



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Academic Communication I/II Akademinė komunikacija I/II	

Lecturer(s)	Department(s) where the course unit (module) is delivered
Coordinator: Jurga Kasteckienė Other(s): Dr. Justina Urbonaitė	Department of English Philology

Study cycle	Type of the course unit (module)
BA	Compulsory

Mode of delivery	Period when the course unit (module) is delivered	Language(s) of instruction
Seminars, tutorials	Autumn semester	English

Requirements for students	
Prerequisites: A good command of English (B1.2-B2)	Additional requirements (if any):

Course (module) volume in credits	Total student's workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	150	64	86

Purpose of the course unit (module): programme competences to be developed
<p>This course unit (module) consists of two components: Academic Writing (50%) and Academic Presentations (50%). The purpose of the course unit is to develop the students' communicative competences in English as well other generic and subject-specific competences of the study programme.</p> <p>The course unit (module) develops a range of transferrable generic competences that are relevant across academic and professional contexts, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Analytical, critical, and logical thinking. (2) Decision-making and problem-solving. (3) Academic integrity and professional ethics. (4) Quality orientation and attention to detail in preparing and delivering academic work. (5) Knowledge of information technologies, including digital and AI-supported tools for research and presentation. (6) Ability to retrieve, evaluate, and handle information from a variety of academic and professional sources. (7) Ability to work autonomously, design effective learning strategies, manage time, and meet deadlines. (8) Ability to engage in academic discussions and to develop written and oral communication skills in English in academic settings. <p>The purpose of the Academic Writing course is to develop students' subject-specific competences:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Communication skills in written academic English. The students will learn to create clear, well-structured academic texts in English, underlining the relevant salient issues, expanding and supporting points of view with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples. They will master the structure of paragraphs and main expository patterns of essay organization, choosing the right tone, style, and register according to the addressee, text-type, and topic. (2) Competence of a researcher. The students will learn to identify a linguistic or interdisciplinary problem, collect, analyse, systematize and critically evaluate material from various sources. <p>The purpose of the Academic Presentations course is to develop students' subject-specific competences:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Communication skills in spoken academic English. Students will develop the ability to understand and differentiate between different types of academic research-based presentations and to plan, structure, and deliver them effectively in line with academic conventions. They will acquire proficiency in applying the principles that underlie the structure and

delivery of research-based presentations, in employing diverse organisational patterns, in supporting claims with evidence and reasoned argumentation, and in integrating visual materials that enhance clarity, credibility, and impact while responding to the needs of different audiences. Emphasis will be placed on the progressive development of transferrable competences: the informative research-based presentation introduces the foundational skills, which are subsequently reinforced, extended, and critically applied in the argumentative research-informed presentation. Emphasis will be placed on the development of research-informed content, the effective use of spoken academic register, strategies for audience engagement, and the appropriate use of non-verbal communication and delivery techniques. Students will also cultivate the ability to manage questions professionally, engage constructively in post-presentation discussion, and demonstrate active listening skills. In addition, they will develop the capacity to evaluate peer performance and to provide constructive, academically grounded feedback based on explicit evaluation criteria.

- (2) Competence of a researcher. Students will be trained to conduct research for academic presentations, to locate, critically evaluate, and select academically credible sources, and to integrate them appropriately into preparatory materials (e.g. extended outlines, notes), visual aids, and spoken delivery through accurate citation, paraphrasing, and referencing. They will cultivate an informed awareness of academic integrity by consistently acknowledging the intellectual contributions of others and by ensuring transparency in the preparation process and the delivery of academic presentations. Furthermore, they will acquire the ability to design professional, academically credible visual aids that are tailored to meet the needs of different audiences in academic contexts and that fully conform to the ethical and formal standards of academic communication. Special attention will also be devoted to the critical, reflective, and responsible use of digital and AI-based tools, with students learning to evaluate their appropriateness, reliability, and limitations when researching, preparing, and presenting research-informed content.

Learning outcomes of the course unit (module)	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
<p>Students will acquire:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Ability to narrow the topic, to brainstorm for ideas, to outline paragraphs and essays. (2) Knowledge about the main types of expository essays (chronological, comparison and contrast, logical order, cause-effect). (3) Ability to critically evaluate and comment on their own paragraphs and essays and those written by others. (4) Knowledge about the main types of academic presentations to be given by students in academic settings. (5) Ability to conduct research for, plan, and deliver academic presentations in English and make effective use of visual aids designed in compliance with the requirements of academic integrity. (6) Ability to employ different patterns of content organisation in academic presentations. (7) Ability to handle questions professionally and engage in discussion. (8) Ability to evaluate and provide constructive criticism and feedback on peer presentations. 	<p>Group and pair discussions, practical assignments, writing paragraphs and essays, analysing, preparing and delivering presentations, assessing peer performance, self-reflection, reading and analysing theoretical resources and other study materials, independent work.</p>	<p>Cumulative assessment: Assessment of paragraphs and essays, preparation, practice and delivery of academic presentations, assessment of extended outlines and work-in-progress slides, brief self-reflection reports, written assignments, active and responsible participation in collaborative assessment of peer presentations.</p>

Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours							Self-study work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Exercises	Laboratory work	Internship/work placement	Contact hours	Self-study hours	Assignments, references to study materials
<p>Introduction to the Academic Writing: aims, structure, assessment scheme. Diagnostic essay.</p>			2				2		<p>* The course instructors reserve the right to amend the list of study materials and/or to provide additional resources when considered necessary or in response to students' academic needs. All mandatory, optional and supplementary materials will be made available via the institutional course website (www.emokymai.vu.lt).</p>

Overview of the writing process, discussion of prewriting techniques (choosing and narrowing the topic, brainstorming, outlining). Ways of analyzing and responding to prompts. Revising drafts.			2				2	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reading texts for critical analysis. 2. Participation in group and pair discussions. 3. Practical tasks for developing academic writing skills. 4. Paragraph and essay writing.
The structure of a paragraph (general-specific and specific-general).			2				2	4	
The structure of an essay and essay types. Choosing the pattern of organization to suit the purpose.			2				2	4	
Discussion of chronological order/process essays. Emphasis on linking words and coherence within a paragraph as well as unity in a paragraph. In-class essay.			4				4	4	
Discussion of comparison and contrast essays (based on similarities and differences). Research skills in academic writing (quoting, paraphrasing, summarising, integrating sources in the text). Process essay.			8				8	12	
Discussion of logical division/classification essays. In-class essay.			4				4	4	
Discussion of problem-solution essays. In-class essay.			4				4	4	
Discussion of cause-effect essays.			2				2	4	
Review of the main principles of writing an academic essay. Revision for the examination.			2				2	3	
Introduction to the course of Academic Presentations. Introduction to the course content, requirements, assessment scheme and overview of the course plan. Types of presentations delivered by students in academic settings.			2				2	1	<p>During the course, students will engage in a variety of activities designed to build their academic presentation competences progressively. These will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Preparing and delivering short introductory presentations to practice structuring content. ○ Developing research-informed presentations by locating and integrating credible academic sources, applying proper citation, paraphrasing, and referencing practices. ○ Engaging in practice tasks focused on specific presentation skills, such as structuring, audience engagement, effective delivery techniques. ○ Designing, using, and critically evaluating visual aids in line with academic and ethical standards. ○ Participating in discussions, Q&A sessions, and peer feedback to strengthen interaction and constructive feedback literacy. ○ Preparing and delivering research-based informative and argumentative
Developing formal presentation skills. Delivering introductory academic presentations.			2				2	2	
Developing research skills in academic presentations. Maintaining academic integrity in presentations: citing, paraphrasing, and referencing appropriately; avoiding plagiarism. Responsible use of AI tools for summarising, paraphrasing, and note-taking, with attention to transparency and limitations.			2				2	3	
Organising the content of an academic presentation. Principles of structuring content: introduction, body, conclusions. Strategies for clarity, coherence, and memorable openings and closings.			2				2	2	
Delivery of (academic) presentations. The language of presentations, non-verbal communication. Focus on spoken academic English, signposting, audience engagement, body language, and other extralinguistic factors of delivery.			1				1	2	

Visual aids in academic presentations. Principles of designing effective and professional visual aids; integrating references; ethical use of AI tools for slide preparation. Pros and cons of using slide templates. Academic integrity and copyrights, copyright-free resources for visual materials for slide preparation.			1				1	2	presentations as summative assessments.
Handling questions and discussion. Strategies for effective handling of questions; encouraging discussion, maintaining professionalism during Q&A.			2				2	2	
Mid-term test (Test I). Students' delivery of research-based informative presentations (mid-term).			8				8	10	
Principles of argumentation and rhetoric. Researching for, planning and preparing an argumentative academic presentation.			2				2	4	
Organising the content of an argumentative academic presentation.			2				2	3	
Revision, drafting extended outlines, practice / consultation.			2				2	4	
Final test (Test II). Students' delivery of research-based argumentative presentations (final).			6				6	8	
Total			64				64	86	

Assessment strategy	Weight, %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Cumulative assessment			
Academic Writing			
- Coursework	30%	During the autumn semester following the deadlines set by the teacher	Coursework will be based on the following: - a 700-word comparison-contrast (process) essay – 10% - other written assignments – 20%
- Essay examination	20%	During the winter examination session	The essay is assessed on a 10-point scale. Evaluation criteria: Content – 30% Organization – 30% Language accuracy – 20% Language range – 20%
Academic Presentations			
Test I	20%	During the autumn semester following the deadlines set by the teacher	Test I (orally): Preparing and delivering an informative research-based presentation The presentation is assessed based on the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research quality and academic integrity [40%] • Content structure and organisation [15%] • Delivery and language use [15%] • Design and use of visual aids [15%] • Formal requirements [15%]
Test II	20%	During the autumn semester following the deadlines set by the teacher	Test II (orally): Preparing and delivering an argumentative research-based presentation The presentation is assessed based on the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research quality and academic integrity [20%] • Construction of arguments [20%]

Active participation and work- in-progress	10%	Week 2 One week before Test I One week before Test II During Test I and Test II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation and application of a relevant persuasive pattern [15%] • Delivery and language use [10%] • Design and use of visual aids [10%] • Handling questions and discussion [15%] • Formal requirements [10%] <p>Active participation and work-in-progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering self-introduction speech (orally) [Seminar 2] • Submitting an extended outline of the informative presentation (in writing) [HW1 above] • Submitting an extended outline of the persuasive presentation (in writing) [HW2 above] <p>Provision of constructive feedback in collaborative assessment (in writing) [during the seminars devoted to the delivery of student presentations]</p>
--	-----	--	--

Use of Vilnius University electronic learning system

All of the texts, compulsory and optional study materials, handouts and other relevant course materials will be made available on the webpage of Vilnius University Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) at <https://emokymai.vu.lt>. It is students' responsibility to refer to the course website on a regular basis to be able to access course materials and submit assignments as requested. Unless indicated otherwise by the course instructor, all home assignments must be uploaded in due time on the course website. Schedules of Test I and Test II will be announced on the course website in advance, and it is students' responsibility to get familiar with the dates that their presentation is due and to be present on the assigned date.

Academic integrity

All assignments must be completed independently by the students complying with the requirements of academic conventions of fair citing, paraphrasing and referencing. In accordance with the university regulations (see articles 49 and 77.2 of the Study Regulations of Vilnius University (https://www.vu.lt/site_files/Vertimai/EN_Translation_Vilniaus_universiteto_studij%C5%B3_nuostatai_30_April_2025.pdf) and articles 21–22 of the Code of Academic Ethics of Vilnius University (https://www.vu.lt/site_files/Studies/Study_regulations/Code_of_academic_ethics_VU.pdf)), a student who commits an act of academic dishonesty (such as plagiarism or any other form of cheating) shall receive a failing grade on the work in which the dishonesty occurred. In addition, any act of academic dishonesty shall result in the failure of the module and the student who has committed the act may be subject to the dismissal from the University. In their applications of AI tools in academic settings, students must comply with the Guidelines on Artificial Intelligence Usage at Vilnius University (https://www.vu.lt/site_files/Vertimai/EN_Translation_Dirbtinio_intelektu_naudojimo_Vilniaus_universitete_gair%C4%97s.pdf).

Lateness of task completion

All of the mandatory assignments (Tests and in-class essays) are obligatory for all the students and are carried out only once. The course instructor informs the students beforehand about the time and date of the assessed assignments. In the case of missed classes, it is the student's responsibility to find out the time and the requirements of relevant tasks and to complete them until the set deadline. Failing to show up for the presentation or any other mandatory in-class task at the assigned time with no justifiable reason results in failing the task (marked 0) with no chance of make-up. To be able to make up for the missed assignment, the student is fully responsible for notifying the course instructor of their absence and provide a justifiable reason for it (cases of documented medical and other justifiable reasons). Documentary proof for the excused absence must be submitted to the course instructor and/or (upon request) to the Studies Division of the Dean's Office. In the case of documented medical reasons or other justifiable absences, make-up time will be allowed either at the end of the semester or at an allocated time during the examination session.

Requirements for passing the course Academic Communication

A student fails the **Academic Writing** or **Academic Presentations** component if the mark awarded is lower than 4.5 (the final marks for each component are not rounded). The entire course **Academic Communication I/II** is considered failed if a student fails at least one of the two components (Academic Writing or Academic Presentations). If a student successfully passes both components, the raw (non-rounded) marks for each component are added together, and the final cumulative mark for the course **Academic Communication I/II** is then rounded up.

Final grade calculation policy

The final assessment is based on a cumulative grade which is calculated in accordance with the proportions established in the description of this course unit (module) (see Section on Assessment Strategy above). The scores granted for each mandatory assignment (Test) are not rounded up or down. Only the sum of the grades of all mandatory assignments (with the proportions established in the description above) is rounded.

Attendance policy

Regular attendance, active participation in seminars, and completion of in-class and homework assignments are expected. If more than 35% of seminars are missed, the course component may need to be retaken the following year.

Course policy regarding the use of electronic devices in class

The usage of electronic devices (laptops, tablets, cell phones, smartphones, e-readers, music players, etc.) during class is only allowed for study and research purposes, when it is required for in-class activities (assigned by the course instructor). All the electronic devices must be put away at all times to facilitate the study process for all participants and to maintain favourable learning environment. Taking photos, videos and making sound recordings in class are strictly forbidden, unless instructed otherwise by the professor or unless students provide documents which outline the requirements for necessary accommodations of the use of electronic devices due to disability or other diagnosed health issues.

List of the learning and teaching resources

Author	Year of publication	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing place and house or web link
Alley, M.	2013	<i>The Craft of Scientific Presentations: critical steps to succeed and critical errors to avoid.</i>	2 nd edition	New York: Springer
Anderson, L.	2015	'Internationality' as a metapragmatic resource in research presentations addressed to English as a lingua franca audiences.	In: P. Thompson and G. Diani, eds. <i>English for Academic Purposes: Approaches and Implications.</i>	Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 225–244.
Bailey, Stephen	2011	<i>Academic Writing; a Handbook for International Students</i>		Abingdon: Routledge
Beebe, S. A. & S. J. Beebe	2018	<i>Public Speaking: An Audience-Centered Approach</i>	10 th edition	Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education
Bjork, Lennart & Christine Raisanen	2003	<i>Academic Writing: a University Writing Course</i>		Lund: Studentlitteratur
Chivers, B. & M. Schoolbred	2007	<i>A Student's Guide to Presentations: Making Your Presentation Count</i>		London: Sage
Davis, M.	2005	<i>Scientific Papers and Presentations</i>	2 nd edition	San Diego: Academic Press
Duarte, N.	2008	<i>Slide:ology: the art and science of creating great presentations</i>		Beijing: O'Reilly
Eaton, S. E. (ed.)	2023	<i>Handbook of Academic Integrity</i>	2 nd edition	Cham: Springer
Gibaldi, J.	2009	<i>MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers</i>	7 th edition	New York: The Modern Language Association of America.
Hamilton, C.	2015	<i>Essentials of Public Speaking</i>	6 th edition	Stamford: Cengage Learning
Oshima, Alice & Ann Hogue	1988	<i>Introduction to Academic Writing (Longman Academic Writing Series)</i>		Boston: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc.
Oshima, Alice & Ann Hogue	1999	<i>Writing Academic English (Longman Academic Writing Series)</i>		Boston: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc.

Pecorari, D.	2008	<i>Academic Writing and Plagiarism: A linguistic analysis</i>		London & New York: Continuum
Powell, M.	2010	<i>Dynamic Presentations</i>		Cambridge: CUP
Pritchard, Alan	2008	<i>Studying and Learning at University</i> (pp. 28-43)		London: SAGE
Smackman, D.	2024	<i>Presenting in English: A Practical Guide</i>		London & New York: Routledge
van Emden J. & L. Becker	2004	<i>Presentation Skills for Students</i>		Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan
Wallwork, A.	2022	<i>Giving an Academic Presentation in English: Intermediate Level</i>		Cham: Springer
Wallwork, A.	2024	<i>AI-Assisted Writing and Presenting in English.</i>		Cham: Springer
Williams, E. J.	2008	<i>Presentations in English</i>		Oxford: OUP

Last updated
September 1, 2025