Course
ANG-5105-1
Writing Skills II

English as a Second Language

Introduction

The goal of this 25-hour course, the second of two courses related to written communication and for which adult learners can earn supplementary credits in second language, is to allow adult learners to improve their English writing skills. Through a variety of learning situations and activities, adult learners will be given the opportunity to improve their ability to:

- broaden knowledge of informative, expressive and persuasive texts

- write English texts that correspond to the requirements of specific contexts

By the end of this course, adult learners will be able to apply knowledge of the English language, such as language functions, grammar and vocabulary, to plan, draft, write, proofread and correct written texts for different purposes: informing, expressing, persuading. They will be able to structure grammatically correct texts, comprised of several paragraphs related to business, educational and personal needs/interests.

Subject-Specific Competencies

The two subject-specific competencies targeted in the course *Writing Skills II* are shaded in the table below.

Competencies	Key Features
Interacts orally in English (C1)	– Engages in oral interactions – Constructs the meaning of the message – Monitors own development as a communicator
Reinvests understanding of texts (C2)	– Broadens knowledge of texts – Constructs the meaning of the message – Carries out a reinvestment task – Monitors own development as a reader, listener, viewer
Writes and produces texts (C3)	– Broadens knowledge of texts – Uses writing and production processes – Monitors own development as a writer/producer

For information on these competencies, please refer to the following sections:

- *Interacts orally in English* (C1), Chapter 3, Section 3.2

- *Reinvests understanding of texts* (C2), Chapter 3, Section 3.3

- *Writes and produces texts* (C3), Chapter 3, Section 3.4

Although only C2 and C3 are targeted in this course, C1 is implicit as speaking activities may complement the learning situations.

Competencies are developed and demonstrated through the mobilization and effective use of various resources that include functional, linguistic and textual knowledge as well as language processes, communication and learning strategies.

Processes and Strategies

Language processes are series of actions or operations that support competency development and help adult learners become more effective speakers, listeners, readers, viewers, writers or producers of texts. Although all four language processes (Oral communication, Response, Writing and Production) are important resources for adult learners, the two processes suggested for this course are illustrated in the table below.

Processes	Phases
Response	Planning (tasks)
	Mobilizing resources (performing tasks)
Writing	Reflecting (on completed tasks)

Strategies are actions, behaviours, steps and techniques that enable adult learners to overcome obstacles, attain goals and achieve success. Communication and learning strategies are important resources that adult learners may use to become more effective speakers, listeners, readers, viewers, writers or producers of texts.

The communication and learning strategies suggested for this course are illustrated in the table below.

Strategies		
Communication		Rephrasing Simplifying
Learning	**Cognitive**	Activating prior knowledge Reorganizing information to make it meaningful
	Socioaffective	Asking for and giving constructive feedback
	Metacognitive	Planning steps related to a task Making transfers to new contexts

Additional information on processes and strategies is provided in the following sections:

- Chapter 3, Section 3.5

- Appendix (Inventory of Strategies)

Cross-Curricular Competencies

Cross-curricular competencies are generic skills that can be developed and used outside the school setting. They are developed in tandem with subject-specific competencies. Given the nature of this course, the shaded cross-curricular competencies listed horizontally could easily be developed simultaneously with the shaded subject-specific competencies listed vertically. Since teachers have the option of choosing learning situations other than the ones suggested in this program, they may also decide to develop cross-curricular competencies other than those shaded in the table below.

Cross-Curricular Competencies → Subject-Specific Competencies ↓	Uses information	Solves problems	Exercises critical judgment	Uses creativity	Adopts effective work methods	Uses ICT	Cooperates with others	Achieves his/her potential	Communicates appropriately
Interacts orally in English									
Reinvests understanding of texts	■				■				
Writes and produces texts	■	■		■	■			■	■

For more information on the key features and manifestations of the cross-curricular competencies, please refer to the General Introduction to the Programs of Study.

Subject-Specific Content

The subject-specific content includes knowledge and cultural references. The prescribed functional, linguistic and textual knowledge for the development of the competencies targeted in this course is provided below.

While any of the knowledge elements from preceding courses may be necessary to carry out the learning tasks for this course, some have been repeated in this list for emphasis. The list below is not restrictive; teachers may complement it with knowledge they feel might be beneficial to adult learners. However, it must be understood that any additions to the lists are not subject to evaluation.

Functional Knowledge

Families of Learning Situations and Language Functions:

Informing
- Understanding, giving and requesting factual information related to business, educational and personal needs/interests
- Inquiring about and explaining causal and logical relationships between facts, phenomena and events
- Describing findings and conclusions

Expressing
- Describing intentions, plans, wishes, opinions and perceptions related to business, educational and personal needs/interests
- Giving subjective accounts of experiences/situations

Persuading
- Explaining about capabilities and possibilities
- Giving reasons
- Influencing or convincing
- Requesting or instructing

Linguistic Knowledge

Grammar and Syntax

Adjectives
- Articles followed by adjectives (e.g. *the best candidate; a qualified worker*)
- Placement/order
- Present and past participles as adjectives (e.g. *interesting/interested; confusing/confused*)

Adverbs
- Adverbs of degree, frequency, manner, place, reason, time
- Formation
- Placement

Conjunctions
- Coordinating, subordinating, correlative

Interjections
- Conveying emotion (e.g. *oh no; ouch; oh my gosh*)

Nouns
- Collective, compound, proper
- Plurals including irregular forms

Prepositions
- Prepositions of time; place/position; movement

Pronouns
- Plural indefinite pronouns (*both; many*)
- Singular indefinite pronouns (e.g. *everyone; neither; none*)

- Gender agreement with antecedents (e.g. *she visited her brother; he met his sister*)
- Reciprocal (*each other; one another*)
- Relative (*who; whom; whose; which; that*)

Verb/Time References
- Active and passive voices
- Past, present, future and conditional verb tenses
- Verbs followed by gerunds but not infinitives (e.g. *appreciate; enjoy; postpone*)
- Verbs followed by infinitives but not gerunds (e.g. *agree; hope; want*)

Other Linguistic Structures
- Single-clause sentence structure (affirmative, negative, interrogative, exclamatory)
- Compound sentence structure (affirmative, negative, interrogative, exclamatory)
- Complex sentence structure (affirmative, negative, interrogative, exclamatory)

Vocabulary

- Broad areas of learning (e.g. Career Planning and Entrepreneurship; Citizenship and Community Life)
- Cross-curricular competencies (e.g. *Adopts effective work methods; Achieves his/her potential; Communicates appropriately*)
- Immediate environment (e.g. social, commercial, educational, vocational and/or recreational)
- Interests/needs (e.g. employment, education; entertainment, recreation, lifestyles; personal experiences)

Semantics

- Abbreviations and acronyms (e.g. for companies, organizations)
- Antonyms (e.g. *old/new; buy/sell; enjoy/dislike; slow/fast; near/far*)
- False cognates (e.g. *form; inscription; sympathetic; sensible*)
- French/English cognates (e.g. *large; chance; patience*)
- Homophones (e.g. *add/ad; made/maid; real/reel; inn/in*)
- Phrasal verbs: inseparable (e.g. *look after; look into*)
- Prefixes/suffixes (e.g. *dis-* :*dislike*; *-cian*: *musician*)
- Synonyms (e.g. *tiny/little; clothes/garments; purchase/buy; fast/quickly; near/close to*)

Orthography

- Abbreviations for organizations, corporations, etc.
- Basic spelling rules
- Canadian vs. American and British variations (e.g. *judgment; cancelled; cheque*)
- Capitalization
- Punctuation: apostrophes; colons; semi-colons; quotation marks

Textual Knowledge

Coherence/Cohesion

Coherence and cohesion include agreement, use of conjunctions, organization of ideas, use of parallel structure and transitional expressions. The list below provides information that is pertinent to this course.

- Agreement: person, number, gender, case
- Conjunctions
- Organization of ideas: appropriate order for context (i.e. chronological, special, climactic, specific-to-general, general-to-specific)
- Parallel structure: nouns, infinitives, gerunds
- Structured texts: introductory paragraph, development paragraphs, summary paragraph
- Transitional expressions for causal relationships: *because; since*
- Writer's perspective (1st person or 3rd person)

Textual Organization

Selected text types: informative, expressive and persuasive (i.e. information-based, popular, literary)

- Knowledge of internal features
  - appropriate language register for the context
  - text development for business letters; reports and summaries; descriptive, explanatory and persuasive type essays (e.g. heading, salutation, body, complimentary closing and signature for business letters; introduction, body, conclusion for reports, summaries and essays)
- Knowledge (i.e. recognition) of external features
  - context (e.g. reporting details of an accident, describing a vacation, explaining how to do something)
  - purpose: informing, expressing, persuading (i.e. any of the bulleted items under Functional Knowledge)
  - target audience (i.e. determine whether the text is intended for a specific gender, age group, social class or social group, e.g. employers, insurance agents organizations)

Cultural References

In this course, adult learners may explore the sociolinguistic aspect of English culture by considering the level of formality required for written texts related to specific contexts. However, any other cultural aspect may be used if deemed more appropriate.

Families of Learning Situations

In this program, "families of learning situations" correspond to macro-functions of language use, i.e. communicative intents that can be classified into three categories. The families of learning situations tied to subject-specific competencies targeted in this course are shaded in the table below.

Families of Learning Situations
► **Informing**
► **Expressing**
► **Persuading**

All three families of learning situations are targeted in this course. **Informing** is associated with understanding, requesting and giving factual information; inquiring about and explaining causal and logical relationships between facts, phenomena and events; and describing findings and conclusions. **Expressing** relates to describing intentions, plans, wishes, opinions and perceptions related to situations and experiences. **Persuading** is associated with instructing, requesting, influencing, convincing, giving reasons and explaining about capabilities and possibilities.

Broad Areas of Learning

The table below illustrates the broad areas of learning. These five areas are significant contemporary issues selected on the basis of their importance to society. Career Planning and Entrepreneurship and Citizenship and Community Life (listed horizontally) are well suited to this course, as demonstrated in our examples of learning situations. Both areas could easily serve as a springboard for the development of the subject-specific competencies listed vertically.

Broad Areas of Learning → Subject-Specific Competencies ↓	Health and Well-Being	Career Planning and Entrepreneurship	Environmental Awareness and Consumer Rights and Responsibilities	Media Literacy	Citizenship and Community Life
Reinvests understanding of texts		■			■
Writes and produces texts		■			■

Each broad area of learning comprises an educational aim and focuses of development that may help teachers delineate the knowledge that might be explored in certain learning situations.

By considering issues related to Career Planning and Entrepreneurship, adult learners may develop greater knowledge of their potential and how to fulfill it (e.g. awareness of personal and career aspirations).

By considering issues related to Citizenship and Community Life, adult learners may develop knowledge of the rules of social conduct and democratic institutions (e.g. awareness of their rights and responsibilities).

Since teachers have the option of choosing learning situations other than the ones suggested in this program, they may decide to develop broad areas of learning other than those suggested for each course in the program.

For more information on the broad areas of learning, their educational aims and focuses of development, please refer to the General Introduction to the Programs of Study.

Examples of Learning Situations

The following examples of learning situations illustrate how a broad area of learning may serve as a springboard for the development of subject-specific and cross-curricular competencies. The development of a competency requires the use of a variety of resources.

In the case of the subject-specific competencies, these resources may include, for instance, oral, written and multimedia texts; functional, linguistic and textual knowledge of English; as well as language processes, communication strategies and human resources.

In these learning situations, adult learners are presented with the following scenarios:

a) **Writing Letters**
   (The letter must include an opening paragraph, development paragraphs and a summary paragraph.)

   - Write a cover letter to be included with your application form for a bursary, scholarship or youth program such as Katimavik. This letter serves the purpose of introducing yourself and explaining why you think your candidature should be considered.

b) **Writing Reports**
   (The report must include an opening paragraph, development paragraphs and a summary paragraph.)

   - Write a report in which you explain a procedure such as emergency medical interventions, handling of food in public food service establishments, how something is made, how to start up your own business or how to apply for a temporary work/resident visa in another country.

- Write a report for an insurance claim, in which you give details of an accident or an incident such as a car accident, water or fire damage to your home or medical treatment required outside the province.

c) Writing Essays

(The essay must include an opening paragraph, development paragraphs and a summary paragraph.)

- Write a summary of an interesting movie that you have seen or a book that you have read. Include factual information as well as your appreciation of the work.
- Write a composition describing a memorable experience such as moving to a new community, the birth of a child or a place you have visited.

End-of-Course Outcomes

By the end of this course, adult learners will be able to demonstrate their development of the competencies *Reinvests understanding of texts* and *Writes and produces texts* by employing a range of resources to:

- broaden knowledge of informative, expressive and persuasive texts
- interpret information conveyed in informative, expressive and persuasive texts
- write texts or short essays that meet the requirements of specific contexts

Adult learners will be able to identify (in writing) the context, purpose and target audience of a text and recognize the text components. They will also be able to answer questions by identifying and communicating pertinent information (e.g. main characters, problems, causes, solutions, outcomes) using past, present, future and conditional forms.

Texts used for broadening knowledge of informative, expressive and persuasive texts may consist of:

- business letters (i.e. acknowledgment, inquiries)
- essays (descriptive, explanatory, persuasive)
- grammar references, dictionaries, writing templates
- instructions, explanations
- movie/hotel/restaurant reviews
- reports
- summaries

Audio and video-mediated texts could be used to complement the written texts. Written texts should be no longer than 500 words. Live or video-mediated texts could be between 60 and 90 minutes.

Adult learners will be able to write texts or short essays that meet the requirements of specific contexts. They will be able to properly organize paragraphs into coherent texts (introduction, body and conclusion). They will make use of the internal features of texts when necessary (e.g. salutation, complimentary closing, signature in letters). They will be able to write simple, compound and complex sentences (e.g. affirmative, negative, interrogative, exclamatory forms); appropriately conjugate verb tenses (e.g. past, present, future and conditional forms); correctly utilize active and passive voices; employ proper grammatical agreement (e.g. person, number, gender, case); properly place adjectives and adverbs; adequately use conjunctions, transitional expressions and prepositions and apply parallelism rules (e.g. nouns, infinitive, gerunds) as well as punctuation rules (e.g. apostrophes, comas, colons, quotation marks). In this course, writing tasks can include business letters, reports, summaries as well as descriptive, explanatory and persuasive essays that are three or four paragraphs long and composed of up to 250 words, depending on the text type and context.

In order to allow adult learners to improve their English writing skills, teachers will need to integrate grammar practice through guided writing and editing activities on elements such as:

- agreement
- clauses and sentences
- parallelism
- paragraphing

- parts of speech
- punctuation
- transitional expressions
- verb conjugation

Teachers might also consider writing and editing activities involving text templates.

Evaluation Criteria for the Competencies Targeted by the Course

Competencies	Evaluation Criteria
Reinvests understanding of texts (C2)	• Demonstration of understanding through the response process • Pertinent use of knowledge in a reinvestment task
Writes and produces texts (C3)	• Coherence of the content • Clear formulation of the message