

# Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

**Final Evaluation Report**

**Project No. :** 33/QEGS/B-08-09

## Part A

**Project Title** : Language Support Programmes for Enhancing Weaker Students' English Language Proficiency

**Name of Grantee** : Hong Kong Community College

**Project Period** : From August 2009 (*month/year*) to July 2011 (*month/year*)

## Part B

Please use separate A4-size sheets to provide an evaluation of the Project with regard to the following aspects:

1. Project activities contributing to the attainment of Project objectives, extent of attainment of the objectives, evidence or indicators attesting to the attainment of the objectives, and if applicable, reasons for not able to achieve the objectives.
2. Impact or benefits of the Project to the participants, the target institution(s) or the sector.
3. Cost-effectiveness of the Project against clear indicators, e.g. utilization of available resources, unit cost per beneficiaries, sustainability of Project activities/impacts, applicability of Project outcomes/deliverables to other institutions, or alternative approaches for equivalent benefits at less cost, etc.
4. Outcomes and deliverables of the Project.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



Organization Chop: \_\_\_\_\_



Name of Authorized Person: Dr Simon Leung

Name of Grantee

Organization: PolyU HKCC

Position of Authorized

Person: Director

Date: 1 November 2011

**The Hong Kong Polytechnic University  
Hong Kong Community College**

**A Final Evaluation Report on QEGS Project - Language Support Programmes for  
Enhancing Weaker Students' English Language Proficiency**

**Project Code: 33/QEGS/B-08-09**

**I. Project Overview & Objective**

A grant of HK\$1,021,000 was accepted by the Hong Kong Community College for the purpose of carrying out the captioned QEGS project to offer four English workshops (each offering 10 one-hour workshop sessions) from 1 August 2009 to 31 July 2011 to provide additional English language support to help students with weaker English language proficiency enhance their academic and workplace English proficiency required for completing a myriad of learning tasks in the English-medium associate degree programmes. This report provides a summary of the project outcomes and deliverables and presents a self-evaluation of the project effectiveness.

**II. Project Activities**

The project has completed all the following planned activities across all four phases of the project during the reporting period, contributing to the successful attainment of all project objectives:

- i) Delivery of English Language Workshops
- ii) Development of Workshop Materials
- iii) Development of a Project Website (An Online English Language Learning Platform)

**i) Delivery of English Language Workshops**

All year 1 associate degree students admitted to the associate degree programmes in 2009/10 and 2010/11 with lower English language proficiency were required to take two mandatory English enhancement workshops in their first year of studies, one focusing on academic English training and the other focusing on workplace English skills.

Four English enhancement workshops (186 classes) in total were offered to a total of 4,083 students.

Workshop	Schedule	Number of Classes Offered	Number of Beneficiaries
<b>Academic Year 2009/10</b>			
1. Academic English	Week of 7 September 2009 - Week of 9 November 2009	46	1,040
2. Workplace English	Week of 25 January 2010 - Week of 5 April 2010	29	627
<b>Academic Year 2010/11</b>			
3. Academic English	Week of 6 September 2010 - Week of 8 November 2010	51	1,243
4. Workplace English*	Week of 7 February 2011 – Week of 11 April 2011	43	1,173
<b>Total:</b>		<b>186</b>	<b>4,083</b>

***\*Delivery of Workshop 4 (Workplace English)***

A total of 60 classes (26 classes on West Kowloon [WK] campus and 34 classes on Hung Hom Bay [HHB] campus) had been offered in Semester 2 of academic year 2011/12. Ten 1-hour workshop sessions had been conducted to provide additional English language support to the target beneficiaries in each class.

Campus	Subject Code	Subject Title	No. of Classes	No. of Students
WK	CC0044	EWC (Business) - Workshop	26	718
HHB	CC0047	EWC (Humanities and Communication) - Workshop	1	25
HHB	CC0048	EWC (Science & Technology) - Workshop	9	235
HHB	CC0049	EWC (Social Sciences) - Workshop	7	195
<b>Total:</b>			<b>43</b>	<b>1,173</b>

*\*60 classes in total were offered; HKCC had subsidised the offering of 17 classes:*

Campus	Subject Code	Subject Title	No. of Classes	No. of Students
HHB	CC0045	EWC (Design) - Workshop	3	69
HHB	CC0046	EWC (Healthcare) - Workshop	2	46
HHB	CC0047	EWC (Humanities and Communication) - Workshop	4	92
HHB	CC0048	EWC (Science & Technology) - Workshop	3	75
HHB	CC0049	EWC (Social Sciences) - Workshop	5	135
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>417</b>

***Schedule of the Workshop Sessions held in Phase 4:***

Session*	Schedule
1	Week of 7 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011
2	Week of 14 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011
3	Week of 21 <sup>st</sup> February, 2011
4	Week of 28 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011
5	Week of 7 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011
6	Week of 14 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011
7	Week of 21 <sup>st</sup> March, 2011
8	Week of 28 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011
9	Week of 4 <sup>th</sup> April, 2011
10	Week of 11 <sup>th</sup> April, 2011

*\*1 hour/ session*

**ii) Development of Workshop Materials**

Based the material developers' experience in teaching sub-degree students, subject lecturers' on-going diagnosis of students' common mistakes and students' feedback on their learning difficulties, the following materials were developed for the Academic English Workshops and the Workplace English Workshops:

***a. Academic English***

Unit	Topic
1.	Writing Effective Academic Paragraphs
2.	Grammar Review I (Common ESL Errors)
3.	Grammar Review II (Common ESL Errors)

4.	Sentence Structure – Fragment (Phrases and clauses)
5.	Sentence Structure – Run-on (Simple sentences, compound sentences, complex sentences)
6.	Sentence Structure – Parallel Structures (More about phrases; active/ passive voice; infinitives/ gerunds/ participles)
7.	Sentence Structure – Misplaced Modifiers (Modifiers)
8.	Sentence Structure – Dangling Modifiers (Combining sentences using participle phrases)
9.	Summarising Skills
10.	Paraphrasing Skills

***b. Workplace English\*\****

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	Business English Skills: Improving grammar & sentence skills in business messages (Revision)
2	Business English Skills: Audience benefits, You-view, Positive expression Grammar Review: Plural nouns
3	Business English Skills: Conversational but Professional Tone, Inclusive Language, Plain Language and Familiar Words Grammar Review: Possessive nouns and Pronouns
4	Business English Skills: Eliminating wordiness (Avoiding wordy prepositional phrases, long lead-ins and outdated expressions, needless adverbs, fillers and repetitious words) Grammar Review: Subject-verb agreement
5	Business English Skills: Writing direct messages (Writing direct openings; Emphasising; Using parallelism) Grammar Review: Verb mood and voice
6	Business English Skills: Writing persuasive messages (Getting attention in the opening; Building interest and creating desire, Motivating actions) Grammar Review: Verb tense
7	Business English Skills: Writing negative messages (Using a buffer to soften bad news in the opening) Grammar Review: Adjectives and Adverbs
8	Business English Skills: Deemphasising negative messages (using active and passive voice; subordinate clauses, implied refusals) Grammar Review: Prepositions
9	Business English Skills: Business Presentation Skills

	Grammar Review: Conjunctions
10	Business English Skills: Avoiding "I" dominance

**\*\*In Phase 4 of the project, the material development team had reviewed and further revised the materials developed for the Workplace English workshop (Workshop 2) based on the feedback of lecturers and students. Materials for a new unit on Business Presentation Skills had been added.**

### **iii. Development of a Project Website**

Four part-time Project Assistants were recruited at different phases of the project to provide administration support to the Project Coordinator, mainly to manage and update the content of the project website:

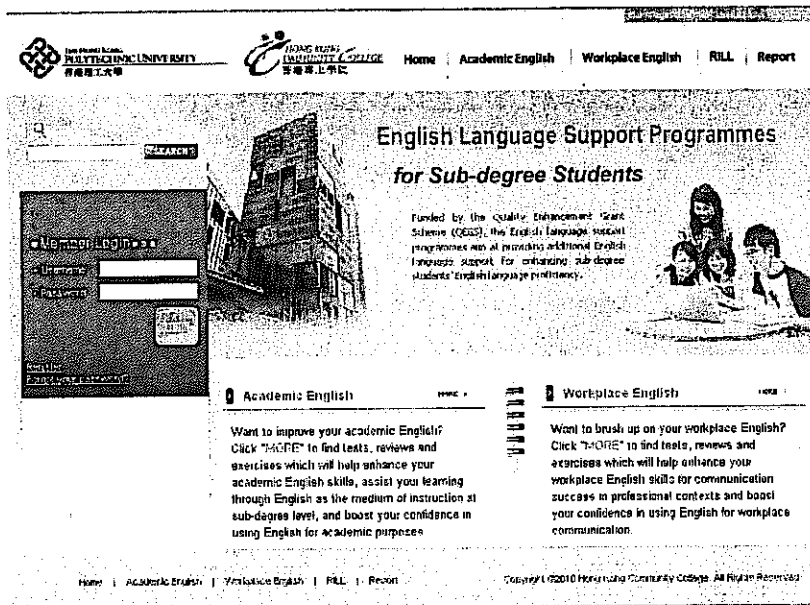
Phase	Project Assistant	Employment Period	Total No. of Hours	Tasks Completed
2	A	7 June 2010 – 30 June 2010	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Input the details of the Online English Learning Platform and the questions on the worksheets for Workshop 1 (Academic English) and Workshop 2 (Workplace English) to the resource system;</li> <li>♦ Tested the Online English Learning Platform and followed up with the vendor on the problems identified;</li> <li>♦ Assisted the Project Coordinator in conducting the telephone interviews – Interviewed the participants of Workshop 1 (Academic English) and Workshop 2 (Workplace English) for feedback; and</li> <li>♦ Assisted the Project Coordinator in two focus group interviews to obtain more detailed feedback from the participants regarding the delivery of Workshop 1 (Academic English) and Workshop 2 (Workplace English).</li> </ul>
2	B	7 June 2010 – 30 June 2010	100	
3	C	3 January 2011 – 14 January 2011	60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Used the resource system to update the academic English exercises on the Online English Learning Platform;</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Tested the Online English Learning Platform and followed up with the vendor on the problems identified;</li> <li>♦ Assisted the Project Coordinator in conducting telephone interviews – Interviewed the participants of Workshop 3 (Academic English) for feedback; and</li> <li>♦ Searched for more online academic English resources for Independent English language learning and updated the Useful Links webpage on the Project Website.</li> </ul>
4	D	13 June 2011 – 4 July 2011	60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Used the resource system to update the workplace English exercises on the Online English Learning Platform;</li> <li>♦ Tested the Online English Learning Platform and followed up with the vendor on the problems identified;</li> <li>♦ Assisted the Project Coordinator in conducting telephone interviews – Interviewed the participants of Workshop 4 (Workplace English) for feedback; and</li> <li>♦ Searched for more online academic English resources for Independent English language learning and updated the Useful Links webpage on the Project Website.</li> </ul>

The platform webpage and resource system (content management system) were built, and the project website, the Online English Learning Platform, was launched for the access of other sub-degree students after the completion of the project:

**i) Platform Webpage:**

The project website was constructed with an aim to encourage students to take ownership of their learning and to develop their learning-to-learn skills. Upon the official launch of the website after the completion of the project, HKCC students as well as teachers and students from other sub-degree institutions will be able to access the online academic English and workplace English materials and the guidebook for independent English language learning at this website upon registration. The registered students can also trace their learning progress by reading their "Report" and their "Record of Independent Language Learning (RILL)" on this website.



**Academic English** Back

**Session 1 : Paragraph Writing**  
STEP 1 - Diagnostic Test

The following sentences are originally written in one paragraph and are now listed in a random order. Pay attention to the transitional words (e.g. "also", "then", "therefore", "thus", "as a result", etc.) and by your best to follow the ideas expressed in the sentences. Then complete the two questions in this part.

1. Write the letter of each sentence in the sequence that makes sense as a paragraph.

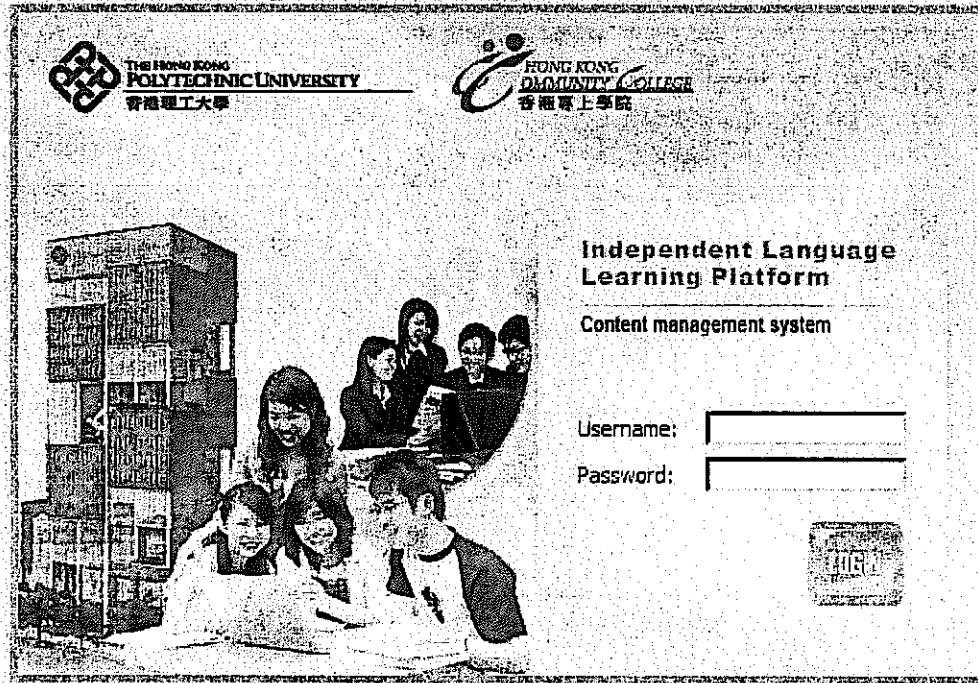
- Reducing the size of a class will be beneficial to both teachers and students.
- More time can then be used to develop learning activities and teaching materials.
- Teachers' workload can also be reduced, as there will be fewer assignments to mark.
- In Hong Kong, the average class size in primary schools is 40 to 45 students.
- With fewer students in a class, teachers can pay more attention to weaker students and provide additional support to them.
- Therefore, it is suggested that the government should introduce small-class teaching, which is very successful in some countries such as the US and Canada.
- The overall teaching and learning quality can thus be improved.
- Many people think that it is too crowded for children to learn in such an environment.
- As a result, students can learn more effectively in class.

Student's Answer: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_\_\_ 7. \_\_\_\_\_ 8. \_\_\_\_\_



**ii) Content Management System:**

The content management system was developed to facilitate further update of the online exercises and to manage the contents of the project website. Through this system, the administrator can update the existing materials and add new online exercises to provide further independent language learning support to students. All registered students' records will be stored on this system, so the administrator can also utilise this system to manage the registration information and monitor students' learning progress.



Copyright ©2010 Hong Kong Community College. All Rights Reserved.



Academic English									
	Session No.	Session Topic	Preview	Status	Updated on	Added on	Edit Content	Edit Session Info	Delete
Manager	10	Extraneous Skills	Preview	Published	2011-06-22 16:24:34	2010-04-14 14:17:32	Edit Content	Edit Session Info	<input type="checkbox"/>
CMS	9	Summarizing Skills	Preview	Published	2011-06-22 15:31:55	2010-06-09 14:44:36	Edit Content	Edit Session Info	<input type="checkbox"/>
Members	8	Comparing Media	Preview	Published	2011-06-22 15:31:49	2010-06-09 14:44:35	Edit Content	Edit Session Info	<input type="checkbox"/>
Step	7	Misplaced Modifiers	Preview	Published	2011-06-22 15:31:42	2010-06-09 14:44:17	Edit Content	Edit Session Info	<input type="checkbox"/>
Academic English	6	Parallel Structure	Preview	Published	2011-06-22 15:31:31	2010-06-09 14:44:00	Edit Content	Edit Session Info	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workplace English	5	Excessive Phrases, Compound and Complex Sentences	Preview	Published	2011-06-22 15:31:18	2010-06-09 14:43:42	Edit Content	Edit Session Info	<input type="checkbox"/>
Test Record	4	Phrases of Phrases and Clauses	Preview	Published	2011-06-22 15:31:10	2010-06-09 11:23:45	Edit Content	Edit Session Info	<input type="checkbox"/>
RILL	3	Common EFL Errors: Verbosity, Ambiguity and Reference, Articles and Nouns	Preview	Published	2011-06-13 17:21:17	2010-06-08 13:27:36	Edit Content	Edit Session Info	<input type="checkbox"/>
Logout	2	Common EFL Errors: Capitalization, Verb Agreement	Preview	Published	2011-06-13 16:53:24	2010-06-07 16:16:03	Edit Content	Edit Session Info	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	Paragraph Writing	Preview	Published	2011-06-22 15:32:01	2010-06-07 14:42:25	Edit Content	Edit Session Info	<input type="checkbox"/>

Total 20 Records(s) Current Page 2 of 2 4/4 (1/2)

[Add Session](#) [Delete Selected Session\(s\)](#)

### III. Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Project

With reference to the feedback collected from the College's regular quality assurance practices (including Student Feedback Questionnaires and Post-teaching Reports) and the telephone/focus group interviews conducted by the Project Assistants, the project was largely considered to be effective in aiding students with lower English language proficiency in our College to achieve the following learning outcomes:

- identify their weaknesses and strengths in academic and workplace English;
- enhance their academic English skills required for success in learning through English as the medium of instructions at a sub-degree level;
- enhance their workplace English skills required for success in communication in professional contexts;
- use independent language learning skills for extended language learning in less formal settings; and
- gain confidence in using English for academic and workplace purposes.

The following are the summary reports of the feedback collected from i) Student Feedback Questionnaires administrated in the last session of each English enhancement workshop (i.e. Session 10), ii) Telephone/ Focus Group Interviews, and iii) Post-teaching Reports. The issues raised in the summary reports will then be discussed in part iv), followed by a report on Students' Performance in the Workshops in part v).

#### *i. Summary Report of Student Feedback Questionnaires (SFQ)*

The Student Feedback Questionnaires [SFQ] were administrated in the last session (i.e. session 10) of each English enhancement workshop. As shown in the following table, an average SFQ score of 3.82 (on a 5-point scale) on the question "The tutorial sessions have helped me achieve the subject learning outcomes effectively" was attained, manifesting that the workshop was generally effective in helping students achieve the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of the project.

<b>Workshop</b>	<b>Number of Classes Offered</b>	<b>Average SFQ Score on the Effectiveness of the Workshop in Helping Students Achieve the ILOs (on a 5-point scale).</b>
<b>Academic Year 2009/10</b>		
1. Academic English	46	3.79
2. Workplace English	29	3.81

<b>Academic Year 2010/11</b>		
<b>3. Academic English</b>	51	3.84
<b>4. Workplace English</b>	43	3.85

**Table 1 Average SFQ Score on the Effectiveness of the Workshop in Helping Students Achieve the ILOs**

***ii. Summary Report of Student Feedback Collected from the Telephone/ Focus-group Interviews***

In addition to the positive statistical results of the relevant question on the effectiveness of the workshop reported above, qualitative feedback on the English enhancement workshops were collected through telephone interviews with the participants as well as two focus group interviews (n=222) conducted in June 2010 and July 2011. In general, students found the contents of both academic and workplace English workshops quite comprehensive. They opined that both workshops could adequately complement the regular academic and workplace English courses. In particular, they agreed that the academic English workshops were helpful to their learning of academic English as it offered them the opportunities to practise and consolidate their academic English and grammar skills. By and large, they felt that the workshops could help them enhance their academic English proficiency effectively. Meanwhile, students who enrolled in the workplace English workshops found the workshops practical and useful. They commented that the workshops could help them review and consolidate the concepts and techniques taught in the regular workplace English course. By completing the workshop exercises, they could attain a better mastery of workplace English skills.

Students liked particularly the worksheets designed for the workshop sessions as they were well-designed, detailed and reader-friendly. They commended that adequate examples were given to aid their comprehension of the key concepts, and sufficient exercises appropriate to their level were provided to facilitate their mastery of the fundamental academic and workplace English skills. Students found the concept review section particularly conducive to their learning as it could provide them a quick overview of the techniques/ concepts taught in the course. By reading the examples and explanations put in simple wordings, they could understand better the techniques/ concepts taught in the courses. In addition, many students praised their lecturers for their patience and care. They thanked their teachers for the well-prepared lessons and clear explanations.

Below are the direct quotes from students (translated from students' responses given in Cantonese):

**i) About their learning in the course:**

*"The workshops could help me improve my writing skills the most."*

*"The workshops could help me gain confidence in writing. Now I am able to spot the mistakes I made and correct them."*

*"The workshops could help me build up my independent language learning skills."*

*"The workshops could help me identify my strengths and weaknesses because it covered different topics that students have to pay attention to."*

*"The workshop was useful since it acted as a revision session of the academic English course for me. I could learn more English skills and grammar as well as testing my understanding through doing exercises."*

*"The workshops could help me consolidate and enhance my grammar and English skills. The topics covered are practical and applicable to daily life."*

*"The workshops could improve my reading and grammar skills. I hope that some useful vocabulary can be taught in the workshops so that I can apply them outside the classroom."*

*"The workshop could polish my grammar skills and helped me expand my vocabulary."*

**ii) About the course materials:**

*"The most useful parts were the concept review and grammar review sections in the notes. They could enhance my English skills and helped me grasp the concepts."*

*"The materials were easy to understand, and the notes were clear and well-organised. The level of difficulty of the exercises was appropriate."*

**iii) About the course design:**

*"The workshops could complement the regular English courses, because the points were extracted from the corresponding chapters of the textbook and were put a simpler way. Therefore, I could understand them easily."*

*"Doing exercises was helpful to my learning."*

*"The workshop provided an opportunity for students to use English more often."*

*"The class size was a bit too large. It would be better to keep it between 15 and 20 students."*

*"The workshop could help me satisfy the requirements of the regular workplace English subject. They could help me gain confidence in taking the examination."*

### ***iii. Summary Report of Lecturers' Feedback Collected from the Post-teaching Reports***

Overall speaking, lecturers reported in the post-teaching reports that they felt the intended learning outcomes of the workshops could be achieved. Based on their observations, students had displayed signs of better understanding and mastery of the English skills/techniques taught in the workshops. Most of the students were attentive, hard-working, and motivated to learn, and they found the materials developed for the workshop sessions useful and highly relevant to students' needs in the sub-degree programmes. The level of the materials was also appropriate.

Lecturers also shared that some students had put an excellent effort in their Independent Language Learning Portfolio, which in their view could help them explore other alternative ways to learn English. Some lecturers also reported that students found the list of suggested sources for independent language learning helpful.

To conclude, lecturers agreed that the workshop could give weak students additional support and urged the workshop to be kept in future.

### ***iv. Issues and Recommendations***

Although the student participants had similar English learning backgrounds, this project revealed that the English standards of these weaker students could varied quite widely. It was also noted in the telephone interviews and focus group interviews that students found the duration of each workshop session too short, so some weaker students did not have time to finish all exercises on the worksheets. Some students even requested to arrange two 1-hour sessions per week and to reduce the class size from 25 to 20. In addition, some particularly weak students also wished the workshop to place greater emphasis on the English fundamentals such as grammar and vocabulary. Meanwhile, some participants with relatively better English proficiency suggested that more challenging practices be included in the learning resources package.

To address the above concerns, it is suggested that more vocabulary and basic grammar practices be given to provide even more supplementary practices to help students of different

needs to consolidate their learning of the English basics. Also, the length of the workshop could be extended to 1.5-2 hours, given adequate resources are provided to support the programme in the future. The extension of the class duration will allow more time for the lecturers to go through the skills/ grammar points and give more personalised feedback to students. Furthermore, even more meaningful interactions conducive to students' learning can be facilitated.

#### ***v. Students' Performance in the Workshops***

In addition to the feedback of the students and teachers, students' performance in the workshops was assessed through continuous assessment. In the Academic English Workshops, students were required to complete all worksheets developed for the 10 workshop sessions, 1-2 reflective writing practices, 1 paragraph writing practice, and an independent language learning portfolio. In the Workplace English Workshops, students were required to complete all worksheets developed for the 10 workshop sessions, 2 reflective writing tasks, and an independent language learning portfolio. As shown in the following table, over 99 percent of the student participants could complete the requirements of the workshop successfully.

<b>Workshop</b>	<b>Number of Classes Offered</b>	<b>Number of Beneficiaries</b>	<b>Number of Students Failed in the Workshop</b>	<b>Fail Rate</b>
<b>Academic Year 2009/10</b>				
1. Academic English	46	1,040	62	0.060%
2. Workplace English	29	627	34	0.054%
<b>Academic Year 2010/11</b>				
3. Academic English	51	1,243	62	0.050%
4. Workplace English	43	1,173	58	0.049%
	<b>186</b>	<b>4,083</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>0.053%</b>

Apart from the on-going assessment of the workshops, the beneficiaries' performance in the credit-bearing academic English and workplace English courses could also demonstrate the effectiveness of the workshop:

<b>Final Grade</b>	<b>Students' Performance in the compulsory English subjects</b>			
	<b>Academic English</b>	<b>Workplace English</b>	<b>Academic English</b>	<b>Workplace English</b>

	Semester 1, 2009-10	Semester 2, 2009-10	Semester 1, 2010-11	Semester 2, 2010-11
A+	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
A	0.36%	1.12%	0.38%	0.87%
B+	5.51%	6.21%	4.76%	8.17%
B	25.39%	24.22%	30.03%	26.57%
C+	39.64%	33.17%	36.70%	32.28%
C	19.04%	22.98%	20.00%	20.14%
D+	7.31%	8.45%	6.35%	5.95%
D	2.16%	0.50%	1.40%	0.63%
F	0.60%	3.35%	0.38%	5.39%

The above figures show that majority of these weaker students managed to satisfy the requirements of the credit-bearing compulsory subjects. With the additional English language support provided, an average of 33.4% of the weaker students could attain Grade B or above\* in the compulsory academic English and workplace English courses, while an average of 87.4% of these beneficiaries could obtain Grade C or above\* in these credit-bearing English subjects.

\*All subjects offered by our College are graded on the basis of Criterion-referenced Assessment (CRA). Grades reflect the extent to which a student has attained the Intended Learning Outcomes of the subjects. The interpretations of the grades are as follows:

Subject grade	Short description	Elaboration on subject grading description
A+	Exceptionally Outstanding	The student's work is exceptionally outstanding. It exceeds the intended subject learning outcomes in all regards.
A	Outstanding	The student's work is outstanding. It exceeds the intended subject learning outcomes in nearly all regards.
B+	Very Good	The student's work is very good. It exceeds the intended subject learning outcomes in most regards.
B	Good	The student's work is good. It exceeds the intended subject learning outcomes in some regards.
C+	Wholly Satisfactory	The student's work is wholly satisfactory. It fully meets the intended subject learning outcomes.
C	Satisfactory	The student's work is satisfactory. It largely meets the intended subject learning outcomes.

D+	Barely Satisfactory	The student's work is barely satisfactory. It marginally meets the intended subject learning outcomes.
D	Barely Adequate	The student's work is barely adequate. It meets the intended subject learning outcomes only in some regards.
F	Inadequate	The student's work is inadequate. It fails to meet many of the intended subject learning outcomes.

#### **IV. Impact or Benefits of the Project**

##### ***i) The Participants***

This project had benefited 4,083 associate degree students admitted in 2009/10 and 2010/11. In this project, students who were identified to be weaker in English based on their public examination results and English learning backgrounds were eligible to enjoy additional English language support through taking two mandatory QEGS-funded English workshops (one on academic English and the other on workplace English) in their first year of studies. Based on the quantitative and qualitative feedback collected from the students and teachers summarized in Section III, the project could effectively enhance the student participants' academic and workplace English language proficiency and equipped them with the strategies for further independent English language learning studies.

##### ***ii) The Target Institution – Hong Kong Community College***

Based on the admission figures of our College, it was estimated that around 25%-30% of the total student population in each cohort would be the weaker English learners who require additional English language support. In other words, it was estimated that around 850 students (out of around 3000 students) in each cohort would be eligible for the English Workshop. The funding granted to us for the implementation of the first academic English workshop (\$178,500) could support the offering of only 34 classes (with a class size of 25 students), but more classes had to be arranged in the end in response to the growing student needs for the additional English language support. The College had subsidised the offering of a total of 44 classes in academic year 2009/10 and 2010/11.

<b>Semester/Academic Year</b>	<b>Workshop</b>	<b>Number of Classes subsidized by HKCC</b>
Semester 2, 2009/10	Workplace English	13 classes
Semester 1, 2010/11	Academic English	14 classes
Semester 2, 2010/11	Workplace English	17 classes



With the grant funded by QEGS, our College has developed a project website (the English language learning platform), the curriculum, and the materials for the English language support programmes for students with weaker English language proficiency, all of which make up the infrastructure for our offering of further academic and workplace English language support services to students. With the project website, students admitted to our sub-degree programmes can continue to receive additional English language support by completing the online exercises on those topics identified to be the problem areas of the weaker students. Besides this, by completing the online independent language learning records, students can also trace and reflect on their progress in independent English language studies. With their consistent effort in independent English language studies, it is expected that our students will be able to develop endearing English learning habits and their life-long learning skills.

Learning well from this project the benefits of the English language support programmes to our students, our College considers it essential to maintain and build on the infrastructure to expand our English language support services to aid weaker students' English language development, even with our internal funds. To realise our mission of producing quality graduates with higher standards of English language proficiency, our College will utilise the available resources developed from this project to design a new credit-bearing English enhancement course for students with weaker English language proficiency admitted through the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) route from the 2012/13 academic year.

### *iii) The Sector*

To provide additional language support to students at the sub-degree level at large, the learning materials catering for the needs of those students with lower English language proficiency developed by the project team are now available for the access of teachers and students in other sub-degree institutions via the project website <[http://staffweb.cpce-polyu.edu.hk/qegs\\_english/](http://staffweb.cpce-polyu.edu.hk/qegs_english/)> upon registration. The public can utilise the online resources to diagnose their strengths and weaknesses in academic English and workplace English and to consolidate their academic English and workplace English skills through the completion of the online exercises.

## **V. Cost-Effectiveness of The Project**

The project is deemed to be cost-effective as it has fully utilised its available resources. The total cost for running all workshops was HK\$876,750, while the cost for material

development was \$50,000. With a total of 4,083 students participating in the Workshops, the cost per beneficiaries is only \$227 per course.

Meanwhile, HK\$86,442 (\$70,442 for the construction, update and maintenance of project website plus \$16,000 for administrative support on the update of online materials on the website) had been spent on the construction, update and maintenance of the project website, which are used to facilitate students' self-learning and to share the materials developed for the QEGS-funded Academic English and Workplace English Workshops with teachers and students of other sub-degree institutions. Since the materials developed for the workshops are specially designed to cover those topics/skills which most students with weaker English language proficiency find challenging, other students at the sub-degree level may also complete the online language practices and benefit from this project.

Most importantly, our project team has earned rich experience from the implementation of the project. We have collected valuable feedback from the stakeholders of the projects and gained valuable insights about the learning difficulties and needs of the sub-degree students. Such insights have helped our College's planning of the English curriculum for the new associate degree and higher diploma programmes which enroll students from the HKDSE route.

## **VI. Project Outcomes and Deliverables**

All project activities for Phases 1 to 4 stipulated in the agreement had been completed by 31 July 2011, including:

<b>Milestone(s) and Deliverables Attained</b>	
1. Workshop 1 (Academic English)	✓
2. Workshop 2 (Workplace English)	✓
3. Workshop 3 (Academic English)	✓
4. Workshop 4 (Workplace English)	✓
5. Teaching and Learning Materials Developed for the English Language Support Programme	✓
6. Guidebook for Independent English Language Learning	✓
7. Enhancement of Students' academic English, workplace communication and study skills	✓
8. Development of a Project Website	✓

## VII. Final Remarks

With the attainment of all the milestones in this project, our College is eager to notch up another success in aiding sub-degree students' further English language development. If external funding is available in the near future, our College can build on the existing infrastructure developed from this project and launch another major project to help diagnose the strengths, problems and difficulties of students admitting to the sub-degree programmes through the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) route. With possible external funding, entry diagnostic tests and exit tests on students' English language proficiency can be administered, which results will help educators in the sub-degree sector and in the tertiary sector at large to understand more about the English standards of the HKDSE students. With a more comprehensive understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, more well-tailored English support programmes addressing students' problem areas in not only writing but also speaking, listening and reading can be planned. Additionally, the availability of external funding can facilitate closer collaboration between the English language teachers and teachers of discipline-specific subjects. With the joint efforts of both English language and content teachers, more instructional materials catering for the needs of respective study disciplines (e.g. analyzing discipline-specific genres, vocabulary skills, etc.) can be developed to help students meet the English language demand in respective English-medium sub-degree programmes. Furthermore, an English Resource Centre with a collection of annotated student samples and other English teaching and learning materials such as worksheets for independent language studies can be built to support students' self-learning.

Enjoying the success of this project, our College would like to thank QEGS for the grant. We will continue to strive for teaching excellence, to provide quality sub-degree education to help nurture quality graduates that are well-prepared for further studies and employment.