

# English for Business Preliminary Level



## 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 Preliminary Level

This qualification is intended for candidates who have achieved a fundamental understanding of English in a business context and who have the ability to use the language in a practical way at a very basic level. It is intended for candidates who wish to

- Gain a recognised English qualification at the equivalent of Council of Europe A1 (Breakthrough) level
- Progress to LCCI IQ Level 1 in English for Business at the equivalent of Council of Europe A2 (Waystage) level.

Further progress can be made up to Level 4 of this qualification. Each of these levels builds on the previous one and provides a consistent extension to the levels of skill and knowledge developed at the previous level.

*Note: The equivalences shown above are 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 preliminary credit / distinction = CEF A2).*

### Structure of the qualification

This qualification has three parts, one part is compulsory, the other two parts are optional. The LCCI IQ Preliminary Level 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) – formally referred to as EFB oral test
- Listening (optional) – available from April 2006

## **Aims**

The aims of this syllabus are to enable candidates to develop their basic linguistic ability, in a predictable business English context, to:

- identify basic data, facts and instructions
- produce basic, formulaic text.
- listen and understand short, basic, business-related English conversations and announcements
- understand basic, spoken and recorded business English
- participate in short conversations in routine contexts

## **Assessment Objectives**

The examination will assess the candidate's ability to:

### **Reading and Writing**

- identify relevant data, facts, and instructions appropriately from simple texts
- take any action necessary from the stimulus material
- refer to a dictionary or other reference material to clarify and confirm meaning.
- produce basic and formulaic text reasonably accurately using basic structures and conventions
- convey the meaning of the written material to enable the reader to understand the message.

### **Speaking**

- provide appropriate oral responses to questions on familiar, personal matters
- answer appropriate questions based on a series of pictures

### **Listening**

- demonstrate understanding of simple business-related enquiries, conversations, and announcements

## **Syllabus Topics**

### **Reading and Writing**

- 1 Basic office or place of work descriptions
- 2 Basic jobs and roles in a work context
- 3 Basic social language within a business context
- 4 Basic work or business-related instructions and directions
- 5 Simple numerical information
- 6 Standard business or work-related messages

For a full breakdown of these topics, refer to syllabus topics 1 to 6 and the associated learning outcomes that are shown on pages 8 – 9 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 competence as outlined in syllabus topics 7 to 10 and the associated learning outcomes that shown on pages 9 – 16 of this document.

### **Listening**

The English for Business Listening test is a test for English with a commercial and business focus, so candidates will be tested for their competence in 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 listening competence as outlined in syllabus topic 11 and associated learning outcomes shown on page 16 of this document.

## **Assessment**

### **Reading and Writing – compulsory**

Candidates will be assessed by means of a 90 minute examination paper consisting of 3 sections. Section A will concentrate on syllabus topics 1 and 2 above, Section B on syllabus topics 3 and 4, and Section C will involve tasks related to syllabus topics 5 and 6. Sections A and B both carry 35 marks, and Section C carries 30 marks.

- Section A will contain a picture of an office or other workplace setting and candidates will be given 15 'tick box' type questions carrying 1 mark each and 10 short answer questions carrying 2 marks each, on what is happening in the picture, to demonstrate use of key structures and concepts
- Section B will contain a 2–person dialogue of about 10 exchanges to provide a reading comprehension exercise. Candidates will be given 11 questions carrying 1 mark each, with true or false answers, and 8 questions carrying 3 marks each requiring longer answers in full sentences.
- Section C will use the dialogue in Section B as a basis for a piece of productive writing. This will be the completion of a document provided (eg a telephone message or memo) which candidates will use to present selected information to a third party mentioned in the dialogue. Candidates will also be provided with some additional numerical data which they will be expected to consult in order to complete the exercise (eg a price list or timetable).

### **Speaking - optional**

Candidates will be assessed by an 11 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 20 minutes. The test comprises 25 short listening tasks, each with a multiple-choice question. There is one mark for each question.

There are 2 types of tasks:

Task 1 (13 questions). Candidates listen to same question three times, with three different answers to that question. They have to choose the correct answer (A or B or C).

Task 2 (12 questions). Candidates listen to a short conversation or announcement. They then read a question about what they have heard, with 4 possible answers marked A, B, C or D. They have to choose the correct answer.

## Candidate Answer Guidance

### Answer Formats for the Reading and Writing Test

Unless otherwise requested, candidates will be asked to provide answers in the following formats:

- multiple choice 'tick box' responses
- one-word answers
- True/False answers
- simple sentence answers
- completion of a document such as a telephone message or a memo.

When completing the short answers in Section B and the message in Section C, candidates should pay attention to good handwriting and layout, correct spelling and punctuation, and clarity of phrasing.

### Pass Mark Information and Mark Allocation

#### Reading and Writing

Pass	50%
Credit	60%
Distinction	75%

In Section C, marks are awarded for: accuracy in spelling, punctuation, grammar; appropriacy of content, length, format; clarity of communication.

A typical weighting of the 30 allocated marks would be:

• correct details (names, dates, times, etc)	6 marks
• correct content of message (facts, actions, etc)	12 marks
• clarity of communication of message	6 marks
• accuracy of grammar, spelling etc	6 marks
TOTAL	30 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	12 – 14 marks
Credit	15 – 18 marks
Distinction	19 > marks

## Varieties of English

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

## Guided Learning Hours

EDI recommends that 60-70 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

### Recommended Reading – Reading and Writing only

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Publisher</b>	<b>ISBN Code</b>	<b>Order Code</b>
How to Pass English for Business Preliminary Level	L Colclough	LCCIEB	1-86247-008-1	0019 ARLA
How to Pass English for Business Preliminary Level Teacher's Guide	L Colclough	LCCIEB	1-86247-013-8	0018 ARLA

### Support Material

Candidates are allowed to take one dictionary into this examination which may be either English or foreign language/English; the 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, if they frequently have recourse to them, candidates will lose time looking up words.

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 questions 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 <b>Basic office or place of work descriptions</b>	Candidates must be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Describe basic office furniture and equipment</li> <li>1.2 Describe basic office or place of work layout</li> </ul>
2 <b>Basic jobs and roles in a work context</b>	Candidates must be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Describe basic job titles and work relationships</li> <li>2.2 Explain basic work tasks</li> </ul>
3 <b>Basic social language within a business context</b>	Candidates must be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 Exchange basic greetings and goodbyes in a business context</li> <li>3.2 Elicit and provide basic personal information</li> <li>3.3 Make and respond appropriately to invitations</li> <li>3.4 Express gratitude in a business context</li> </ul>
4 <b>Basic work- or business-related instructions and directions</b>	Candidates must be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1 Explain basic and common work tasks</li> <li>4.2 Give basic directions to a destination</li> <li>4.3 Give basic directions within a building</li> </ul>
5 <b>Simple numerical information</b>	Candidates must be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.1 Understand a basic timetable or schedule</li> <li>5.2 Understand a basic price list, bill, or invoice</li> </ul>

**6 Standard business- or work-related messages**

Candidates must be able to:

- 6.1 Compose a basic memo or note relaying simple information within a business context

**7 Linguistic competence (structures)**

Candidates must be able to:

- 7.1 Recognise and use the following verb forms:

7.1.1 the simple present and present continuous tenses (eg *I work/I am working*)

7.1.2 the simple past tense (eg *I worked*)

7.1.3 the simple future tense expressed by use of the present continuous tense and a time marker (eg *I'm working next week*)

7.1.4 simple imperatives (eg *open the door*)

- 7.2 Recognise the following verb forms:

7.2.1 the present perfect tense (eg *I have worked*)

7.2.2 the future expressed with *will* and *going to*

7.2.3 more complex imperatives (eg *bring me that file*)

7.2.4 the modals *can, may, would, must, and will*

- 7.3 Recognise and use the following types of adjectives:

7.3.1 possessive adjectives (eg *my, his, her*)

7.3.2 demonstrative adjectives (eg *this, those*)

7.3.3 the descriptive adjective *very*

- 7.4 Recognise a limited range of descriptive, comparative and superlative adjectives (eg *a little, much better, big, small, high, tall, (-er), (-est)*)
- 7.5 Recognise and use the locative adverbs *here* and *there*
- 7.6 Recognise a limited range of further locative adverbs (eg *inside, outside, near, far*)
- 7.7 Recognise and use the following pronoun forms:
  - 7.7.1 possessive pronouns *mine, yours, his, hers, ours, theirs*
  - 7.7.2 indefinite pronouns *something, anything, nothing, everything*
  - 7.7.3 relative pronouns *who, which, that*
- 7.8 Recognise and use the following determiners:
  - 7.8.1 singular demonstratives *this, that*
  - 7.8.2 simple quantifiers *many, some*
  - 7.8.3 basic count words (eg *a bottle of, a piece of, a cup of*)
- 7.9 Recognise the following determiners:
  - 7.9.1 the definite and indefinite articles
  - 7.9.2 plural demonstratives *these, those*
  - 7.9.3 a range of quantifiers (eg *a bit of, a few, any, more, most, no, half*)
- 7.10 Ask and respond to *yes/no* questions
- 7.11 Recognise and use the interrogatives *when, where, why, what, who*
- 7.12 Recognise a further range of interrogatives (eg *how far/much/long, which, whose*)

## 8 Linguistic competence (concepts)

Candidates must be able to:

- 8.1 Recognise and use the following ways of expressing existence:
  - 8.1.1 simplest forms of existence (eg *there is/is there?*)
  - 8.1.2 simplest forms of presence and absence (eg *(not) here/(not) there*)
- 8.2 Recognise the simplest forms of non-existence (eg *There isn't any ...*)
- 8.3 Recognise and use the following ways of expressing space:
  - 8.3.1 geographical location *north, south, east, west*
  - 8.3.2 simple directions *left, right*
  - 8.3.3 basic prepositions (eg *up, down, in, out, to, from, into*)
- 8.4 Recognise the following ways of expressing space:
  - 8.4.1 distance (eg *near, far*)
  - 8.4.2 a further range of directions (eg *straight on, back*)
  - 8.4.3 more complex prepositions (eg *past*)
  - 8.4.4 a further range of verbs (eg *bring, follow, send, turn*)
- 8.5 Express present, past and future time within the limits of the given verb range (see Section 7.1)
- 8.6 Recognise and use the following ways of expressing time:
  - 8.6.1 time divisions including days of the week and the term *weekend*
  - 8.6.2 months of the year
  - 8.6.3 seasons of the year
  - 8.6.4 times of day (eg *morning, afternoon, evening*)

- 8.6.5 use of the term *from* to express starting and finishing (eg *I work from nine to five*)
- 8.6.6 the simplest forms of frequency (eg *always, never*)
- 8.7 Tell the time using the *o'clock* form
- 8.8 Recognise the following ways of expressing time:
  - 8.8.1 *late, early*
  - 8.8.2 the *am* and *pm* forms
  - 8.8.3 the term *holidays*
  - 8.8.4 sequence (eg *first, then*)
  - 8.8.5 more complex expressions of frequency (eg *sometime, often, not often, on Mondays, every Monday, times per week, again*)
- 8.9 Recognise and use the following ways of expressing number and quantity:
  - 8.9.1 the singular and plural form of countable nouns (eg *computers, desks*)
  - 8.9.2 cardinal numbers of up to 4 digits
- 8.10 Recognise the following ways of expressing number and quantity:
  - 8.10.1 the singular and plural nature of uncountable nouns (eg *money, weight*)
  - 8.10.2 ordinal numbers up to 2 digits
  - 8.10.3 approximations (eg *it's about ...*)

- 8.11 Recognise and use the following ways of expressing quality:
  - 8.11.1 basic shapes (eg *square, round*)
  - 8.11.2 a range of adjectives concerning size (eg *big, small, high, low*)
  - 8.11.3 a limited range of weights and measures:
    - 8.11.3.1 *centimetre, metre, kilometre*
    - 8.11.3.2 *gram, kilo, ton*
    - 8.11.3.3 *litre*
  - 8.11.4 basic adjectives concerning temperature *hot, cold, warm*
  - 8.11.5 the names of basic colours (eg colours of the spectrum, plus *black, white, grey, light, dark*)
  - 8.11.6 the names of basic materials (eg *gold, silver, leather, wood, paper, plastic*)
  - 8.11.7 the adjectives *new* and *old*
- 8.12 Recognise and use a limited range of adjectives for expressing evaluation and opinion (eg *cheap/expensive, good/bad, right/wrong, easy/difficult*)
- 8.13 Recognise the comparative forms of *better* and *worse* when an opinion is expressed

**9 Linguistic competence (vocabulary)**

Candidates must be able to:

- 9.1 Recognise and use the following personal and biographical details:
  - 9.1.1 the basic forms of titles used before names *Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms*
  - 9.1.2 the basic terms used in an address (eg *number, street, road, park, square, postcode*)
  - 9.1.3 the forms of a telephone number and terms connected with telephoning (see 10.4)

- 9.1.4 statements of nationality and means of expressing these (eg *I am from...*)
  - 9.1.5 simple expressions for gender (eg *man, woman, boy, girl*)
  - 9.1.6 statements of marital status (eg *I am (not) married*)
  - 9.1.7 names of immediate family members (eg *father, mother, husband, wife, child, son, daughter, brother, sister*)
- 9.2 Recognise and use the following basic terms used in socialising:
- 9.2.1 forms of greeting (eg *Hello, Good morning/afternoon/evening, How are you?*)
  - 9.2.2 the main formal and informal means of addressing others (eg title and surname/first name/*Sir/Madam*)
  - 9.2.3 the basic forms of introduction (eg *This is...*)
  - 9.2.4 the main forms of taking leave (eg *Goodbye/Goodnight*)
  - 9.2.5 the main forms of inviting (eg *Would you like to...? / Will you...?*)
  - 9.2.6 the main forms of accepting and declining (eg *Yes please / No thank you*)
- 9.3 Recognise and use the following terms connected with accommodation:
- 9.3.1 types of accommodation (eg *house, flat, apartment, room*)
  - 9.3.2 basic names of rooms (eg *living room, bedroom, kitchen, toilet*)
  - 9.3.3 types of furniture (eg *chair, table, bed*)
  - 9.3.4 names of services (eg *telephone, water, gas, electricity*)



- 9.4 Recognise and use the main terms connected with travel (eg *by air/train/taxi etc, suitcase, passport, visa*)
- 9.5 Recognise and use the following terms connected with food and drink:
  - 9.5.1 names of main meals (eg *breakfast, lunch, dinner*)
  - 9.5.2 names of main categories of foodstuffs (eg *meat, vegetables, fruit, drinks*)
  - 9.5.3 the main forms of requesting and refusing food and drink (eg *I would (not) like a/some*)
  - 9.5.4 basic terms connected with eating out (eg *restaurant, café, bar, menu, bill*)
- 9.6 Recognise and use the following basic vocabulary of the workplace:
  - 9.6.1 names of organisations (eg *company, college*)
  - 9.6.2 places of work (eg *office, factory, department*)
  - 9.6.3 job titles (eg *manager, officer, director, secretary, assistant*)
  - 9.6.4 relationships (eg *colleague, boss*)
  - 9.6.5 names of office furniture (eg *chair, table, desk, clock*)
  - 9.6.6 names of architectural features (eg *window, door, lift, stairs*)
  - 9.6.7 terms connected with transactions (eg *buy, sell, money, tax, price*)
  - 9.6.8 names of main national currencies
  - 9.6.9 names of office items (eg *pen, notepad, briefcase, calculator, report, file*)

9.6.10 correspondence salutation and close  
(eg *Dear...*, *Yours sincerely*, *Best wishes*)

9.6.11 terms connected with routines (eg *I come to work at...*, *I go home at...*, *I have lunch/coffee at...*, *I work from... to ...*)

## 10 Linguistic competence (functions)

Candidates must be able to:

10.1 Recognise and use the social conventions of arriving, departing and greeting (see 3.1)

10.2 Recognise and use basic expressions of gratitude *thanks*, *thank you (very much)* and apology (*I'm (very) sorry*)

10.3 Recognise and use the main forms of communication repair (eg (*sorry*) *Could you say that again please?* *What is...?* *Could you spell that please?* *Please could you speak more slowly?*)

10.4 Recognise and use the main telephone expressions (eg *This is... speaking*, *I'd like to speak to... please*)

## 11 Listening competence

Candidates must be able to demonstrate their ability to:

11.1 Follow speech which is slow and carefully articulated, with long pauses for him / her to assimilate meaning.

11.2 Understand everyday expressions aimed at the satisfaction of simple needs of a concrete type, delivered directly to him / her in clear, slow and repeated speech.

11.3 Understand questions and instructions addressed carefully and slowly to him / her and follow short simple directions.

11.4 Understand numbers, prices and times.

11.5 Understand the alphabet when used to spell words.



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