

2011 BALEAP Biennial Conference

EAP Within the Higher Education Garden: Cross
Pollination Between Disciplines, Departments
And Research

10-12 April, 2011

University of Portsmouth

An investigation into the role of
spoken English competence in an
assessed business discussion in an
ELF context.

Sarah Beaumont

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University of Hertfordshire Business School Pre-Masters Programme

Graduate Certificate in Business

Length: 15 Week Course

Aim: Prepare Students for Entry to Range of UH
Masters Programmes

Start: June or September

Entry Requirements

- A first degree or similar qualification.
- Student whose first language is not English require a minimum IELTS score of 5.5 or equivalent for entry into the programme.

Course Structure

| | |
|---------|--|
| Week 1 | Induction/Preparation for Block A |
| Week 2 | |
| Week 3 | Block A |
| Week 4 | |
| Week 5 | |
| Week 6 | |
| Week 7 | |
| Week 8 | |
| Week 9 | Reflection and Preparation for Block B |
| Week 10 | Block B |
| Week 11 | |
| Week 12 | |
| Week 13 | |
| Week 14 | |
| Week 15 | |

Course Structure

2 Modules Per Block

15-20 Students

Each Module 10 hours class time

4 hours – Business Lecturer

6 hours – English Lecturer

Course Structure

Block A: Core

- **Economic Environment of Business**

Block A: Options

- **People Management**
- **Managing Accounting Information**

Course Structure

Block B: Core

- **Business Strategy**

Block B: Options

- **Introduction to Research Methods**
- **Financial Management**

Course Structure

| Block A: Core | Block A: Options |
|---|--|
| • Economic Environment of Business | • People Management |
| | • Managing Accounting Information |

Managing Accounting Information

10 hours per week

5 hours per day

4 hours taught by Business Lecturer: Sarah

6 hours taught by English Lecturer: Andy ...

1 hour
English

2 Hours
MAI

2 Hours
English

Managing Accounting Information

- **Module Code:** 6BUS0348
- **Credit:** 15
- **Assessment:** 100% coursework
- **Module Contents**

This module provides an applied understanding of the role and function of financial information in the decision and communication process of an organisation. It provides an understanding of how data is gathered and how both data and financial measures are used to plan, monitor and control the progress of the organisation. Students will be expected to apply these techniques to particular industry sectors and organisations.

Managing Accounting Information

| | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Introduction, Basic income statement and balance sheet – terminology and layout. |
| 2 | Context of financial reports (reading from newspapers/ share price info) Introduce M&S |
| 3 | Interpretation of accounts – key ratios, what they mean, limitations Profitability and efficiency ratios |
| 4 | Liquidity, gearing and investor ratios |
| 5 | Interpretation of the ratios of M&S |
| 6 | Interpretation of the ratios of M&S |
| 7 | Introduction to traditional budgeting. |
| 8 | Traditional budgeting - behavioural aspects, problems with traditional budgeting. Beyond budgeting – the issues |
| 9 | Development of the material in <i>better budgeting</i> |
| 10 | Work on material for the presentations |
| 11 | Assessed discussions |
| 12 | Feedback on assessed discussions and written reports |

Managing Accounting Information

Assessment

- Assessment 1 – Students will write a report interpreting a set of published accounts (Marks and Spencer). They will need to show an understanding of the users and purposes of accounts and some of the problems which make interpretation difficult. They will calculate a number of ratios and draw meaning from them and synthesise this with other information available about the business. They will recommend whether to invest in the business. 1600 - 2000 words.
- Assessment 2 – Students will work in groups of three to five to prepare a 10 minute discussion on the current debate on the usefulness and future of budgeting. The presentations will be videoed.

Managing Accounting Information

Assessment

- Assessment 2 – Students will work in groups of three to five to prepare a 10 minute discussion on the current debate on the usefulness and future of budgeting. The presentations will be videoed.
- 50% of module marks

Managing Accounting Information

“Budgeting is on its way to becoming extinct” or “Budgets are in fact alive and well”. Discuss

- The basis for this discussion is the report “better budgeting” published by CIMA and ICAEW
- Students will be divided into sub-groups and each sub-group will be asked to present ideas from one of the presentations given in the report. They will then be expected to discuss the views put forward in a question and answer session. The discussion will be recorded on video.

Managing Accounting Information

Two sub-groups: A & B

A present their point of view, with each member contributing.

B ask questions

Discussion

B present their point of view, with each member contributing.

A ask questions

Discussion

Each person must ask and answer a question.

Managing Accounting Information

Individual presentations are prepared.

Questions may (?) be prepared.

Answers are probably not prepared.

So we are assessing discussion. Students talking to each other, probably from different countries.

Marking Guide for Group Discussions

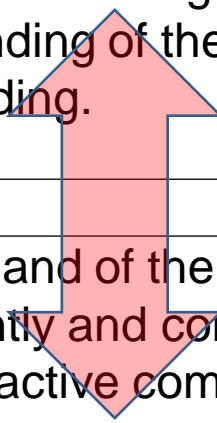
| Content 30% | Grades | |
|--|---------------|--|
| Demonstrates a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject gained from wide reading (25%) | A B C D F | Shows a weak knowledge and understanding of the subject with limited research |
| Makes correct use of a wide range of technical vocabulary (5%) | A B C D F | Technical terms are not used or are used incorrectly |
| Language 70% | | |
| Has full command of the language, speaking fluently and confidently; excellent interactive communication (25%) | A B C D F | Communicates only basic information with frequent errors of grammar; limited interactive communication |
| Demonstrates excellent organisation and use of linking devices; excellent timing and pacing (15%) | A B C D F | Poor organisation with a lack of linking devices; poor time management |
| No problems with pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation (15%) | A B C D F | Weaknesses in pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation cause the listener great difficulty |
| Excellent use of vocabulary and grammatical structures; appropriate style (15%) | A B C D F | Unable to use simple language accurately; inconsistent or inappropriate style |

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Example 1



VB: I have a question. What do you think if you set up the company, for example, a company they just care about their profits, they don't care about their customer so what do you think about this in your problem.

S: Well, most of the companies, they consist on the sales, how much they want to sell because they want to make a profit. They don't care about the people, if they are happy from the goods they sell or not. So only they need to make a high budget through the year. This is the answer. So anyone is going to add.

X: Let me continue to answer this question. I think the better budgeting is focus on the cost of the company but not, not, but it doesn't means we don't consider of the company's profits.

Example 2



CH: Yeah, erm, so I have some questions. Expanding your companies, but, you have a budget. So what do you think about the limitation?

A: Well, we do have some limitations to a certain extent. But because of technology the companies can forecast furthermore. And then set their budgets, so they do have an idea of what they are actually budgeting, so I think the technology plays an important information, because they can collect more information, they can store more information, they can process the information more quicker.

CH: So what is the important advantage of the better budgeting? What do you think?

Example 3



J: I want to ask a question. I've heard that they have not any fixed plan in beyond budgeting. How do you think the beyond budgeting company can win in the marketplace? Because they have any, they have not any fixed plan.

S: They can success because they have not a fixed plan because as you know about world business nowsady, nowaday it's not predictable, it's unpredictable, yeah, and because it unpredictable it's almost impossible to plan the long term so let's see the real situation and plan step by step. What will happen they plan to fix to solve that situation and that's why they can win on the market.

Example 4



D. Yeah, actually I have question for M. And as S and you mentioned actually, and it's that managers can decide actually and it's not from the top, it's not coming to down, and they can decide actually whatever they want. And don't you think it's maybe can create to, you know maybe loss, maybe that their decision is not the correct decision actually and they can maybe take the wrong decisions, like because there is no supervision, maybe, or based on your, this one, no supervision from the top? And don't you think that it can lead to loss of the company actually, maybe some losses?

M: I think that when the department has developed authority to handling the real situation, they took, they continue to improve, and it take everything about around it. They may take wrong decision but they have the flexibility to do it and re.. do it again to without the top managers. But in the ...

Example 5



S: Is it possible for the company to make a mistake which can affect to the whole firms? Like, if it can, could you tell me how can they solve this problem?

M: Thank you for your question. It's an interesting question. Yes sometime the companies they made mistake. When they put their budget in at the beginning. Of course maybe they will considerate all aspect. But they can fix it. By adjustment their budgeting. It takes some times, but they will fix it, this problem.

Background

- Gillett, A. J. & Hammond, A. C. (2009). Mapping the maze of assessment: An investigation into practice. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 10, 120-137
- Jenkins, J. (2011). Accommodating (to) ELF in the international university. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43, 926-936.
- Johns, T. F. & Dudley-Evans, A. (1980). An experiment in team teaching of overseas postgraduate students of transportation and plant biology. In *Team teaching in ESP* (ELT Documents 106, pp. 6-23). London: British Council.
- Nordmeyer, J & Barduhn, S. (Eds.). (2010). *Integrating language and content*. Alexandria, VA: TESOL.
- Wingate, U. (2006). Doing away with study skills. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 11, 457-469.



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Conclusions

- Distinction between content & language not possible.
- English mark does not add anything.
- English feedback – most important.