

Course Companion

# GAC Academic English

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Every topic handout in one volume

全部专题讲义合集

exercises.lol

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# GAC001 Academic English I: Listening and Speaking Skills

GAC Academic English

## What this module is, and how it is marked

You hear a change to a club meeting, explain a plan to classmates, or help a group choose a room. In each situation, useful English connects a message to an action. A listener needs the right details. A speaker needs a clear point and a chance to check understanding.

This guide supports GAC001-aligned listening and speaking practice. Its six **themes** 主题 are communicating, countries and cultures, modern lifestyles, journeys and travel, living things, and technology. The theme gives you something to talk about; the language skill is the focus.

Your teacher's current task brief explains the assessment you must complete. It may include a **listening test** 听力测试, a **short formal presentation** 正式演讲, a **discussion** 讨论, or **coursework** 平时作业. Read that brief for the time, permitted materials, criteria and submission rules. This guide does not replace it or promise a score for a particular speaking habit.

The six companion exercise sheets are original practice, not official GAC assessments. Their written tasks use printed messages, planning records and model responses. They help you check meaning and plan speech. Reading a transcript does not test your ability to hear a recording. A typed answer cannot establish pronunciation, pace or spoken delivery. Use teacher-reviewed audio and actual speaking practice for those skills.

For a written practice answer, check three things: does it answer the question, does it preserve the supplied evidence, and can another person follow it? For a spoken task, ask a listener what they understood and compare their account with your intended message.

## Communicating: text types and purpose

A **spoken text type** 口语语篇类型 is a form of talk, such as an announcement, conversation, interview or lecture. Its **purpose** 目的 is what it tries to achieve. Its **audience** 听众 is the people it addresses. Its **formality** 正式程度 depends on the relationship and situation.

**Formal** 正式 speech often uses carefully organised language. **Informal** 非正式 speech may use contractions and short turns. Neither form is always better. A formal speaker

can still say “we’ll”, and a friendly conversation can give a precise instruction. Decide from several features, not one word alone.

An announcement usually gives information to a group. A conversation allows people to ask and respond. Compare these original examples:

*Announcement:* “Tuesday’s reading club will meet in the library seminar room instead of room 204. The start remains 15:30.”

*Conversation:* “Are we still meeting at half past three?” “Yes, but use the library seminar room this week.”

Both give the same change. The second also shows a listener checking it. When you identify a text type, explain which features support your choice.

**Signposts** 提示语 such as “first”, “however” and “finally” help organise a message. They can show sequence, a contrast or a final point. They do not make every statement that follows equally important.



### Worked example: a condition is not a general deadline

Suppose the announcement also says: “If you need step-free access, email the coordinator by Monday lunchtime.” The deadline applies to students who need that access. It is not a deadline for everyone to join the club. A useful reminder preserves the condition: “Students who need step-free access should email by Monday lunchtime.”

A weak reminder says “Everyone must email on Monday.” It changes who must act and makes the timing less precise. Ask: who, what, when, where, and under what condition?

### Try it

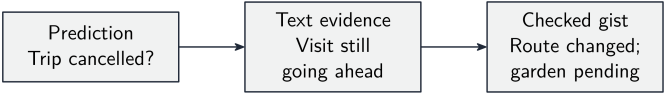
A tutor says: “The workshop remains on Friday. Only students borrowing a school tablet need to collect it on Thursday.” Must every student collect a tablet? No. The collection instruction applies only to borrowers; the workshop day has not changed.

## Countries and cultures: listening for meaning

**Listening for gist** 泛听 means finding the overall point. **Listening for detail** 精听 means finding information needed for a particular question or action. A useful listener moves between these two purposes.

Before a recording, read the available task information. **Predict** 预测 likely topics or the kind of answer needed, such as a time or place. A prediction prepares your attention; it is not evidence that your guess is correct. When the speaker gives a different detail, use what was actually said.

**Context clues** 上下文线索 are the surrounding words and situation that help explain a message. They can narrow possible meanings, but they do not always establish an exact definition. Mark an uncertain word and continue following the message. If a second listening is allowed, return to that point. In a live conversation, ask for clarification.



### Worked example: a changed route does not mean cancellation

A museum trip notice says the river path is blocked by a fallen tree. Visitors should use the hill entrance. The trip still goes ahead. An outdoor garden visit may be cancelled if the weather is unsafe; staff will decide on Saturday morning. Indoor galleries remain available.

The gist is “the trip continues with a changed route and a possible change to one activity”. “The museum is closed” is not supported. “The garden visit is definitely cancelled” turns a possibility into a fact.

For detail, separate the times: meet at the school gate at 08:40; the bus leaves at 08:50; arrival is planned for 09:30. A reminder that gives only 08:50 may cause students to miss the meeting time.

### Try it

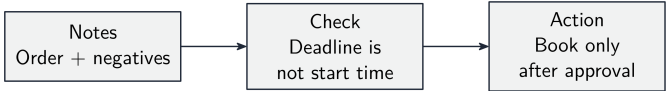
A speaker says: “We might move the discussion indoors if it rains.” Which part is certain? There is a plan for a discussion and a possible indoor location. Rain and the move are not established by this sentence. Preserve “might” and “if” in your account.

## Modern lifestyles: responding and following instructions

**Following instructions** 遵循指令 means carrying out the required actions and respecting their conditions. Some actions must happen in order. Others are separate requirements. Listen for words such as “before”, “after approval”, “only if” and “once”.

**Note-taking** 记笔记 is selective. Record the action, important details, conditions and questions. Short phrases and clear abbreviations can help, but do not shorten so much that you cannot understand your own notes later. A useful note might be “send tutor Thu 16:00; wait approval BEFORE booking”.

**Clarifying** 澄清 means asking about what is uncertain. Name the problem: “Is 16:00 the form deadline or the meeting time?” **Restating** 转述 means saying the message again in your own words so the speaker can check it. Neither requires pretending you understood everything.



**Worked example: permission changes the sequence**

A project briefing gives these instructions: download the blank form; save your own copy with the group code; complete the transport and access sections; send it to the tutor by Thursday at 16:00; wait for approval before booking a vehicle. Do not edit the shared blank form.

A suitable checklist preserves the private copy, both sections, the deadline and the approval condition. Booking a vehicle immediately after submission is a mistake: submission and approval are different events.

If the briefing time is shown only on a separate notice that you do not have, mark “briefing time: check notice”. Do not turn the form deadline into a meeting time. An honest gap in your notes is safer than a confident invented detail.

**Try it**

A teacher says: “Send me the equipment list today. Buy the materials only after I approve the list.” A student sends the list and immediately buys materials. What is missing? The teacher’s approval. Sending a request does not supply it.

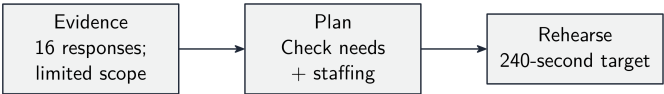
**Journeys and travel: preparing a short presentation**

Start with the actual task: your purpose, audience, available time, permitted notes and expected evidence. Then plan an **introduction** 引言 that identifies the question, a **body** 主体 that develops it, and a **conclusion** 结论 that states the next step or main finding.

Prepare **transitions** 过渡 between points: “The survey gives one view. However, it does not tell us about staffing.” A transition should show a real relationship. Adding

“therefore” does not make a conclusion valid.

A note card may contain a point, its evidence and a reminder of its limit. Practise aloud with a timer. Measure your own talk rather than guessing that a written script will always take a fixed extra time. If it runs long, remove repetition or reduce scope while keeping essential evidence and limits. Check the task rules before choosing how much to read from notes.



**Worked example: a small poll is a starting point**

A class poll on later library closing receives 16 responses: 10 prefer later hours, 4 prefer current hours, and 2 have no preference. You do not know what nonresponders think. You have no staffing or cost information, and no change has been approved.

A careful claim is “Ten of the sixteen respondents preferred later hours.” “Everybody wants later hours” goes beyond the evidence. A reasonable next step is to ask nonresponders and discuss staffing with the librarian.

For a four-minute classroom practice talk, one possible plan is 30 seconds opening, 60 seconds evidence, 90 seconds limits and options, 40 seconds next steps, and 20 seconds conclusion. This totals 240 seconds. It is an example allocation, not an official GAC timing rule. If rehearsal takes 4 minutes 40 seconds, it is 40 seconds over that practice limit. Cut repeated points and rehearse again.

**Try it**

Why should a speaker keep the sentence about nonresponders even when shortening the talk? It limits what the poll can show. Removing it may make a small set of responses sound like the whole class.

**Living things: accuracy in interaction**

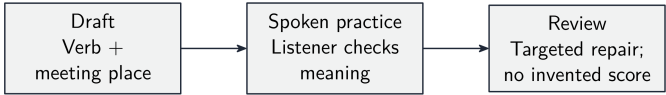
**Fluency** 流利度 is connected speech that a listener can follow. **Accuracy** 准确性 includes using language forms that express the intended meaning. A practice activity may focus on one, but both support communication. A fluent answer can contain a wrong detail; an accurate sentence can still be hard to follow in a long, unclear explanation.

**Word stress** 重音 is the stronger beat in a word. For example, the noun “record” commonly has first-syllable stress, and the verb has second-syllable stress. **Intonation**

语调 is the pattern of voice pitch across a phrase. A yes-no question can use rising or falling-rising pitch depending on its meaning and context. Do not use “all questions rise” as a rule.

**Self-correction** 自我纠正 can repair meaning: “He go—he goes to the lab on Tuesdays.” A brief repair may help the listener. Constantly restarting every minor error can interrupt the message. There is no automatic score increase for every correction.

**Turn-taking** 话轮转换 gives people opportunities to speak and respond. “Can I add a point about the room?” can open a turn. After someone responds, deal with their point rather than reciting your next prepared sentence.



**Worked example: separate a wrong detail from an unknown cause**

The intended message names lab 2. A partner’s written note says lab 3. The note shows a mismatch, but it does not establish whether pronunciation, attention, noise or writing caused it. Without reviewed audio, you cannot grade the speaker’s sounds from the typed sentence alone.

A practical repair is “The meeting is in lab 2, not lab 3. Could you say the room back to me?” The listener’s response checks the detail. Practise the sentence aloud, then review the actual recording or delivery with your teacher if pronunciation remains a concern.

**Try it**

During a connected-speaking practice, a learner notices a minor grammar error. Must they stop the whole talk and restart? No. They can make a brief repair if meaning needs it, continue, and review selected errors afterwards. The exercise purpose and listener’s needs guide the choice.

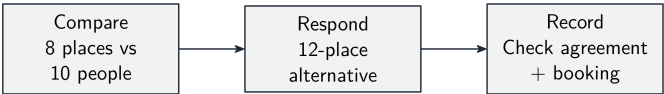
**Technology: the formal discussion**

**Support a claim** 支持观点 with relevant evidence and a reason connecting it to the decision. Identify limits. One person’s preference is evidence of that person’s view, not proof that everyone agrees.

**Bring others in** 邀请他人发言 with a real invitation: “Mei, how does the room capacity affect your choice?” Listen to the answer. Polite disagreement can still be

clear: “I understand why quiet matters, but this room holds only eight and we expect ten.”

A **consensus** 共识 is a shared decision that the group has actually reached. Silence alone does not prove agreement. Ask participants to respond, summarise the proposed choice, and check for remaining concerns. A discussion decision is also different from permission or a confirmed booking.



**Worked example: a preference is not a completed decision**

Ten students are expected at a study meeting. The quiet library room holds eight, and its opening time is unconfirmed. Room 204 holds twelve, with a supervisor available until 17:00. The exact meeting start has not been set and neither room is booked. The task permits a choice between these two rooms.

A useful contribution is: “I prefer room 204 because it can hold ten people. We still need to check the start time and booking process. Dan, you preferred the library. Does its capacity change your view?” This connects the supplied numbers to the decision, keeps the outstanding checks, and invites a response.

“Everyone agrees, so I have booked it” invents both agreement and a booking. “Let’s use another room” leaves the two-room task unless the group obtains permission to change it. Speaking for most of the time does not itself make a useful contribution.

**Try it**

The group favours room 204, but one participant has not answered. What should happen before calling the decision shared? Invite that participant’s view and check whether anyone still objects. Then confirm the booking procedure and timing. A good discussion leaves the group with a decision it can explain and actions it can verify.

# GAC002 Academic English I: Reading and Writing Skills

GAC Academic English

## What this module is, and how it is marked

GAC002 is the reading and writing half of Academic English at Level I, over the same six themes as GAC001. Again the theme is the material; the skills are what carry the marks.

Assessment is written and continuous: **reading tasks** 阅读任务, several pieces of **writing** 写作 built up over the semester, and **coursework** 平时作业. The final piece is usually a short **essay** 论文 that has to plan and connect ideas rather than list them.

- **Plagiarism** 抄袭 is dealt with in this module as content, because western universities treat it as a serious offence rather than a formatting mistake.
- △ Marks are for structure and accuracy together. A well-organised text in imperfect English beats perfect sentences in no order.

## Communicating: reading skills

Academic reading is not reading every word from the start. It is choosing a technique for a purpose.

- **Skimming** 略读 is reading fast for the general idea: title, first and last paragraph, the first sentence of each paragraph in between.
- **Scanning** 查读 is hunting a page for one item — a date, a name, a figure — while ignoring everything else.
- **Close reading** 精读 is slow reading of a short passage for exact meaning, and it is what an argument deserves.
- Choose by purpose: skim to decide whether a source is useful, scan to find the number, read closely to quote it.
- The **topic sentence** 主题句 usually opens a paragraph and states what it is about. Reading only the topic sentences of a long text gives you its shape in a minute.

## Countries and cultures: vocabulary in context

You cannot look up every unknown word, and you are not expected to.

- **Context clues** 上下文线索 come first: the rest of the sentence, an example after a colon, a contrast marked by *but* or *however*.
- **Word parts** 词根词缀 carry meaning. *Bio-* is life, *-logy* is the study of, *un-* reverses, *-able* means can be done. One prefix unlocks a family of words.
- The **part of speech** 词性 constrains the meaning. If the word sits after *the*, it is a noun, whatever else you know about it.
- An **English-English dictionary** 英英词典 is the module's tool of choice, because a definition in English teaches usage and collocation that a translation hides.
- △ Do not trust a translation app for an academic word. It gives a synonym, not a register, and the wrong register is visible to a marker instantly.

**Worked example.** "The city's water supply proved *precarious*: a single dry summer emptied the reservoir."

The colon introduces evidence, and the evidence is a failure after one dry summer. So *precarious* means unstable or easily lost. The word was never looked up, and the guess is supported by the sentence, which is exactly the marked skill.

## Modern lifestyles: sentences that link ideas

A complex idea needs a sentence built to hold it.

- A **simple sentence** 简单句 has one clause. A **compound sentence** 并列句 joins two equal clauses with *and*, *but*, *so*. A **complex sentence** 复合句 joins a main clause to a subordinate one with *because*, *although*, *when*, *which*.
- **Subordination** 从属 shows which idea matters: *Although the survey was small, the result was clear* puts the weight on the result.
- **Connectives** 连接词 signal the relationship: *however* (contrast), *therefore* (consequence), *moreover* (addition), *for instance* (example).
- △ A **run-on sentence** 流水句 joins clauses with commas alone. Use a full stop, a semicolon, or a connective.
- Vary the length. Every sentence long is as hard to read as every sentence short.

## Journeys and travel: the paragraph

The paragraph is the unit of academic writing, and it has parts that are marked.

- A **topic sentence** states the paragraph's single idea. One idea per paragraph, always.
- **Supporting sentences** 支撑句 develop it with explanation, evidence or examples.
- A **concluding sentence** 结尾句 closes the idea or turns it towards the next paragraph.

- **Cohesion** 衔接 is what makes sentences feel joined: pronouns pointing back, repeated key nouns, connectives that fit.
- **Unity** 统一性 means every sentence serves the topic sentence. A sentence that does not belong in another paragraph, or nowhere.

**Worked example.** *Public transport in the city has improved sharply.* (topic) *The new metro line opened in 2021 and now carries 400,000 people a day.* (evidence) *Bus routes were redrawn to feed the stations rather than to compete with them.* (evidence) *As a result, the average commute is eleven minutes shorter than it was.* (conclusion)

Four sentences, one idea, each doing a different job.

## Living things: plagiarism and how to avoid it

This unit exists because the rule is cultural as much as academic, and because breaking it unknowingly still counts as breaking it.

- **Plagiarism** is presenting someone else’s words or ideas as your own. Copying without a citation, translating without a citation, and buying work are all the same offence.
- **Quoting** 引用原文 uses the exact words in quotation marks, with a citation.
- **Paraphrasing** 改写 restates an idea in your own words and sentence structure — and still needs a citation, because the idea is borrowed.
- **Summarising** 概括 compresses a longer text to its main points, and needs a citation too.
- A **citation** 引用 in the text points to a full entry in the **reference list** 参考文献表.
- △ Changing a few words is not paraphrasing. If the sentence shape survives, it is still the source’s sentence.

**Worked example.** Source: "Rising sea temperatures have accelerated coral bleaching across the Great Barrier Reef since 2016."

*Not acceptable:* "Increasing sea temperatures have sped up coral bleaching across the Great Barrier Reef since 2016." — words swapped, structure identical, no citation.

*Acceptable:* "Since 2016, coral on the Great Barrier Reef has bleached faster, and warmer water is the cause (Hughes, 2018)." — new structure, new words, credited.

## Technology: planning a short essay

The last unit puts the parts together into one piece of continuous writing.

- **Analyse the question** 审题 first. Underline the command word — *discuss, compare, evaluate* — because it decides the shape of the whole answer.
- **Brainstorm then select** 筛选. Write more ideas than you need, then cut to the three that can be supported.
- **Outline** 提纲 before writing: one line per paragraph, in order. Reordering an outline costs a minute; reordering a finished essay costs an evening.
- The **introduction** 引言 gives context and states the **thesis** 论点 — your answer to the question, in one sentence.
- The **conclusion** 结论 answers the question and adds no new evidence.
- **Synthesis** 综合 means combining sources into your own argument rather than describing them one after another. It is the skill that separates a Level I essay from a school report.

**Worked example.** Outline for “Discuss the effects of smartphones on student study habits.”

1. Introduction: phones are universal among students; thesis — they help access and hurt attention, and the balance depends on how study is organised.
2. Access: material, dictionaries, group coordination.
3. Attention: notification interruption and the cost of resuming a task.
4. What decides which wins: planned use versus constant availability.
5. Conclusion: answer the question, no new evidence.

Five lines, written before any prose. The essay is now a matter of expanding each one, and the argument cannot wander because the plan already answers the question.

# GAC007 Academic English II: Listening and Speaking Skills

GAC Academic English

## What this module is, and how it is marked

GAC007 is Academic English II, listening and speaking. It repeats the shape of GAC001 at a higher level: the units are still themes, and the skills are still what carry the marks — but the tasks now assume you can already follow a straightforward talk.

Assessment is again spoken and continuous: a **listening test** 听力测试, a **presentation** 演讲 using digital media, participation in **discussion**, and **coursework**.

- The new demands are **note-taking under pressure**, **describing data aloud**, and holding a discussion rather than contributing to one.
- △ Describing a graph in English is a specific skill with its own vocabulary, and it appears in every Level II and Level III assessment in some form.

## People and society: analysing spoken text types

- At Level I you named the text type. Now you **compare** two, and analyse the **speech functions** 言语功能 inside them: informing, persuading, hedging, conceding.
- A **hedge** 模糊限制语 softens a claim: *tends to, in most cases, appears to*. Academic speakers hedge constantly, and hearing it is part of hearing the meaning.
- **Register** 语域 shifts within one talk. A lecturer moves between formal exposition and informal aside, and the aside is often where the exam question is.

## Living environments: listening skills and strategies

- **Selective listening** 选择性听力 at this level means holding a structure in mind while details arrive, rather than catching everything.
- **Inference** 推断: what is implied but not said. *That approach was popular in the nineties* usually means it is not now.
- **Discourse markers** 语篇标记 signal the turn ahead: *having said that, on the other hand, which brings me to*.

**Worked example.** You hear: "The scheme worked well in the first year — although, having said that, the funding was unusually generous."

The inference is that later years were worse, and the cause was money. Neither is stated. The marks in a Level II listening test sit in exactly this kind of question.

## Work and business: note-taking and summarising

- **Note-taking** at speed uses abbreviation, symbols and indentation to show structure.
- **Summarising** 概括 aloud afterwards is the assessed part: two or three sentences that keep the shape of what you heard.
- Keep the speaker's **hierarchy** 层级: what was the main claim, what supported it, what was an aside.
- △ A summary that lists every detail in order has not summarised. Selection is the skill.

## Health science: describing data aloud

- Name the **chart type** 图表类型 first: a bar chart, a line graph, a pie chart, a table.
- Give the **axes and units** before any number, so the audience knows what they are hearing.
- Use the language of trend: *rises sharply, levels off, fluctuates, falls steadily, peaks at, bottoms out*.
- Quantify with approximation: *roughly a third, just under 40%, around double*.

**Worked example.** "This line graph shows household energy use in kilowatt-hours per month across one year. Use rises sharply from October, peaks at about 780 in January, then falls steadily to a low of roughly 300 in June."

Type, axes, units, shape, then the numbers. That order is the marked structure, and it works in every data question in the programme.

## Processes and production: explaining a process

- A **process** 过程 description is sequential, and its marks are in the connectives: *first, once that is complete, this then allows, finally*.
- Use the **passive voice** 被动语态 where the agent does not matter: *the sample is heated*, not *we heat the sample*.
- Signal each stage before describing it, so a listener can count the stages as they arrive.

## The environment: leading and encouraging discussion

- At Level II you are expected to **encourage** discussion, not only join it.
- Ask questions that open rather than close: *What would change if...* beats *Do you agree?*
- **Summarise the state of the discussion** periodically: *So we agree on the cause but not the remedy*. That single move is scored, and few students make it.
- Manage the time. A discussion task that reaches no conclusion because two people argued for nine minutes has failed for everyone in it.

## GAC008 Academic English II: Reading and Writing Skills

GAC Academic English

### What this module is, and how it is marked

GAC008 is Academic English II, reading and writing. Where GAC002 built the paragraph, this module builds the researched text: reading critically, avoiding plagiarism in practice, and citing sources properly.

Assessment is written and continuous, and the final piece is usually a short researched essay with a **reference list** rather than a personal one.

- **Information literacy** 信息素养 is a named outcome here: selecting appropriate research material and referencing it accurately.
- △ Referencing is now marked directly, not merely expected. An essay with good ideas and no citations loses marks it cannot recover.

### People and society: features of academic text types

- Academic writing has recognisable **features** 特征: an impersonal voice, hedged claims, defined terms, evidence before conclusion.
- **Nominalisation** 名词化 turns a process into a noun — *we investigated* becomes *the investigation* — which is why academic prose feels dense.
- Identify the **genre** 体裁 before you write: a report, an essay, a case study and a review each have a different shape and a different reader.

### Places where people live and work: reading for argument

- Distinguish a **claim** 论断 from the **evidence** that supports it. Most weak reading treats both as facts.
- Find the author's **stance** 立场: what do they want you to accept, and where do they hedge?
- Mark the **counter-argument** 反驳 if there is one. A text that never concedes anything is usually persuasion rather than analysis.

**Worked example.** "Although early trials were small, three subsequent studies found the same effect, which suggests the result is robust."

Claim: the result is robust. Evidence: three studies replicating. Concession: the early trials were small. Hedge: *suggests*.

Reading a sentence this way — four labels, one sentence — is the skill the unit is built on.

## Doing business: vocabulary and idiom

- **Decode unknown vocabulary and idiom** from context, word parts and grammar, as in GAC002 but now in denser text.
- **Collocation** 词语搭配 matters as much as meaning: you *conduct* research, *draw* a conclusion, *raise* a question. The wrong partner word reads as non-native even when the meaning is right.
- Record new terms with a real sentence, not a translation. The sentence carries the collocation.

## Human health: sentences and cohesion

- Level II expects **complex sentences** used deliberately: subordination to show which idea matters, not to sound advanced.
- **Cohesive devices** 衔接手段 join sentences: reference words, substitution, ellipsis, and connectives that fit the logic.
- △ A paragraph stuffed with *however*, *moreover* and *furthermore* is not cohesive. It is signposting relationships that are not there, and a marker notices.

## Human progress: research and synthesis

- **Synthesis** combines several sources into one argument of your own.
- The test of synthesis: could a reader tell which sentence came from which source? If yes, you have summarised in sequence rather than synthesised.
- Group sources by **idea**, not by author. One paragraph per idea, citing whoever supports it.

**Worked example.** Two sources agree that street trees cool a city; one adds that the effect needs irrigation in dry months.

*Not synthesis:* "Li (2020) says trees cool cities. Chen (2021) says the same. Wang (2022) says they need water."

*Synthesis:* "Street trees measurably cool a city (Li, 2020; Chen, 2021), although the effect depends on irrigation in exactly the dry months when cooling matters most (Wang, 2022)."

One sentence, three sources, and a relationship between them that no single source stated.

## Man-made environmental issues: referencing and information literacy

- A **citation** points to a full entry in the **reference list**. Both are marked.
- Use one **referencing style** 引用格式 consistently. Which one matters far less than consistency.
- **Evaluate** a source before citing it: authority, currency, and whether it is primary or secondary.
- △ Citing a source you have not read, because another author cited it, is a **secondary citation** 转引, and it must be labelled as one.

# GAC014 Academic English III: Listening & Speaking Skills

GAC Academic English

## What this module is, and how it is marked

GAC014 is Academic English III, listening and speaking, and it is the last English module before university. Its six units are the subjects a university actually argues about: education, medicine, law, politics, communications, the future.

Assessment is the heaviest of the three levels. A typical set is a **listening and group discussion** with a consensus to reach, a **listening skills test**, a **seminar presentation** 研讨课展示 with follow-up questions, and **coursework**.

- The seminar is the new thing. You present for about ten minutes, then **lead a discussion** about what you presented, and both halves are marked.
- △ You are now expected to **evaluate** what you hear — to judge validity, reliability and bias — not only to understand it.

## Education: critical listening

- **Critical listening** 批判性倾听 asks what a speaker is claiming, what supports it, and what they have left out.
- Separate **evidence** from **assertion** while listening, in real time. Most speakers mix them.
- Listen for **qualification** 限定: *in this sample, under these conditions, so far*. A claim without qualification is usually a claim being oversold.

## Medicine: abstract topics and precision

- Level III topics are **abstract** 抽象的: risk, consent, fairness, trade-offs. The vocabulary is ordinary; the reasoning is not.
- Say what you mean precisely. *Most patients improved* and *patients improved on average* are different claims, and the difference is examinable.
- Handle **numbers** aloud with care: a rise from 1% to 2% is a doubling and a one-point rise, and which you say frames the whole argument.

## Legal studies: validity, reliability and bias

- **Validity** 效度 asks whether a study measured what it claimed to measure.
- **Reliability** 信度 asks whether it would give the same result again.
- **Bias** is systematic error in one direction — in sampling, in measurement, or in the reporting.
- A source can be reliable and invalid: a badly worded survey question returns the same wrong answer every time.

**Worked example.** "A survey of visitors to a hospital website found 78% support for the new appointment system."

Validity: it measures the view of people who use the website, not of patients. Reliability: it would probably repeat. Bias: sampling — the people most affected by a digital system are the least likely to be surveyed by one.

Naming all three, in that order, is the marked answer.

## Political studies: presenting with digital media

- A Level III presentation uses **digital media** 数字媒体 as evidence, not decoration: a chart you interpret, a clip you analyse, a document you quote.
- Everything shown needs a **source on the slide**, and everything quoted needs a citation.
- △ Choose neutral, well documented topics for this unit — public health, urban policy, education systems, the environment. The skill assessed is the analysis, and a topic that invites heat rather than evidence works against you.

## Communications: the seminar

- A **seminar** presents an argument and then **defends** it in discussion.
- Prepare the argument, then prepare the three strongest objections and your answers.
- **Fielding a question** 应对提问 is scored: restate it, answer it, and say what you cannot answer.
- Bring the discussion back when it drifts: *That connects to my second point, which was...*

**Worked example.** Two responses to the same hard question.

*Weak:* a long restatement of the presentation, hoping the question dissolves.

*Strong:* "That is a fair point about cost. My data covers the first two years only, so I cannot speak to the long run — but within that window the saving was consistent, and here is why I think it holds."

The second concedes the limit, keeps the claim inside it, and gives a reason. That is a Level III answer, and it is the same move an academic makes at a conference.

## The future: consensus and closing

- Group tasks at this level require a **consensus** with reasons, not just a vote.
- Track what has been agreed and what has not, aloud, so the group knows where it stands.
- Close on time. An unfinished discussion is marked as an unfinished task, whatever was said in it.

# GAC015 Academic English III: Reading & Writing Skills

GAC Academic English

## What this module is, and how it is marked

GAC015 is the last written English module, and its output is an in-depth academic essay built from sources you have found, judged and combined yourself.

Assessment: an **annotated bibliography** 注释性参考书目, a substantial **essay** 论文 with a reference list, reading tasks, and **coursework**. The essay is the largest single piece of writing in the programme.

- The essay is marked on **argument**, not on coverage. A well-supported narrow claim beats a broad description of everything you read.
- △ Referencing is now assumed. Errors in it cost marks that the content cannot win back.

## Issues in education: critical and analytical reading

- **Critical reading** 批判性阅读 asks what the author wants you to accept, what they offer for it, and what they leave out.
- **Analytical** 分析性 reading breaks an argument into its parts: claim, evidence, warrant, and the assumption joining them.
- The **assumption** 假设 is where most academic disagreement actually lives, and it is almost never stated.

**Worked example.** "Class sizes should be cut, because smaller classes raise attainment."

Claim: cut class sizes. Evidence: smaller classes raise attainment. Assumption: the money spent doing so could not raise attainment more some other way.

Nobody wrote the assumption down, and it is the thing an examiner wants you to notice.

## Issues in medicine: evaluating and referencing sources

- **Select, evaluate and reference** — the three verbs of the module, in that order.

- Prefer a **peer-reviewed** 同行评审 source where one exists, and say when you could not find one.
- Record the citation as you read, not afterwards. This is the same rule as GAC002 and it is still where accidental plagiarism starts.

## Legal issues: building an argument from data

- An **argument** is a claim plus reasons a reader can check, in an order that leads somewhere.
- Data does not speak. *Crime fell 8%* becomes an argument only when you say what it is evidence for, and against what alternative explanation.
- Handle a **counter-argument** properly: state it at its strongest, then answer it. A counter-argument stated weakly is a signal to the marker that you could not answer the strong version.

## Political issues: the annotated bibliography

- An **annotation** 注释 is not a summary. It summarises, then **judges**: how reliable, how relevant, how you will use it.
- Sixty words per source is usually enough, and the judgement should occupy half of them.
- Keep the research question at the top of the page. Every annotation is written towards it.

**Worked example.** A usable annotation.

*“Wang (2022) surveys 1,200 households in three cities on street-tree cooling, with temperature logging rather than self-report. The sample is urban only, so it says nothing about towns, but the measurement method is stronger than the studies it cites. I will use it for the size of the effect and flag the urban limit.”*

Summary, judgement, limitation, use. Four moves, sixty words.

## Communications: planning and writing the in-depth essay

- Plan to the **word count**: an essay of 2,000 words has roughly six body paragraphs, so the outline has six lines.
- State the **thesis** in the introduction. Level III still expects the answer up front.
- Signpost across paragraphs, not only inside them: each opening sentence should tell a reader where the argument now stands.

- **Synthesis** across sources is the difference between Level II and Level III writing, and it is visible in whether your paragraphs are organised by idea or by author.

## The future: revision and the final read

- Revise for **structure** first — an unfixable paragraph order cannot be rescued by better sentences.
- Then for **argument**: does every paragraph serve the thesis, and is every claim supported?
- Then for **language**, and only then. Editing sentences in a paragraph you are about to delete is the commonest waste of an evening.
- Read the final draft **aloud**. It is the fastest way to find a sentence that does not work, and it costs ten minutes.