

Course Outline

“Academic English for Computer Science”

Learner autonomy is a key element of this course. Your language progress will largely depend on self-study, self-reflection and individual effort to improve particular language areas.

1) Course goals

- Students acquire subject-specific vocabulary
- Students identify their strengths and weaknesses (=language awareness)
- Students are introduced to professional academic writing (theses, seminar reports, papers).
- Students practice different writing styles and registers
- Students can adjust the language to the purpose of the text (formal/informal, subjective/objective)
- Students have the confidence to express their opinion on subject-related and other topics
- Students critically research, read and review subject-related texts and articles

This course is divided into two parts: the first part focuses on language awareness and subject-related topics, exercises and vocabulary; the second part revolves around academic writing for computer science. Each part stretches over 7 weeks and involves different requirements (please see below).

2) Course material and resources

Online documents and links on Moodle: <https://moodle.jku.at/jku2015/>

3) Requirements

- a) This course is worth 3 ECTS credits and thus requires a time commitment of **75 full hours (per semester)**: = **21 contact hours / 54 hours self-study**
- **80% attendance at lessons and active participation in English**: You must attend the course consistently.
 - **Two meetings** can be missed without providing a reason, but the course instructor must be informed
 - If students miss **a third time**, it can only be allowed due to health reasons and with a doctor's certificate
 - If students miss **a fourth time**, they will fail the course
 - Students can only **deregister from the course within the first two weeks of term**. Please inform your course instructor in such a case.
 - **PLEASE NOTE**: If you decide to leave the course later in the semester and/or after your first written homework has been submitted and corrected, you will fail the course.



Requirements Part 1:

- Expert portfolio
 - One summary (homework assignment - written, corrected and possibly rewritten)
 - One documentation of a CS related project (homework assignment - written, corrected and possibly rewritten)
 - Learner Diary* to record and reflect student learning and progress

This expert portfolio will be handed in after seven weeks and is different from the academic writing portfolio of the second part of the course.

Requirements Part 2:

○ Academic writing portfolio:

- Review of an abstract (in class and homework): in teams, a list of criteria for assessing abstracts is drafted and 10 abstracts are rated accordingly. As a homework, the reasons for the choice of the best and worst abstract are explained in detail
- Writing an abstract (homework): Write an abstract for a scientific paper (homework)
- Academic Writing Diary* to record and reflect student learning and progress

4) Specifications of the two diaries:

Learner Diary*:

- Self-evaluation (at the beginning of the semester to reflect on your English skills - more details provided by your course instructor)
- 4 - 5 diary entries: these entries should make you aware of the time you spend with language learning and your learning progress. Every week, you will be requested to sum up the English class content in a few sentences. In addition, you will have to answer some questions. Each diary entry should follow this structure:
 - Brief summary of the English class (content, activities, etc.)
 - **Vocabulary activity: choose one subject-specific article/paper, read through it and identify new vocabulary and phrases. Pick at least five new words/phrases and do activities with them as outlined by your course instructor.**
 - What have I learnt in class this week?
 - Why did I like/dislike this topic/activity?
 - What else have I done this week to improve my English?
 - Anything else that is worth mentioning?

The word count for each entry should be 200-300 words – this will amount to anything between 800 - 1500 words for the whole Learner Diary. Please write coherent text and full sentences only.

Academic Writing Diary*:

- Self-evaluation (to reflect the learning progress at the end of the semester - more details provided by your course instructor)
- 4 - 5 diary entries: these entries should make you aware of the time you spend with language learning and your learning progress. Every week, you will be requested to sum up the English class content in a few sentences. In addition, you will have to answer some questions. Each diary entry should follow this structure:
 - Brief summary of the English class (content, activities, etc.)
 - What have I learnt in class this week? What was difficult for me? Any remaining questions?
 - Why did I like/dislike a particular topic/activity?
 - What else have I done this week to improve my English?
 - Anything else that is worth mentioning?

The word count for each entry should be 200-300 words – this will amount to anything between 800 - 1500 words for the whole diary. Please write coherent text and full sentences only.

Resources for academic and summary writing: IEEE Computer, Communications of the ACM, Nature Science, The Guardian, The New York Times, The Atlantic, New Statesman, BBC, Scientific American; etc.

When doing research for class activities, please print the newspaper texts and try to read them on paper (=offline) and not online. Use up-to-date articles, which should have been published in 2025.

5) Grading

- Correction of written work will focus on grammatical accuracy, range of vocabulary and expression, content, organization and appropriate register
- All written work will be corrected and feedback will be given, but work will not be graded. The only requirements to pass the course are regular attendance and the submission of all the written assignments.

There will only be a “pass/fail” grade issued in your certificate.

Late homework submissions without valid reasons will neither be accepted nor receive feedback. If you copy any parts from the internet or other sources, or use translation and AI tools from those sources, or use translation and AI tools in an obscured manner to produce your entries for your learner diary, you will fail the course. For more information about AI use, please see below.

6) General guidelines

All written assignments must be typed according to *the Zentrum für Fachsprachen* style sheet.

If you do not apply the style guidelines, your homework will not be accepted.

- All submitted work must be **word processed**, using a common font such as Arial.
- At the **top** of every page, include: name, matriculation number, course number
- Font size: main text - 12 point; headings - 14 point; 1.5 line spacing; separate headings for “Summary” and “Commentary”
- 1 carriage return (¶) between each paragraph and word count at the end
- A heading in accordance with APA-standards:

Author, A. A. (Year, Month Day). Title of article. *Title of Print or Online Newspaper or Magazine* . Page numbers
OR Retrieved from <http://www.someaddress.com/full/url/>, Date of download.

7) Academic integrity

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition. **If you plagiarize, you will fail the course.**

Generative AI

AI (artificial intelligence) resources such as ChatGPT can be useful in a number of ways, but they can also be abused. Students are required to acknowledge the use of AI in any work submitted for class (for more details please ask your course instructor). Text directly copied from AI sites must be treated as any other direct quote and properly cited. **Uncited text copied from a generative AI is plagiarism, so please be 100% transparent about your AI use.**