2022-23

Warwick International Foundation Programme

English for Academic Purposes

English for Academic Purposes on the IFP

This document provides a summary of the design, assessment and grading of the suite of EAP modules delivered on the Warwick International Foundation Programme (IFP). The information details how the EAP modules go above and beyond a simple indicator of language proficiency to reveal a deep understanding and application of appropriate academic literacies enabling students to succeed in their chosen academic studies at UK HEIs. It is for this reason that the University of Warwick will be accepting the EAP module as an approved English language qualification, replacing the need for students to take a language proficiency test in order to satisfy language entry requirements for their undergraduate degree.

The pedagogy underpinning these modules is informed by theory in the fields of applied linguistics and sociology of education with a focus on uncovering the 'rules of the game' when it comes to valourised practice in UK HE. Our approach is to empower students, enabling learner autonomy and the development of a transferable toolkit.

About the EAP Modules

There are currently 5 EAP modules, each designed to develop students' language and academic literacies for specific discipline groups (Social Sciences and Law, Arts and Humanities, Science and Engineering, Maths and Economics, Business). All classroom materials and activities are developed in house and have been designed to engage students with academic conventions in their relative disciplines informed by conversations with receiving departments. The principle aims of the modules are to:

- introduce students to a variety of techniques for analysing texts appropriately, within their disciplines.
- develop students' ability to organise their writing, signal their main points, and cite the sources used to support their main arguments, within the conventions of their discipline.
- develop students' ability to stage effective, engaging presentations, skilfully express their opinions, respond to others in group seminar discussions, in addition to leading such seminars.
- make students aware of how to listen to lectures strategically to identify key points, take notes and review learning.

Learning Outcomes for the Modules

- Analyse, interpret and evaluate spoken and written discourse for the study of a given discipline.
- Synthesise relevant information/data to produce discipline specific written and spoken genres, incorporating one's own ideas.
- Communicate effectively in written and spoken genres, employing academic conventions relevant to the discipline.

Assessments

There are 4 assessments in each module, each focusing on one of the 4 language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing, to provide individual scores for each skill.

All assessments have been designed to be authentic representations of what is expected of the students on their academic studies. Students are fully prepared for their assessments through careful scaffolding and formative feedback.

Speaking: Student led seminar. Students are required to prepare a short presentation on different aspects of a topic relevant to their discipline and then lead a group discussion on that topic. This is a 30 minute group speaking exercise (individually marked).

Writing: 1,000 word assignment in genre relevant to the discipline (e.g. essay, report, literature review, critical review). The assignment requires students to undertake independent research and to synthesise knowledge from sources into a coherent written piece adhering to appropriate academic conventions. This assignment also has a portfolio element, where students are required to focus on the process of writing in their disciplines.

Listening: Listening logs. Students are required to listen to lecture extracts on a topic related to their discipline and then to produce a summary including an analysis and evaluation of the ideas and points made in the lectures.

Reading: Reading logs. Students are required to read text extracts on a topic related to their discipline and then to produce a summary including an analysis and evaluation of the ideas and arguments made in the extracts.

Grading

The grading criteria has been developed to enable results to be interpreted as IELTS equivalencies. As many universites, like Warwick, have different language requirements for different levels and degrees, we have differentiated IELTS equivalencies as outlined in the table below. We would expect institutions to set the benchmarks relevant to their degree entry, so for example a student who would normally require an IELTS score of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each component would be asked to achieve 60-69% (High Credit) overall, with no component below 50% (Credit).

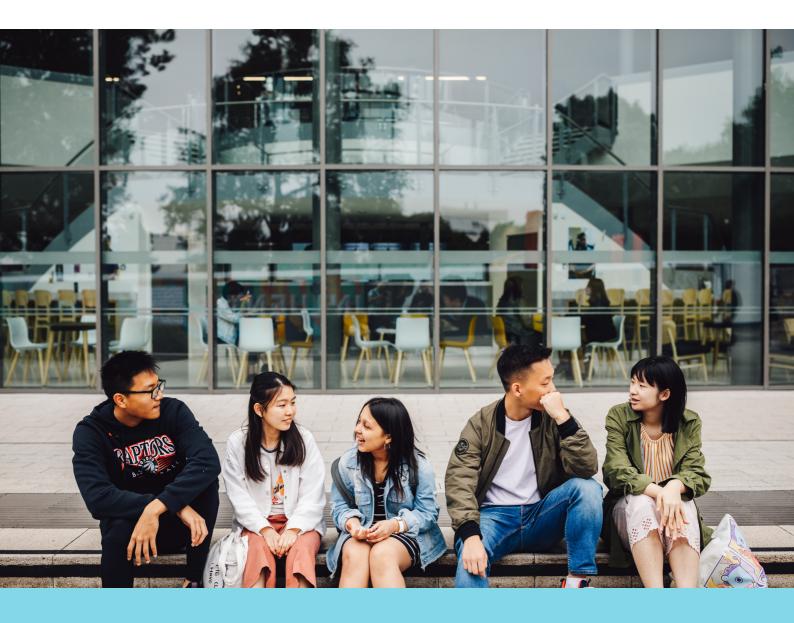| Distinction	70 – 79%	= IELTS 7.0 – 9.0	Work at this level exhibits minimal error with language use, these errors have no impact on communication.
High Credit	60-69%	= IELTS 6.5	Work at this level exhibits some error with language use, but these errors do not significantly impede communication.
Credit	50-59%	= IELTS 6.0	Work at this level exhibits some error with language use, these errors cause occasional confusion with communication.
Pass	40-49%	= IELTS 5.5	Work at this level exhibits frequent error with language use, these errors cause some confusion with communication.
Fail	38%	= up to IELTS 5.0	Work at this level fails to exhibit appropriate language use and errors significantly impede communication.

Quality Assurance

Given the high stakes nature of these modules, the team have regular standardisation sessions to ensure that marking across the suite of modules maintains objectivity and consistency. Student work is also blind marked and moderated.

Our modules are also subject to external examiner review. In the external examiner's report 2019/20, the areas of good practice identified were:

- English for Specific Academic Purposes modules that cater to students' specific needs - which is not very common on foundation programmes and which are clearly conceived and assessed.
- Very detailed, helpful feedback.
- Good grading criteria, used transparently so students can see how their marks are calculated.
- Several modules had formative tasks that needed to be completed before the summative assessments - strong focus on learning.
- Authentic assessment tasks.

Further details

For further details please contact Susie Cowley-Haselden (Course Director for EAP)

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