COURSE (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Dalyko (modulio) pavadinimas	Kodas
Academic Writing/Akademinis rašymas	

Teacher(s)	Unit(s)
Co-ordinator: Dr. Jelena Kirejeva	Vilnius University Faculty of Philology

Study cycle	Type of course (module)
First cycle	Elective

Mode of delivery	Semester or period when it is delivered	Language of instruction
Contact and independent work	4 semester (spring)	English

Requisites	
Prerequisites: None	**Co-requisites (if):** None

Course (module) volume in credits	Total student workload	Contact hours	Independent study hours
5	135	32	103

Aim of course (module): competences developed by the study programme

The course acquaints the students with the fundamental principles of writing both small-scale research projects (a research-based academic essay) and dissertations; it helps the participants to find their own identity/or their own voice in the respective research field. The course details the characteristics and the stages of writing an academic text and makes the participant aware of various manners of argument; it tackles the following aspects: the anatomy of an academic paper, concision and clarity, stylistic conventions, typographic conventions, etc.

Learning outcomes of the course (module)	Study methods	Assessment methods
Generic Learning Outcomes: – the acquisition and/or development of the following transferable skills: communication, active listening, problem-solving, critical thinking, logical reasoning, independent research and argumentation, data collection and analysis, conscious thinking, collaboration. **Subject Learning Outcomes:** – the acquisition and/or development of the ability to produce a well-researched, well-structured, concise and clear academic paper written according to all the necessary conventions.	Study methods include the combination of a *Task-Based* Approach, a *Flipped Classroom* Approach and a *Case Study* method through the application of the following tasks and activities: – lectures and group assignments; – classroom polling; – Q&A sessions; – listing and/or brainstorming; – collaborative discussions based on the materials covered indiviadually at homeand in class (teacher-led); – collaborative problem-solving (teacher-led); – digital research; – readings; – the use of digital resources both as synchronous and asynchronous learning materials; reflection assignments.	**1. Research essay-in-progress presentation:** students will prepare and deliver an individual presentation based on their ongoing research essay. This outcome emphasises the ability to communicate academic arguments orally, use visual aids effectively, respond to questions and engage in scholarly discussion. **2. Individual essay writing:** students will complete a research-based academic essay that demonstrates the ability to construct a clear thesis, develop coherent arguments supported by evidence, apply appropriate citation styles, and adhere to

		academic conventions of structure, style, and language accuracy. **3. Progress test:** Students will have to answer questions on the materials covered during the course.

Topics	**Contact hours**							**Independent study assignments**	
	Lectures	Consultations	Seminars	Practice	Laboratory work	Practice	**Total contact hours**	**Independent work**	**Assignments**
1. Introduction: Overview of the syllabus, aims and objectives. Introduction to the expectations, assessment methods, and importance of academic writing in higher education.			1				**1**		
2. Key concepts in academic writing: Defining terminology (academic tone, argument, evidence, clarity, concision, coherence, etc.). Understanding the role of reading as part of the writing process. Strategies for choosing reliable sources, effective note-taking techniques, and creating mind maps to organise ideas.			2				**2**	**10**	*In-class group essay: Mind-mapping.* Brooks (2020, 1-11) Street (2015, 111-115)
3. Plagiarism: Text-internal references, direct quotes, indirect quotes			2				**2**		Murray (2012, 117-135)
4. Stylistic conventions: the use of the first person sg. – 'I', emotive and biased language, vague and empty language, casual language, etc. Notational conventions.			2				**2**		Murray (2012,136-158)
5. Research-based academic essay: structure and topic selection Introduction to the genre of research-based essays. Criteria for selecting a suitable essay topic. Building an effective essay outline as a foundation for logical organisation. Possible research fields: Sociolinguistics, Cognitive Linguistics, Pragmatics, Cultural Linguistics, etc.			2				**2**	**10**	*In-class group essay: Outlining.* Brooks (2020, 15-24)
6. Essay writing: introduction and thesis statement Techniques for drafting a strong introduction and clear, focused thesis statement. Incorporating background reading effectively. Introduction to			2				**2**	**20**	*In-class group essay: Writing an introduction.* Kriaučiūnienė & Arcimavičienė (2023, 119-128)

citation styles and their role in academic integrity.									
7. Essay writing: body paragraphs Strategies for constructing cohesive body paragraphs. Developing a clear line of reasoning supported by substantiated evidence. Applying the APA formatting and style guide to academic work.			6				**6**	**20**	*In-class group essay: Writing body paragraphs.* Kriaučiūnienė & Arcimavičienė (2023, 119-128) Brooks (2020, 24-36)
8. Essay writing: conclusion Writing effective conclusions that restate the main thesis, synthesise key arguments and address potential future directions or research trends.			3				**3**	**10**	*In-class group essay: Writing a conclusion.* Kriaučiūnienė & Arcimavičienė (2023, 119-128)
9. Editing and referencing: The process of redrafting and editing essays for clarity, style, and accuracy. Addressing common issues with spelling, grammar and punctuation. Correctly formatting references and compiling bibliographies.			3				**3**	**10**	*In-class group essay peer-review presentation.* Brooks (2020, 75-85) Creme & Lee (2008, 35-47)
10. Reflective writing practices: Maintaining a learning journal to track progress and challenges. Introduction to reflective writing as a tool for self-assessment and continuous improvement in academic writing.			8				**8**	**20**	*Individual research-based essay writing on the topic of your choice.*
11. Final reflection session: Group reflection on learning outcomes and skill development throughout the course. Discussion of how academic writing skills can be transferred to other academic and professional contexts.			1				**1**	**3**	
Total			**32**				**32**	**103**	

Assessment strategy	Weight %	Assessment time	Assessment criteria
Research essay-in-progress presentation	30	Week 6-9	Each student will deliver an individual presentation (15 minutes, followed by 5 minutes of Q&A). The presentation should be based on the student's research essay in progress and should demonstrate both content knowledge and effective communication skills. Assessment criteria: • **Delivery and visual aids (5 points):** clarity of oral delivery, effective use of body language, and integration of visual support (slides, charts, handouts). • **Content (20 points):** relevance, depth of analysis, originality of ideas and appropriate use of supporting evidence. • **Structure, cohesion and language accuracy (5 points):** logical organisation of material, smooth transitions, appropriate academic register and clarity of expression.
Final essay	40	Week 12-16	Students will submit one written assignment of at least 500 words. The essay must follow academic writing

			conventions and demonstrate research-based argumentation. Assessment criteria: • **Content (30 points):** strength of thesis and argumentation, integration of research, and critical analysis of specific examples. • **Structure (10 points):** clear organisation into five paragraphs (introduction, three body paragraphs, conclusion), with coherence and unity across sections. • **Style, register and language accuracy (20 points):** use of appropriate academic style and vocabulary, consistency of register, grammatical accuracy, and adherence to formal writing conventions (e.g., citation style, formatting)
Progress test	30	Week 10-12	**10-point** grading scale (the final test is comprised by open-ended and close-ended questions on the materials covered and a mini-research intended to demonstrate one's ability to carry out pragmalinguistic research independently). The questions formulated in the test will cover the topics discussed both in the lectures and seminars. Students who do not attend the lectures and seminars must a)independently follow the information related to the course; b) study the texts (both compulsory and optional) indicated in the course description and uploaded on the VMA/MsTeams platform; no individual tutorials to be provided if one appears to have some questions due to their frequent absenteeism
Attendance requirements			70% of lectures and seminars; Students who have missed more than 30% of lectures and seminars without a justifiable reason will have to re-take the course
On the ethical and honest use of Gen AI			When preparing written assignment(s), **principle 1** of Vilnius University Faculty of Philology Guidelines for the Use of Generative AI applies, i.e., no Gen AI. The task is completed entirely without Gen AI, relying only on one's own knowledge and skills; When preparing a presentation/project, **principle 2** of Vilnius University Faculty of Philology Guidelines for the Use of Generative AI applies, i.e., GenAI is used while preparing to complete the task: to generate ideas; plan the stages and structure of a project; identify possible risks; formulate or narrow the topic; formulate a research question; search for scholarly literature; and anticipate possible questions for a discussion, defence, etc.

Author	**Year of publication**	**Title**	**Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication**	**Publishing place and house or a web link**
Compulsory reading list				
Kriaučiūnienė, R. Arcimavičienė, L.	2023	English for Academic Purposes and Research (C1)	**ISBN:** 97860 90707906	Vilnius University Press

Brooks, C.	2020	Building Blocks of Academic Writing		https://opentextbc.ca/buildingblocks/. CC BY-NC 4.0 Licence.
Creme, P., & Lea, M.	2008	Writing at university: A guide for students		McGraw-Hill Education (UK)
Murray, N.	2012	Writing essays in English Literature and Linguistics		Cambridge: CUP
Street, B. V.	2015	Academic Writing: Theory and Practice.		*Journal of Educational Issues*, *1*(2), 110-116.
Hyland, K.	2008	Genre and academic writing in the disciplines		*Language Teaching*, *41*(4), 543-562.
Additional reading list				
McKinley, J.	2015	Critical argument and writer identity: Social constructivism as a theoretical framework for EFL academic writing.		*Critical inquiry in language studies*, *12*(3), 184-207.
Fernsten, L. A., & Reda, M.	2011	Helping students meet the challenges of academic writing.		*Teaching in Higher Education*, *16*(2), 171-182.
Orwell, G.	1946/ 2013	*Politics and the English language*.		Penguin UK.
Bourdieu, P.	1991	*Language and symbolic power*.		Harvard university press.
Wodak, R.	2012	Language, power and identity.		*Language teaching*, *45*(2), 215-233.

Modified 2026-10-21.