

Minor Business English

Syllabus

Academic Year 2017 - 2018

Spring 2018 Semester

Faculty of Business and Economics

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Academic Year	2017 – 2018
Course website	<u>Business English</u>

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Business English Minor course

The Business English Minor course is intended for students who wish to improve their business communication skills in English and who already have a reasonable grasp of English.

This course focuses on improving both fluency and listening skills in business situations. You will develop your business communications skills in English, for instance in giving presentations, job interviews or running meetings.

You will also work on improving your writing skills for business: reports, job applications and e-mail. Developing a familiarity with and knowledge of the most up-to-date business terminology will be an integral part of the course.

In this course, we will cover all aspects of business communication skills in English. The aim is to help you improve your production of English in writing and speaking, as well as developing passive comprehension with respect to listening and reading.

Course Objectives

During this course your listening, speaking, reading and writing skills will be brought up to advanced level (i.e. C1 Language Level of the Common European Framework of Reference).

After the course, you should be able to communicate more confidently, fluently and naturally in English. We will focus specifically on business jargon, with the aim of broadening your passive and active knowledge of both business-related and general vocabulary.

You will also develop skills and competences required to work in an international business environment where English is the working language. In this course, you will build a Business English Language Portfolio consisting of several assignments, including written and speaking assignments, which will help you in pursuing a career in international business.

BEC Higher Cambridge Business English Certificates (BEC)

The Business English Minor prepares you for the Cambridge Business English Certificates (BEC) exams. These exams are internationally recognized qualifications that show employers your skills for using English in the workplace.

BEC is an ideal English language exam if you are preparing for a career in business. During this course, you will be working at the BEC Higher level (i.e. C1 CEFR level). For more information, visit the [Cambridge BEC Higher website](#) and the [British Council Netherlands website](#).

Course Programme

You of the Business English course will be following the Cambridge Business English Certificate programme.

First session: Diagnostic Test

At the beginning of the course, you will be given a diagnostic test to assess your level of English, which will give both you and your lecturer a good idea of your strengths and weaknesses.

Business English Language Portfolio

The Business English Language Portfolio consists of several assignments, including written and speaking assignments, all geared towards job hunting in a global business environment. Further details and specifications relating to deadlines and the content of this portfolio will be provided in class. The individual assignments will be handed in on deadlines set throughout the semester and then feedback will be provided. You will submit your complete and final portfolio at the end of the semester

Professional Development

Learning a language is an on-going process that requires consistent and continuous effort and attention. We expect you to attend class and actively take part in class discussions and activities. Your progress and commitment will be monitored throughout the semester and will be taken into account when determining the final mark for your language portfolio. The course is designed to address the needs and abilities of all students taking part and your lecturer will be giving you as much continuous feedback and critique as possible.

Course schedule

The Business English course will encompass one semester. The semester will incorporate two terms of 10 weeks each. Check the academic year planning on the course website for exam periods, important term dates and holidays.

Below is the **provisional** weekly course schedule.

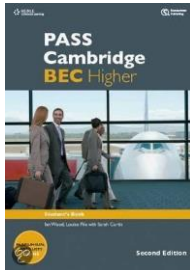
Term 1

Semester Week	Topic	Preparation
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnostic Test • Grammar and Vocabulary refresher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study course description in syllabus.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Exam Part 1 • Reading Exam Part 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Book & Workbook, module 1 • Practice material
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Exam Part 3 • Reading Exam Part 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Book & Workbook,, module 2 • Practice material
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Exam Part 5 • Reading Exam Part 6 • Writing Exam Part 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Book & Workbook, module 3 • Practice material
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Writing Exam Part 1 • Writing Exam Part 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Book & Workbook, module 4 • Practice material
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Writing Exam Part 2 • Exam Practice: Reading Exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Book & Workbook, module 5 • Practice material
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam Practice: Writing Exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Book & Workbook, module 6 • Practice material
Exam Week		
Resit Week		
Feedback Week		

Term 2

Semester Week	Topic	Preparation
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and Speaking Exam introduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course Book & Workbook,, module 7 Practice material
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening Exam Part 1 Speaking Exam Part 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course Book & Workbook, module 8 Practice material
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening Exam Part 2 Speaking Exam Part 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course Book & Workbook, module 9 Practice material
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening Exam Part 3 Speaking Exam Part 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course Book & Workbook,, module 10 Practice material
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Listening Exam Review Speaking Exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course Book & Workbook,, module 11 Practice material
16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exam Practice: Listening and Speaking Exam Deadline Language Portfolio: Assignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course Book & Workbook,, module 12 Practice material Deadline Language Portfolio: Assignment
17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision
Exam Week		
Resit Week		
Feedback Week		

Business English Minor Booklist



PASS Cambridge BEC Higher 2nd edition

ISBN 10: 1133313221

ISBN 13: 9781133313229

PASS Cambridge BEC Higher: Workbook, 2nd edition

ISBN 10: 1133316573

ISBN 13: 9781133316572

Publisher: Heinle-Cengage ELT

Edition: : 2nd Revised edition



Business Grammar Builder, 2nd edition, Paul Emerson, Macmillan,

ISBN: 9780230732544



Advanced English Learners Dictionary. Recommended:

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English 6th Edition, available in hard-copy, online and mobile app: <http://global.longmandictionaries.com/>

Buy your books from:

- Studystore: www.studystore.nl
- Bol.com: www.bol.com
- Book Depository: www.bookdepository.com

Suggested further reading and internet resources

To improve your English and to keep abreast of the latest trends and developments in the business world, check out these sources:

- [HvA Library](#)
- [BBC website](#)
- The Economist, weekly magazine, www.economist.com
- [Bloomberg Business Week](#)

Visit www.iss-online.nl for student discounts on news magazine subscriptions, e.g. [News Magazine Mix](#).

Exams, assessment and feedback

Exams and assessment

Though you will not be required to take the Cambridge Business English Certificate exam, BEC Higher exams will be given at the end of each term. These exams will be designed to mimic the experience and level of the BEC Higher examination. As such, the exams will test your knowledge of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Grammar will not be tested or assessed separately but within the context of your written and spoken English.

Throughout the course, in-class tests and quizzes, as well as sample tests from the Cambridge BEC Higher exam, will be used as a means of giving you a quantifiable structure by which to follow their individual progress.

You can earn a maximum of 30 ECTS (academic credits) in this semester. You need to pass all exams in order to complete the course. The test formats, codes and the academic credits which can be earned are set out in the table below.

Table: Examination and ECTS

Examination Skills	SIS Catalogue No.	ECs	Test Period
BEC Higher Reading and Writing Exam	6215BEHRTS	6	Week 8
	6215BEHWTS	6	
BEC Higher Listening and Speaking Exam	6215BELSAS	6	Week 17 - 18
	6215BELLTS	6	
Business English Language Portfolio	6215BELPPO	6	Week 17
Total ECTS		30	

Exam formats

As students will be prepared for taking the official Cambridge BEC Higher exam, the written exam consists of authentic exams set in a previous BEC Higher exam.

- The **Reading Exam** consists of six tasks, which test the candidates' ability to scan and skim texts, to edit and complete texts and to understand C1 business vocabulary.
- The **Writing Exam** consists of two tasks: commenting on a graph in a 140-word report and writing either a 250-word letter, a report, or a proposal.
- The **Listening Exam** consists of three tasks: listening for and noting specific information, listening to identify context and speakers' motivation and listening for gist.
- The **Speaking Exam**, too, follows the official BEC Higher format with an interlocutor and an assessor. It is taken in threesomes and consists of three tasks: a conversation between one student and the interlocutor and, a mini presentation and a discussion on a business topic between the three candidates. The assessor does not take any part in the interaction but focuses solely on listening to and making an assessment of certain aspects of your English speaking skills.

Official BEC Higher exam at British Council Netherlands.

After completing the course you have the option of taking the official BEC Higher exam at the British Council Amsterdam. The exams are offered four times a year. Visit the [British Council website](#) for more details

Appendix

Appendix 1 Language Levels of the European Council Common European Framework of Reference

Global Scale: levels European Council Common European Framework of Reference		
Proficient User	C2	<p>Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read.</p> <p>Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.</p>
	C1	<p>Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning.</p> <p>Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions.</p> <p>Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.</p>
Independent User	B2	<p>Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation.</p> <p>Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party.</p> <p>Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.</p>
	B1	<p>Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. • Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. • Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	<p>Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment).</p> <p>Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters.</p> <p>Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.</p>
	A1	<p>Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type.</p> <p>Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has.</p> <p>Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.</p>

For more information about language levels and the Cambridge exams, please follow this link:

<http://www.cambridgeesol.org/about/standards/cefr.html>

Assessment criteria for the productive skills

The *BEC Handbook* and the Cambridge ESOL website www.cambridgeesol.org provide useful information about the marking schemes and assessment criteria. The following tables outline the criteria for assessing the speaking and writing tests.

Speaking

The two examiners in the Speaking Test give independent marks. The Interlocutor (the examiner who speaks to the candidates) gives one global mark and the Assessor (the examiner who observes) gives four separate marks for the areas listed in the table below.

Area and criteria	Minimum adequate performance		
	<i>Preliminary</i>	<i>Vantage</i>	<i>Higher</i>
Grammar and Vocabulary This refers to the range and accuracy of grammatical and lexical forms.	At this level candidates should be accurate enough, and use sufficiently appropriate vocabulary, to convey their intended meaning.	At this level candidates should be accurate enough, and use sufficiently appropriate vocabulary, to convey their intended meaning.	At this level a range of grammar and vocabulary is needed to deal with the tasks. At this level grammar is mainly accurate and vocabulary is used effectively.
Discourse Management This refers to the coherence, extent and relevance of each candidate's individual performance.	Contributions should be adequate to deal with the BEC Preliminary level tasks. At times, candidates' utterances may be inappropriate in length and some utterances may lack coherence.	Contributions should be adequate to deal with the BEC Vantage level tasks. At times, candidates' utterances may be inappropriate in length.	Contributions should be adequate to deal with the BEC Higher level tasks. Candidates should produce utterances which are appropriate in length.
Pronunciation This refers to the candidate's ability to produce comprehensible utterances.	At this level, most meanings are conveyed through the appropriate use of stress, rhythm, intonation and clear individual sounds, although there may be some strain on the listener.	At this level, meanings are conveyed through the appropriate use of stress, rhythm, intonation and clear individual sounds, although there may be occasional difficulty for the listener.	At this level, meanings are conveyed through the appropriate use of stress, rhythm, intonation and clear individual sounds, although there may be occasional difficulty for the listener.
Interactive Communication This refers to the candidate's ability to take an active part in the development of the discourse.	At this level, candidates should be able to take turns and keep the interaction going by initiating and responding appropriately. Hesitation may demand patience of the listener.	At this level, candidates should be sensitive to turn-taking and sustain the interaction by initiating and responding appropriately. Hesitation may, at times, demand patience of the listener.	At this level, candidates should be sensitive to turn-taking throughout most of the test and hesitation should not demand patience of the listener.