# **<u>Lecture 3:</u>** Purpose and process

This unit deals with two closely linked concepts: **purpose** and **process**. Purpose is concerned with the question of **why** or for **what reason** something is done or exists, while process describes **how**, or **the manner** in which it is done.

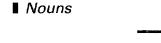
Process is frequently associated with the passive form.

# Functions & Grammar

**KEY POINTS - PURPOSE & PROCESS** 

## 1. Purpose

→ Purpose is concerned with questions of "why" or for "what reason" something is done.



the purpose • function • use

➤ Metal is increasingly used in architecture for structural purposes.

the aim · goal · target · objective

➤ The main **objective** of hydrology is to study the physical and chemical processes of the water cycle.

#### ■ Verbs

it is designed to / for ' is devised to / for ' is planned to / for ' is aimed to / for ' is responsible for

- ➤ The new safety measures were **designed to** reduce the risks of contamination.
- ➤ A cooling system was **devised for** the preservation of clinical specimens.

it functions (as) · operates (as)

it provides • supplies

➤ The haemoglobin **provides** the extra oxygen.

#### Other expressions

in order to / so as to · so that

**→**N.B.

• "In order to / so as to" have basically the same meaning as "to". They are merely stronger ways of expressing the idea of purpose.

- "So that" is followed by a clause composed of subject + verb.
  - ➤ Platinum contacts should be used **to** prevent oxidisation.
  - ➤ Platinum contacts should be used **in order to / so as to** prevent oxidisation.
  - > Platinum should be used so that oxidisation can be prevented.

### 2. Process

- → Process is concerned with questions of "how" or "in what way" something is done.
- Adverbial and prepositional phrases (see Unit 5)

by means of • through • thanks to • via

➤ The brain was damaged **through** lack of oxygen.

therefore • thus • thereby

He switched off the computer, thereby losing all the data.

## ■ Verbs

to enable • make (it) possible (for) • allow • permit

- ➤ It is the carbon compounds that are responsible for the chemical reactions that **enable / make it possible for** the cell to grow.
- ➤ Visibility was poor the plane was not **allowed / permitted** to land.

N.B. – Meaning

- "To enable / to make possible" have the primary meaning of making something feasible or physically possible.
- "To allow / to permit" have the primary meaning of making something possible by giving authorisation or permission.

However, in modern English, the meaning of to allow / to permit is often extended to physical possibility.

The Erasmus grant

enabled made it possible for allowed permitted

him to go on studying