

Table 1: The differences between general English language teaching (ELT) and EAP

Context	General English Language Teaching	English for Academic Purposes
1 What drives the syllabus?	Level driven: the main focus is what a student can and cannot do now.	Goal driven: the main focus is where a student has to get to, often in relation to a specific academic course.
2 Time available	Relatively flexible: a student may opt in and out of ELT at various points in adult life with different motivations.	Not flexible: time is strictly limited and an EAP course is probably a 'one-off' endeavour for a student.
3 What is at stake for the student?	For most students, the outcome is a sense of personal achievement or certification of the language level attained, not necessarily involving high stakes.	For almost all students, the only relevant outcome is entry to or successful completion of university study. Failure is costly in time, money and career prospects.
People		
4 Student motivation	Motives are varied and general. Students often learn general English out of interest in the language and associated cultures or a wish to become part of a global community.	Motives are specific. A high proportion of EAP students learn English as a means to entering a course at an English-medium university or in order to access a particular academic community
5 Teachers	Attracts predominantly graduates in the humanities, e.g., English (usually literature), linguistics or European languages.	Attracts a significant number of graduates in evidence-based academic disciplines, such as science, social science, business studies.

6	Teacher-student roles	Unequal: teachers are seen as language experts and students as language novices.	Teachers and students are more equal: both are learning about the academic community.
Teaching and learning content			
7	Language content (grammar and vocabulary)	Potentially, the totality of the English language is possible content. Usually, students need to be equipped for a wide range of communicative situations.	Content is limited to academic discourse, e.g., emphasis on academic style: academic vocabulary and associated grammar and discourse features.
8	Language-skills balance	Speaking and listening are usually given more importance than reading and writing. Exams or students may determine the weighting given.	The main emphasis is on reading and writing. Some EAP students have a specific need, such as academic reading or writing for publication.
9	Materials	Texts and tasks are often chosen for self-expression and are usually short and quickly covered; personal response and creativity are valued.	Texts and tasks are drawn from degree study. They are for communicating information and are inherently long and dense. Clarity and objectivity are valued in student writing.
10	Text choice	Texts are often chosen from entertaining, easily accessible genres. Traditionally, there has been an emphasis on sentence grammar, with topic driving text choice.	Text choice is based on academic genres: students learn about audience, purpose and organization as well as rhetorical functions and information structure. ²

11 Text exploitation	Variety and pace of activities are important in delivery, leading to a tendency to move quickly from text to text to maintain interest, each text having a different topic and learning focus.	Texts require more time for full exploitation. Each text may have a range of learning focuses. Texts may be linked thematically.
12 Other skills content	There is little emphasis on study skills, or these focus on language learning only. Cognitive skills are not explicitly included.	Study skills are emphasized and made explicit, particularly learner independence and cognitive skills, especially critical thinking.

A later section of this chapter, *The distinctive features of teaching and learning in EAP*, discusses the contents of Table 1 more fully.

The process of adjustment from general English to EAP teaching can involve some major shifts in approach. However, this does not mean abandoning good teaching practice. When the important differences between general English and EAP are over-emphasized, teachers sometimes begin to feel insecure and leave their most valuable skills at the EAP classroom door. EAP and other kinds of English teaching share an underlying core of methodology: all require teachers to have a sound grasp of how to promote language learning and manage all aspects of the classroom. However, a teacher wishing to adapt to the EAP context first has to explore that context in detail.

Academic discourse communities and academic expectations: joining the tribe

The internationalization of higher education has brought students from all over the world into English-medium universities, but this is not a new phenomenon. The original concept of a university was not an educational facility for local young people but a focal point where groups of international scholars sought permission to settle from the city authorities.³ As early as the 12th century, students from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds crossed the Alps or sailed across the Mediterranean to study Italian thinking on law, the Greek philosophy of Aristotle or to gain access to translations of the great Arabic writers on science, medicine and mathematics. Similarly, scholars journeyed