Syllabus Scientific Writing and Presentations in English - B2a

General Learning Outcomes
The course aims to help students develop their ability to explain and discuss topics related to science and mathematics in both speaking and writing. Writing skills will concentrate on the style and features of grammar and vocabulary used in scientific writing and on linking words used to organize text. Speaking skills will focus on explaining scientific concepts to others, from verbal explanations of a calculation to giving a short presentation on a scientific topic to the class.

Specific Learning Outcomes
During the course, you will work on:
- Improving your ability to build sentences and paragraphs using linking words and other cohesive devices.
- Improving the grammatical accuracy of your writing.
- Developing your awareness of formal style in scientific writing.
- Proofreading and evaluating your own and your classmates’ written work.
- Developing your ability to incorporate symbols and formulas grammatically.
- Developing your ability to extract useful vocabulary and expressions from texts.
- Developing your ability to describe and explain your calculations orally.
- Developing your ability to communicate scientific concepts clearly to a group.
- Developing your awareness of the pronunciation of individual words and of connected speech.

Prerequisites: Students must have passed the B1 level.

Course content:

More specifically, the course will work on:

1. Writing clear and full definitions: language for defining.
3. Describing methods used in your work: language for describing method and purpose.
5. Describing key features of visuals: referring to tables/figures, describing trends, and speculating about data.
6. Making a presentation in English: the dos and don’ts of good presentations, structuring a presentation, using discourse markers and signposting language, and engaging an audience with visual aids and body language.
8. Reading scientific English.

Grammar: (as required)
- Relative clauses
- Indirect questions
- Participle clauses
- Reduced relative clauses
- Position of adverbs
Principal tenses in technical writing (present tenses, past simple, present perfect)
Quantifiers
Abstract nouns
Verb agreement
Articles
Gerund vs infinitive
Compound nouns
Nominalisation
Passives
Punctuation
Countable/uncountable nouns

Text organisation and cohesion: (as required)
‘This’ cohesion
Linkers and conjunctions
Paragraphing
Pronoun reference
Lexical cohesion

Presentations:
Lexical chunks for structuring presentations
Pronunciation of individual words
Suprasegmental features of pronunciation as necessary (sentence stress, intonation, linking)
Speaker presence
Interaction with the audience
Delivery of information

Teaching method:
An active approach is used, with students producing written texts and then correcting them individually and as a group. Lessons will consist of a mixture of teacher explanation, text analysis, practice exercises, writing, and discussion in pairs or groups. Students will also give a short presentation during the course, and give feedback on other students’ presentations.

Assessment:
A minimum of 75% attendance is required.

The course is assessed at B2 level on the CEFR. Assessment is based on work during the course:

50% Total marks for writing tasks undertaken in class.
15% First written assignment
15% Second written assignment
20% Presentation.

A minimum final course score of 60% is required to pass. The final grade is recorded as ‘Idoneo’ (60% or more) or ‘Non idoneo’ (59% or less).

Texts:
Materials will be mostly provided by the teacher. Students will also be asked to bring to class examples of texts or graphs from their field of studies. Occasional use will be made of the text English Grammar and Technical Writing, Peter Master (2004). Students are not required to have a copy, and copies are available in the university Povo library for those who are interested.