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Your path to university

UNL11 Academic Literacy Skills Course Outline

About the Course

This unit prepares you for writing assignments at a tertiary level. The unit focuses on developing your communication and written skills that are necessary to be successful in the university environment. The unit helps you develop the necessary skills you need for essay writing and research reports, summarising readings, editing your work, citing works and referencing of articles, journals and internet resources.

This unit includes individual tutorial support with an experienced high school English teacher. Tutorial support is via email, phone and an online classroom with discussion forums.

The unit has flexible enrolment dates to meet your needs. Start your study when you want and complete the unit any time within the 12 month enrolment window. This unit is equivalent to year 11/12 English Communication. This unit requires a minimum of 220 hours or 13 weeks to complete.

Aim

The course materials comprise of a study guide or “workbook”. It has been prepared for people who have not previously written essays at a tertiary level.

The Academic Literacy Skills course addresses five main questions:

- What is academic writing, and what makes it different from other kinds of writing?
- What are the main ideas, why are they important, and how can they be recognised?
- How to organise ideas and communicate them clearly?
- How to summarise and note down accurately the information required?
- How to research, write, reference and present essays?

Structure

UNL11 Academic Literacy Skills course consists of 1 Module. Questions and Exercises are included within the module so that the learner can work through them to develop experience in problem solving.

Assignments are also provided at appropriate points in the course. Students are required to successfully complete Five (5) of these assignments. Tutorial Support is available from the UNL11 Academic Literacy Skills Teacher. This support, which can be accessed by the online classroom, mobile phone or email, is designed to help students clarify understanding of concepts, to provide details of solutions to exercises, and to answer other relevant queries.

Hours of Study

In general the course should be completed in a minimum of 220 hours of study. The actual time required by an individual student to receive a successful result, however, will depend on the background, time available and needs of the learner.

Grading Scheme

Students are required to complete all required materials (progress tests and lab activities) with a score of 60% or above on each in order to be eligible to sit the final exam. A student's final grade is an accumulation of all required content and will be weighted as follows:

Assignment 2	10%
Assignment 3	25%
Assignment 4	15%
Assignment 5	50%

The final grading scale is as follows:

Grade	% required
High Distinction (HD)	85% and above
Distinction (D)	75- 84 %
Credit (C)	65 – 74 %
Pass (P)	50-64%
Fail	0 – 49%

Content

Acknowledgements

Introduction

The purpose of Academic Literacy Skills

How to use this book

Finding your way around

Unit 1 - First Principles

The requirements of academic essays

The purpose of this chapter

Quality & convention

Organisation & structure

Language & style

Understanding & purpose

Word & dictionaries

Where to next?

Feedback

Language builder Section 1: Unit 1 The basic sentence

Objectives

Sentence fragments

Subjects & verb groups

Main units of meaning (MUMs)

Commas in MUMs: Lists

Agreement between subjects & verbs

Answers to progress checks

Unit 2 - The importance of main ideas

The purpose of this chapter

Structure

Main ideas

Topic sentences: What are they?

Supporting information

Feedback

Language builder Section 1: Unit 2

Main units of meaning in combination

Objective

Joining main units of meaning

Answers to progress checks

Unit 3 - Ways of organising text Part 1

The purpose of this chapter The thesis

Definitions

Classification

Classification in longer texts

Classification used to advance a point of view

Feedback

Language builder Section 1: Unit 3

Adding supporting units of meaning (SUMs)

Objectives

Distinguishing between supporting units of meaning & main units of meaning

Joining SUMs & MUMs

Fragments often confused

Units of meaning that name

Supporting units of meaning that describe or explain

Supporting units of meaning that indicate special relationships

Answers to progress checks

Unit 4 - Ways of organising text Part 2

The purpose of this chapter

Compare & contrast

Writing your own compare/contrast paragraphs

Comparison & contrast in longer sections of text

Comparison/contrast & the thesis

Cause & effect

Cause & effect & the thesis

Feedback

Language builder Section 1: Unit 4

Review: Indicating relationships by using the various combinations of MUMs and SUMS

Objective

Cause, effect, reason, result

Contrast & concession Time-order

Addition Replacing Transitions

Another pattern for supporting units of meaning

Final practice

Answers to progress checks

Unit 5 - Analysing E1 summarising text Part 1

The purpose of this chapter

Previewing & overviewing

Making a paragraph summary

Feedback

Language builder Section 2: Unit 1

Style

Objectives

Conciseness

Precision

Avoiding general terms

Clichés

Jargon

Parallel constructions

Answers to progress checks

Unit 6 - Analysing & summarising text Part 2

The purpose of this chapter
Two summaries compared
So—what makes a good summary?
How to write a summary
Feedback

Language builder Section 2: Unit 2 Style

Objectives
Mixed constructions
Shifts
Consistency of tone
Sentence variety
Emphasis in SUMs & MUMs
Answers to progress checks

Unit 7 - Writing your own essay Part 1

Analysing the questions
The purpose of this chapter
The characteristics of a good essay
The six stages in essay writing
Analysing the question
Feedback

Unit 8 - Writing your own essay Part 2

Researching your topic
Section 1: Reading with purpose
Section 2: reading techniques
 Technique 1: Previewing
 Technique 2: Skimming
 Technique 3: Scanning
Section 3: Note-taking
Feedback

Unit 9 - Writing your own essay Part 3

Planning & drafting
The purpose of this chapter Getting organised
The components of your essay Feedback

Unit 10 - Writing your own essay Part 4

The purpose of this chapter
Editing
Quotations & references to the ideas of other writers
How to reference