

Communication Skills

The Communication Skills program is located in the Department of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics and provides a unique facility in Australian university education. Its mission is to create a culture of student excellence in written and oral communication, presentation skills and the application of information technologies. The curriculum is designed to assist students in Arts and other faculties of the University with developing and refining their academic and professional communication skills. These skills-based subjects will be of direct benefit to many students in extending the vocational opportunities provided by the Bachelor of Arts and other degree programs.

Time commitment to study

As well as scheduled contact hours for lectures, tutorial and seminars a considerable additional time commitment is needed to complete the academic requirements of each subject.

A subject-specific time commitment to study will be provided by your lecturer or tutor at the beginning of semester to help you schedule your workload and successfully manage your time during the semester. In addition, general estimates of the total time commitment required to study a 12.5-point single semester subject in the Faculty of Arts can be found on page 1.

Skills subjects limitations

Communication Skills subjects, along with ESL subjects, computer skills subjects and subjects that focus on workplace skills, are termed 'skills-based subjects'. Students enrolled in an arts degree may credit a maximum of three skills subjects towards their course. See *Skills-based subjects (p.8)*. Students from other faculties should check for skills subject limitations at their Faculty Office.

Communication skills subjects

- 175-134 Project Based Communication (*p.1*)
- 175-210 Business and Management Writing (*p.1*)
- 175-211 Technical Writing (*p.1*)
- 175-300 Managing Work and Projects (*p.2*)

These subjects are designed to develop students' academic and communication skills.

Workplace skills subject

The subject 175-300 Managing Work and Projects (*p.2*) is designed to assist students with the transition from study to work, and provides students with knowledge about contemporary employment and project management. It is for third-year students only and includes a work placement.

For more information

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Communication skills subjects

First/Second/third-year subject

175-134 Project Based Communication

Note: Formerly available as 145-003/134/234. Students who have completed 145-003/134/234 are not eligible to enrol in this subject.

Availability: 1st, 2nd and 3rd year

Credit points: 12.5

Coordinator: Celia Thompson

Prerequisites: Non-native speakers will need to present evidence of English language proficiency (ie. 7 on IELTS or equivalent). There are no specific requirements for native speakers.

Contact: A 1-hour lecture and a 2-hour tutorial per week (*Semester 1, repeat 2*).

Description: This subject is designed to introduce students from all disciplinary backgrounds to a range of theories of communication through a project-based and critical approach to learning and research. Students will increase their understanding of the role played by web-based technologies, language, gender and culture in different communicative contexts. In addition, students

will learn about the theory and practice of critical thinking and group dynamics. This subject will enable students to develop their speaking and writing abilities for a range of audiences using electronic media. Students will complete a variety of individual and group-based tasks including the presentation of a paper at a student-run conference. On completion of the subject students will have increased their knowledge of sociocultural approaches to communication theory; will be able to undertake well-documented academic research, analyse scholarly texts critically and present their own research findings in both verbal and written formats.

Assessment: A collaborative project of 1000 words 25% (due mid-semester), a written research paper of 1500 words 35% (due at the end of semester), an oral presentation of 800 words 25% (due at the end of semester) and class exercises of 700 words 15% (due at the end of semester).

Prescribed texts: A subject reader will be available.

Second/third-year subjects

175-210 Business and Management Writing

Note: Formerly available as 145-210. Students who have completed 145-210 are not eligible to enrol in this subject.

Availability: 2nd and 3rd year

Credit points: 12.5

Coordinator: Dr Joanna Tapper

Prerequisites: 100 points of university study at any level.

Contact: A 1-hour lecture and a 2-hour tutorial per week (*Semester 1*).

Description: In this subject students are introduced to concepts of communication as both constituting work, and enabling people to do their work and manage organisations. The subject is grounded in rhetorical theory, with a strong focus on the ways in which audience, purpose and persuasion shape written and oral workplace communication. Key aspects of workplace communication such as collaboration, 'authorless' writing and recurrent revision of documents will be presented. Students will learn to analyse the requirements for different kinds of business and organisational documents (eg memos, letters, leaflet, reports), develop awareness of ethical and legal issues, and understand cross-cultural aspects of business writing. Students will apply theoretical content to practical writing and business meeting assignments.

Assessment: Written exercises of 1000 words 20% (due throughout the semester), an analytical report of 1500 words on a business document 40% (due at the end of semester), a collaborative meeting assignment of 1500 words including written and spoken components 20% group grade and 20% individual grade (due in week 8).

Prescribed texts: K O Locker, *Business and Administrative Communication*, (6th ed) Mc Graw Hill 2003.

175-211 Technical Writing

Note: Formerly available as 145-211. Students who have completed 145-211 are not eligible to enrol in this subject.

Availability: 2nd and 3rd year

Credit points: 12.5

Coordinator: Dr Joanna Tapper

Prerequisites: 100 points of university study at any level.

Contact: A 1-hour lecture and a 2-hour tutorial per week (*Semester 2*).

Description: The subject introduces students to the basic principles of technical communication. Subject content includes consideration of research studies on written, visual and oral technical communication, and the distinctive rhetorical and critical theory underlying this branch of communication. The subject is designed to enable students studying in a range of scientific, technical, humanities and social science fields to apply their existing skills and knowledge to technical communication contexts. Students will become aware of the challenges of technical communication, such as writing for the needs of varied readers, displaying information visually, and designing documents that help readers to use and understand information. Ethical, legal and cross-cultural aspects of technical communication will be covered. Students will study and produce standard types of technical documents such as proposals, instructions and reports. The collaborative nature of technical writing will be stressed in classwork and assignments. On completion of the subject, students should be able to analyse the requirements of technical communication situations, gather and present data and design documents that are suited to the needs of their readers.

Assessment: Written exercises of 1000 words 20% (due throughout the semester), a technical report (individual) of 1000 words 30% (due week 8), a collaborative user manual or procedures guide comprising written text, visuals, document design and oral presentation (group work) of 2000 words 50% (due end of semester).

Prescribed texts: M M Lay et al, *Technical Communication*, (2nd ed) McGraw Hill 2000.

Third-year subject

175-300 Managing Work and Projects

Note: Formerly available as 145-002/300. Students who have completed 145-002/300 are not eligible to enrol in this subject. There is a quota of 50 places in this subject. Students must contact the Department of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics for further details.

Availability: 2nd and 3rd year

Credit points: 12.5

Coordinator: Dr Joanna Tapper & Ms Emma O'Connell

Prerequisites: 50 points of second year study.

Contact: Two 1-hour lectures, a 1-hour tutorial per week and 40 hours of work placement (*Semester 1*).

Description: Students will gain insights into bridging the gap between study and the workplace. They will be introduced to concepts of project management, consultancy, career management and working within organisations. Students will complete a 40-hour project during their placements, supervised by the coordinators. In the placements, students will apply knowledge gained in the subject content, and develop transferable skills. Work-related oral, written, IT and team skills will be fostered by practice, self-reflection and constructive feedback. On completion of the subject, students will have knowledge of current workplace demands and have developed skills that will make them productive in the workplace.

Assessment: A collaborative project brief of 500 words 15% (due mid-semester), an individual or group (by agreement) oral presentation of 1000 words 20% (due in week 9), a business plan of 1250 words 25% (due at the end of semester), a final report of 1250 words 30% (due at the end of semester), a hurdle requirement of a project log 5% (begun in week 2 and due at the end of semester) and a hurdle requirement of the employer's feedback 5% (due at the end of semester).

Prescribed texts: A subject reader available at the University Bookshop.

E Verzuh, *The Fast Forward MBA in Project Management*, John Wiley 1999.