SYLLABUS 2026-2027

Business English (U2 S3)

MODULE SPECIFICATION

Module Code	2627_LNG_1_EN_014
Campus	Oxford
Department(s)	English as a Foreign Language
Level / Semester	Undergraduate Year 2 (U2); Equivalent to FHEQ level 5 Semester 03
Language of Instruction	English
Teaching Method	☒ In-person (face-to-face) ☐ Distance learning (live online) ☐ e-Learning (asynchronous) ☐ Hybrid: _____
Pre-requisite(s)?	None
ECTS *Reminder: 1 ECTS = between 20 and 30hr- student workload*	4
Equivalent FHEQ credits	8
Study Hours	100 hours which comprise of 30 directed learning and 70 independent learning/assessment hours

MODULE DESCRIPTION

Module Aims	This module introduces students to the principles and practices of news analysis and reporting in a business context. Focusing on mass communication and social media, students learn how to evaluate current events, detect bias, and report on developments clearly and accurately while continuing to apply reading strategies. Key skills include reported speech, interpreting author perspectives/purpose, identifying and paraphrasing key facts/trends/main ideas in texts,

	news vocabulary, and writing effective news reports for professional settings.
Teaching Arrangement	The module will be delivered as 10 classes of 3 hours over the 10-week semester. A workshop style will be incorporated for writing and speaking components.
Learning Outcomes	By the end of this module, students should be able to: 1. Identify, interpret, and critically summarise key facts, trends, and main ideas in texts, including media texts and interviews. 2. Differentiate between factual information and opinions or misleading statements, identifying and being able to discuss media bias and fake news with critical awareness. 3. Paraphrase and synthesise key expressions, ideas, and arguments accurately in one's own words, demonstrating control of vocabulary and grammatical range. 4. Apply reading strategies such as scanning, summarising, and inferring meaning from context, including effectively interpreting an author's perspective, purpose, or viewpoint. 5. Use reported speech appropriately to produce concise and coherent professional writing, including for news reports and summaries. 6. Understand and apply specialised vocabulary related to mass and social media accurately and appropriately across communication contexts.
Competency Goals *(Knowledge, expertise and interpersonal skills)*	PGE_U_CG01 - Communicate effectively in multicultural teams. PGE_U_CG03 - Solve problems and make informed decisions in business contexts. PGE_U_CG06 - Operate in a globalised and multicultural environment.
Alignment with Programme Learning Goals	PGE_U_CG01 – Communicate effectively in multicultural teams PGE_U_CG03 – Solve problems and make informed decisions in business contexts PGE_U_CG06 – Operate in a globalised and multicultural environment PGE_U_KG01 – Demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills PGE_U_KG02 – Use relevant tools and technologies effectively PGE_U_SG02 – Demonstrate proficiency in professional communication

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SESSION TOPICS / MODULE SCHEDULE

(Please note, a session/sequence may be more than one scheduled class)

Session 1: Introduction to Mass Communication

Content:

- Overview of media and mass communication systems
- History and evolution of print, broadcast, and digital media
- Key concepts (agenda-setting, framing, gatekeeping)
- Identifying credible media sources and evaluating reliability

Assignments:

- Read introductory article on media landscapes
- Create a brief timeline of key developments in mass communication
- Write a short reflection on a news story from different media formats

Session 2: Understanding Social Media

Content:

- Role of social media in shaping public opinion and news agendas
- Characteristics of viral content and user-generated media
- Algorithms, echo chambers, and filter bubbles
- Ethical concerns and misinformation on social platforms

Assignments:

- Research and compare coverage of a trending news topic across Instagram, Twitter/X, and TikTok
    - Submit a summary of findings and note differences in presentation and tone

Session 3: Writing a News Report

Content:

- The inverted pyramid structure (headline, lead, body, tail)
- Writing with clarity, accuracy, and neutrality
- Common errors in professional news writing
- Peer-reviewed techniques and editing practices
- Paraphrase key ideas, expressions, or arguments

Assignments:

- Continuous assessment – written evaluation (250-word New Report)
    - Submit a first draft for peer feedback before final submission

Session 4: Analysing Media Coverage

Content:

- Identifying bias, slant, and loaded language as well as key facts, trends, and main ideas of the text
- Comparing international coverage of the same event
- Introduction to media literacy tools and fact-checking resources (e.g. Snopes, Media Bias/Fact Check)
- Interpret author's perspective, purpose, or viewpoint and apply reading strategies

Assignments:

- Complete a worksheet identifying fact vs. Opinion in sample texts

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- Write a paragraph comparing two reports of the same event from different outlets

Session 5: Grammar Focus – Reported Speech

Content:

- Converting statements, questions, and commands into reported speech
- Tense shifts and reporting verbs
- Using reported speech in written news and summaries
- Practice activities using excerpts from interviews and press releases

Assignments:

- Grammar exercises converting direct speech to reported speech
- Convert a short news interview into a summary using reported speech

Session 6: Fake News – Understanding and Responding

Content:

- Definitions and typologies of fake news (satire, propaganda, hoaxes)
- Psychological and social drivers of misinformation
- Techniques for detecting and debunking false content
- Introduction to video storytelling and project guidelines
- Distinguish fact from bias, opinion, and/or misleading statements

Assignments:

- Continuous assessment – video project (fake news report):
    - Group planning and scriptwriting for 2–3-minute video

Session 7: Interview Techniques and Reporting Interviews

Content:

- Interview techniques:
    - Planning and structuring interviews for news purposes
    - Open vs. closed questions, follow-up, and clarification strategies
    - Practising active listening and note-taking
    - Conducting interviews with classmates or external guests
- Reporting interviews:
    - Turning raw interview data into concise, readable content
    - Maintaining objectivity while capturing voice and tone
    - Avoiding misrepresentation and taking quotes out of context

Assignments:

- Conduct a mock interview and record responses
- Reflective journal entry:
    - What worked well?
    - What could be improved?
- Draft a short news report based on a mock interview transcript
    - Submit for feedback and revise as necessary

Session 8: Review – Grammar and Vocabulary

Content:

- Review of vocabulary (collocations, idioms, and topic-specific language)
- Grammar drills (reported speech, passive voice, and tenses in news writing)
- Introduction to test-taking strategies for TOEIC/IELTS formats

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Assignments:

- Continuous assessment – grammar and vocabulary test on Moodle
- Self-assessment quiz with immediate feedback

Session 9: Final Exam Preparation

Content:

- Exam overview: format, timing, and expectations
- Practice reading comprehension using interview-style texts
- Time writing of news reports under exam conditions
- Review common mistakes and how to avoid them

Assignments:

- Complete mock exam (writing, grammar, and vocabulary sections)
- Final peer Q&A and review session

KEY TEXTS

1. Thill, J.V. and Bovée, C.L. (2024) *Excellence in business communication*. 14th edn. Pearson Education.

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS

1. Tandoc, E.C., Lim, Z.W. and Ling, R. (2017) 'Defining "fake news": A typology of scholarly definitions', *Digital Journalism*, 6(2), pp. 137–153. doi:10.1080/21670811.2017.1360143.
2. Grizzle, A., Wilson, C., Tuazon, R., Cheung, C.K., Lau, J., Fischer, R., Gordon, D., Akyempong, K., et al. (2021) *Media & information literacy curriculum for educators & learners*. Paris, France: UNESCO.
3. Wardle, C. and Derakhshan, H. (2017) *Information disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making*. rep. Strasbourg, France: Council of Europe, pp. 1–107.

MODES OF ASSESSMENT

Continuous Assessment (40% - equal weighting between assessments)	Grammar + vocabulary test
	Video project
	Written news report
Final Exam (60%)	Written exam

MODULE DESIGN TEAM

- Author: *Duncan Jamieson*
- Reviewer: *Michael Surguy*
- External Reviewer: *Martin Jenkins*

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