

ACE Guidelines for SIS

You must enroll in the **non-credit bearing** course “CAES1001 Academic Communication in English” (ACE) in your first year of study unless you have been officially granted exemption from ACE (Please check with your home Faculty in relation to the criteria and application procedures for ACE exemption). If you are in the process of applying to be exempted from the course, you should complete the necessary application procedures as early as possible. You are advised to enroll in one of those classes offered in the second semester if the application process for ACE exemption is not completed by the end of August 2025; if you are enrolled in a class in the first semester, please attend all the sessions of the class as scheduled and submit all the assignments as required until your application for ACE exemption is successful.

Enrollment Arrangements

ACE is offered in two modes: 1) standard mode (e.g., CAES1001 – 1A1), and 2) intensive mode (e.g., CAES1001 – 1AI). Both modes offer the same teaching and learning hours.

- 1) The **standard mode** is conducted during either the first or second semester of the students’ first year. Students must add/drop a standard mode during the *course enrollment period* before an academic year begins [i.e. August 19, 2025 (10:00 am) – August 25, 2025 (4:00 pm)], and in the respective *add/drop period* during the first and second semester [i.e. September 1, 2025 (10:00 am) – September 15, 2025 (4:00 pm) for the first semester; and January 19, 2026 (10:00 am) – February 2, 2026 (4:00 pm) for the second semester].
- 2) The **intensive mode** consists of two modules. Students need to complete both modules to pass the course. Two intensive modes will be offered in an academic year:
 - The first intensive mode, including both modules, will take place in the last two weeks of August 2025 and the first two weeks of January 2026 respectively;
 - The second intensive mode, including both modules, will take place in the first two weeks of January 2026 and the first two weeks of June 2026 respectively.

Students must add/drop a class of the first intensive mode during August 11, 2025 (4:00 pm) to August 14, 2025 (9:00 am); and add/drop a class of the second intensive mode during the standard *course enrollment period* before an academic year begins and the 2-week *add/drop period* in the first semester.

Each CAES1001 class has a quota of 20 and the Student Information System (SIS) approves students’ enrollment requests by auto-balloting. Thus, there is no guarantee that you will be allowed to enroll in the class you have selected. Please check your course selection results periodically, and if you fail to enroll in your selected class, please choose another timeslot until you can enroll in a class successfully. If you don’t sign up for any CAES1001 class during the course enrollment period, the SIS system will automatically assign you a class (the standard mode) in either the first or second semester randomly after the course enrollment period ends. Please check with your home Faculty on your status if you believe you have been granted exemption but have been assigned a CAES1001 class subsequently.

You can change your CAES1001 class freely during the add/drop period in the first semester for the second intensive mode; or during the add/drop period in the first and second semester for the standard mode. Please attend sessions of your original class until your application for class change has been approved. The SIS system will perform random class assignment to those who do not have any ACE course enrollment after the end of the add/drop period. You can no longer change your ACE enrollment after the specified period. Please refer to the course website at <https://caes.hku.hk/caes1001/> for more details of the course and the procedures of changing class groups at this stage.

Students Seeking Applications for ACE Exemption

For exemption criteria and application procedures, please refer to the section below. Eligible students will be informed of application details by the Faculty Office directly.

If your exemption application result is not available by the end of August 2025, you should enroll in one of those classes offered in the second semester. Or else, you will be auto-enrolled in a class (the standard mode) in either the first or second semester and are expected to attend all the sessions of class as scheduled and submit all the assignments as required until the exemption result is granted.

**Exemption from CAES1001 Academic Communication in English
(applicable to the September 2025 intake)**

Students admitted through the non-JUPAS/International Admissions or Mainland Admissions Scheme may apply for exemption from the ACE requirement with any one of the following qualifications achieved in the year of admission (*i.e. 2025, unless otherwise specified below; test result obtained after admission to the University will not be considered*):

- holder of a Bachelor's degree from an English-medium university
- achieved Grade A or above in English Language at GCSE/ GCEO / English First Language at IGCSE / English Second Language at IGCSE / English Language or English Literature at GCE AS/ AL
- achieved an overall IELTS score of no less than 7 AND with all sub-scores no less than 6.5 on the Reading, Speaking, Listening, and Writing Tests in the same sitting (*Note: only result obtained after August 1, 2023 and before admission to HKU will be accepted for ACE exemption*)
- achieved an overall TOEFL Internet-based test score of no less than 94 AND no less than a 24 on the writing, a 20 on the speaking, a 20 on the listening, AND a 19 on the reading sections in the same sitting (*Note: only result obtained after August 1, 2023 and before admission to HKU will be accepted for ACE exemption*)
- achieved in International Baccalaureate (IB) Grade 4 or above in HL English Language A: Language and Literature / HL English Language A: Literature / HL English Language (B Syllabus) / HL English Language (A1 or A2 Syllabus); Grade 5 or above in SL English Language A: Language and Literature / SL English Language A: Literature / SL English Language (B Syllabus) / SL English Language (A1 or A2 Syllabus)
- achieved Grade 4 or above on the Advanced Placement (AP) English Language/ English Language and Composition/ English Literature and Composition Test
- achieved section scores of 630 or better in Reading and Writing of the NEW Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) in the same attempt
- achieved Level C2 in Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English / Grade A in Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English
- achieved a score of 76 in the Pearson Test of English Assessment (Academic)
- achieved Grade B or above in H1 General Paper at the Singapore GCE A-level
- achieved Grade A or better in English language at Malaysia SPM examination
- achieved Grade A2 or better in Malaysia UEC-Senior English Language
- attained Level 4 in each set of credits in New Zealand NCEA Literacy (10 credits made up of 5 credits in reading and 5 credits in writing)
- achieved a score of 95% or better in English at All India Senior School Certificate Examination / Higher School Certificate
- achieved a final score of 90% or better in English at Grade 12 Canadian high school curriculum.
- achieved Grade B or better in English Language at Sri Lanka Ordinary examination
- achieved a score of 90 or better in English in the Russian Unified State Exam (Единый государственный экзамен, ЕГЭ, Yediniy gosudarstvenniy ekzamen, EGE)
- Academic Speaking and Writing test conducted by the Centre for Applied English Studies (CAES) for students who have not taken any of the above tests (*Note: When applying to take the Academic Speaking and Writing Test, students should provide evidence that they were admitted to the University using qualifications other than those included in the list. If any applicants fail to provide any evidence that they were admitted to HKU using qualifications other than those included in the list provided by CAES, the CAES assessor has the rights not to allow the applicant to take the test. The Faculty Office will relay your information to CAES. You will be notified of the arrangement of the Academic Speaking and Writing Test by CAES direct in due course.*)

Please submit your exemption application via the following link **on or before HKT23:59 July 31, 2025 (Thursday)**: https://hku.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0C1k7vJV5883noO. **Late application or application with insufficient information will NOT be accepted and processed.**

(**Freshmen who have received and/or accepted their admission offer on or after July 25, 2025 will receive notice for application from the Faculty Office separately.)

ACE is optional if exemption is granted, and optional students may take ACE as an elective on a non-credit bearing basis during their first year of study.

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Freshmen admitted through JUPAS or SNDAS with Level 5 or above in 2025 HKDSE English Language

Students admitted through JUPAS or SNDAS who have achieved Level 5 or above in 2025 HKDSE English Language will be automatically exempted from the ACE requirement, and ACE is optional. (ACE is compulsory for those who have achieved Level 4 or below in HKDSE English Language.)

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For any enquiry, please contact us by email at fbe.ugenquiry@hku.hk.