PESE

PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH SKILLS FOR EMPLOYABILITY ACROSS EU - FRAMEWORK FOR A CURRICULUM

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Introduction

The development of professional English framework for a curriculum

With the research conducted by the project partners in mind, a framework for a curriculum has been drawn up to address the skills required by survey participants. Overall, speaking, reading and writing were considered important skills across the industries and businesses surveyed. Within each skill, there were a number of subskills that were required by respondents to the questionaries conducted by the British, Cypriot, Maltese, Romanian, Portuguese and Spanish project partners.

Some of the modules overlap in content and theme though this serves to consolidate knowledge gained in those modules.

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Module 1: Preparation for Employment

Aims The aim of the lesson is to prepare unemployed participants for their job search; It aims to help participants negotiate the environment including employment agencies. It aims to instruct learners in how to apply and search for work through 'cold calling' and speculative CVs, targeted CVs, reading job advertisements, writing cover letters and CVs, and completing job applications, writing personal statements, the STAR technique; behavioural questionnaires, biometric aptitude tests, and dealing with 'nonsense' questions at interviews. It aims to instruct students on interview techniques for employment agencies and companies, and telephone interviews; personal grooming and what is expected at an interview including dress codes. The lesson is intended to be a useful practical aid to all participants who are seeking work either for English-speaking positions or in English speaking countries/companies.

Objectives The objectives of this module are: to explore ways in which the candidate can obtain work; to understand how to effectively negotiate the employment agency environment; to provide advice on planning, drafting and writing a cover letter and curriculum vitae; to prepare the candidate for a successful interview.

Learning Outcomes Learners will understand the key principles of cover letter and CV writing techniques; how to conduct a telephone interview; how to approach a selection panel, group interviews and face-to-face interviews.

Module 2: Cultural sensitivity for communication

Aims The aim of the lesson is to introduce students to the idea of 'international' English; to look at aspects of cultural sensitivity with regards to work and colleagues; to introduce concepts of respect with regards to work colleagues, management and customers. It aims to instruct students on the use of honorifics, salutations, pleasantries and closings within the working culture of the English-speaking world. It will also look at things such as body language and gestures.

Objectives The objectives of this module are: to provide an understanding of English-speaking working culture; how to effectively use honorifics, salutations, pleasantries and closings within various contexts; to provide advice on appropriacy of body language and prepare candidates for their first day at work.

Learning Outcomes Learners will understand the working culture of the English-speaking environment. They will understand their rights and responsibilities as an employee.

Module 3: Confidence-building skills for presentations, workshops and training courses

Aims The aim of this lesson is to introduce participants to presentation skills and subskills needed to deliver effective and engaging presentations to a variety of audiences. These skills cover a number of areas such as structuring presentations; formal language; the tone voice; body language; use the presentation tools; delivering scripted addresses at conferences; humility and humour in a presentation; maintaining a powerful presence through use of body language; being attentive, responsive and flexible to the changing needs of the audiences; dealing with unexpected situations; structuring presentations for impact; developing proper notes; creating engaging PowerPoint presentations through use of language.

Objectives The objectives of this module are to provide the participants with all the tools necessary to deliver well-structured and language-appropriate presentations to native and non-native speakers alike.

Learning Outcomes Learners will be able to deliver a presentation in English using the correct pace, pronunciation, and intonation.

Module 4: Telephone communication skills

Aims The aim of the lesson is to introduce students to telephone communication skills; to increase listening competency through an awareness of English pronunciation; to develop active listening skills (acknowledging the speaker, showing interest, interjecting and turn taking); questioning (asking for clarification, asking open-ended questions to stimulate dialogue); to develop call planning-strategies; to examine key telephone skills; to planning effective call structures for the most common and challenging calls including inbound customer service calls; to initiate a call with authority and purpose, and establish your credibility and describing your purpose; to engage the contact and establish a positive context for the call; overcoming resistance and moving the call forward (in sales cold calling); questioning techniques; to create empathy and rapport; building strong relationships with sources based on the exchange of value; liaising with the reception, secretaries and P.A.s to get access to contacts; working with company scripts to sound more natural; cultivating your telephone personality, and delivering clear spoken language by looking at register, appropriacy and intonation, pronunciation and fluency in slow speech.

Objectives The objectives of this module are to: provide a learner with the practical tools to deal with every eventuality of call; to understand how to successfully use those techniques of the English-speaking working culture; how to effectively use honorifics, salutations, pleasantries and closings with various call contexts.

Learning Outcomes Learners will understand different approaches to receiving and making a telephone call; they will be able to make a variety of calls and adjust formality and tone of language accordingly.

Module 5: Web-conferencing skills

Aims The modules aim is to help the learner participate actively in webinars, web conferences and presentations; to develop and increase their presentation skills for meetings, workshops, conferences and promotional activities; to plan and deliver formal oral presentations using appropriate vocabulary and syntax, recognisable organization, clear pronunciation, non-verbal cues, and appropriate pace, volume and intonation, and respond appropriately to questions; to speak with fluency, using complex and accurate language, clear pronunciation and prosodic elements such as appropriate intonation, rhythm, word and sentence stress; demonstrate the ability to use a range of formal and informal language appropriate to the context; participate in discussions in formal and informal settings using active listening skills and make appropriate and extended comments; communication for conferences, business meetings etc. to use appropriate self-monitoring strategies such as rephrasing, re-directing, asking for clarification, and circumlocution. Dealing with delayed responses, turn taking etc

Objectives The objectives of this module are to: inform the candidates regarding web-conferencing skills and delivering a conference or presentation remotely; it will provide the learner with insight into the structure of web-based teleconferencing, and the appropriacy and formality to be employed.

Learning Outcomes Learners will be able to deliver successful teleconferenced presentations and meetings.

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Module 6: Speaking: functions in business/professional communication

Aims The aim of this module will take a functional approach to language needed in the workplace with a stronger emphasis on pronunciation; it will focus on specific functions; a function is the main reason why we communicate in any language and the aim behind this module is to better understand and use functions for apologising, greeting, clarifying, inviting advising, agreeing, disagreeing, refusing, thanking, interrupting, expressing obligation, expressing preferences and communicating feedback while avoiding jargon; to be able to make offers, requests, clarify understanding; it will heighten awareness of levels of formality with regards to more official and important situations amongst people; informal (more socially casual) language often occurs in relaxed situations, amongst friends, people who know each other well or treat each other in a relaxed way. Informal exponents are sometimes colloquial, i.e., very casual and conversational, neutral exponents which we use when we want to show neither great respect nor too much casualness on. This is called appropriacy.

Objectives The objectives of this module are to: to explore ways in which the candidate can increase their speaking and listening competency by focusing on functional language required in the workplace.

Learning Outcomes Learners will be able to use a wide range of functional language in the workplace.

Module 7: Social speaking

Aims The aims of this module are to introduce students to social speaking and develop their interactional skills; It will look at things such as 'small talk' or social communication; this includes giving extra information for conversation continuance and softening negative comments; using affirmatives, interjections, vocalized pauses and fillers such as "um", "I understand," "really," "I see," and "yes, of course" to acknowledge one's understanding; an understanding of banter, conviviality, humour and profanities; using phatic expression as conversation starters such as "Hi", "hello", "how are you?", "Howzitgoin?", and "good afternoon".

Objectives The objectives of this module are to: give the learner the necessary English language skills and functional language to enable them to negotiate social situations at work and whilst socialising in the workplace or at workplace functions; an understanding of spoken etiquette for traditional paper-pen communication and spoken communication using formal, semi-formal and formal language; genre-specific writing: legal, academic and law enforcement.

Learning Outcomes Learners will be able to speak with ease in a number of social situations; they will be able to employ various techniques in order to allow for ease of communication with colleagues.

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Module 8: Focus on Reading

Aims The aim of the lesson is to introduce students to advanced reading skills; It will look at reading subskills such as previewing and predicting; skimming a text (skimming) to understand the global meaning; scanning a text, reading for specific information (scanning); reading a text and answering basic comprehension questions; deducing vocabulary from context by distinguishing fact from opinion; critical reading; recognizing stated or implied facts and opinions; summarizing and inferring from a text, and coherence and cohesion within a text. Understanding different text types is something else good readers can do. Some examples of written text types are warning signs, informationals, letters, professional articles, reports, information brochures, leaflets and contracts. All these kinds of text types are different from one another.

Objectives The objectives of this module are to: provide the learner with the reading skills required by businesses; an understanding of instructional, informational, persuasive, and transactional writing; writing etiquette for traditional paper-pen communication and written communication for electronic media such as Slack, text, and email; using formal, semi-formal and formal language; genre-specific writing: legal, academic and law enforcement; to present to learners a diversity of text- press, emails, adverts- where genre-specific lexis can be seen in context; to present listening where the use of stress patterns and other phonology can be heard in authentic situations.

Learning Outcomes Learners will be able to use appropriate reading skills for a given text; they will be able to apply critical thinking, infer and identify information quickly; they will be able understand a variety of written text likely to be encountered in the workplace.

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Module 9: Focus on Writing

Aims The aim of the lesson is to introduce students to writing skills; writing like speaking is a productive skill; it will look at instructional, informational, persuasive, and transactional writing; writing etiquette for traditional paper-pen communication and written communication for electronic media such as Slack, text, and email; using formal, semi-formal and formal language; genre-specific writing: legal, academic and law enforcement; it will introduce students to the elements of effective professional writing through clear, simple, precise style; it will look at writing from a technical level; it will analyse word choice and lexis; it will introduce students to effective paragraph writing including the use of topic sentences, linking words, and coherence and cohesion in writing; it will develop students' knowledge and use of sentences – active and passive sentences, simple, compound and complex structures, and punctuation. It will look at different ways of ordering information, i.e., structuring the text, employing different layouts, and various levels of complexity of grammar, register and range of vocabulary commonly used in a job application letter; subskills: accuracy, i.e., using the correct forms of language.

The others relate to communicating our ideas. The writing subskills related to accuracy are: spelling correctly, forming letters correctly, joining letters together correctly, writing legibly, punctuating correctly, using correct layouts, choosing the right vocabulary, using grammar correctly, joining sentences correctly and correctly using paragraphs (a part of a longer piece of writing, which starts on a new line and usually focuses on one idea). The writing subskills related to communicating our ideas include using appropriate style and register, organising ideas in a helpful way, using the features typical of the text type we are writing, joining our words and sentences clearly and using appropriate functions to express our meaning, e.g., narrating (telling a story), complaining, requesting, thanking, summarising (expressing main points or ideas in a few clear words), concluding; to provide students with a solid lexical base of modern English usage in the workplace. It will introduce the concept of collocations and an array of phrasal verbs, typical verb inversions, phrasal verbs and prepositional phrases that can be used in written and spoken English.

Objectives The objectives of this module are to: provide the learner with the writing skills required by professional use; an understanding of the technical side to writing for business and work.

Learning Outcomes Learners will be able to produce a variety of written text likely to be encountered in the workplace; they will be able to produce coherent and cohesive text using appropriate structures and punctuation.

Aims The aim of the lesson is to introduce students to advanced listening skills. It will look at things such as: listening for gist and listening for detail; listening and answering basic comprehension questions; guessing vocabulary from context; distinguishing fact from opinion; critical listening; recognizing stated or implied facts and opinions; summarizing a listening text; recognising elements of pronunciation in spoken English.

Objectives The objectives of this module are to: provide the learner with the listening skills required by businesses; an understanding of instructional, informational, persuasive, and transactional listening; identifying formal, semi-formal and formal language; identifying functional elements of listening for paying attention and showing you are listening; providing appropriate feedback; deferring judgment; understanding and employing appreciative, empathic, comprehensive, and critical listening skills.

Learning Outcomes Learners will be able to use employ a range of listening skills for a given text; they will be able to apply critical thinking, infer and identify information quickly; they will be able understand a variety of listening texts likely to be encountered in the workplace.