EFSP Auxiliary ESL Curriculum

Energy and Utilities English

Instructor guide for advanced ESL learners working in energy and utilities

Audience: utility operations staff, energy project managers, grid planners, field supervisors, regulatory affairs teams, renewable-energy developers, customer operations teams, and infrastructure leaders

Focus: An energy and utilities English curriculum for reliability, outages, grid operations, safety, regulatory filings, renewables integration, infrastructure projects, customer communication, and risk reporting.

Designed for advanced ESL learners who already use professional English and need industry-specific terminology, realistic meetings, role-play pressure, careful pushback, and polished workplace outputs.

Teaching stance: this is language and workplace-communication training, not legal, medical, financial, safety, or regulatory advice. Instructors should connect every scenario to the learner's current company policies, local rules, and approved procedures.

Purpose and Course Logic

An energy and utilities English curriculum for reliability, outages, grid operations, safety, regulatory filings, renewables integration, infrastructure projects, customer communication, and risk reporting.

Core language challenge

Advanced learners do not only need vocabulary. They need the ability to ask which standard applies, who owns the decision, what evidence is sufficient, what risk is being accepted, and how to disagree without sounding vague, defensive, or reckless.

Each module trains a realistic workplace pressure point with role-specific terms, decision language, pushback practice, and a written output learners can adapt to their own work.

Course objectives

- Use energy and utilities terminology accurately in meetings, written updates, handoffs, escalations, reviews, and client or stakeholder conversations.
- Turn vague requests into specific questions about evidence, owner, deadline, constraint, risk, and decision rights.
- Push back on unsafe, unsupported, noncompliant, unrealistic, or poorly scoped proposals while preserving professional trust.
- Handle realistic dialogues from the field, including conflict, uncertainty, documentation gaps, customer or stakeholder pressure, and cross-functional disagreement.
- Produce concise workplace outputs: briefing notes, escalation updates, meeting scripts, risk memos, decision records, and follow-up messages.

Instructor Module Plans

Module 1. Grid Reliability and Outage Response (90 minutes)

Explain reliability events with operational precision.

Learners should be able to

- Use these terms accurately: reliability, feeder, restoration, critical customer.
- Explain the workplace tension: Crew safety, fault location, switching, weather, and restoration uncertainty matter.
- Respond professionally when a stakeholder says: Promise restoration within an hour.
- Draft a usable outage response update with facts, caveats, owner, and next step.

Customized scenario

Workplace pressure

A feeder outage affects critical customers during peak load.

Promise restoration within an hour.

Crew safety, fault location, switching, weather, and restoration uncertainty matter.

Classroom sequence

1. Terminology drill: define each term, then use it in one sentence from the learner's own role.
2. Risk map: identify the stakeholder, the decision, the evidence gap, the operating constraint, and the cost of being wrong.
3. Pushback ladder: move from clarifying question to evidence-based objection to consequence to decision request.

4. Output lab: draft and revise a outage response update.

Module 2. Safety, Field Work, and Switching (90 minutes)

Use field-safety language under pressure.

Learners should be able to

- Use these terms accurately: switching order, lockout, clearance, energize.
- Explain the workplace tension: Lockout, clearance, switching order, and crew confirmation must be complete.
- Respond professionally when a stakeholder says: Proceed to meet the schedule.
- Draft a usable field safety stop with facts, caveats, owner, and next step.

Customized scenario

Workplace pressure

A crew is asked to energize equipment before all checks are complete.

Proceed to meet the schedule.

Lockout, clearance, switching order, and crew confirmation must be complete.

Classroom sequence

1. Terminology drill: define each term, then use it in one sentence from the learner's own role.
2. Risk map: identify the stakeholder, the decision, the evidence gap, the operating constraint, and the cost of being wrong.
3. Pushback ladder: move from clarifying question to evidence-based objection to consequence to decision request.
4. Output lab: draft and revise a field safety stop.

Module 3. Regulatory Affairs and Rate Cases (90 minutes)

Translate regulatory requirements into business and customer impact.

Learners should be able to

- Use these terms accurately: rate case, tariff, prudence, customer impact.
- Explain the workplace tension: Cost drivers, prudence, customer impact, and regulatory process need careful framing.
- Respond professionally when a stakeholder says: Say rates must rise because costs rose.
- Draft a usable rate-case narrative with facts, caveats, owner, and next step.

Customized scenario

Workplace pressure

Leadership wants to simplify a rate-case explanation.

Say rates must rise because costs rose.

Cost drivers, prudence, customer impact, and regulatory process need careful framing.

Classroom sequence

1. Terminology drill: define each term, then use it in one sentence from the learner's own role.
2. Risk map: identify the stakeholder, the decision, the evidence gap, the operating constraint, and the cost of being wrong.
3. Pushback ladder: move from clarifying question to evidence-based objection to consequence to decision request.

4. Output lab: draft and revise a rate-case narrative.

Module 4. Renewables Integration and Interconnection (90 minutes)

Discuss clean-energy goals with grid constraints.

Learners should be able to

- Use these terms accurately: interconnection, capacity, curtailment, queue.
- Explain the workplace tension: Queue position, study results, upgrades, and system reliability affect timing.
- Respond professionally when a stakeholder says: Promise the date to secure the deal.
- Draft a usable interconnection status note with facts, caveats, owner, and next step.

Customized scenario

Workplace pressure

A developer wants fast interconnection for a solar project.

Promise the date to secure the deal.

Queue position, study results, upgrades, and system reliability affect timing.

Classroom sequence

1. Terminology drill: define each term, then use it in one sentence from the learner's own role.
2. Risk map: identify the stakeholder, the decision, the evidence gap, the operating constraint, and the cost of being wrong.
3. Pushback ladder: move from clarifying question to evidence-based objection to consequence to decision request.
4. Output lab: draft and revise a interconnection status note.

Module 5. Asset Management and Maintenance (90 minutes)

Explain infrastructure risk and investment needs.

Learners should be able to

- Use these terms accurately: asset management, condition assessment, lifecycle cost, failure rate.
- Explain the workplace tension: Asset condition, reliability impact, safety, and lifecycle cost need evaluation.
- Respond professionally when a stakeholder says: Delay replacement for budget reasons.
- Draft a usable asset-risk business case with facts, caveats, owner, and next step.

Customized scenario

Workplace pressure

Aging equipment shows rising failure rates.

Delay replacement for budget reasons.

Asset condition, reliability impact, safety, and lifecycle cost need evaluation.

Classroom sequence

1. Terminology drill: define each term, then use it in one sentence from the learner's own role.
2. Risk map: identify the stakeholder, the decision, the evidence gap, the operating constraint, and the cost of being wrong.
3. Pushback ladder: move from clarifying question to evidence-based objection to consequence to decision request.

4. Output lab: draft and revise a asset-risk business case.

Module 6. Emergency Preparedness and Storm Response (90 minutes)

Coordinate crisis communication and resource allocation.

Learners should be able to

- Use these terms accurately: mutual aid, crew staging, restoration priority, emergency response.
- Explain the workplace tension: Mutual aid, crew staging, materials, public communication, and safety messaging need preparation.
- Respond professionally when a stakeholder says: Wait until damage is confirmed.
- Draft a usable storm readiness brief with facts, caveats, owner, and next step.

Customized scenario

Workplace pressure

A storm forecast may affect multiple service territories.

Wait until damage is confirmed.

Mutual aid, crew staging, materials, public communication, and safety messaging need preparation.

Classroom sequence

1. Terminology drill: define each term, then use it in one sentence from the learner's own role.
2. Risk map: identify the stakeholder, the decision, the evidence gap, the operating constraint, and the cost of being wrong.
3. Pushback ladder: move from clarifying question to evidence-based objection to consequence to decision request.
4. Output lab: draft and revise a storm readiness brief.

Module 7. Customer Programs and Energy Efficiency (90 minutes)

Explain incentives without overpromising savings.

Learners should be able to

- Use these terms accurately: incentive, baseline, demand response, measurement and verification.
- Explain the workplace tension: Eligibility, baseline use, behavior, equipment, and measurement rules affect outcomes.
- Respond professionally when a stakeholder says: Promise the average result.
- Draft a usable program expectation script with facts, caveats, owner, and next step.

Customized scenario

Workplace pressure

A customer expects guaranteed savings from an efficiency program.

Promise the average result.

Eligibility, baseline use, behavior, equipment, and measurement rules affect outcomes.

Classroom sequence

1. Terminology drill: define each term, then use it in one sentence from the learner's own role.
2. Risk map: identify the stakeholder, the decision, the evidence gap, the operating constraint, and the cost of being wrong.

3. Pushback ladder: move from clarifying question to evidence-based objection to consequence to decision request.
4. Output lab: draft and revise a program expectation script.

Module 8. Executive Reliability and Investment Updates (90 minutes)

Present technical risk to leaders and regulators.

Learners should be able to

- Use these terms accurately: SAIDI, SAIFI, vegetation management, capital plan.
- Explain the workplace tension: SAIDI, SAIFI, asset condition, vegetation, investment, and mitigation all matter.
- Respond professionally when a stakeholder says: Blame weather.
- Draft a usable reliability executive update with facts, caveats, owner, and next step.

Customized scenario

Workplace pressure

The executive team asks why reliability metrics worsened.

Blame weather.

SAIDI, SAIFI, asset condition, vegetation, investment, and mitigation all matter.

Classroom sequence

1. Terminology drill: define each term, then use it in one sentence from the learner's own role.
2. Risk map: identify the stakeholder, the decision, the evidence gap, the operating constraint, and the cost of being wrong.
3. Pushback ladder: move from clarifying question to evidence-based objection to consequence to decision request.
4. Output lab: draft and revise a reliability executive update.

Nomenclature and Jargon

These are classroom working definitions. Learners should adapt wording to their organization's policies, systems, and local regulatory environment.

Grid Reliability and Outage Response

Term	Working meaning
reliability	Working energy and utilities term used in grid reliability and outage response; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
feeder	Working energy and utilities term used in grid reliability and outage response; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
restoration	Working energy and utilities term used in grid reliability and outage response; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
critical customer	Working energy and utilities term used in grid reliability and outage response; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Safety, Field Work, and Switching

Term	Working meaning
switching order	Working energy and utilities term used in safety, field work, and switching; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Term	Working meaning
lockout	Working energy and utilities term used in safety, field work, and switching; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
clearance	Working energy and utilities term used in safety, field work, and switching; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
energize	Working energy and utilities term used in safety, field work, and switching; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Regulatory Affairs and Rate Cases

Term	Working meaning
rate case	Working energy and utilities term used in regulatory affairs and rate cases; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
tariff	Working energy and utilities term used in regulatory affairs and rate cases; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
prudence	Working energy and utilities term used in regulatory affairs and rate cases; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
customer impact	Working energy and utilities term used in regulatory affairs and rate cases; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Renewables Integration and Interconnection

Term	Working meaning
interconnection	Working energy and utilities term used in renewables integration and interconnection; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
capacity	Available people, assets, time, space, or system throughput for a given workload.
curtailment	Working energy and utilities term used in renewables integration and interconnection; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
queue	Working energy and utilities term used in renewables integration and interconnection; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Asset Management and Maintenance

Term	Working meaning
asset management	Working energy and utilities term used in asset management and maintenance; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
condition assessment	Working energy and utilities term used in asset management and maintenance; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
lifecycle cost	Working energy and utilities term used in asset management and maintenance; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
failure rate	Working energy and utilities term used in asset management and maintenance; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Emergency Preparedness and Storm Response

Term	Working meaning
mutual aid	Working energy and utilities term used in emergency preparedness and storm response; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Term	Working meaning
crew staging	Working energy and utilities term used in emergency preparedness and storm response; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
restoration priority	Working energy and utilities term used in emergency preparedness and storm response; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
emergency response	Working energy and utilities term used in emergency preparedness and storm response; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Customer Programs and Energy Efficiency

Term	Working meaning
incentive	Working energy and utilities term used in customer programs and energy efficiency; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
baseline	Working energy and utilities term used in customer programs and energy efficiency; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
demand response	Working energy and utilities term used in customer programs and energy efficiency; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
measurement and verification	Working energy and utilities term used in customer programs and energy efficiency; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Executive Reliability and Investment Updates

Term	Working meaning
SAIDI	Working energy and utilities term used in executive reliability and investment updates; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
SAIFI	Working energy and utilities term used in executive reliability and investment updates; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
vegetation management	Working energy and utilities term used in executive reliability and investment updates; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
capital plan	Working energy and utilities term used in executive reliability and investment updates; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Industry-Specific Meeting Moves

Situation	Useful language
Grid Reliability and Outage Response	Before we commit, I want to confirm reliability, feeder, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If crew safety, fault location, switching, weather, and restoration uncertainty matter., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.
Safety, Field Work, and Switching	Before we commit, I want to confirm switching order, lockout, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If lockout, clearance, switching order, and crew confirmation must be complete., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.
Regulatory Affairs and Rate Cases	Before we commit, I want to confirm rate case, tariff, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If cost drivers, prudence, customer impact, and regulatory process need careful framing., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.
Renewables Integration and Interconnection	Before we commit, I want to confirm interconnection, capacity, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If queue position, study results, upgrades, and system reliability affect timing., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.

Situation	Useful language
Asset Management and Maintenance	Before we commit, I want to confirm asset management, condition assessment, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If asset condition, reliability impact, safety, and lifecycle cost need evaluation., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.
Emergency Preparedness and Storm Response	Before we commit, I want to confirm mutual aid, crew staging, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If mutual aid, crew staging, materials, public communication, and safety messaging need preparation., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.
Customer Programs and Energy Efficiency	Before we commit, I want to confirm incentive, baseline, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If eligibility, baseline use, behavior, equipment, and measurement rules affect outcomes., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.
Executive Reliability and Investment Updates	Before we commit, I want to confirm SAIDI, SAIFI, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If saidi, saifi, asset condition, vegetation, investment, and mitigation all matter., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.

High-pressure pushback frames

- I understand the urgency. The risk is that we move faster than the evidence or process supports.
- I am not blocking the goal. I am naming the condition we need before the decision is safe and credible.
- If we accept this risk, we should name the owner, document the assumption, and define the trigger for escalation.
- That may be possible, but not under the current scope, timeline, or approval path.
- Let's separate what we know, what we assume, and what still needs confirmation.

Assessment and Coaching

Performance rubric

Skill	Developing	Proficient	Strong
Terminology	Recognizes terms but uses them loosely.	Uses field terms accurately in context.	Defines terms, connects them to evidence, and explains decision impact.
Pushback	Disagrees vaguely or avoids disagreement.	Names concern with evidence and next step.	Balances urgency, relationship, risk, owner, and decision rights.
Scenario judgment	Focuses on one stakeholder's preference.	Identifies constraint, risk, and process.	Guides the group toward a documented, realistic decision.
Written output	Writes general summaries.	Produces clear notes with facts and owner.	Creates concise, decision-ready workplace communication.

Source orientation

- Utility operating procedures and safety manuals.
- Public utility commission requirements and tariffs.
- Emergency response and customer communication protocols.
- The learner's own company policies, SOPs, contracts, systems, templates, and approved communication standards.