

English for Business Level 4



Specification

Effective from January 2006

Vision Statement

Our vision is to contribute to the achievements of learners around the world by providing integrated assessment and learning services, adapted to meet both local market and wider occupational needs and delivered to international standards.



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INTRODUCTION

Education Development International (EDI) is a leading international awarding body that was formed through the merger of the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examinations Board (LCCIEB) and a leading online assessment provider (GOAL). EDI now delivers LCCI International qualifications (LCCI IQ) through a network of over 4000 registered centres in more than 100 countries worldwide. Our range of business-related qualifications are trusted and valued by employers worldwide and recognised by universities and professional bodies.

English for Business Level 4

This qualification is intended for candidates who have reached a standard of productive English usage which will create an extremely good impression of their language skills. There would be no need for close supervision and scrutiny of the English of a successful candidate at this level. Linguistic and stylistic errors of all types will be rare.

This examination will test at a higher level the linguistic skills and business knowledge tested at Level 3. The techniques for handling, displaying, interpreting, transferring and reformulating information already introduced at the previous levels will be invoked for more advanced tasks.

The level of this qualification is in line with Level 4 of the LCCI IQ Language Levels Framework. Candidates would be expected to be at the Council of Europe's Effective Operational Proficiency Level (C1).

Please note that a UK accredited ESOL version of this examination is available as 'Certificate in Written Business English, Level 2'.

Note: The equivalence shown above is specific to a pass grade at the respective EFB level. A credit or distinction is considered to be equivalent of one Council of Europe Framework (CEF) level higher than that of a pass (eg a level 4 credit / distinction = CEF C2).

Structure of the qualification

This qualification has three parts, one part is compulsory, the other two parts are optional. The LCCI IQ Level 4 Certificate in English for Business will be awarded to candidates who successfully complete the learning outcomes and assessments for the following part:

- Reading and Writing (compulsory)

An additional certificate will be awarded to candidates who successfully complete the learning outcomes and assessments either one or both of the following parts:

- Speaking (optional)
- Listening (optional)

Aims

The aims of this syllabus are to enable candidates to develop the ability to:

- understand authentic business texts
- write English in a wide variety of ways within an extensive range of business contexts.
- listen and understand business-related material such as conversations, announcements, short talks, and news bulletins.
- give clear, detailed oral descriptions and presentations on complex subjects
- express themselves orally in a clear and appropriate style on business or professional matters.

Assessment Objectives

The examination will assess the candidate's ability to:

Reading and Writing

- extract and use relevant information from authentic written sources and employ a correct layout and textual structure in order to complete the given written task
- use structures, syntax and vocabulary both coherently and accurately
- demonstrate an extensive range of language

Speaking

- give a clear, detailed oral presentation on a business-related subject
- express themselves orally in a discussion on business-related or professional matters

Listening

- understand standard speech encountered in work and everyday situations
- understand factual information that they have listened to, such as instructions and directions, short talks, announcements, and news bulletins

All modes

- use appropriately and accurately the notions, functions and grammatical exponents listed in the linguistic syllabus

Syllabus Topics

Reading and Writing

- 1 Reading and comprehending an authentic text and producing a piece of business writing related to this text.
- 2 Writing business texts from given information.
- 3 Reformulating and reformatting texts from one text type to another – specifically text to précis and digital/graphical/numerical information to text.
- 4 Extending and producing completed texts in a range of contrasting genres.

For a full breakdown of these topics, refer to syllabus topics 1 to 4 and the associated learning outcomes that are shown on pages 9 – 11 of this document.

Speaking

The English for Business Speaking Test is a test of English with a commercial and business focus, so candidates will be tested for their competence in English within a general business and/or commercial context. The topics for the oral test are as follows:

- 1 Earning a living
- 2 Production and sale of goods
- 3 Trade
- 4 Money
- 5 Transport
- 6 Communications
- 7 Education
- 8 Travel and tourism

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate a level of linguistic competences as outlined in Syllabus topics 5 to 8 and the associated learning outcomes that are shown on pages 11 – 12 of this document.

Listening

The English for Business Listening Test is a test of English with a commercial and business focus, so candidates will be tested for their competence in English within a general business and / or commercial context. The topics for the listening test are as follows:

- 1 Personal information
- 2 Travel information
- 3 Work information
- 4 Business transactions

- 5 Instructions
- 6 Arrangements

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate a level of linguistic competences as outlined in Syllabus topic 9 and the associated learning outcomes shown on page 12 of this document.

Assessment

Reading and Writing - compulsory

There will be 4 compulsory questions corresponding to the 4 syllabus topics listed above. The time allowance for the examination is 3 hours. There are 4 compulsory questions as follows:

- Question 1 will be in 2 parts. The first part will require the candidate to understand and respond to a lengthy (around 750 words) and complex authentic business text. Comprehension will be demonstrated through a variety of question types (eg sentence completion, true/false etc.). The second part of the question will require the production of a written text related to the article, within a given scenario
- Question 2 will require the candidate to produce business texts in the appropriate tone and style. The question type will be either:
 - a single case study/scenario generating 2 pieces of business writing which will allow candidates to demonstrate their ability to write in contrasting styles (eg in a memo to a colleague and for a trade journal news item on the same topic), or:
 - a formal report generated from a series of pieces of information written in an informal style
- Question 3 will be in 2 parts. The first part will require the candidate to reformulate information by way of a précis of a longer text, within a given scenario (eg to write an abstract of an article to put in an information bulletin). The second part will require the candidate to reformulate digital/graphical/numerical information into a written form (eg a management comment on the performance of a subsidiary company)
- Question 4 will require the candidate to produce fluent and accurate written texts in a range of styles and genres. Candidates will be required to continue and complete 2 different texts appropriately from information given (eg a formal notice for exhibition on the office wall or an invitation to a company open recruitment meeting).

Speaking – optional

Candidates will be assessed by a 17 minute examination including 5 minutes preparation time. The examination consists of 2 parts. There are four criteria – fluency, lexis, grammar and pronunciation – and candidates will be assessed on their performance in both parts. The assessment tasks are as follows:

- Part 1 consists of a warm up conversation during which the candidate will be asked about, eg. study, work ambitions for the future,

- Part 2 requires the candidate to participate in a discussion of the topic selected by the examiner

Listening - optional

Candidates will be assessed via a listening test lasting about 30 minutes. The test comprises 15 listening passages, each with two multiple-choice questions. There is one mark for each question. There are 2 types of task:

- Task 1. Candidates listen to a conversation. They then read 2 questions about the conversation, both of which have 4 possible written answers (A, B, C, D), and choose the correct answers.
- Task 2. Candidates listen to a monologue. They then read 2 questions about the monologue, both of which have 4 possible written answers (A, B, C, D), and choose the correct answers.

Candidate Answer Guidance

Answer Formats for Reading and Writing Test

Candidates will be required to answer the questions in the format prescribed to the standard of English outlined in Target Audience and Candidate Progression above.

All answers should take full account of the given context and be fully appropriate for that context and any associated scenario. The texts produced should be as concise as is appropriate for these contexts and scenarios. Where the length of the required text is not clear from the task itself, guidance as to approximate word number will be given in the question. In the reading comprehension (question 1 part A) understanding should be signalled in the most economic means possible, eg incomplete sentences, figures, single words, diagrams etc.

The answers to the questions should be wholly adequate in practical business terms in the sense that they achieve the purpose of the communication and successfully complete the task required by being linguistically and structurally clear and by including all essential information whilst excluding all irrelevant information.

Business style language appropriate to the text and question-type should be used at all times. This should be correct in formal terms (eg using correct grammar and punctuation) and appropriate in terms of the business role or occasion described (eg displaying tact or expressing disappointment).

Marks will be awarded for the task achievement and linguistic content of the written texts and not assessed for the business knowledge of the candidate.

Candidates are allowed to take one dictionary into this examination which may be either English or foreign language/English; EDI cannot undertake to advise on which dictionaries to choose and candidates make the choice entirely at their own risk. Poor quality dictionaries may be misleading and candidates will lose time looking up words if they frequently have recourse to them.

Pass Mark Information and Mark Allocation

Reading and Writing

Pass	50%
Credit	60%
Distinction	75%

A positive marking approach is used except where candidates extensively and inappropriately 'lift' language from the text used as the basis for questions in the examination paper, where up to 5 marks may be deducted in each question.

Question 1

Part a - Comprehension Task (15%)

An average of 6 questions will be asked with a total mark value of 15 marks.

For this part of the examination answers may also be provided in the form of incomplete sentences, figures, diagrams, charts etc if appropriate.

Part b - Written text related to the article (10%)

- Extraction and use of relevant information/layout/task completion 2 marks
- Coherent, accurate use of structure and vocabulary 4 marks
- Breadth and range of language used 4 marks

Questions 2, 3 and 4 (25% each)

- Extraction and use of relevant information/layout/task completion 15 marks
- Coherent, accurate use of structure and vocabulary 5 marks
- Breadth and range of language used 5 marks

Speaking

Marks are awarded for: fluency, lexis, grammar and pronunciation with 4 possible marks available for each criterion (i.e. 1 = Fail, 2 = Pass, 3 = Credit, 4 = Distinction).

Fail	two or more criteria scored at fail level.
Pass	minimum of three criteria scored at pass level (or higher) but failing to meet credit/distinction requirements.
Credit	minimum of three criteria scored at credit level + one at pass (or higher) but failing to meet distinction requirements.
Distinction	minimum of three criteria scored at distinction level + one at credit.

The weighting of marks for a complete oral examination is:

- fluency 25%
- lexical range and accuracy 25%
- grammatical range and accuracy 25%

- pronunciation 25%

TOTAL 100%

Listening

One mark is awarded for each correct answer.

Pass 15 – 17 marks
 Credit 18 – 22 marks
 Distinction 23 > marks

Varieties of English

The Board will accept any of the main varieties of English (British, North American, Australasian) in candidates' answers as long as candidates are **consistent** in the variety they use.

Guided Learning Hours

EDI recommends that 140 – 160 Guided Learning Hours (GLHs) provide a suitable course duration for an “average” candidate at this level. This figure includes direct contact hours as well as other time when candidates' work is being supervised by teachers. Ultimately, however, it is the responsibility of training centres to determine the appropriate course duration based on their candidates' ability and level of existing knowledge. EDI experience indicates that the number of GLHs can vary significantly from one training centre to another.

Recommended Reading List and Support Material

Reading List – Reading and Writing only

Title	Author	Publisher	ISBN Code	Order Code
Business Class	David Cotton	CUP	0175563373	
Write for Business	Michael Doherty	Longman	0582748933	
Professional Reading Skills	Series	Prentice Hall		
How to Pass English for Business Level 4	M Sneyd and A Timson	LCCIEB	1-86247-098-7	ASPB 0105
How to Pass English for Business Level 4, Teachers book	M Sneyd and A Timson	LCCIEB	1-86247-028-6	ASPB 0109

Support Material

Candidates are allowed to take one dictionary into this examination which may be either English or foreign language/English; EDI cannot undertake to advise on which dictionaries to choose and candidates make the choice entirely at their own risk. Poor quality dictionaries may be misleading and candidates will lose time looking up words if they frequently have recourse to them.

For advice on the layout and presentation of the reading and writing test, candidates are recommended to refer to the past question papers and corresponding model answers which are available from EDI. For the listening and speaking tests, candidates are recommended to refer to the Guidance Document for English for Business Optional Tests. Sample items for the listening test and sample topic sheets for the speaking test can be found within the appendices of this document. In addition, a listening test sample CD and a speaking test tutorial CD are available from EDI. The speaking test tutorial CD has been developed to be used in conjunction with the speaking test sample topic sheets.

Syllabus Topic

Learning outcomes

1 Comprehension and response to a complex authentic text

The text will be from a business source such as a business newspaper or journal. The writing task will be related to the article and may require the candidate to invent some further information according to the specified scenario.

Candidates must be able to:

- 1.1 Demonstrate a factual understanding of the text by answering comprehension questions.
- 1.2 Demonstrate an ability to identify ambiguity, argument, opinion and persuasive devices in the text.
- 1.3 Demonstrate an ability to infer the writer's meaning by reading between the lines.
- 1.4 Write a text based on the information in the passage and appropriate to a specified scenario, including all necessary information from the article.
- 1.5 Employ correct and stylistically appropriate language in the satisfactory completion of the task

2 Composing business texts

Based either on a scenario which will generate 2 contrasting business texts or on informal data which will generate a more formal report.

Candidates must be able to:

- 2.1 Compose a full range of business correspondence using appropriate business conventions (i.e. layout etc) to a standard suitable for mailing or distribution

- 2.2 Compose a report, using appropriate layout, conventions, and clear organisation of information
- 2.3 Describe accounts of events, cause and effect, assessments of data and evaluation of information within these contexts
- 2.4 Handle different content types, such as giving instructions and directions, making proposals and suggestions and argumentation
- 2.5 Employ correct and stylistically appropriate language for both the report and other business correspondence.

3 Business-related text and data conversion and reformulation

A contextualised precis based on a text and a reformulated text from digital/graphical/numerical data

Candidates must be able to:

- 3.1 Select relevant information from the text or other data
- 3.2 Collate and express such information concisely, clearly and unambiguously
- 3.3 Adopt an appropriate tone and format for the specified context
- 3.4 Draw on a basic understanding of relevant business issues and practices to enhance the effectiveness of the texts produced.
- 3.5 Employ correct and stylistically appropriate language in the satisfactory completion of the task

4 Handling different genres/text types

**Based on the start of
2 contextualised texts to be
completed in a style
appropriate to the genre**

Candidates must be able to:

- 4.1 Recognise and identify the reader/writer relationship from the given context and the initial part of the text
- 4.2 Adopt an appropriate tone and style for this genre
- 4.3 Complete the task satisfactorily for the purpose according to the information supplied
- 4.4 Supply invented content appropriately to the texts as required.

5 Linguistic Competence (Structures)

Candidates must be able to:

- 5.1 Understand and use an unrestricted range of structures.

6 Linguistic Competence (Functions)

Candidates must be able to:

- 6.1 Use a full range of appropriate language to carry out an unrestricted range of functional purposes: eg to give descriptive accounts of events and statements of cause and effect; to give an assessment and evaluation of information; to give instructions and directions; to make proposals, suggestions, arguments for action etc.

**7 Linguistic Competence
(Vocabulary)**

Candidates must be able to:

- 7.1 Understand and use an extensive range of vocabulary and other lexical items both on general topics (eg making arrangements, current affairs etc. and on all usual business topics (eg company and management practices, financial terminology, production practices etc)
- 7.2 Understand and use a wide range of idiomatic forms used in business eg business idioms and business collocations

**8 Linguistic Competence
(Style)**

Candidates must be able to:

- 8.1 Select appropriate grammatical structures and lexical items for use in a full range of business styles – formal and less formal, standard and colloquial.

9 Listening competence

Candidates must be able to demonstrate their ability to:

- 9.1 Understand enough to follow extended speech on abstract and complex topics even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and signalled explicitly.
- 9.2 Recognise a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, and appreciate shifts of register.
- 9.3 Understand complex technical information and distorted public announcements.
- 9.4 Follow most talks, discussions or debates with relative ease.
- 9.5 can understand a wide range of broadcast material, including implicit attitudes and relationships between speakers.



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