**Welcome and Induction 2020: ‘Global’ English tips and listening strategies**

*In our day-to-day interactions as a global community of students and staff, we all encounter different ways of using English; unfamiliar accents; and different communication styles and expectations. Wherever we are from, we can all continually improve our communication skills and share responsibility for successful communication.*

*You can use this document (individually or as a team) to reflect on your own strategies for communicating effectively with individuals and in diverse groups:*

* *Which tips will be easy for you to remember and implement? Mark with* ✅
* *Which will require conscious effort? Mark with* ⭕
* Use short sentences without overly complex structures
* Speak at a slow but still natural speed; leave pauses and silences to allow time to digest information and to prepare responses
* Speak loudly enough to be heard clearly but no louder and avoid background noise
* Try to keep your face/mouth visible (when possible)
* Finish the ends of words; pronounce carefully but naturally, without running words together; stress key words
* Be ready to compensate for the fact that unfamiliar accents can make even the most straightforward language hard to understand
* Repeat, rephrase and summarise to aid understanding
* Try to match the other person’s language level with your own. Are they using complicated vocabulary or colloquial English? If so, you can probably raise the level of English you are using.
* Where appropriate take responsibility for being understood e.g. "Sorry, let me re-phrase that..."
* **Use open questions to check understanding**  
  **NOT** Is that OK? / Did everyone understand that?

**USE** So, let’s just check, what do you need to do next?

* **Explain or avoid jargon, slang, acronyms and technical/specialist words and be aware of potential knowledge gaps due to lack of familiarity with UK context**

Explain **“**LUU”, “FAQs”, “Go to the cluster to log on to Minerva,” “Speak to the SES team”

Think carefully about how colloquial language may sound friendly and engaging to some, but may not work for all audiences e.g. *Pop in for a cuppa..*. However, in certain situations, language learners may appreciate if you can explain an interesting colloquialism.

* **Use active language which makes it clear who does the action**

Student ID Cards are collected from the Great Hall

**Global English** You can collect your Student ID card from the Great Hall

* **Use positive language**

If you don’t attend your induction talk you will miss some essential information  
**Global English** Please attend your induction talk to find out essential information

* **Avoid using double or multiple questions**

Have you finished or would you like some more time?

**Global English** Would you like some more time?

* **Be aware that forms of politeness in UK English (e.g. indirect speech) can be confusing or counterproductive => be clear and direct** *(this may feel uncomfortable, but you can still use a friendly tone)*

I don’t think that’s going to be possible *(Is it possible? Not clear!)*

**Global English:** That is not possible / I cannot do that for you

Here are some papers you might like to read to prepare for the seminar *(Is this a suggestion or an instruction? Not clear!)*  
**Global English** Read these papers to prepare for the seminar

I would tell your Module Leader about that (*Could be understood that the speaker will contact the Module leader*)  
**Global English** You need to tell your Module Leader about that

Would you mind coming in at 9am? (*Agree = no*)  
**Global English** Can you come in at 9am? *(Agree = yes)*

* **Use “Strong” verbs rather than phrasal verbs**

Pop into the Student Support Office and they will sort you out  
**Global English** Visit the Student Support Office and they will help you

Are we ready to get down to it? / Shall we leave it there?  
**Global English** Are we ready to start? / Shall we stop?

* **Be specific when talking about time;** For example, some people say a half to nine, whereas in the UK people usually say half past eight. For some people ‘I will do it right now it’ doesn’t mean *right* now. For some people 9am means about 9am. If you want it to mean exactly 9am you may need to stress this.
* **Avoid irony and sarcasm and remember jokes often don’t translate well across cultures!**
* Think carefully about use of culturally specific jokes and references in different contexts (e.g. welcome talks) - unexplained references can exclude those who don’t ‘get’ them e.g. a joke referencing a popular UK TV show
* **Use metaphors with care and be ready to explain**

That computer probably “fell off the back of a lorry” (is probably stolen)

We don’t want everything going pear-shaped (going wrong)

**Global English listening strategies:**

* Invite someone to speak and give them time to think
* Give your full attention. Any small signs of impatience are likely to discourage the speaker
* Concentrate on hearing and understanding, not judging or planning your response
* Show you are listening through your body language
* Allow more silence than you might normally find comfortable
* Don’t interrupt or finish the speaker’s sentence
* Summarise what you have heard and understood and check whether you have understood correctly.
* Avoid pretending to understand if you haven’t