

**City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus**

**offered by Department of English
with effect from Semester A 2016 / 17**

Part I Course Overview

Course Title:	Technical Writing and Document Design
Course Code:	EN3560
Course Duration:	One semester
Credit Units:	3
Level:	B4
Proposed Area: <i>(for GE courses only)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Humanities <input type="checkbox"/> Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations <input type="checkbox"/> Science and Technology
Medium of Instruction:	English
Medium of Assessment:	English
Prerequisites: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
Precursors: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
Equivalent Courses: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
Exclusive Courses: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil

Part II Course Details

1. Abstract

(A 150-word description about the course)

This introductory course in technical writing is suitable for students of technical and non-technical subjects. Participants work on their writing style to improve clarity, directness and accuracy, and develop skills in document design and technical/business graphics (charts, tables, drawings). To improve the effectiveness of their documents, students learn techniques for audience analysis, information development, library and internet research, and usability testing. Participants may choose to work primarily in print or for screen display using multimedia or web authoring packages. In addition to a number of small-scale assignments to develop specific skills, students are required to plan and execute a technical communication project of their own design, applying the skills they have acquired during the course.

2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs	Weighting* (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Identify the structure and language characteristics of definition writing and apply them to the writing of a set of definitions.		√		
2.	Identify the standard structure and language characteristics of procedure writing and apply them to the writing of a set of procedures.		√	√	
3.	Identify the standard structure and language characteristics of reference entries and apply them to the writing of a set of reference entries.		√		
4.	Identify the structure and language characteristics of a web document and apply them to the design of a web document.		√	√	√
5.	Plan, discuss and rehearse a demonstration of a web document.		√	√	
6.	Participate actively in class and group activities.		√		
		100%			

* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
1.	Writing definitions Each student has to apply the identified structure and language requirements of definitions to the creation of a set of definitions for a technical document.	√						2 weeks
2.	Writing procedures Each person has to apply the identified structure and language requirements of a standard procedure to the writing of a procedure for a technical document.		√					2 weeks
3.	Writing reference entries Each person has to apply the identified structure and language requirements of standard reference entries to the writing of a set of reference entries for a technical document.			√				2 weeks
4.	Designing a web document Each group of 3-5 students has to apply the identified structure and language requirements of a web document to the design and creation of a web document.				√			5 weeks
5.	Demonstrating a web document Each group plans and gives a demonstration based on their designed web document.					√		2 weeks
6.	Preparation for each TLA Students participate actively in class activities and group discussions in preparation for each TLA using English						√	In each lesson

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.						Weighting*	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Continuous Assessment: 100%								
<p>Coursework: Writing definitions</p> <p>Identify and apply the structure and language characteristics to write definitions.</p> <p>In all assessments, students' understanding of key issues, and their ability to apply these in creating documentation are evaluated. In addition, the accuracy of the content, coherence in organization and accuracy of language are assessed.</p>	√						15%	Individual work; assessed individually
<p>Coursework: Writing procedures</p> <p>Identify and apply the structure and language characteristics to write a procedure.</p>		√					15%	Individual work; assessed individually
<p>Coursework: Writing reference entries</p> <p>Identify and apply the structure and language characteristics to write reference entries.</p>			√				15%	Individual work; assessed individually
<p>Coursework: Designing a web document</p> <p>Identify and apply the structure and language characteristics to design and create a web document.</p>				√			35%	Group work; assessed as a group
<p>Coursework: Demonstrating a web document</p>					√		10%	Group work; assessed individually and as a group

Plans and present a demonstration based on their web document. The clarity of the demonstration procedures and appropriateness in the use of verbal delivery skills and non-verbal delivery skills are assessed.								
Course Work: Participation Students' class attendance, punctuality for class and participation in class & group activities using English while preparing for each TLA are assessed.						√	10%	Individual work; assessed individually
Examination: % (duration: _____, if applicable)								
* The weightings should add up to 100%.								100%

5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Adequate (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
Tasks 1 - 5. Analysis and production of documents and document components	Text presentation and analysis	◆ The text is extremely well-presented and analysed	◆ The text is competently presented and very well analysed	◆ The text is adequately presented and is analysed reasonably well	◆ The text is sketchily presented and analysed inadequately presented	◆ The text is highly inadequate in its presentation and is very badly analysed
	Genre requirements	◆ Text fully meets requirements of genre;	◆ Text mostly meets requirements of genre	◆ Text meets requirements of genre to some extent;	◆ Text barely meets requirements of genre;	◆ Text does not meet requirements of genre;
	Coverage of relevant information	◆ All relevant information is excellently covered	◆ The information is sufficiently covered	◆ Only part of the information is covered	◆ Only limited information is included	◆ Very limited or inaccurate information is included
	Organization of information	◆ Organization of information is completely coherent	◆ Organization of information is mostly coherent	◆ Organization of information is somewhat coherent	◆ Organization of information is poor	◆ Organization of information lacks any coherence

	Accuracy	◆ Text displays very high levels of accuracy	◆ Text displays high levels of accuracy	◆ Text displays reasonable levels of accuracy	◆ Text displays frequent lapses in accuracy	◆ Text is largely inaccurate
	Achievement of purpose	◆ The purpose of analysing and presenting the material is completely achieved	◆ The purpose of analysing and presenting the material is achieved	◆ The purpose of analysing and presenting the material is partially achieved	◆ The purpose of analysing and presenting the material is not fully achieved at all	◆ The purpose of analysing and presenting the material is not achieved in any way
	Style and tone	◆ Style and tone are completely appropriate	◆ Style and tone are appropriate	◆ Style and tone are somewhat appropriate	◆ Style and tone are inappropriate	◆ Style and tone are completely inappropriate

Grading criteria: participation

Marks	
8-10	Has made significant contributions to in-class group discussion/workshops. Demonstrates evident effort in reading relevant materials related to the texts discussed during tutorials. Has attended all classes.
5-7	Has made adequate contributions during the in-class group discussion/workshops. Demonstrates some effort in reading relevant materials related to the texts discussed during tutorials. Has missed up to 3 classes.
0-4	Has limited contribution to in-class discussion/workshops. Shows minimal effort in reading relevant materials related to the texts discussed during tutorials. Has missed more than 3 classes.

Part III Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

1. Keyword Syllabus

(An indication of the key topics of the course.)

Technical writing
Technical communication
Technical writing style
Audience analysis
Document design
Page layout
Technical graphics
Library and internet research skills
Defining and classifying
Technical description
Usability testing
On-line documentation
Computer-based writing
English language proficiency

2. Reading List

2.1 Compulsory Readings

(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	
2.	
3.	
...	

2.2 Additional Readings

(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	Blicq, Ron S., 1999, <i>Technically Write!</i> (5 th ed), New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
2.	Borowick, Jerome N., 2002, <i>Technical Communication and its Applications</i> (2 nd ed), New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
3.	Burnett, Rebecca E., 1997, <i>Technical Communication</i> (4 th ed), International Thomson Publishing.
4.	Carliner, S., Verckens, J.P. and de Waele, C. (eds), 2006, <i>Information and document design : varieties on recent research</i> . Amsterdam: Benjamin
5.	Huckin, Thomas N., & Olsen, Leslie A., 1991, <i>Technical Writing and Professional Communication for Non-Native Speakers of English</i> (2 nd ed), New York: MacGraw Hill.