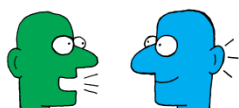# English for Writing & Presenting a Degree Project in Science & Engineering (LS2439), 7.5 credits

Do you want to feel more confident using English in your studies? Do you want to learn how to write and present your thesis successfully? This B2-C1 level course will help you to improve your English and to become a better academic writer.

The official course objectives are copied below. The ultimate aim of the course, however, is to help you to develop greater confidence in your language skills so that you can communicate your research and ideas more fluently.

## What are the aims of the course?

On completion of the course, the student should be able to:

- analyse how a well-written report is structured and be able to assess how his/her own report should be structured

- write an effective degree project report in Academic English using dictionaries and other resources, with not more than a few problems with grammar or style

- handle source material, quote and use references according to convention

- assess how the oral presentation should differ from the written report, with regard to the medium, time limit and target group

## Am I expected to acquire some course literature?

Yes. You need the following texts to prepare for and contribute to almost every class.

1) A copy of a successful degree project. Ask a teacher in your department to recommend one, or browse the digital archive DiVA: www.diva-portal.org

2) Copies of 1-3 academic articles in your field (one is enough for the first session)

3) The textbook: Caplan, N. A. (2012) *Grammar Choices for Graduate and Professional Writers.* University of Michigan Press ELT. There are copies available at the Student Union bookshop, adlibris.com/se and bokus.se **You cannot hope to participate in and thereby pass this course without having acquired this book.**

(*GC* refers to this book.)
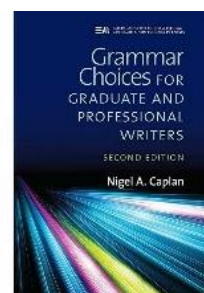
# What does B2-C1 mean?

B2 and C1 refer to levels in the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR)**, which is a guideline used to describe achievements of learners of foreign languages across Europe. There is a large gap between these two levels (between what might be called an "independent user" and a "proficient user") that this course will help you to bridge and/or develop from.

Students at **B2 level** are expected to be able to:

- understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics

- interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular communication easy

- produce clear, detailed text and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue objectively

These are the minimum requirements for the LS2439 course.

Students at **C1 level** are expexcted to be able to:

- understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning

- express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions

- use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes

- produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices

## How does the course work?

As you can see from the schedule (see www.kth.se/schema), there are just seven sessions. You must attend a minimum of 5.5 sessions. If you miss half a session, a whole session, or 1.5 sessions, you must complete compensatory work. You can find details of compensatory work in Canvas.

In preparation for each session, you should 1) learn about an aspect of academic communication (mostly by reading GC – the course book), 2) prepare any study questions posted on Canvas, and 3) complete oral or written assignments. In weeks 1-5 you will also have language and vocabulary exercises to complete, and you will be tested on these towards the end of the course.

Most weeks, you will have a deadline for an exercise or an assignment. If you submit your work after the deadline, you may not receive feedback in the following session. There is no negative marking for late work.

All the information and material you need will be available on our course page in Canvas, kth.instructure.com. This is also where you upload your assignments.

In class each week, you will check your understanding of academic communication in more difficult contexts and practise using what you have learnt. This style of teaching and learning is sometimes called "the flipped classroom". Why flipped? Because students learn the new material at home and do the "homework", the consolidation and practice, in class under the teacher's supervision.

It is essential that you both prepare and learn material ready for each class and contribute to the class activities in order to receive a pass grade. If you miss a class or come to class unprepared, you will be expected to complete a compensatory assignment – see the separate document in Canvas.

## Grading criteria

There are four assignments and these are all graded either PASS or FAIL. Successful completion of all the assignments will mean that you pass the course. Every criterion of every assignment needs to be fulfilled in order for you to pass the course (if you have not met all the criteria, there will be an opportunity to revise your work). The two assignments to submit before sessions 2 and 3 are a criterion of assignment 1, and the test in session 6 is a criterion of assignment 4.

**The four assessments:**

1. Introduction to the degree project  (written)

2. Introduction to the degree project  (oral)

3. Presentation of graphical data and commentary (written)

4. Presentation of graphical data, commentary and interpretation (oral)

**Please find the grading criteria for all four assignments overleaf.**

## Further questions?

For further information about the Unit for Language and Communication and its courses, please visit www.kth.se/language

If you have a specific question regarding course registration or administration, please contact Susanne Edorson at KTH Language and Communication at kurser@ece.kth.se. For all questions regarding the course content, deadlines, etc., contact your teacher.

If you are in need of special educational support following a diagnosis of dyslexia, Aspergers syndrome, ADHD, a hearing or visual impairment etc., please inform your teacher. For help and information about your rights, please contact Monica Barsch (coordinator for disabled and students and students with special educational needs) at funka@kth.se.

## Grading criteria

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**1. *A written introduction to a degree project***
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| Grading criteria | Pass | Rev. |
|---|---|---|
| The text is a Word file and is **at least 350 words long**, excluding headings, figure captions and references. The student's name is *both* on the first page *and* in the file name. | | |
| The text has an **informative title**. | | |
| The text is divided into **coherent paragraphs** that 1) define a concept, 2) present a literature review, 3) reveal a "gap", and 4) home in on a research question OR a thesis statement. | | |
| Paragraphs have sentences that flow in a reader-friendly way. The student achieves this **cohesion** by using discourse markers and by ordering the information in each sentence appropriately. | | |
| The language in the text demonstrates an awareness of the required **style** for academic and work: formal, but audience-aware. | | |
| The text includes an **image**, which is appropriately **placed, labelled and referred to** in the body of the text. | | |
| The text includes in-text **references** and a list of **at least three sources**. All references are correctly presented. | | |
| The **language** used corresponds to at least B2 level. Language errors do not impede the readability of the text. | | |
| ***Best aspects of the work.*** | _____ <br> _____ | |
| ***Targets for improvement*** | _____ <br> _____ | |

## Grading criteria

**2.** *An introduction to a degree project (oral presentatation)*

| Grading criteria | Pass | Rev. |
|---|---|---|
| The presentation lasts at least 3 minutes. The **content has been adapted** for a listening audience of fellow students rather than an expert reader. | | |
| The speaker begins by capturing the **listeners' attention** and s/he tries to keep them engaged during the presentation. | | |
| The **thesis statement and/or research questions** are clearly stated and appear to emerge naturally from the previous parts of the speech. | | |
| **Visuals** are appropriately informative and there is an audience-friendly interplay between them and the speech. | | |
| Pace, pronunciation and body language do not impede the **effective delivery** of the speech. | | |
| The **language** used corresponds to at least B2 level.  Language errors do not impede the effective delivery of the speech. | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| ***Best aspects of the work.*** | _____<br>_____ |
| ***Targets for improvement*** | _____<br>_____ |

## Grading criteria

**3.** *Presentation of graphical data and a written commentary*

| Grading criteria | Pass | Rev. |
|---|---|---|
| The text is a Word file and is **at least 350 words long**, excluding headings, figure captions and references. The student's name is *both* on the first page *and* in the file name. | | |
| The assignment has an **informative title**. | | |
| The **choice of graphical data** is appropriate, and the main visual has been designed and created by the student (not copied from a source). | | |
| All **visuals** are appropriately labelled and placed in the text. There are **location statements** in the text. | | |
| The text is an **impartial commentary** on the graphical data. The text includes some background information, location statements, and highlighting statements. Subjective interpretations are avoided. | | |
| The commentary is logically structured in **well-designed paragraphs**. | | |
| The student's language demonstrates an awareness of the required **style** for academic writing:  formal, but audience-aware. | | |
| The **language** used corresponds to at least B2 level and errors do not impede the readability of the text. | | |
| The student has **reviewed** (in Canvas) two other students' work and suggested tips for the oral presentation. | | |
| ***Best aspects of the work.*** | _____ _____ | |
| ***Targets for improvement*** | _____ _____ | |

## Grading criteria

**4. *Oral presentation of graphical data, a commentary & interpretation***

| Grading criteria | Pass | Rev. |
|---|---|---|
| The presentation lasts 3 minutes. The **content has been adapted** for a listening audience of fellow students rather than an expert reader. | | |
| The speaker begins by capturing the **listeners' attention** and s/he tries to keep them engaged during the presentation. | | |
| The presentation is divided into at least **two parts** including "commentary" and "interpretation". | | |
| The **visuals** are appropriately informative and not too cluttered or vague. There is an audience-friendly interplay between them and the speech. | | |
| Pace, pronunciation and body language do not impede the **effective delivery** of the speech. | | |
| The **language** used corresponds to at least B2 level. Any language errors do not impede the effective delivery of the speech. | | |
| The student shows that he/she has tried to **meet the targets for improvement** from Assignment 2. | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| ***Best aspects of the work.*** | _____ <br> _____ |
| ***Targets for improvement*** | _____ <br> _____ |