English Communication Skills

IEEL015 non-credit bearing module

1. Module Leader

Peter Martin

Biography. Peter has worked as the General English and Short Courses Coordinator for the University’s English Language Centre since December 2018 and has been working in the field of English Language Teaching since 2010. Peter is an alumnus of the University of Liverpool where he studied English Language and Literature and has worked in Argentina, Scotland, London and for the last eight years in Liverpool. He speaks 5 languages – although some better than others and is passionate about helping other people overcome their difficulties in using English to communicate efficiently and effectively.

2. Module Description

The main aim of the English Communication Skills module is to help students develop all aspects of their English proficiency but with a special emphasis on speaking and listening skills. There is a strong emphasis on broadening students’ vocabulary and in expanding their capacity for independent learning.

The course also aims to broaden students’ cultural knowledge. By doing this, we hope not only to enhance their experience of spending a summer in Liverpool but also to help improve their performance at formal interviews in the future.

This module is suitable for students whose first language is not English. It is a non-credit bearing module, so you will not earn University of Liverpool credits from studying on this module.

3. Module Aims

This module aims to:

- help students communicate effectively in a variety of situations
- guide students through the design and administration of basic data-gathering tools
- support students as they carry out linguistic field research and present their findings in a classroom setting
- support students’ developing understanding of the regional varieties of English through interaction with local people
4. **Content**

The course will look at various different aspects of speaking and writing English. In speaking, students will be supported in developing their pronunciation, their intonation, their ability to check understanding, their fluency and their appropriacy. In writing, students will look at how academic texts are structured and the importance of precision in writing for academic purposes.

Culturally and academically, students will be encouraged to identify puzzles about living in Liverpool/the North West/ the UK/ Europe which they would like to investigate. They will be supported in devising realistic research tools to explore their puzzle and writing their findings up.

5. **Module structure**

Two three-week modules combine to create a single six-week course. Most students sign up for the full six weeks, but it is possible to sign up either for the first or second module alone.

This gives the course a special dynamic. Each module leads towards the production of significant piece of work, which the students will plan, prepare and deliver.

Each week of the course consists of two two-hour sessions, either on Monday/Wednesday or on Tuesday/Thursday. Some sessions are classroom based, some are based in a computer suite, and others involve off-campus interactions.

Students will also be expected to spend up to four hours per week on out-of-class work in order to gain the full benefit from the module.

6. **Teaching methods**

The teaching approach will include the following:

- Taught sessions
- Flipped classroom – preparation work
- Small group working
- Group discussions
- Presentations
- Online learning
- Workshops

7. **Assessment:**

Informal assessment will be by:

- Group presentation

8. **Course structure:**

The indicative schedule is as follows:
The course will be practical in nature, with the sessions highly focused on giving the students as much practical experience as possible, and encouraging them to put their language skills into use throughout.

The module leader will work with the course participants to identify areas of interest and value. As an example, in previous years, the sessions have had the following themes:

**Session One:**
*Nice to meet you!*
This sessions will explore the cultural differences when meeting people for the first time. We will look at patterns of social interaction within the UK and how small talk is used in social gatherings. There will be a focus on speaking fluency, pronunciation and intonation. The first session will also provide participants to set themselves reasonable goals for the remaining sessions.

**Session Two:**
*Having a laugh*
A fundamental part of becoming a better language learner is understanding the cultural aspects of the target language’s humour. In this session, participants will learn about humour in the UK, develop their ability to tell jokes and try to understand what it is that makes the English laugh!

**Session Three:**
*English and Scouse*
Participants will discover where the English language comes from, and how the local dialect evolved. There will be opportunities for students to develop their listening skills and to work as part of a small group to examine features of language.

**Session Four:**
*Out and about*
In this session participants will conduct a street survey with the local population to find out more about the way they speak. Classroom activities will include group writing a report, editing, speaking and listening.

**Session Five:**
*News from around the world*
Participants will learn about English-language newspapers from around the world and how they report the news. There will be a focus on reading critically and a look at how language is sometimes used to quietly persuade.

**Session Six:**
*Final presentations*
In this final session the participants will work with a partner to create a final presentation designed to highlight some key points from what was been learned during the course.
9. Learning outcomes

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcome</th>
<th>Assessment component which assesses this learning outcome</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better understand and communicate complex ideas in written and spoken language</td>
<td>Group presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research a topic and work collaboratively to produce a group presentation</td>
<td>Group presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate a basic awareness of the skills and knowledge required to present via the use of English</td>
<td>Group presentation</td>
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10. Skills

Key skills that will be developed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>How this skill is developed</th>
<th>Mode of assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Group discussions, activities and tasks in class</td>
<td>Group presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Orally in group discussions, activities and tasks in class, in writing by production of assessed assignment</td>
<td>Group presentation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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11. Books, ebooks and websites:

The University Website at [www.liv.ac.uk/library](http://www.liv.ac.uk/library) provides access to many relevant books, films, and electronic books, as well as academic journals and databases. There are also some useful websites for people who wish to develop their understanding of English and how it is used:

The BBC has a very good website for people who are developing their language use: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish](http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish)

The British Council also has free materials available to English language students: [http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/](http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/)

The English Listening Lesson Library Online has many resources to help students develop their listening skills. All are free! [http://elllo.org/](http://elllo.org/)