GAC014 Academic English III: Listening & Speaking Skills

GAC Academic English

What this module teaches

GAC014 develops critical listening, academic interaction, evaluation of arguments, oral presentations using relevant media and formal class seminars. Its education, medicine, legal-studies, political-studies, communications and future themes provide contexts for those skills. They do not prescribe a universal assessment weighting, ten-minute presentation or compulsory consensus in every task.

Your teaching centre supplies the actual brief, criteria and timing. A **seminar presentation** needs real delivery and interaction. The six accompanying sheets provide original written scripts, evidence records and rehearsal tasks. Their word ranges, analytic points, roles and timings are local practice conventions, not official GAC assessment rules. Printed-script checks do not replace reviewed audio or measure one-pass listening, pronunciation, vocal fluency or actual presentation duration.

Education: critical listening and argument structure

Critical listening tracks a claim, its support, its limits and unanswered questions. A **qualification** such as in this sample narrows the scope. A strong summary retains the qualification rather than changing after into because of.

Before a rehearsal, choose note headings suited to the question. Claim, evidence, limitation and next check work for an argument. On a permitted second reading, verify numbers, negatives and conditions. A confident voice does not strengthen the evidence, and a sentence without a hedge is not automatically an exaggerated claim.

> **Worked example.** Sixteen fictional volunteers used a teacher checklist and exchanged peer comments; twelve made a relevant revision. The sheet defines that revision as clarifying a claim or adding checklist-required support, not just correcting spelling. There is no checklist-only comparison or earlier revision rate. The record supports revisions after a combined activity, not an isolated causal effect of comments.

The remaining four did not meet the criterion; that does not establish they changed no words. A useful next comparison could keep the checklist and revision criteria consistent across groups. Limited evidence is not the same as no useful evidence, and a proposed comparison is not proof that the effect has been established.

Medicine: abstract discussion and precise quantities

An **abstract** discussion can concern access, fairness or evidence rather than one concrete object. Ask what the term means in the task before agreeing or disagreeing. Clarification should identify the uncertainty, then allow the speaker to explain it. The invented medical-communication examples here are language tasks, not clinical studies, health advice or authority to change care.

> **Worked example.** Five fictional volunteers each score ten on a notice-comprehension quiz before reading. Their after scores are nine, nine, nine, nine and twenty-four. The group total rises from fifty to sixty, so its mean rises from ten to twelve. Only one individual score rises and four fall. An average increase therefore does not establish that most people improved. The quiz also measures wording comprehension, not health, attendance, consent or treatment.

A separate fictional date-label check changes from 1% to 2%. The difference is one **percentage point**; relative to the initial rate, it is a doubling or 100% increase. Keep the measured outcome and denominator attached to either description. Different collections do not isolate a cause. Neither these formatting rates nor the quiz scores can be treated as clinical risks.

For discussion, acknowledge the contribution and correct the specific distinction: "Do you mean the mean score or the number of people improving?" Follow with a useful question about access or the design of a suitable comparison. Do not invent missing data to make the answer sound decisive.

Legal studies: relevance, validity, reliability and bias

When evaluating an argument, ask whether the reasons support its conclusion. For a measurement, **Validity** concerns whether the evidence measures the intended thing. **Reliability** concerns consistency under suitable repeated conditions. It cannot be inferred merely because a result comes from an official-looking page.

Bias can arise through recruitment, wording, measurement or selective reporting. Describe the possible mechanism and what could check it. A speaker's role or personal stake may affect emphasis without making every statement false. This module's invented procedure examples are reasoning practice, not actual law or statements of legal rights.

> **Worked example.** An invented library wants all five hundred students' views about its review procedure. Twenty voluntary website respondents answer "How helpful is our fair new review procedure?" Sixteen choose helpful. This is 80% of those respondents, not observed support from 80% of all students. Helpful is also not a measurement of every disputed case's fairness.

Website-only self-selection may omit other views; fair and helpful frame the question positively. There is no repeat or comparable measurement, so reliability is unestablished. Do not say it would probably repeat or that every response is false. A stronger review could recruit through accessible routes, use neutral questions matching the intended judgement and examine consistency under suitable comparable conditions. Each change addresses a concern without guaranteeing perfect representation or validity.

Political studies: priorities, viewpoints and supported recommendations

Represent a viewpoint fairly before judging it. In the fictional community-hall case, quiet access matters to residents without a calm home space, while group activities also need a room. Neither viewpoint means banning the other activity everywhere. State the comparison criteria explicitly: access, noise, demand or setup effort.

A measured preference and a priority need different support. Twenty-four of forty voluntary respondents choosing quiet study is a bounded empirical result. The value placed on quiet access is a judgement about what should matter. The count alone does not settle how much weight to give either group's needs.

Worked comparison. The hall serves two hundred residents. Scaling 24/40 to that population gives a calculation, not an observed census or proof that 120 residents want quiet-only use. A quiet-only option prioritises quiet access; a group-only option prioritises shared activities. A scheduled-use trial could explore both needs, but actual time-slot demand, noise and switching effort remain unmeasured.

Ask what evidence could address those questions and give a conditional recommendation. The original script approves no schedule. Record suggestions and priorities without attributing motives or claiming that an untried schedule has already solved the problem.

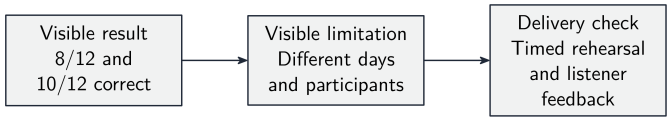
Communications: oral presentations with relevant digital media

Digital media should clarify the point you explain aloud. Use readable headings, contrast, clear labels and a text description where available. Colour alone should not carry the distinction. Include the quantity, denominator, scope and source. Use real source credit for real evidence and label these supplied classroom records as fictional; do not make them look like published evaluations.

Worked presentation plan. In the original notice example, eight of twelve first-day volunteers answer the event-time question correctly, compared with ten of twelve different second-day volunteers viewing a revised notice. That is two additional correct responses, not a doubling. Different people and days do not isolate the revision's effect, and one event-time question does not measure overall understanding of the event.

1. First slide: the question and the notice change being considered.
2. Second slide: a clear table retaining 8/12 and 10/12, with group labels and the fictional source.
3. Final slide: visible comparison limits and a proposed next check.

Explain both the result and uncertainty aloud. Do not hide the qualification in unreadable print. Prepare brief speaker notes and a usable static backup. Time the actual rehearsal and ask a listener to restate the result and its limit; written length alone does not establish duration or comprehension.



The future: conduct a formal class seminar and synthesise honestly

A formal seminar connects preparation, evidence-based contributions, questions and an accurate synthesis around a focused task. Roles can include chair, prepared speakers and recorder; their exact allocation and timing depend on the actual brief. Protect discussion time instead of treating several consecutive speeches as the whole seminar.

Worked seminar brief. The fictional equipment log records forty requests and six double bookings across two weeks. Waiting time, abandoned attempts and unique-user counts are missing. No interface trial has occurred. The question is what a limited trial should measure before wider adoption, not whether an untested interface has already succeeded.

The operations speaker proposes recording conflicts; the access speaker proposes waiting times and abandoned attempts. A synthesis connects them: fewer recorded conflicts may coexist with access difficulties. The group explicitly agrees to recommend measuring conflicts and access difficulties, while duration and a numerical success threshold remain undecided. Keep specific proposed indicators distinct from the broader agreed categories.

Fielding a question means responding to the question actually asked. Clarify an unclear term, answer from available evidence and identify what remains unknown. A short restatement can help; do not repeat the whole talk to avoid the question. When the record covers a limited period, it cannot establish an unmeasured long-run outcome.

Close with what was agreed, what remains unresolved and what planning comes next. Invite correction from the recorder and participants. Silence is not consensus, a recommendation is not rollout approval, and criteria should be defined before observing trial results. An honest unresolved decision need not mean every participant failed the task. For a real seminar, conduct the session, time it and preserve an accurate record of the interaction.

Vocabulary card meanings

seminar presentation: A short talk given in a small university-style class. Critical listening: Listening in order to judge the strength of a speaker's reasons. abstract: Existing as an idea rather than as a physical object. digital media: Audio, video and text published through computers or phones. Fielding a question: Answering a question from the audience during or after a talk. percentage point: The unit for the difference between two percentages, not a relative change.