

MELBOURNE INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY

UNIT OUTLINE

SEMESTER 1 2009

UNIT CODE: ACA100

UNIT NAME: ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Melbourne Institute of Business and Technology

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What is Academic Support?

ACA100 Academic Support is a complementary class conducted in conjunction with enrolment in Diploma units. It is **free** to all students. Academic Support is not specifically an English language program. It is a program designed to help students develop a range of study skills to improve study opportunities as shown in the next section.

Contact details

Unit Co-ordinator: Irene Goldwasser
Room: 1a4.111, Level 4, Building 1a
Telephone: 9244 5197 (Monday to Friday, business hours. This is the general MIBT Phone No. Lecturers do not have individual business phone numbers
Email: IreneMIBT@aol.com

Unit overview

Unit: ACA100
Unit title: Academic Support
Teaching Method: Each session runs for **two hours**. As this is shorter than other class sessions, there are no breaks. You are required to attend each session **punctually**. Mobiles must be kept completely switched off AND in your bag. You will be expected to give this class, like all other classes, your full attention. The class roll will be marked for each session at no particular time. If you are out of the room when it is called, you should check that you have been marked 'present'. You may be marked 'L' for late or even H – for half if you are not present for the entire session.

Aim / Purpose

To support students as follows:

- To improve general study methods
- To develop and maintain organizational skills
- To assist students in setting and achieving goals
- To develop strategies to overcome learning barriers
- To motivate, support and encourage students
- To provide a solid foundation for future study
- To try to change any negative attitudes, behaviours and/ or strategies that contribute to study problems
- To assist students in developing greater confidence in their abilities

Objectives

Apart from improving academic studies, the aims of this subject include helping students to develop a variety of language and communication skills including reading, general and academic writing, critical thinking, referencing, listening and speaking. The idea is to encourage students to improve such skills in a helpful, encouraging, supportive and friendly environment. Of course, students need to be prepared to participate **willingly** in all activities.

*What you can expect from your lecturer in this subject

Your lecturer can be expected to do the following:

- Treat all students with respect and courtesy
- Provide information using various methods
- Answer questions, either individually, in groups and/ or by email
- Provide information regarding assessment tasks in writing
- Provide feedback regarding assessment tasks in writing
- Be prepared to discuss feedback verbally
- Provide feedback regarding assessment tasks, within 2 weeks, or less, if humanly possible
- Email students individually and/ or in groups regarding various matters
- Respond to students' emails within 24-48 hours, unless there are emergencies

- Provide ongoing support and encouragement, academically and, if appropriate, personally
- In the case of Conditional Enrolments, monitor attendance carefully and speak to any student whose attendance falls below the 80% minimum requirement
- Provide information regarding other staff contacts, if necessary/ appropriate
- Only change class days/ times/ rooms if strictly necessary and in such a case, try to advise students in advance, wherever possible

***What your lecturer expects from students**

Your lecturer expects students to do the following:

- Treat your lecturer and your classmates with respect and courtesy
- Attend lectures regularly and punctually and NOT leave the classroom for extended periods
- Buy the resources required including the prescribed textbook in Week 1 or 2
- Bring ALL resources to each CLASS Session including the textbook
- Take notes in class when the lecturer uses audiovisual resources and/ or as directed
- Listen attentively in class and not distract either the lecturer and/ or other students
- Participate willingly in all class activities
- Switch mobiles off completely and leave them in your bag
- Obtain and read assessment task instructions
- Ask questions if any information is unclear
- Complete all assessment tasks set
- Read any feedback provided by the lecturer and use it appropriately
- Check email and where possible, respond within a reasonable period, if a reply is requested

Why am I studying Academic Support?

Students in this subject fall into two categories:

1) Conditional Enrolment

If you have been advised to enrol in Academic Support this means that the MIBT Academic Progress Committee has determined that you require extra assistance with your study program due to your academic results. Conditional enrolment requires **COMPULSORY** attendance in all Academic Support classes. The Academic Progress Committee monitors attendance regularly. In this case, you cannot (usually) withdraw from this subject. You need to maintain a **minimum 80% attendance** for this AND **all** your subjects, hand in assignments on time and generally demonstrate that you are making efforts to further your study progress.

2) Volunteers

Some students choose to attend classes as 'volunteers.' In this case, students may attend the sessions that are of most interest to them. It is recommended that such students complete the tasks and particularly, the written task in order to receive helpful feedback.

****** As there is sometimes confusion regarding Conditional Enrolment and Volunteers, students should read the relevant section. If you are still unsure about the nature of your enrolment in this subject, you should contact Stase, Pari, or your lecturer so that you can clarify these details. Do not wait until Weeks 4, 5 or 6 to do so! ALL students are welcome and for ALL students this subject is free – as previously mentioned.

Information for Conditional Enrolment (CE) students

If you were told by MIBT to enrol in this subject, by letter, email or otherwise and/ or your name appears on the ACA 100 class list, then this subject is compulsory. This occurs when a student fails two or more subjects and/ or the Academic Committee decides that such a student needs to be enrolled in this subject to improve their study skills and methods. In this case, withdrawal is usually not possible.

If you are a CE student, then you have been given permission to continue study on the basis that you attend this subject and ALL subjects with a minimum of 80% attendance, that you hand in and complete all assignments and tests for all subjects and that you generally demonstrate that you are willing to make any changes necessary to improve your chances of passing this semester.

Students who do NOT abide by the above conditions, may find that they have to repeat ACA 100 and/ or any other subject they fail. Also, if a student does not attend ACA 100 classes regularly and/ or does not hand in assessment tasks, as well as completing tasks for other subjects, that student may be excluded from further study at MIBT.

CE students should be aware that MIBT does NOT wish to punish you by enrolling you in this free subject. MIBT has to provide a lecturer, classroom as well as other resources at its own cost. On the contrary, ACA 100 is an opportunity and CE students should treat it accordingly.

Information for Volunteers

If you are a student new to MIBT, you may have decided to volunteer to join this class. The same Class Roll/ List is used for all students, but for volunteers, attendance in ACA 100 is NOT compulsory. However, to gain the most from this subject, regular attendance in as many classes as possible can be helpful as a way of adapting to a new study environment, particularly at a tertiary level and particularly, although certainly not exclusively, if you are an international student.

Completion of assessment tasks is also voluntary and again, assessment is useful as a way of getting feedback regarding various study methods and language skills.

* The 80% minimum attendance rule still applies to international students regarding attendance in all other subjects.

Prescribed textbooks

*You will be required to purchase and **bring to each class session**, the following book:

Goldwasser & Notsis 2008 'Academic Communication: another magic bullet book', Cengage Publishing, Australia

* Please note that this is a recent publication and replaces the old prescribed textbook. **NO other textbook should be used in this subject!**

This book should be readily available from the MIBT bookshop. If it is not readily available, you should place the book on order immediately and advise your lecturer accordingly. The book is COMPULSORY and will be used in class sessions. In addition, students will be given at least one task based on the book. ALL chapters are important and helpful.

The week-by-week lecture plan gives you the relevant chapter for each topic covered in this subject. You will be expected to read ahead, i.e. read the chapter that will be covered in the next class session. This book is **COMPULSORY**.

Other resources

You will also be required to bring the following to each class session:

- A **2-ring folder**. **NO** other folder is acceptable.
- Plenty of lined writing paper or a lined exercise book/s. Unlined paper is **NOT ACCEPTABLE**.
- Black or blue pens – bring spares
- A dictionary

You should also buy **a small stapler, a 2-hole punch** and **some plastic cover sheets**, but these do not necessarily have to be brought to class.

Folder

Your folder should be labelled with your name, student number and a contact telephone number in case of loss. It's recommended that you keep separate folders for **each** of your **subjects**. As far as this subject is concerned, you should keep the following materials in your folder:

- Unit Outline
- Your own class notes –see below
- Assignments/ feedback
- Any memos

The above material should be kept in **chronological** (date) order.

COURSE NOTES AND CLASS NOTES

You will also be expected to take class notes in each session. Information about taking notes is covered in the prescribed textbook, but here are a few general points:

- Use **only** lined writing paper/ exercise book
- Write down the **subject, topic** and **date weekly** as written on the whiteboard
- Write more rather than less i.e. write down what the lecturer says as well as anything **written on the whiteboard** and/ or on any other **audiovisual materials e.g. overhead/s**

Your class notes should either be filed in **date order** in your **folder** if you are using loose-leaf paper or if you are writing in an exercise book, make sure that this book is also **labelled** with your **name, student number** and **contact telephone number**. Do **NOT** write on unlined paper. If you do, you will have to re-write your notes.

If you miss a class session and/ or are late, you will have missed information. You need to make sure you catch up by copying another student's notes and/ or asking what you have missed. Make sure you take notes from a student who attends regularly and punctually, one who takes clear and detailed notes.

It is **not recommended** that you either borrow or lend notes (or other study materials) to take home. If the borrower is ill and cannot be contacted, this will not be accepted as an excuse for incomplete tasks. If you need to catch up or help another student e.g. your study partner, make arrangements to do so at the College.

USING THE STUDENT PORTAL

Once you have your student identification card, you should access the Student Portal on a regular basis, first, because, the Portal contains general information which is important for all students and secondly, other lecturers may place their course notes on the Portal. This is **your** responsibility. In addition, your lecturer/s may email you regarding various aspects of your study and/ or you may choose to use the Portal to email your lecturer/s. Aim to check the Student Portal 2-3 times weekly.

* If you experience difficulties in accessing the Portal, ask another student to help you, or a computer teacher or advise MIBT Reception immediately.

Class Partner/s

In the first or second session, you will be asked to exchange names and contact details with at least two other students. These students will be your Academic Support 'partners.' The purpose of this partnership is:

- To support and encourage one another throughout the course
- To encourage you with your goals
- To help you to catch up in this subject i.e. if you miss a session, your partner/s can help you with class notes

Further details and explanation will be supplied in Weeks one or two. *If you arrive late, for example, in Week 3, make sure that you are introduced to another student/s.

Making the most of this subject

All students stand to gain the most from this subject if they are prepared to do the following:

- Attend classes regularly and punctually
- Read all class materials and complete all assessment tasks
- Keep an open mind about all topics
- Be willing to practice new ideas/theories and develop effective study strategies
- Be positive and change-oriented
- Be willing to overcome study barriers
- Make a firm commitment to give study first priority

Unit presentation / time commitment

All instruction will occur in the classroom. In addition to the classroom instructions, you will need approximately **2-4 hours per week** on a regular basis to do the following:

- Read the relevant textbook chapter
- Read and review other course material e.g. class notes
- File class notes in your folder
- Prepare assessment tasks

The time commitment is much less than that required for other subjects which is approximately 1-1 ½ hours per subject per day – minimum. More hours may be required if a) you are finding a subject difficult and/ or b) during assessment periods and/ or c) close to tests/ exams.

Groups

The number of groups depends on the number of students enrolled as well as other factors that may sometimes be beyond the control of your lecturer and/ or MIBT. A timetable will be set and students will have access to that timetable which will set out the day of the week, time/s and room number/s. Depending on the number of students (and other factors), there may be 2-4 groups. All attempts are made to ensure that there are no subject clashes, if possible. Any changes made by your lecturer and/ or MIBT regarding timetabling will be advised to you. Please ensure that you check the Portal and your email.

Assessment

There are **NO** tests or exams in this Unit. However, there are two assessment tasks as shown below. **Please note down the dates for submission carefully in your Diary and/ or Organizer.** The tasks including submission dates are also set out in the Week-by-Week plan.

1. Attendance:

CE students must meet a **minimal 80% attendance requirement**. Volunteers do not have to abide by this condition, BUT it is highly recommended that ALL students attend regularly.

2. Writing skills: Week 5

Students are required to write an assignment based on the new prescribed textbook. Task instructions will be given in Week 2.

3 Student Diary and Progress Interview with lecturer – Week 10

Students are required to keep a Study Diary from Week 3 until Week 10
And produce it during an in-class progress interview with the subject lecturer

- *The Lecturer/s reserve the right to change a task should there be factors that make it difficult to carry out the task, e.g. classroom numbers. In such a case, students will be advised in writing and given adequate notice to prepare a substitute task. The Lecturer also reserves the right to set in-class activities, individually and/ or in group.*

Why assessment is important

Assessment tasks are important for various reasons. First, completing tasks shows that a student has positive intentions and is motivated to study. More importantly, it allows your lecturer to learn more about your skills and to identify where you may need extra assistance and guidance by providing feedback. Whether you are a CE student or a Volunteer, it is strongly recommended that you complete as many assessment tasks as possible.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they get a copy of the task instructions even if they are absent.

Assessment criteria

It is important to follow task instructions AND to ask questions if instructions are unclear. Do NOT ask other students as they may also misunderstand information. ALWAYS ask your lecturer if you are in doubt. **Students are expected to follow the task criteria and produce work of a high standard, appropriate to tertiary study in Diploma Units.**

Submission of Tasks

Apart from tasks completed in class, assessment tasks should be handed in personally to your lecturer. Disks are **NOT** acceptable and assignments should **NOT** be sent by email. Print out your assignment early and keep a hard copy in case of loss. Electronic malfunctions do happen, but are not acceptable as excuses for late work. Written assignments must have the MIBT Cover Sheet and be identified. **UNSTAPLED** assignments are **NOT ACCEPTABLE**.

Late Assignments

Unless there are **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**, late assignments are **NOT** acceptable. Doing assignments and/ or Tests in other subjects is **NOT** considered **EXCEPTIONAL** – this is a normal part of study! Do **not** leave tasks until the last minute. This can result in a failure to read and/ or follow instructions carefully, poor proofreading and editing and reduce the quality of your work. This applies to **ALL** subjects.

Grading / Completion

Actual marks/grades do not form part of this subject. The following system will be used:

S	- Satisfactory
NS	- Not satisfactory
NA	- Not assessed i.e. student has not completed task

Conditional enrolment students must maintain a minimum **80% attendance record** in addition to completing the two set assessment tasks. If they fail to attend regularly and/ or do not complete their assessment tasks, depending on their other results, they may be required to repeat this subject. The MIBT Committee looks at students' attendance and results to determine whether a student should be allowed to continue their studies if progress is consistently unsatisfactory.

Volunteers do not have to complete assessment tasks, **but they are strongly encouraged to do so**. Lecturers cannot give individual feedback unless students do their tasks.

Changes to enrolment

- Enrolment changes can be made through the myMIBT student portal until 5.00 pm Friday of the second week of the semester.
- A unit can be dropped until the end of the fourth week (without penalty) and fees paid for the dropped unit will be credited to the next semester. After week four if a unit is dropped fees for that unit will be forfeited.
- Students who drop a unit after Week 4 will have 'W' (Withdrawn) recorded as their result in the unit.

- A unit dropped after Week 8 will be recorded as 'WN' (Withdrawn – Fail).
- A unit cannot be dropped in the final two teaching weeks of a semester.

* **Conditional enrolments** students cannot generally withdraw from this subject. Lecturers are in no position to withdraw students as this is not their role. **Volunteers** are encouraged not to withdraw from this Unit even if they later decide not to attend all class sessions. Once a student has withdrawn, he/ she is not permitted to attend classes.

Class Attendance

Attendance is an important element of a student's success in their studies and it is strongly recommended that regular attendance be maintained in all classes.

Attendance will be recorded in all sessions and **international** students need to be aware that if they fail to meet satisfactory attendance requirements, as set out by DIAC, they may be breaching their visa requirements.

Assignments in other subjects

As far as assignments for other subjects are concerned, it's preferable that you ask any questions of and/ or discuss any concerns regarding your tasks with your individual subject lecturer/s rather than asking me for help. First of all, your subject lecturer will have a better idea of what they expect from you and secondly, I don't have first-hand knowledge of all subjects.

Please read and, if necessary, re-read the contents of this Unit Outline **carefully**. If you have any questions and/ or concerns, please speak with me and/ or email me about these, sooner rather than later.

If you have any questions and/ or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me by email, either through the Student Portal or on IreneMIBT@aol.com. **If emailing me, please state your full name, subject and brief reason for your email.** I usually respond to emails within 1-2 days. If you do not receive a response and/ or your query is very urgent, you could try phoning MIBT and asking them to contact me. In this case, please also give your full name, subject and contact phone numbers.

NOTE. Please do not ask me to provide references for you. Lecturers are usually discouraged from doing so.

Also, please do not invite me to join your Address book/ Facebook/ Birthday book or anything similar. You are free and welcome to keep in contact with me, even after the semester finishes by using the email address in this Unit Outline. Thank you!

Semester timetable

Week (Monday)	Topics
1. 25 February	<p>Meet and greet session - introduction to subject, overview of Unit Outline including discussion of topics, course objectives and assessment tasks. Students will have an opportunity to exchange contact details with other students as a way of forming friendships and/ or study groups</p>
2. 2 March	<p>Critical thinking – Critical thinking is vital in all aspects of life including, in particular, tertiary studies. Learn the principles of critical thinking and strategies to become a more critical thinker including avoiding poor thinking practices. The link between critical thinking and academic studies is discussed.</p> <p>Task1 – Written assignment - Instructions given out and discussed</p> <p><i>Textbook: Chapter 2 –P10-16</i></p>
3. 9 March	<p>Language skills – Learn the importance of writing principles and how to improve your writing by using various skills such as word use, sentence and paragraph construction, logical and clear writing, structure of information, avoiding discriminatory language and slang, proofreading and editing</p> <p>Textbook: Chapter 2 –P16-24</p>

4. 16 March	<p>Academic writing skills – Academic writing is a vital part of tertiary study. Learn strategies for writing effectively including the principles of academic writing and how to respond to keywords and terms. Also, how to read textbooks and other sources more critically</p> <p>Textbook: Chapter 1 –P2-9</p>
5. 23 March	<p>Research skills – Everyone is a researcher. Research is particularly linked to tertiary studies. Learn the reasons why research is so important including strategies for undertaking research and how to use resources in assessment tasks. Also, how to undertake library searches.</p> <p>Textbook – Chapter 3 – P25-34</p> <p><i>* Task 1 due</i></p>
6. 30 March	<p>Referencing – Resources used must always be acknowledged to avoid plagiarism. We look at definitions of plagiarism, materials that may be plagiarised, consequences and in particular, how to use the Harvard referencing method</p> <p>Textbook –Chapters 6 and 7</p>
7 6 April	<p>Academic essays – Students are expected to write essays in assignments and also in tests and exams. We look at strategies for writing effective essays including brainstorming and responding to questions, structuring an essay and the three main parts of an essay</p> <p>Textbook: Chapter 4 – P35-47</p>
	<p>Thursday 9 April 2009 to Wednesday 15 April 2009 –</p> <p>EASTER BREAK</p>
8 20 April	<p>Working in groups – In the workplace, people are often expected to work in pairs or teams (groups). Students are also sometimes expected to work in groups, either in the classroom or outside of it including on assessment tasks. Learn how to work effectively with other students, including forming a group, electing a leader, discussing how to complete tasks and communicating effectively within a group</p> <p>Chapter 9 –P100-110</p>
9 27 April	<p>Oracy and speaking skills – The ability to speak fluently and persuasively is an extremely important skills for personal, business and study purposes. Learn some of the skills involved in improving speaking skills including in oral presentations</p> <p>Chapter 8 –P97-99</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lecturer may also use additional resources
10 4 May	<p>Task 2 due and in class Progress Interview with Lecturer</p>
11	<p>Studying for Tests and Exams – Since most subjects are assessed using at least one test and/ or exam, we look at how to prepare for tests and</p>

11 May	exams. This includes physical, mental and practical preparation, including checking timetables, checking test and exam regulations and how to use the exam process effectively by dividing it into three stages – reading, writing and proofreading. We also include stress management strategies <i>Textbook: Chapter 10-P111-127</i>
12 18 May	Final class before exams. Verification of results and return of uncollected assessment tasks. Final questions. Thank class and farewell students.

- **NOTE. No classes in Week 13 (25 May). This is Examination Week.**

** Topics will be covered using either the textbook and/ or additional materials such as overheads/ overheads and/ or discussion.

If a topic takes longer than a week to cover, the lecturer reserves the right to continue that topic in the following week and/ or make changes as appropriate but with minimal disruption to the weekly timetable (where possible). Students will always be kept informed of any important changes.

Semester 1 Census Date: Friday 20 March 2009

Easter Break: Classes finish on Wednesday 8 April 2009 at 5.30 p.m. and resume on Thursday 16 April 2009 at 8.30 a.m.

Results released on portal: Tuesday 9 June 2009