

# Learning Skills

## Oral Presentations

Study  
skills

Many students find that oral presentations are one of the most confronting forms of assessment. However, with planning, preparation and practise you can build your skills and confidence.

The message is a simple: **PLAN! PREPARE! PRACTISE! PRESENT!**

### Plan

Before you start gathering info/writing the presentation answer the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the presentation (Are you trying to inform/convince/entertain?)
- What assessment criteria (marking guide) will be used to mark the presentation?
- What terminology should be included to show knowledge for the subject?
- What would most interest the audience?
- What sort of information/evidence/examples will best support my presentation?

### Prepare

Create a strong plan to get the structure of the presentation right.

#### 1. Introduction - tell them what you're going to tell them

Try to grab viewers' attention and interest in the topic (give a surprising statistic/piece of info, give a real life scenario, ask a rhetorical question, use humour).

Provide background information and definitions

Clearly state the main point of the talk and outline the structure of the talk.

#### 2. Body - tell them

For each main point/argument provide an overview and then give examples/evidence.

#### 3. Conclusion - tell them what you have told them!

Give a summary of your presentation and prepare some closing comments that catch the listener's attention.

Select appropriate visual aids to support your presentation. Do not over-use visuals (a trap when using Powerpoint).

The visuals are not the presentation, their purpose is simply to summarise or illustrate your main points.

### Practice

The more you practice the more confidently and clearly you will present.

Practice your presentation aloud as much as possible. Use cue cards with simple dot points on which you elaborate orally.

Do not rush. Speak more slowly and clearly than you normally would. Provide extra emphasis through intonation (emphasis on certain words) and body language.

Be aware of body language: practice how you will stand and where you will put your hands

Practice maintaining eye-contact. If this is challenging try looking up and focussing just over the top of the eyes

Make sure you practice with any equipment you are using (eg. PPT)

### Present

Nervousness is normal - combat it by knowing your content and practising it! Convert what nervousness remains into enthusiasm and focus. Breathe. Pause between points. Emphasise key ideas/information.

Walk purposefully and confidently to the front of the lecture room (if you're not feeling it, fake it!).