

Taif University

ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE  
CENTRE

# TUELC Student Handbook



DEANSHIP OF  
SUPPORTIVE  
STUDIES

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## 1. About TUELC

Working under the Deanship of Supportive Studies, the Taif University English Language Centre (TUELC) was established in 2009 to offer compulsory as well as elective English language courses at the undergraduate level. Since then, the center, with its more than 200 full-time English language instructors, has been meeting the English language requirements of students from various colleges across the university. Catering for the English language needs of more than 40,000 students every academic year, the TUELC English language courses are mainly divided into two programs: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). With an exhaustive professional development program that is augmented by onsite as well as online training packages, provided by some of the world-known publishers and trainers, the center ensures that the consequent capacity building is cascaded to every English language teacher on campus. Following the English language needs analysis of the various colleges at the University, the relevant courses have been designed in a way to students achieve the predefined/target level of their English language skills, and, subsequently, lead to equip them with the essential language and study skills, needed to successfully study courses offered in English in their respective colleges. With an added methodological as well as procedural emphasis on 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, the overall approach at the TUELC is to efficiently teach all the four language skills

e.g. listening, speaking, reading and writing (vocabulary and grammar as sub-skills) in an integrated way. The English language proficiency levels of the programs are correlated with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

## 2 . TUELC MISSION

Prepare the University students to undertake English medium instruction in their relevant fields of study. Also, it aims at helping students use English as an effective means of communication in their prospective endeavors.

## 3 . TUELC GOALS

Help students develop their English proficiency level.

Help students improve their English communication in their respective academic fields by developing profession specific vocabulary and contexts.

Design and deliver an appropriate curriculum with measurable learning outcomes to help students achieve the expected language proficiency level.

Employ suitable assessment methods to measure students' achievement of the curriculum outcomes

Bring together a team of qualified instructors to deliver high standards of language instructions

Provide continuous professional development opportunities for faculty members throughout the academic year

6Provide a conducive environment and the necessary facilities to ensure both teaching and learning are effectively carried out

#### 4. ELC Faculty

English Language Centre has more than 220 male and female faculty members, which include both national and international teachers. They are highly qualified professionals. They include teachers with PhD, MA and BA in English language / applied linguistics / EFL / ESL or other related fields.

The faculty members include teachers with diverse teaching experience. Their continuous professional development is taken care of by the ELC in collaboration with its partner Cambridge University Press, which provides with online training as well as on-site training workshops.

ELC assigns teachers to courses based on their qualifications and professional development, which means that the most challenging and demanding courses are taught by the best qualified teachers.

Details of the faculty are available at the University website [www.tu.edu.sa](http://www.tu.edu.sa)

## 5. Program Overview

### Mission

The mission of TUELC is to prepare the University students to undertake English-medium instruction in their relevant fields of study. Also, it aims at helping students use English as an effective means of communication in their prospective endeavors.

To achieve the mission, a variety of English courses are designed and delivered through an appropriate curriculum with measurable learning outcomes. In addition, appropriate assessment methods are employed to measure students' achievement of learning outcomes (Course Specifications). The instructors receive continuous professional development opportunities throughout the academic year to deliver language instructions. A conducive environment and the necessary facilities are provided to ensure both teaching and learning are effectively carried out.

The mission guides all activities, policies, and different practices. Firstly, in order to cover the course content, all teachers are allocated sufficient teaching hours. Furthermore, workload is equally distributed to ensure all teachers successfully carry out their teaching tasks with ease. Secondly, apart from the classrooms, students have access to teachers during office hours on a daily basis in order to discuss any issues or queries. In addition to this, the center has clear attendance policies to address and tackle students' tardiness (lateness, absences etc). The center also provides teachers with a conducive teaching environment equipped with the necessary technology to aid both teaching and learning in all classrooms. Finally, a very clear grading distribution system is not only used to ensure teachers assess students effectively, but to also help students in knowing how they are being assessed.

## **Academic Program: Curriculum**

Taif University English Language Centre (TUELC) offers compulsory and elective English courses that have been designed to suit the respective academic programs of their students: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). These have been designed to help students acquire knowledge of the English Language and as a result aim to equip them with the essential language and study skills needed to successfully study courses that relate to their chosen professional majors. The overall approach at the TUELC is to efficiently teach all the four language skills e.g. listening, speaking, reading and writing (vocabulary and grammar as sub-skills) in an integrated way. The program is correlated with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), and focuses on developing students' language proficiency skills to successfully foster active and independent learning.

## **Rationale to Adopting Vertical Learning Approach (VLA)**

The Deanship of Supportive Studies (DSS) has introduced the vertical learning approach to replace the horizontal program of teaching English to the students at TU. In the past as a part of the Preparatory Year Program, English was taught only in the first year of their studies to cover all the levels (textbooks). In this way, the students could not find enough time to learn and practice English in the following years of their studies. It became apparent that overburdening students with such a packed curriculum did not help them to develop the required language proficiency. This also made it difficult for them to retain the newly acquired knowledge for a long period. Thus, the vertical approach has been introduced so that students learn English with a reasonable input in a gradual manner over a long period of time to provide them with enough opportunities to practice English. This approach as we deem would help learners to retain the English language skills and perform better in their respective professional fields.

## Program Design

The table below illustrates the structure of the courses that are offered at TUELC and how they are linked to one another:

Program			Course Name	Number of weeks per term	Number of teaching hours per week	
					Face to face	Online
English for Academic Purposes (EAP)	REAP	Non-EMI colleges	Regular English for Academic Purposes 1	15	6 hours	2 hours
			Regular English for Academic Purposes 2	15	6 hours	2 hours
			Regular English for Academic Purposes 3	15	6 hours	2 hours
			Regular English for Academic Purposes 4	15	6 hours	2 hours
	IEAP	EMI colleges	Intensive English for Academic Purposes 1	15	12 hours	3 hours
			Intensive English for Academic Purposes 2	15	12 hours	3 hours
English for Specific Purposes	Non-EMI colleges	English for Specific Purposes: Business Administration	15	3 hours	-----	
		English for Specific Purposes: Design and Applied Arts	15	3 hours	-----	
		English for Specific Purposes: Sciences	15	3 hours	-----	
	EMI colleges	English for Specific Purposes: Medicine	15	3 hours	-----	
		English for Specific Purposes: Pharmacy	15	3 hours	-----	
		English for Specific Purposes: IT and Computer 1	15	3 hours	-----	
		English for Specific Purposes: IT and Computer 2	15	3 hours	-----	
		English for Specific Purposes: Engineering	15	3 hours	-----	



Elective Courses	Non-EMI colleges	Presentation Skills	15	3 hours	1 hour
	EMI college	English for 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	15	3 hours	1 hour
		IELTS	15	3 hours	1 hour

\*EMI: English as a medium of instruction

### English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

EAP is divided into two types of courses: Regular EAP (REAP) and Intensive EAP (IEAP). Both REAP and IEAP aim to help students achieve an Intermediate Level of proficiency in the use of the English language (B1 CEFR). REAP covers English Unlimited Special Edition for Saudi Arabia over 4 semesters for the first two years to cover three levels (A1, A2 & B1 CEFR). REAP courses are introduced to the students of Non-EMI colleges. IEAP covers the UNLOCK series which is taught to the students of EMI. This is taught over two semesters for the first year to also cover three levels (A1, A2 & B1 CEFR).

### English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

After acquiring the required proficiency level in English as described earlier, students need English language courses that could acquaint them with the knowledge and skills needed to help them in their specific professional fields. ESP courses aim at helping students acquire language proficiency in order to communicate in their occupational and educational roles. These courses are therefore tailored to train the learners to cope with certain predetermined requirements of their future professions.

### Elective courses

Elective courses are offered after students have completed EAP and ESP courses. These courses focus on helping students to strengthen their knowledge of English acquired in EAP and ESP courses and find more opportunities to practice English and develop their language skills.

## **Curriculum: Course Specifications and SLOs**

Each course in TUELC has a well-developed course specification document with clear goals and objectives for each level supported by SLOs. This document also provides teachers with information about textbook topics along with teaching and assessment methodologies.

Teachers have access to all the course specifications, teachers' books and supplementary materials (progress/achievement tests) to adequately prepare their lesson plans and strive to achieve all learning outcomes. At the end of each semester, teachers are required to complete and submit a course portfolio to give feedback on teaching and assessment methodologies as well as facilities and other relevant course material.

## **Needs Analysis: Analysis of the Curriculum**

Needs analysis is an essential part of our educational policy at TUELC. We apply it prior to introducing a new course for all learners. It helps us to create a comprehensive understanding of the preferences and needs of the students. We collect information using different tools such as surveys, interviews and meeting with the deans of different colleges in order to make decisions about designing and choosing the appropriate curriculum to meet the learners' needs. In addition to this, frequent meetings are also held with stakeholders to identify students' needs and to reflect on the curriculum in order to improve the process of teaching and learning.

## **6. Rules and Regulations**

### ***a. Class Timings / Break Policy***

According to University regulations, one lecture spans 50 minutes. The regulations about breaks concerning the lectures spanning 1, 2 and 3 hours respectively, are as follows:

### **1. One hour class:**

A class of one hour lasts for 50 minutes with the last 10 minutes considered as break.

**2. Two hour class:** In a class of two hours, there will be two sessions of 50 minutes each with the last 10 minutes of both hours considered as break.

**3. 3 hour lecture,** a twenty- minute break is given after eighty minutes from the start of the lecture. The second half of the three- hour lecture lasts for seventy minutes and ends ten minutes before the start of the next lecture.

### *b. Absence, Denial and Exam retake Policy*

1. For absences up to 3 days, teachers themselves can decide to accept the excuse or refuse it. If they accept it, they have to mark the concerned student EXCUSED in the system.

2. For absences exceeding 3 days, denial, and exam retake, the concerned students should log on the link below to download and complete a special form and submit it with a health report to the DSS deanship.

<http://deanships.tu.edu.sa/DoPY/FormsAndApps/Pages/default.aspx>

### *c. Tardiness Policy*

A student is considered late if he / she arrives to the class late by up to 15 minutes. If the student is late by more than 15 minutes, he may be considered absent for the whole session/ class. However, the teacher may excuse his/ her late arrival if the student is able to convince the teacher about a valid reason of delay

### *d. class Coverage Policy*

TUELC always strives to ensure a smooth learning experience for the students. The following Coverage Policy has been institutionalized.

### *Policy Objective*

To ensure seamless and uninterrupted functioning of TUELC and a continuous academic experience for learners, the following institutional policy with regard to substitution of instructors is adopted contingent upon a staff's unavailability for a regular teaching slot. This policy mandates its implementation for all streams, campuses, and subject and substitute instructors.

### *Procedural Exercise of the Policy*

- i. In case of any contingency, the teacher communicates his unavailability to the Academic Coordination Unit which appoints a substitute best-suited available instructor to conduct the class / session(s).
- ii. The substitute teacher conducts class on time, and covers the default pacing / syllabus, as communicated to him by the regular teacher.
- iii. The substitute teacher reports the material taught, objectives achieved and any other pertinent information such as class attendance to the Academic Coordination Unit to be passed on the regular instructor who enters the attendance in the system on the day the class is substituted, as per rules.
- iv. In case the regular or substitute teacher doesn't reach the class in time, the Building Supervisor informs the Academic Coordination Unit about details of the class and the latter arranges a substitute teacher.

### *e. Student Complaint Policy*

The aim of this administrative policy is to provide students with the ability to raise a complaint regarding any issues related to the ELC. The policy is aligned with Taif University Complaints Policy. TUELC is very assertive in providing student with high quality educational experiences. Yet, it is understood that undesirable situations might arise leading to discontent of the parties involved. Therefore, students might need to express their dissatisfaction when needed. This policy covers both academic (related to classroom) and non-academic matters (services) at the ELC.

This policy applies only to matters raised by individual students or groups of students. Students, however, are advised to discuss their complaints with the course teacher as they may result from misunderstanding or disagreement and could likely be resolved simply by discussion. However, if the students feel that the issue is still unresolved and needs intervention of another party, other procedures are followed (see procedures).

### *General principles*

1. When necessary, a student / a group of students may raise a complaint against a faculty member, a staff member, other student/s, or services
2. The student must lodge a complaint without any delay after the matter of concern arises.
3. The ELC will act promptly to resolve the issue highlighted by the complainant.
4. ELC shall maintain fullest confidentiality about the complaint / complainant/s.
5. The complaining party, i.e. the student/s must provide their contact details for follow up.
6. The policy guarantees that no action will be taken against any student who raises a complaint.

### *Procedures*

1. To raise a complaint whether academic (marks, denial, teachers' indiscipline, etc.) or non-academic (threatening, bullying, verbal abuse, etc.), the student must complete a form. ( see appendix A)
2. The form should be submitted to Students Affairs Unit
3. An appointed committee handles the complaints and takes a decision. The committee consists of Supervisors / nominees of:
  - The Academic Coordination Unit
  - Students Affairs Unit
  - The Registration Unit
4. If students are unsatisfied with the committee's decision, they have the right to lodge the unresolved complaint with the University Students Rights Committee.

5. Students may also lodge their complaints directly at the Students Rights Committee that will send officially to the ELC for resolving cases and responding back.
6. Students' complaints will be resolved and documented.

#### *f. No smoking Policy*

Taif University is a strictly "NO SMOKING" university. ELC, in line with the University policy, strongly discourages students / teachers smoking at the campus and any students who fail to abide by the university policy are penalized under the university rules. Apart from smoking, no foods or drinks (except water) are allowed inside the lecture halls / labs.

#### *g. No cell phone Policy*

The following **Do's** and **Don'ts** must be observed:

- ✓ You must keep your cell phones on silent mode throughout the class.
- ✓ You must keep your cell phone in your pocket or bag.
- ✓ You may use your cell phone for study purposes only if your teacher tells you to do so.
- ✓ *You may attend an absolutely urgent phone call, i.e. the one from your father or mother if your teacher allows.*
  - × No loud ringtone during the class
  - × No texting / chatting, browsing or call during the study
  - × No picture of the teacher or white board to be made or shared.
  - × No audio / video of the teacher or a classmate be recorded or shared
  - × No headphones / Bluetooth to be put in ears

As a first warning, the teacher puts name of the student on the whiteboard. If the student continues to use the cell phone, the teacher warns him / her for the second time. If the problem continues, the teacher communicates the name of the violator to the Floor Supervisor. The said Supervisor communicates the names to the disciplinary committee for an appropriate action.

However, the student may attend an absolutely urgent phone call, for example from their mother or father, with the teacher's permission. He must leave the class to do so.

#### *h. Teachers' Office Hours*

The students are expected to insist the teachers to display their office hours in the classroom. Apart from class timings, the teachers are expected to be available to the students for academic counselling / additional teaching support for any weak students. During office hours, the students may visit the teacher's office and request their assistance in academic matters, agree on the time for additional instructional support, or sort out other issues such as attendance, etc.

#### *i. Low Achieving Student Policy*

Providing readily available support to the students entails not only ensuring quality classroom teaching but also keeping a vigilant eye on their progress. The timely identification of students who are, unfortunately, unable to make progress in a particular course is mainly the responsibility of the course instructor, who is teaching the course. TUELC Policy on the Identification and Progress of Low Achieving Students aims to serve the purpose of providing guidelines and procedures in this regard.

#### **Procedures**

1. The course coordinators hold meetings with all the teachers to discuss the performance of students, who are not making progress, and devise strategies for the way forward. The first meeting takes place well before the middle of every semester i.e. after the second quiz or any other assessment activity that takes place before the middle of the semester. In the meeting, the performance of such students is discussed with the teachers one by one, and strategies are devised to make concerted efforts towards bringing improvement in these students.
2. As a follow-up, the coordinators hold the second meeting after the middle of every semester to see if the identified students have improved their performance. In cases where there has been no improvement in their performance, more measures are taken by the teachers, in consultation with their course coordinators concerned.

3. The coordinators hold the third meeting with the teachers before the end- term exam to get an update on the performance of such students.
4. For record and follow-up, an excel sheet list of such students is kept by the coordinators, along with the suggested measures to bring improvement in their performance. The list is updated by the course coordinators after every meeting.
5. At the end of the semester, every coordinator writes a report, detailing the complete case history of all such students, the measures taken for improvement and the outcome, along with recommendations.

#### *j. Academic Advising*

Students receive academic advising in their respective colleges. However, if they have English related queries, they refer to the Academic Coordination and Follow up Unit. (See appendix B).

#### *k. Inclusion of Students with Special Needs*

##### *Policy*

TUELC is committed to embedding inclusive education for students with disabilities and special needs. TUELC Inclusion Policy for Students with Disability provides policy for the delivery of special education programs and services based on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia special needs law and Taif University Rules and regulations. Inclusion describes the principle that all students are entitled to equitable access to learning, achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their education to the best of their ability.

Special education is meant to take place in the least restrictive environment (LRE) and all students should have an Individual Educational Program (IEP) by offering them a modified curriculum and modified assessments). Teacher needs to address the needs of the students in modifying lesson plans based on the student's disability.



### *Obtaining students personal data concerning their disability*

Information about the student is collected from the Deanship of Students Affairs. Initially teachers also observe students to decide if they require modified lesson delivery.

Then the teachers liaise with the disability officer or ELC management to ensure the privacy of the students. Teachers make sure that their students' disability is not highlighted in a disempowering way. Upon suspecting a learning disability, teachers consult with the student individually of what will make the learning easier for them.

#### *1. ELC Testing Policy*

In line with the University testing and assessment policy, the ELC employs semester-wise assessment of its students. At the Centre, the exam cycle includes class quizzes, midterm and final exams. In some of the courses with online component, grades are also allocated to the CLMS related student tasks, which are usually considered part of class assessment. Depending upon the nature of courses, formatting or summative assessment strategies are used.

Teachers are basically responsible to conduct class quizzes, whereas the midterm and end term exams are centralized, i.e. they are prepared, finalized and conducted by the Curriculum & Testing Unit.

All quizzes/ exams are based on the syllabus specified by the Curriculum Unit of the ELC, which is issued to the teachers and shared with the students in the beginning of the semester.

#### *A. Attendance and Denial*

Students have to attend classes regularly. They are denied access to final exams if their attendance rate is less than 75%.

## B. Make-up Exams

The ELC arranges make-up exams for students who fail to attend the final exams base on their accepted excuses presented to their respective colleges.

## 7. Extra-Curricular activities at the ELC

The **English Language Center** at Taif University organizes a variety of educational and recreational activities of a non-seasonal nature. Students are challenging language barriers & various obstacles to open exploratory and developmental dimensions for students who wish to open windows on a world. These activities are:

### a. *The Hurdz:*

Hurdz is a program to help students overcome obstacles that prevent them from reaching the required level.

### b. *The Syllabus Shop:*

Based on the topics presented, "the Syllabus Shop" offers mini workshops that enhance students' language acquisition.

The aim of these workshops is to meet all the skills according to the curriculum requirements and to focus on achieving the objectives of the lesson through cooperative learning using English as a means of communication.

### c. *Chatterbox*

A program designed to encourage students who have successfully assimilated the current curriculum, and provides guidance for further initiatives to enhance the performance and explore language alternatives.

## 8. Disciplinary Matters

Disciplinary Violation has been defined in the TU Student handbook as "***Any deviation from the rules, regulations, instructions, values and academic traditions provided for in the university principles***".

English Language Centre strictly follows the University policy pertaining to disciplinary matters as stipulated in detail at page 110 of the *TU Student Handbook*. We believe in students and teachers' respect and wish to provide all students a pleasant stay at the campus and strive to offer them a smooth learning experience. For details of disciplinary matters and penalties for violations, please see the TU Student Handbook.

### **Important Offices at the ELC**

1. Dean's Office
2. Vice Dean's Office
3. Students Affairs Unit
4. Academic Coordination Unit
5. Testing and Curriculum Unit
6. Registration Unit



### ELC Students' Complaint Form

#### Section A: Student contact details:

Name: .....  
Identification Number: .....  
College: .....  
Phone Number: .....  
Email: .....  
Course: .....  
Section: .....

#### Section B: Complaint details:

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#### Section C: Committee decision:

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Academic Unit  
Unit

Testing Unit

Registration

**Student satisfaction:** Satisfied  
Not Satisfied

In case a student is not satisfied with the decision, they may lodge their complaints to the Student Rights Committee.

**Appendix B.**



**Student Academic Advising Form**

**Section A: Student contact details:**

Name: .....  
Identification Number: .....  
College: .....  
Phone Number: .....  
Email: .....  
Course: .....  
Section: .....

**Section B: Advising query**

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**Response to the student's query**

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I have received a response to my query.

Student's signature: .....