FEEDBACK TUTORIAL LETTER

2nd SEMESTER 2019

ASSIGNMENT 2

PRINCIPLES OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE USE
(PLU411S)
Dear Students of Principles of Language Use

This is a feedback tutorial on Assignment 2 which you completed recently.

In addition to the individual comments made by your marker-tutors at the end of your assignments, this tutorial will focus on overall strengths and weaknesses of this assignment. It is hoped that the comments will assist you when you start preparing for your examination.

We will deal with each question as it appears in the assignment, give you the correct answers (the memorandum) for each question and point out any general problems and/or weaknesses experienced by students.

**General Comments on the Reading Comprehension question:**

Many students passed this question well. Congratulations! The passage was easy to understand and students generally understood most of the questions. For the benefit of those who did not get a good mark in this question, another reminder that you read the passage and the questions carefully first before attempting any written answers. An important aspect of answering the questions is to answer them as per instruction, which many of you did correctly. Because this is an assignment which you complete at home, remember you are allowed to make use of a dictionary to clarify any difficult words you may not have known. This could have helped the weaker students obtain a better mark. You are not allowed to use a dictionary in an examination, of course, so try to gauge the meaning of the word from its use in the context of the passage. It is good to start getting used to doing this even for your assignments.

**Here are the answers to Question 1.**

**QUESTION 1: READING COMPREHENSION 25 MARKS**

1.1 Her regal, light-footed style of her former ballet days (Any similar idea) (1)

1.2 That her walk which is graceful and stylish hides the fact that she had once been in a terrible accident and had to learn how to walk again. (2)

1.3 By sheer triumph of will (2)

1.4 In the one we focus on ourselves and in the other on the community as a whole. (2)

1.5 They were released at the appropriate time when she was at the stage that she needed the help and the message they provided most. (Any similar idea) (2)

1.6 Insomnia/stress/grumpiness/feeling incomplete, inadequate and insecure (Any 2) (2)

1.7 She wanted to take yoga to all 14 regions in Namibia and make it cost-effective. (2)

1.8 1.8.1 FALSE 1.8.2 TRUE 1.8.3 TRUE (6)
The grammar question should not pose too many problems for most students if you know and understand the rules and are able to apply them. Some of the questions dealt with subject/verb agreement. This is one area of grammar which many students still find difficult. Revise this again. You will also find additional exercises in the Language in Practice Study Guide. Do them in order to revise and consolidate the grammar section.

2.1 Remember and revise: The finite verb forms of the verb “to be”, depending on the tense and number (singular or plural) and person (first, second and third persons) of the subject are: am, is, are, was, were, will be, etc.

2.2 The majority of the students misspelled “conjunction”. This error will not be overlooked in the PLU411S examination where correct spelling is important. Accuracy of expression and spelling is crucial for an answer to be correct, especially where a wrongly spelled word can mean something else.

2.3 N.B. this (singular) these (plural)

2.4 Retain the verb tense when changing a positive statement to the negative and question forms as follows:
The Present Simple Tense: do/does + the infinitive
The Past Simple Tense: did + the infinitive

2.5 For your own benefit, please study the tenses. They are very important.

Read the passage below to give you a sense of the meanings of the correct answers in context.

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

Pollution in its many forms

1. One of the most serious problems (i) (to face) the world today is pollution, that is the contamination of air, land and water by all kinds of chemicals such as poisonous gases, waste materials and insecticides. Pollution (ii) (to upset) the balance of nature, destroys many forms of wildlife and (iii) (to cause) a variety of illnesses. It (iv) (to occur) in every country on earth but (v) (to be) most prominent in industrial countries.
2. Breathing polluted air is very common to most people, especially those living in cities. In heavily industrialized areas, fumes from car exhausts and thick smoke from factory chimneys can be seen darkening the atmosphere. This would reduce visibility and make the air unpleasant to breathe. Large scale burning of fossil fuels, such as coal, gas and oil, in homes and industries also produces a wide range of pollutants. This includes sulphur dioxide which damages plants, destroys buildings and affects health. Other known pollutants are carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide and dirt particles. The fumes produced by car exhausts and factories would normally disperse in the air, but sometimes they are trapped by air layers of different temperatures. The result is a fog-like haze known as smog. Britain and some other countries introduced smokeless zones and smokeless fuels some years ago and smog no longer occurs, but it still remains a very real problem in Japan and the United States.

3. The motor car is a major source of pollution. In densely populated cities where (a) they're/there are millions of cars on the roads, the level of carbon monoxide in the air is dangerously high. On windless days, the fumes settle near ground level. Fumes from car exhausts also pour out lead and nitrogen oxide. The testing of nuclear weapons and the use of atomic energy for experimental purposes in (b) peaceful/peacefull times have exposed some (c) people/poeple to levels of radiation that are (d) to/too/two high for safety. Crop-spraying by aircraft also adds chemical poisons to the air.

4. Domestic rubbish is another very serious pollution problem. The average American citizen throws away nearly one ton of rubbish every year. Much of (e) these/this consists of plastic, metal and glass packaging that cannot be broken down naturally. Instead it (f) lies/lays with old refrigerators, broken washing machines and abandoned cars in huge piles for years without decaying. Each year the problem of rubbish disposal becomes more serious.

5. Sewage causes another form of pollution. Most of it flows straight into rivers, where it is broken down by tiny bacteria. The bacteria need oxygen for this process, but because of the vast quantities of sewage, the bacteria uses up all available oxygen in the water, causing the death of countless fish and other river life. Rivers provide a very convenient outlet for industrial waste, as well as being a source of water for cooling in nuclear and other power plants.

6. Like rivers, oceans have been used as dumping grounds for waste of all kinds. One of the recent sources of sea pollution is oil and millions of tons of it spill into the sea each year. Oil not only pollutes beaches, it also kills fish and seabirds.

1.1 Write the correct form of the verbs numbered (i) to (v) in the first paragraph. Simply write the number (i) to (v) and next to each, the correct form of the verb. (5)

   a) facing
b) upsets
c) causes
d) occurs
e) is

1.2 Six words are highlighted and underlined in Paragraph 2. Write down the part of speech
of each underlined word. In each case, write the word and the correct part of speech
next to it.

polluted - adjective
in - preposition
reduce - verb
oil - noun
they - pronoun
but - conjunction (coordinating)

1.3 In paragraphs 3 and 4 choose the correct word from each pair in brackets marked
(a) to (f).

a) there
b) peaceful
c) people
d) too
e) these
f) lies

2.4 The following sentence is underlined in paragraph 5:
Sewage causes another form of pollution.
Write this sentence in the negative form and as a question.

Sewage does not cause another form of pollution. (Negative form)
Does sewage cause another form of pollution? (Question)

2.5 Write the same sentence in the tenses indicated below it.

Sewage causes another form of pollution.

2.5.1 The Past Tense: Sewage caused another form of pollution.
2.5.2 The Present Continuous Tense: Sewage is causing another form of pollution.
2.5.3 The Present Perfect Tense: Sewage has caused another form of pollution.
2.5.4 The Future Simple Tense: Sewage will cause another form of pollution.
General Comments on Essay and Paragraph analysis

This is the question that students generally do not do so well in and the one where they lose the most marks. They do not understand the terminology such as “topic sentence”, “sentence fragment”, “irrelevant sentences”, etc.

There is only one thing to do to improve your marks in this section: study these terms and in fact, this whole chapter so that you know and understand these concepts and can recognise the errors in a given passage. Most importantly, do not make these same errors in your paragraphs and essays that you are required to write.

It is important to rewrite the sentences accurately. The thesis statement, topic sentence and concluding sentence are full sentences and the answers should be given as such.

For (g) write only the sentence fragment i.e. the incorrect part.

(j), (k) and (l) were omitted by many students. Please the paper to ensure that marks are not forfeited through negligence on your part.

Here is Question 3, the questions and expected answers:

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow:

1. Electronic mail (e-mail) threatens to pervade everyone's life -- whether you are living in the western world or in a third-world country. A look at today's business cards verifies this fact virtually every business card nowadays sports an e-mail address. Businesses prefer to communicate by e-mail, as it is easier, quicker and cheaper. Furthermore, the message goes direct from the desk of the sender to the desk of the recipient.

2. All that is needed to be an e-mail user is a PC, a modem, an Internet account and of course, a phone line. Ever since the Internet has been commercialized, Internet Service Providers (ISPs) have sprung up in almost all the countries in the world. Subscribers only need to pay a small yearly subscription fee to an ISP, what makes e-mails extremely popular is the negligible cost. Compared to faxes, e-mails are extremely cost effective. Sending an e-mail to the United States or Germany costs no more than sending it to your neighbour across the street.

3. It is also very easy to send an e-mail. When the message has been written. All one has to do is to click on the 'send' button on the screen. The mail gets transferred from the PC to the ISP and is then automatically sent to the recipient. The sender does not have to worry about a busy line at the other end (as compared to sending a fax). The e-mail software can also be configured for the sender to receive
a confirmation e-mail when the e-mail has been delivered and downloaded by the recipient. If the e-mail cannot be delivered, it is returned to the sender with a reason given.

4. One of the most important reasons supporting the use of e-mail is that it is eco-friendly. No papers are used which means no chopping down of trees! Another advantage of using the e-mail is that it is very fast. For example, an e-mail from Asia to the United States would normally arrive in less than two minutes and within the same country, in less than a minute. This means that e-mails and attached documents, spreadsheets and database files can be routed to friends, family members or colleagues all over the world several times in a day.

5. Similar to roaming facilities offered on the mobile phone, ISPs offer global roaming for Internet access. A person can dial a local access number in the foreign country (at a small surcharge) and download and upload his e-mails the same way as he does at home, in school or in the office. All that one has to do is to get access to a computer. In short, this means that you can send and receive your mails anywhere and anytime -- e-mails are mobile! Computers can be purchased at any electronic shop.

6. These days, e-mail software provides advanced facilities allowing one to save incoming and outgoing e-mails onto different diskettes. Along with search facilities, this acts as a repository for future reference. This feature is very handy, especially when one is travelling, as a person can now literally carry all his incoming and outgoing communication with him all over the world.

7. In conclusion, using the e-mail is very advantageous and it has become a necessary tool in all businesses.

a) Identify the thesis statement of the passage and write it down. (2)
   Electronic mail (email) threatens to pervade everyone’s life – whether you are living in the western world or in a third world country.

b) Find the run-on sentence in paragraph 1 and correct it. (2)
   A look at today’s business cards verifies this fact virtually every business card nowadays sports an e-mail address.

   Correction:
   A look at today’s business cards verifies this fact. Virtually every business card nowadays sports an e-mail address.

c) Identify the topic sentence in paragraph 4 and write it down. (2)
   One of the most important reasons supporting the use of e-mail is that it is eco-friendly.
d) Write down the topic of the sentence you selected in (c) above.

One of the most important reasons supporting the use of email

e) Write down the controlling idea of your topic sentence.

is that it is eco-friendly

f) Write down one sentence from paragraph 4 which supports the topic sentence.

No papers are used which means no chopping down of trees!

c) There is a sentence fragment in paragraph 3. Identify it and write it down.

When the message has been written

d) Correct the sentence fragment you identified in (g).

Correction:

When the message has been written all one has to do is to click on the 'send' button on the screen.

N.B. The fragment can also be joined to the first sentence in the paragraph, hence the following correction can also be accepted.

It is also very easy to send an e-mail when the message has been written.

e) A comma splice is used in paragraph 2. Identify it and correct it.

Subscribers only need to pay a small yearly subscription fee to an ISP, what makes e-mails extremely popular is the negligible cost.

Correction:

Subscribers only need to pay a small yearly subscription fee to an ISP. What makes e-mails extremely popular is the negligible cost.

f) There is an irrelevant sentence in the fifth paragraph. Identify it and write it down.

Computers can be purchased at any electronic shop

g) Three transitions are used in paragraphs 1, 4 and 5. Identify them and write them down.

Furthermore (Paragraph 1)

For example (Paragraph 4)
In short (Paragraph 5)

h) Write down the transitional phrase used in the last paragraph. (1)
   in conclusion

**QUESTION 4: ESSAY WRITING**

Students achieved the least number of marks for this question. Many students are unable to structure an essay, so the three essential parts of an essay were missing. These are:

- an introductory paragraph
- the body consisting of **several** paragraphs and
- the concluding paragraph

Some students did not write several paragraphs in the body, but one long paragraph instead. This meant that many ideas were written in this long paragraph, thus resulting in an absence of topic sentences.

Generally students do not understand topic sentences and this has a serious impact on the essays you write. Revise the notes in your Study Guide on Paragraph Writing and Analysis and Essay Writing. These units provide guidelines to assist you with a section of your syllabus which many of you find difficult.

You also need to practise writing paragraphs and essays in preparation for your exam. Take the topics you were given in both assignments. Use the ones you did not choose and write essays and paragraphs on them.

In addition to the structural errors, there were still too many grammar, spelling and punctuation error

Finally a serious word on plagiarism and academic **dishonesty**. Students are penalized for using information from the internet and for quoting the material word for word (verbatim) without even attempting to paraphrase or use their own words to explain some of the ideas. We identified some of the websites from which the information you used was copied. Well done to those students who wrote their own original essays!

On a positive note, we wish you well with your exams and urge you to prepare yourselves by revising all notes in the Study Guide. Assignment 2 questions closely resemble the format of past examination papers. You are therefore encouraged to work through your assignment once again to see where marks were lost and where you can improve and also to use past examination papers when you are revising.

From Mrs Rainey (who compiled Assignment 2 and this feedback tutorial)