

## **Module Descriptor**

<b>Module Code and Title:</b>	ACS101 Academic Skills
<b>Programme:</b>	University-wide module
<b>Credit Value:</b>	12
<b>Module Tutors:</b>	Rinchen Dorji, Tashi Tshomo, Ugyen Tshering, Wangmo
<b>Module Coordinator:</b>	Ugyen Tshering

### **General Objective**

This module aims to develop the knowledge and understanding of a range of academic skills required for study at university level. The module will focus on the development of academic writing, oral presentation, as well as listening skills to enable students to communicate effectively in both spoken and written forms. The module will enhance their learning throughout their studies at university and beyond, through close reading, discussions and critiquing of academic texts. Further, it will also enhance students' capacity to critically reflect on their own learning.

### **Learning Outcomes**

On completion of the module, students will be able to:

- use effective note taking skills to extract relevant information from a range of academic texts
- lead and participate productively in group situations
- apply features of academic writing in academic discourses
- apply learned strategies to avoid the consequences of academic dishonesty
- employ a range of strategies and techniques to read academic texts
- demonstrate information retrieval and analysis skills by identifying, assessing and using appropriate sources i.e. author, publisher or website
- identify the content, viewpoint and relevance of articles and reports on a wide range of topics
- write academic papers using a process approach: planning, drafting, eliciting feedback and revising, following consistent academic standards
- construct a coherent and substantiated argument that integrates appropriate source material, and uses appropriate research and APA referencing conventions in clear and correct language in the form of an essay

- produce academic essays using process approach: planning, drafting, eliciting feedback and revising using appropriate terminology and a consistent academic style
- plan, organise and deliver clear, well-structured academic oral presentations.

### Teaching and Learning Approach

Tutors will employ an interactive, student-centred approach, integrating language and critical thinking skills using the following strategies such as demonstrations/modelling, practical exercises and activities, group work (discussions, problem-solving activities, collaborative and individual tasks, peer feedback and debates), academic essay writing (process learning with diagnosis, feedback and remediation), oral presentation, portfolio, independent study and VLE discussions over the 120 credit hours.

Approach	Hours per week	Total credit hours
Demonstrations/modelling	1	15
Practical exercises and group works	2	30
Academic essay writing	1	15
Oral presentation	0.5	7.5
Portfolio	1.5	22.5
Independent study and VLE discussions	2	30
<b>Total</b>		120

### Assessment Approach

Since the module is entirely assessed through continuous assessment, a student must complete all five components of the assessment outlined below and get an aggregate mark of 50% in order to pass. Assessment will be carried out on a continuous basis through the following tasks:

#### Academic Essay: Portion of the Final Mark (30%)

Students have to write one 800 to 1000-word academic essay following the rules of academic standards, essay writing, APA referencing and mechanics of language in order to practice and develop academic writing skills at the university level. The academic essay will be written in three drafts; the first draft to be peer reviewed, the second and final essay to be assessed based on the following criteria:

Second Draft (10%)	Final Draft (20%)
Content (4%)	Content (10%)
Language (2%)	Language (4%)
References (2%)	References (4%)

Format (2%)	Format (2%)
-------------	-------------

**Presentation: Portion of the Final Mark (15%)**

Each student has to make one 5-minute presentation. This will help them to acquire the skills necessary for carrying out effective oral presentations during the course of their university study. The students can choose presentation topics related to ACS101 from their programme modules. The presentations will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- Introduction 2.5%
- Content 4%
- Delivery 4%
- Presentation aids 2%
- Conclusion 2.5%

**Portfolio: Portion of the Final Mark (25%)**

Each student has to maintain a portfolio containing a series of exercises from both within and outside the classroom. This is to ensure the development of independent study, skills and ability to work with other students. The portfolio will be assessed based on the following criteria:

Class work and homework:

- Completeness 5%
- Extra material 3%
- Language 3%
- Neatness 2%
- Organisation 2%

Class notes:

- Completeness 5%
- Clarity and Organisation 5%

**Class Test: Portion of the Final Mark (20%)**

Students have to write one class test towards the end of Unit V. The test will mainly focus on features of academic writing and referencing skills.

**VLE Discussion: Portion of the Final Mark (10%)**

Students will contribute to VLE discussions on selected topics assigned by tutors.

- Nature of discussion 4%

- Content 3%
- Language 3%

An overview of the assessment approaches and weighting:

Areas of assessment	Quantity	Weighting
Academic essay	1	30%
Oral presentation	1	15%
Portfolio	1	25%
Class test	1	20%
VLE discussion	2	10%

**Pre-requisite:**None

## **Subject Matter**

### **Unit I: Academic Standards**

- 1.1 Academic standards
- 1.2 Purpose of academic skills
- 1.3 Academic integrity and intellectual property

### **Unit II: Note-taking Methods**

- 2.1 Introduction to note taking
- 2.2 Tips to take notes
- 2.3 Types of notes-taking methods
  - 2.3.1 The mind map method
  - 2.3.1 The outlining method
- 2.4 Listening and note taking
  - 2.4.1 Practicing listening with partners
  - 2.4.2 Listening to podcasts
  - 2.4.3 Listening to IELTS test samples

### **Unit III: Academic Reading**

- 3.1 Definition

3.2 Text features, graphic, informational and organisational aids

3.3 Reading strategies

3.3.1 Skimming and scanning

3.3.2 SQ3R

3.4 Paraphrasing

3.5 Summarising

#### **Unit IV: Academic Writing**

4.1 Definition and purpose

4.2 Features of academic writing

4.2.1 Formality

4.2.2 Structure

4.2.3 Logic

4.2.4 Evidence

4.2.5 Objectivity

4.2.6 Precision

4.3 Types of academic writing

4.3.1 Academic essays

4.3.2 Research paper

4.3.3 Literature reviews

4.3.4 Journal articles

4.3.5 Dissertation/theses and proposals

4.3.6 Reports

4.4 Academic argument

4.4.1 Definition

4.4.2 Distinction between academic argument and informal argument

4.4.3 Facts, opinions and beliefs

#### **Unit V: APA Referencing Style**

5.1 Introduction to APA referencing style

5.1.1 Using sources materials

5.1.2 Why and when to cite

5.1.3 Critical evaluation of sources

5.2 Referencing and academic integrity

5.2.1 Using sources as in-text citations

5.2.2 Direct and indirect voices

5.3 Writing references

5.3.1 Basic rules for references

5.3.2 Preparing references for different sources

5.4 Basic of APA paper layout

## **Unit VI: Academic Essays**

6.1 Academic essay

6.2 Understanding written assignments

6.3 Writing process

6.3.1 Pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing

6.4 Essay format

6.4.1 The introduction

6.4.2 The body

6.4.3 The conclusion

## **Unit VII: Oral Presentations**

7.1 Basics of oral presentations

7.1.1 Structure and organisation

7.2 Strategies for preparing an effective presentation

7.2.1 Signposting

7.3 Presentation aids

## **Reading List**

### **Essential Reading**

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6thed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Department of Academic Affairs. (2019). *ACS101 Academic Skills:Students' materials*. Thimphu: Royal University of Bhutan.

Department of Academic Affairs. (2019). *ACS101 Academic Skills:Tutors' materials*. Thimphu: Royal University of Bhutan.

### **Additional Reading**

Bailey, S. (2011). *Academic writing: A handbook for international students* (3rded.). Abingdon, Oxford: Routledge.

Butler, L. (2007). *Fundamentals of academic writing*. New York, NY: Pearson Longman.

Gillet, A. (2013, January 15). *Using English for academic purposes(UEFAP): A guide for students in higher education*. Retrieved from <http://www.uefap.com>

Gillet, A., Hammond, A., & Martala, M. (2009). *Inside track successful academic writing*. England: Pearson Education.

Hogue, A. (2007). *First steps in academic writing*. New York: Pearson Education ESL.

Oshima, A., & Hogue, A. (2005). *Writing academic English* (4thed.). White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.

Oshima, A., & Hogue, A. (2006). *Introduction to academic writing* (3rded.). New York, NY: Pearson Longman.

Ramsey-Fowler, H., & Aaron, J. E. (2010). *The little brown handbook* (11thed.). New York, NY: Pearson Longman.

**Date 29 June 2018**

---