

Level 1 Certificate in English for Business



International
Qualifications from EDI

Annual Qualification Review

2008

CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Pass Rate Statistics	2
General Strengths and Weaknesses	2
Teaching Points by Syllabus Topic	3
Further Guidance	5
Examples of Candidate Responses	6

INTRODUCTION

The annual qualification review provides qualification-specific support and guidance to centres. This information is designed to help teachers preparing to teach the subject and to help candidates preparing to take the examination.

The reviews are published in September and take into account candidate performance, demonstrated in both on demand and series examinations, over the preceding 12 months. Global pass rates are published so you can measure the performance of your centre against these.

The review identifies candidate strengths and weaknesses by syllabus topic area and provides examples of good and poorer candidate responses. It should therefore be read in conjunction with details of the structure and learning objectives contained within the syllabus for this qualification found on the website.

The review also identifies any actual or proposed changes to the syllabus or question types together with their implications.

PASS RATE STATISTICS

The following statistics are based on the performance of candidates who took this qualification between 1 October 2007 and 30 September 2008.

Global pass rate 87.87%

Grade distributions

Pass	11.34%
Credit	22.68%
Distinction	35.06%

GENERAL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths

- Formal layout of answers in Question 1 (Letter or Memorandum)
- Accurate reading, decision-making and selection of evidence in Question 2 (True/False)
- Highly successful answers in Questions 3 and 4

Weaknesses

- Failure to plan answers accurately, particularly in Question 1
- Direct copying from the Situation /Task information.
- Weak grammatical structures, poor sentence construction
- Poor time organisation during the examination

TEACHING POINTS BY SYLLABUS TOPIC

Syllabus Topic Area 1 – Letter or Memo.

The Letter or Memo is the sole question on the paper which calls for continuous creative writing of 150 –200 words. Whilst many candidates get off to a flying start on this question, others do less well, and some candidates struggle to put together a satisfactory answer.

Specific recommendations are that candidates need to:

- Read and understand clearly the wording in the Situation and Task
- Plan their answers by making notes and putting information in order
- Make sure that their answer matches the needs of the question
- Use the appropriate Layout for Letter (addresses, date, salutation, complimentary close, and signature) or Memo (To, From, Date, Subject Matter)
- Omit sender's name above address in letters, and omit any signature in memos

There are further guidelines offered later, when the sample letter and answers are being discussed.

Syllabus Topic Area 2 – True / False Question.

This question calls for careful reading of a passage of about 300 words on a business-related topic. Candidates must then decide whether each of 12 statements about the passage is True or False. Then they must supply supporting words from the passage to justify their true/false decision.

Specific recommendations are that candidates must

- Read the passage carefully once
- Read the 10 statements carefully
- Read the passage a second time (key words can be underlined here if recognised)
- Read each statement a second time and decide if it is True or False within the context of the passage. This is the most important decision in this question. If the wrong choice is made, no marks can be given for any supporting words.
- Find the supporting words (no more than 6) that they need.

On each paper an example of a Statement and Answer is given for this question. Candidates are told that there are usually 2 parts to the answer and that the supporting words may be in different parts of the passage.

The question calls for careful reading and sifting out the key supporting words.

Syllabus Topic Area 3 – Single Word Answers

This is probably the least demanding question on the paper, provided that the candidate does not panic, and studies the table to see what kind of information it contains. Only a single word, a name or a figure needs to be used for each answer.

Specific recommendations are:

- Determine what the table information refers to and look at the table headings
- Read through the questions – some are very straightforward, others need to be broken down to find what is being asked.
- Use notes to jot down the information needed to find the answer.
- Use only a single word, a name or a figure in your answer.

Syllabus Topic Area 4 – Charts, Diary Entries, Booking Forms etc.

This question is usually a high scorer for most candidates. The task varies, but it always involves the re-formulation of specific information. The situation may involve a voicemail about engagements for the month ahead, and the task is to complete the diary entries for the month. Another example could be some notes left by a senior colleague about booking a hotel for a conference. The candidate would be asked to fill in the booking form using the information in the notes. Sometimes a bit of the “puzzle” is given to help the candidate to find a “starting point.”

Specific recommendations are

- Read the given information carefully
- Check that you have worked out exactly what the Task is
- Use one clear piece of information as a starting point (e.g John arrives at Heathrow airport on Monday)
- Look for any other instructions (e.g. Complete this form using capital letters)

FURTHER GUIDANCE

TIME MANAGEMENT OF THE EXAMINATION.

Candidates must plan their work according to the time allowed and the total marks for each question. Tutors should give practice exercises to develop this management of time. The plan should be to have 10 minutes to spare at the end. This is for checking and **re-checking** for that elusive error. Finding it could make the difference between reaching or not reaching a higher grade.

EXAMPLES OF CANDIDATE RESPONSES

QUESTION 1. LETTER.

Situation:

You work for a catering company which makes pre-packed ready meals. Ms Anna Savarola, the Chief Buyer for a large supermarket chain, wants to buy your products. She has asked to visit your factory to inspect your production methods.

Task:

Write a letter of between 150 and 200 words to Ms Savarola inviting her to tour your premises. Offer her two dates when you can see her. In the letter tell her about the different stages of production that she will see on her tour, and the names of the supervisors who will accompany her during her visit.

You may make up suitable names and addresses.

Lay out your answer as a **letter** in the space below.

Note:

Before we look at 3 candidate responses to this question, let us see what information candidates can draw from the information in the Situation and Task.

- The answer must be a business letter of a certain length.
- It is to be written to a person of some importance (a Chief Buyer) in her company.
- She is a potential customer of your firm
- She wants to visit.
- She wants to see your production methods
- The letter should be polite, informative and welcoming
- It must offer 2 dates for a visit
- It must mention the different production stages (chosen by the candidate)
- It must mention names of supervisors (chosen by the candidate)

- The letter needs the correct Layout (Writer's address, Inside address, suitable date, matching Salutation and Complimentary Close, Signature and Position of writer)
- The letter needs suitable opening and closing sentences.
- The letter needs paragraphing (from the information given, 4 or 5 paragraphs suggest themselves)
- The letter needs to be written in clear, simple English with an appropriate Style and Tone.
- The letter needs to be accurate in terms of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Question 1 – Letter
Answer A - Distinction Response

14 Friendship Road
London HC 8G

May 24, 2008

Ms Anna Savarola
Chief Buyer
ABC Company
20 Green Street
London HC 9BG
England

Dear Ms Savarola

We are very pleased to receive your request **for visiting** our factory. The 28th of May and the 29th of May would be **the** suitable date to visit our factory

As you know, there are different stages of production. On the tour you will see the whole procedure of the production line. **For example how to make good use** of the materials, how to run the production machines, and how to package the products.

On the day you visit, Mr Brown, the Production Manager, will give you a talk before your tour. The Production **Asistant**, Mr Wang will accompany you during your visit. He will describe to you the production methods and answer all your questions. Finally, there will be a meeting with Mr Brown and myself.

Here are the details of the tour.
0830 Talk with Mr Brown
0900 Visit the factory
1130 Lunch with Mr Brown
1300 Meeting with Mr Brown and myself.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.
We look forward to your early reply.

Yours sincerely
K. Luang
Director

Comments on Letter A (Distinction).

- The letter is the required length (173 words)
- The letter has the correct Layout.
- The letter acknowledges (implicitly) the importance of the recipient.
- The letter contains suitable opening and closing sentences.
- The letter offers the required information (dates etc)
- The letter is paragraphed (5 short paragraphs)
- The letter is acceptably businesslike, polite and welcoming
- The letter is for the most part accurate in terms of grammar, punctuation and spelling
- The letter shows ,despite one or two weak expressions, a good command of simple English.

This letter is at the low end of Distinction marks. It lacks a little in terms of further details about the factory, but the Layout, paragraphing, Style and Tone, and high level of Accuracy make up for this deficit. Distinction does not mean perfection.

Question 1 – Letter
Answer B - Pass Response

No 8 ~~tomas~~ road
Burneside
Cheshire

23 May 2008

No256 Conduit Road
Crook
Cheshire

Dear Ms Savarola

Thank you for you letter of 18 May. We are glad that you would like to buy our products and visit our factory to inspect production methods.

We would like to offer you two dates when you are free to tour us. 30 May or 10 June 2008.

There are different stages of production. Such as purchasing, manufacturing, packing and production quota and so on. You will see on your tour if you like.

When you are visiting with us, Mr Bill who is Puchasing Manager, Mr Wade, who is Manufacturing Director and Mr Toms, Sales Manager will during with you.

Pleas receive a letter to confirm when you will visit. Look forward to your reply.

Your sincerely

P. Johns

Comments on Letter B (Pass)

- The letter is short (116 words) This would lose Content marks
- The Layout has all components, but a number of errors.
- The letter has some “progression” but no overall cohesion.
- The letter has barely adequate opening and closing sentences
- The letter offers the required information, but there is a lack of precision in the presentation of it.
- The letter is paragraphed, but each paragraph is little more than a single sentence.
- The letter is polite, a little welcoming, but lacks “mailability”
- The standard of English is weak, but the meaning is fairly clear.
- Grammar, punctuation and spelling are prone to error.

Despite weaknesses, the candidate has, albeit by a narrow margin, produced a letter which merits a Pass .

Question 1 Letter.
Answer C – Fail response.

PO Box 64
30 Parkway
Guangzhou

May27 2008

Catering Company

Dear Ms Savarola

Thank you for your letter of enquiry.

For catering company **just to makes** pre-packed ready meals. For **the inviting** to tour your premises offer **her** 2 day from the **education** to you. And information for a large supermarket chain want to buy your products.

She told to visit your factory to inspect your production methods. Production that is very qualified. **Our was pass Qualified quality check in to the factory.** That production is **my company to the custmore.** **An** different stages of production all different request names of supervisors who will **company** her during her visit to the company. I look forward to the **please** of seeing you at the inspect of production methods

Yours **fathfully**
Li Wan
Sales **Manger**

Comments on Letter C (Fail)

- The letter is short (114 words). This will lose marks.
- The Layout is incomplete with several errors
- There are poor opening and closing sentences.
- The letter is inadequately paragraphed.
- The letter is confused and not “mailable” in its present form.
- The candidate has confused the relationships of writer and recipient
- The candidate has lifted phrases from the Situation / Task but not meaningfully
- The English is very weak.
- The message in the letter is garbled and unclear.

The candidate does not have the necessary skills to deal with the task.

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