have specific times of the day when they are more or less productive as a result of energy levels and demands of the day.

Last but not least, adaptability in the workplace means being flexible and able to change in order to become successful. Adaptability skills can include an ability to learn and persistence. Employees in a leadership role often have to manage unusual circumstances where there are no explicit instructions. They must learn quickly how to rest upon their own judgment and have the confidence to make difficult decisions. These leaders are always learning and willing to take risks, as long as it means that they can develop personally and professionally. Additionally, people who adapt well rarely feel the pressure to quit. Every challenge is exciting, and remaining dedicated to their job means pushing through even with challenges. Likewise, persistent people are able to stay positive and encourage their team members to stay focused during difficult times.

In conclusion, the four categories of soft skills including communication skills, creative thinking, time management skills, and adaptability skills are important to the success of most employers. Employers are increasingly looking for candidates with hybrid skills, which are a combination of soft skills. Candidates with this skill set are very competitive in a continually evolving, technologically focused economy. The soft skills should be highlighted on resumes and cover letters or during job interviews to make sure potential employers are aware of these skills.

* **Task 2: (70 points)**

**Write a comparison/ contrast essay of about 350 words on ONE of the following topics:**

1. Write an essay to compare and contrast *life in Vietnam now and a decade ago*. Pay attention to the use of academic language and a clear text structure.
2. Write an essay to compare and contrast the *methods of communication (e.g, letters, telephones, etc.) used today with those which were used in the past*. Pay attention to the use of academic language and a clear text structure.

1

Vietnam, a Southeast Asian country with a rich history, has undergone significant changes over the past decade. This essay will compare and contrast life in Vietnam now and a decade ago, focusing on economic development, societal changes, and health improvements.

**Economic Development**

[A decade ago, Vietnam was still grappling with the aftermath of war and economic isolation1](https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/VNM/vietnam/life-expectancy). [However, today, Vietnam is emerging as a rising power in the Indo-Pacific region2](https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/04/current-situation-vietnam). [Once one of the world’s poorest and most isolated countries, Vietnam is now a middle-income country with a dynamic, young population2](https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/04/current-situation-vietnam). [The country’s economy has continued to grow at the highest rate in Southeast Asia2](https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/04/current-situation-vietnam)[, despite challenges such as pollution and the COVID-19 pandemic3](https://ninaoutandabout.ca/pros-and-cons-of-living-in-vietnam/).

**Societal Changes**

In terms of societal changes, Vietnam has seen both progress and challenges. [The country has made strides in regional diplomacy and development since joining ASEAN in 19972](https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/04/current-situation-vietnam). [However, issues such as freedom of expression and human rights remain contentious](https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/VNM/vietnam/life-expectancy)[2](https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/04/current-situation-vietnam). [While the constitution guarantees freedom of expression, opinion, and speech, these are not properly implemented in practice2](https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/04/current-situation-vietnam). [The vibrant civil society and social media face increasing restrictions2](https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/04/current-situation-vietnam).

**Health Improvements**

Health-wise, Vietnam has made significant progress. [A decade ago, the average life expectancy was around 74.96 years1, but it has now increased to 75.77 years1](https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/VNM/vietnam/life-expectancy). [This improvement is relatively high compared to countries with similar GDP per capita4](https://www.statista.com/topics/6181/health-in-vietnam/). [The Vietnamese government won international recognition for its strict handling of the COVID-19 pandemic in its early stages2](https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/04/current-situation-vietnam).

In conclusion, while Vietnam has made considerable strides in economic development and health improvements over the past decade, societal changes present both progress and ongoing challenges. The country’s journey from a war-torn nation to an emerging power in the Indo-Pacific region is truly remarkable. However, issues such as human rights and freedom of expression need further attention to ensure a balanced growth and development for all its citizens.

2.

Communication is a fundamental aspect of human interaction, and the methods we use to communicate have evolved significantly over time. This essay will compare and contrast the methods of communication used today with those used in the past.

**Traditional Methods of Communication**

[In the past, communication was primarily face-to-face, with individuals relying on direct verbal communication and non-verbal cues1](https://www.kalamtime.com/blog/evolution-of-communication/). [Written communication took the form of letters, which could take days or even weeks to reach their destination2](https://sharksavewriters.com/traditional-vs-modern-methods-of-communication/). [Other forms included cave paintings, smoke signals, symbols, carrier pigeons, and telegraph1](https://www.kalamtime.com/blog/evolution-of-communication/).

**Modern Methods of Communication**

Today’s communication landscape is vastly different. The advent of technology has introduced a plethora of new communication methods. [Email and text messaging have largely replaced traditional letter writing](https://www.kalamtime.com/blog/evolution-of-communication/)[3](https://leverageedu.com/blog/modes-of-communication/)[4](https://cpdonline.co.uk/knowledge-base/business/different-communication-methods/). [Telephones have evolved into smartphones, capable of not only voice communication but also video calls, internet browsing, and social media](https://www.kalamtime.com/blog/evolution-of-communication/)[2](https://sharksavewriters.com/traditional-vs-modern-methods-of-communication/).

**Comparison and Contrast**

The most significant difference between past and present communication methods is speed. [While a letter could take days to reach its recipient, an email or text message arrives almost instantaneously](https://www.kalamtime.com/blog/evolution-of-communication/)[3](https://leverageedu.com/blog/modes-of-communication/)[4](https://cpdonline.co.uk/knowledge-base/business/different-communication-methods/). This speed has facilitated a globalized world where individuals can communicate across vast distances in real time.

However, this shift has also led to changes in the nature of our communication. [Traditional methods often required more thought and effort, as they were typically slower and more permanent](https://www.kalamtime.com/blog/evolution-of-communication/)[2](https://sharksavewriters.com/traditional-vs-modern-methods-of-communication/). [Modern methods, while convenient, can lead to more superficial interactions due to their transient nature](https://www.kalamtime.com/blog/evolution-of-communication/)[5](https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/types-of-communication).

In conclusion, while modern methods of communication offer speed and convenience, they also present new challenges. As we continue to innovate and develop new ways to communicate, it is crucial to consider the implications these changes have on our interactions.