

CONCEPT NOTE

**Department of English Language Teaching
Faculty of Arts
University of Colombo**

Advanced Certificate in Business English

ACBE

1. Introduction

Department of English Language Teaching seeks the permission of the Faculty Board of the Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo to offer an Advanced Certificate Course in Business English.

The course is expected to commence in December, 2022.

2. The Need

One of the constant complaints of the employers is the lack of candidates with good communication skills in English. This demand for employees who can negotiate their way around in English in the course of their duties is no longer limited to the private sector. The public sector is now equally starting to covet such employees as it struggles to meet the demands of increasingly cosmopolitan citizenry. Forced to mainly focus on general English and academic English, most educational institutions fail to provide their students with the necessary English language skills to thrive in the world of work. The Business English program offered by the Department of English Language Teaching is custom designed to help anyone who wants to improve their ability to communicate effectively in English in a business setting. This course is going to be an integral part of the Business English program.

3. Objectives

The objectives of this Advanced Certificate Course are as follows:

At the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- attain a degree of fluency in English so that they can interact successfully with others in specific communicational contexts e.g. meetings, interviews and presentations etc.
- articulate their thoughts, views and opinions as required in a business setting both verbally (in meetings, seminars and workshops, etc) and in writing (through emails, letters, memos, reports etc.)

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- use appropriate phrases and expressions and make appropriate stylistic choices as required by the mode of communication.

4. **Target Groups**

School leavers, state and private sector employees, professionals, anyone interested in improving their communication skills in English as applicable to the world of work.

5. **Admission Requirements**

To be admitted as students of this course, candidates should possess any one of the following qualifications:

- a) G.C.E. O/L or equivalent qualification

OR

- b) Completion of NVQF Level 3

AND

- c) Receiving a score between 51 percent and 79 percent in the selection test

An applicant whose application for admission to the Advanced Certificate is accepted is required to register for the Advanced Certificate not later than the prescribed date and shall pay the required fees to the University. The registration lapses at the end of its period of validity. When the registration lapses the student may renew registration for a further period subject to the registration fees applicable, where the student is still eligible to be in the Advanced Certificate programme.

6. **Medium of Instruction:** English

7. **Course Fee:** Rs. 30,000

8. **Course Duration:** 04 months [64 contact hours]

9. **Teaching Methodology**

The course will comprise lectures, discussions, self-study, pair work, group work. The participants are required to maintain an 80% attendance and complete all the assignments.

10. **Evaluation**

The assessments will comprise of:

- (a) Three continuous assessments – mid-term assessments

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(b) An end of course assessment - final examination

Continuous assessment –midterm assessments

- Individual written assignment: writing an email (10%)
- Individual listening assignment: taking down a telephone message (15%)
- Individual oral assignment: a business conversation (15%)

End of course assessment - final examination

- Final examination (60%)

The grading scales of the Faculty of Arts shall apply to this course:

Range of Marks	Grade
80% +	A+
75% -79%	A
70%- 74%	A-
65% -69%	B+
60% -64%	B
55%-59%	B-
50% -54%	C+
45% -49%	C*
40% -44%	C- (fail)
35%-39%	D+ (fail)
30% - 34%	D (fail)
0% -29%	E (fail)

Notes: i. * - *minimum performance for a pass.*

The achievement structure will be as follows:

45% -69% of total marks - Pass

70% -79% of total marks - Merit Pass

80% - of total marks or above - Distinction Pass

A candidate shall present himself/herself for the final examination of the course leading to the Advanced Certificate on the first occasion on which the examination is held after the completion of the relevant course modules taken by that candidate. If he or she has been prevented from sitting the examination due to illness or any other reasonable cause, the department may permit him/her to sit on a subsequent occasion. In such cases where permission has been obtained, a candidate shall have two years respectively to complete the requirements for the award of the advanced certificate without penalty.

A student shall be deemed to have sat the first scheduled examination irrespective of the fact whether it has been actually sat or not, except in the case where the department is satisfied that he or she has been prevented from sitting the examination due to illness or any other reasonable cause.

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A candidate is deemed to have failed a particular assessment if he or she has scored less than 50% for that assessment. Candidates must repeat all assessments so failed and obtain a score of 50% or above.

A candidate who fails to pass an assessment in the first attempt shall be eligible to repeat this assessment within a maximum of two other subsequent occasions. Attendance will not be considered for the 2nd or 3rd attempt. Participants may carry the assignment marks to the repeated attempts. The pass mark will remain the same as described above. However, such a repeat candidate will not be eligible for Merit or Distinction Pass, although he/she might have secured the necessary marks.

A candidate who is unable to sit for the Course-End Examination due to medical reasons or any other valid reason which is/are acceptable to the department should support with necessary supporting documents to prove his/her case within 1 month of the examination. Such examination will not be considered as an attempt against the respective candidate. Nevertheless, such a candidate should sit for the course end examination at the subsequent attempt when it is held.

Course Title	Advanced Certificate in Business English (ACBE)		
Course Code		Theory hours	64
No. of Credits		Practical hours	
		Tutorial hours	
Pre-requisites	Students need to have scored between 51% and 79% in the selection test conducted by the DELT.	Independent learning hours	
		Assessment	
		Total	
Course Type	Advanced Certificate Course		
Course Description			
This course is intended for intermediate level students who want to develop communication skills in a business context. The course focuses on improving their communication skills in specific business contexts such as meetings, interviews and presentations etc. Similarly, a thorough grounding of conventions to be followed in communication formats such as emails, letters, memos and reports will be provided. The students will be introduced to the structural requirements, expressions and language conventions typical of the above verbal and written communication contexts.			

Learning outcomes	
<p>On completion of this course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. attain a degree of fluency in English so that they can interact successfully with others in specific communicational contexts e.g. meetings, interviews and presentations etc. 2. articulate their thoughts, views and opinions as required in a business setting both verbally (in meetings, seminars and workshops, etc) and in writing (through emails, letters, memos etc.). 3. use appropriate phrases and sentence structures and make appropriate stylistic choices as required by the mode of communication. 	
Course contents	Aligned Learning Outcomes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At a new workplace <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meeting new people and getting to know them ● Introductions and greetings, work activities & contact information ● Present simple & forming questions 2. Describing people, things and processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Talking about skills and experience ● Job descriptions, contracts ● Present perfect & articles 3. Talking about events, habits and routines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Workplace routines, habits and employment history ● Describing trends and patterns ● Simple past, prepositions and adverbs 4. Giving opinions and advice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agreeing, disagreeing, suggesting & giving advice ● emails, letters and reports ● Present continuous, pronouns and signposting devices 5. Making requests and apologizing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Requests, explanations, apologies and complains ● Slides and presentations ● modal verbs 6. Traveling for business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Making plans and arrangements; hotels, restaurants and customs ● Travel itineraries, brochures and travel vocabulary ● Future Tenses 7. Telephoning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● telephone etiquette ● memos, minutes and agendas ● conditionals and imperatives 	<p>1, 2, 3</p> <p>1, 2, 3</p> <p>1, 2, 3</p> <p>1, 2, 3</p> <p>1, 2, 3</p> <p>1, 2, 3</p> <p>1, 2, 3</p>
Methods of teaching and learning	

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Interactive lectures, assignments, small group learning activities, independent learning activities					
Assessment methods					
Assessment Method					Weight
Individual written assignment: Report					15%
Individual oral assignment: Presentation					15%
Individual listening assignment					10%
Final examination					60%
Prescribed Text(s):					
Core reading:					
Harding, R. (2017). <i>English for everyone business English course book level 1: A complete self-study programme</i> . Dorling Kindersley.					
Recommended reading:					
The graduate attributes incorporated into this unit are:					
Unit Code	Ability to communicate	Ability to work in teams	Critical appraisal skills	Ability to generate ideas	Cross-cultural outlook
	through written and verbal communication activities.	through in-class group activities	by engaging in critical thinking for verbal and written communicative tasks.	by generating ideas for communicative tasks	through communicative activities based on different cultural contexts
The subject-specific attributes:					
Ability to communicate effectively in English in a business setting.					