

Minor Business English

Syllabus

Academic Year 2016 - 2017

Spring 2017 Semester

Faculty of Business and Economics

Author	Beth Bedinotti, Randy Bundel
Lecturers	Beth Bedinotti, Lia Korrel, Ralph Zwart, Randy Bundel,
Programme Manager	Mrs. Hans Seubring-Vierveyzer
Course Code	6000MBEN15
Study points	30 ECs
Academic Year	2016 – 2017
Course website on DLWO	https://dlwo.dem.hva.nl/.....

Table of Contents

About this course 3

Course Programme 4

Testing, assessment and feedback 8

Appendix 9

About this course

The Business English Minor course is intended for those motivated students who wish to improve their practical language skills primarily within the field of business English and who already have a reasonable grasp of English.

The course focuses on improving both fluency and listening skills in business situations, such as meetings and telephone conversations, as well as in improving writing skills for business: letters, memos, faxes and e-mail. Developing a familiarity and knowledge of the most frequently used business terminology will also play an integral part in the course. This is a well-rounded course that addresses all aspects of language learning: thus, the aim is to help students improve their production of English in writing and speaking, as well as developing passive comprehension with respect to listening and reading.

The Business English Minor follows the programme of the Cambridge Business English Certificates (BEC), which are internationally recognized qualifications that show employers your skills for using English in the workplace. Though students will not be required to take the Cambridge BEC Exam, following a preparation course for that exam will prove useful as a means of structuring the development of students' English.

BEC is an ideal English language exam if you are preparing for a career in business. There are three different levels of BEC: BEC Preliminary, BEC Vantage and BEC Higher. During this course, you will be working at the BEC Higher level (equivalent to a C1 level of the Common European Framework mentioned below). For more information, visit the [Cambridge BEC Higher website](#) and the [British Council Netherlands website](#).

Course Objectives

During this course listening, speaking, reading and writing skills will be brought up to a C1 level. See Appendix 1 *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. After the course, you should be able to communicate more confidently, fluently and naturally in English.

This course will aim at improving your writing skills for the purpose of writing specifically business-related English. The course will deal to some extent with more general aspects of writing, in addition to focusing on specific writing problems in English. Again, special attention will be given to specific business jargon, with the aim of broadening students' passive and active knowledge of both business-related and general vocabulary.

Professional Development and Developing Competencies

The BEC exams are aligned with Levels B1 to C1 of the Common European Framework for languages — an internationally recognized benchmark of language ability. The framework uses six levels to describe language ability, from A1 to C2. 'Can Do' statements, or competencies, have been used to describe these levels in terms of real skills with language, such as being able to write a report, or take a telephone message. This means that preparing for BEC will help you develop real-life skills and the confidence to use them.

Besides developing language skills, you will also develop competencies as part of your personal professional development, particularly result orientation, communication skills and intercultural sensitivity.

Course Programme

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

First session: Diagnostic Test / Placement Test

At the beginning of the course, you will be given a diagnostic test to assess your level of English. Based on the outcome of the test you will be placed in one of the two groups best suited to your level of English. Please make sure you attend the first session.

English Language Portfolio

During the Business English Minor you will also create a Business English Language Portfolio as demonstration of your ability to communicate in professional English at an advanced level. You will be given a series of assignments each week in the second term of the course.

At the end of the semester these assignments should be submitted as one professional looking document. Throughout the semester you will be given detailed instructions, tips and feedback for these assignments.

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.

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 DLWO for exam periods, important term dates and holidays.

Below is the provisional weekly course schedule.

Term 1

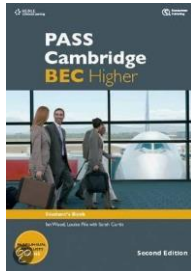
Semester Week	Topic	Preparation
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnostic Test (Placement Test) • Grammar and Vocabulary refresher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study course description in syllabus.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Exam Part 1 • Reading Exam Part 2 	<ul 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"> Diagnostic Test: Listening and Speaking 	<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

Compulsory



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

Recommended



Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English - 6th Edition

Discount offer!

Online access available at *Studystore Fraijlemaborg*:

€ 7.50 (for a four-year licence)



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

ISBN: 9780230732544

Recommended bookshops:

- 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:

- BBC website: www.bbc.co.uk
- 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](#).

Testing, assessment and feedback

Testing and Test Moments

Though students will not be required to take the Cambridge Business English Certificate exam, 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 students' knowledge of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Grammar will not be tested or assessed separately but within the context of students' 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 students' 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	
MBEN 5 English Language Portfolio	6215BELPPO	6	Week 17
Total ECTS		30	

After completing the course you have the option of taking the official BEC Higher exam at the British Council Amsterdam (examination fee approximately € 215). The exams are offered four times a year. You will receive more information on the BEC Higher Examination during the course.

Assessment and Feedback

As much as possible, the course will be designed to address the needs and abilities of the students taking part, with the teacher giving as much continuous feedback and critique as possible to each individual participant. Course grades will be given ultimately on the basis of the four exams testing skill levels in each of the four competences: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

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.

Writing

An impression mark is awarded to each piece of writing. The *General Mark Scheme* is used in conjunction with a *Task-specific Mark Scheme*, which focuses on criteria specific to each particular task.

The table below shows the *Summary of General Mark Scheme* for Higher. Examiners, who are co-ordinated prior to each examination session, work with a more detailed version, which is subject to updating. The other levels follow broadly the same criteria. Full details are available in the *BEC Handbook* or on the Cambridge ESOL website www.cambridgeesol.org.

<p>BAND 5 Full realisation of the task set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All content points included.• Controlled and natural use of language; minimal errors.• Wide range of structure and vocabulary.• Effectively organised, with appropriate use of cohesive devices.• Register and format consistently appropriate. <p>Very positive effect on the reader.</p>
<p>BAND 4 Good realisation of the task set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All major content points included; possibly minor omissions.• Natural use of language; errors only when complex language is attempted.• Good range of structure and vocabulary.• Generally well-organised, with attention paid to cohesion.• Register and format on the whole appropriate. <p>Positive effect on the reader.</p>
<p>BAND 3 Reasonable achievement of the task set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All major content points included; some minor omissions.• Reasonable control although a more ambitious attempt at the task may lead to a number of non-impeding errors.• Adequate range of structure and vocabulary.• Organisation and cohesion is satisfactory.• Register and format reasonable, although not entirely successful. <p>Satisfactory effect on the reader..</p>
<p>BAND 2 Inadequate attempt at the task set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some major content points omitted or inadequately dealt with; possibly some irrelevance.• Errors sometimes obscure communication and are likely to be numerous.• Limited range of structure and vocabulary; language is too elementary for this level.• Content is not clearly organised.• Unsuccessful attempt at appropriate register and format. <p>Negative effect on the reader.</p>
<p>BAND 1 Poor attempt at the task set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Notable content omissions and/or considerable irrelevance.• Serious lack of control; frequent basic errors.• Narrow range of structure and vocabulary.• Lack of organisation.• Little attempt at appropriate register and format. <p>Very negative effect on the reader.</p>
<p>BAND 0 Achieves nothing.</p> <p>Either fewer than 25% of the required number of words or totally illegible or totally irrelevant.</p>

Marking for Business English writing exam

More than sufficient to pass (8,0 to 10,0)

- all content points included
- vocabulary appropriate and varied
- tone of voice appropriately professional
- structure clear and logical
- overall very few language accuracy errors

Sufficient to pass (5,5 to 8,0)

- all content points included
- vocabulary limited to familiar range
- tone overall appropriately professional
- structure not always clear or logical
- some confusing language errors which might be distracting

Not sufficient to pass (5,5 or lower)

- not all content points included
- vocabulary limited to familiar range
- tone overall too "slang" or informal for business writing
- structure not clear, not logical, or inappropriate to the task
- numerous basic or confusing language errors

Language Portfolio Assessment Rubric

When does a Portfolio merit a mark between 8.0 and 10.0?

- all the assignments are included and are fully developed in accordance with the required criterion
- there are no language errors
- the vocabulary is totally professional and appropriate
- the tone of voice is appropriately professional

When does a Portfolio merit a 5.5 to an 8.0?

- all the assignments are included and are fully developed in accordance with the required criterion
- there are some language/grammatical errors but these are not overly confusing
- the vocabulary is generally professional although there may be some occasional errors
- the tone of voice is generally appropriate despite there being some informal vocabulary

When does a Portfolio fail?

- an assignment is missing
- an assignment is not fully developed
- an assignment is not appropriate to meet the required criterion
- there are numerous confusing language errors
- the vocabulary is not always appropriate
- there is too much slang or too much informal vocabulary
- there is too much “Dunlish”



Business English Minor Writing Exam Assessment Form

Name	
Student ID	
Date	

Writing Task 1

Writing task criteria	grade	Comments
* Realisation of the task: all content points included		
* Accurate use of language: minimal errors in grammar, spelling and vocabulary		
* Wide range of structure and vocabulary		
* Effectively organised, with appropriate use of linkers		
* Appropriate tone and format		
* Overall positive effect on the reader		
Total grade for Writing Task 1 (1/3 of your final grade)		

Writing Task 2

Writing task criteria	grade	Comments
* Realisation of the task: all content points included		
* Accurate use of language: minimal errors in grammar, spelling and vocabulary		
* Wide range of structure and vocabulary		
* Effectively organised, with appropriate use of linkers		
* Appropriate tone and format		
* Overall positive effect on the reader		
Total grade for Writing Task 2 (2/3 of your final grade)		

Final Grade	
--------------------	--

Business English Minor Speaking Exam

Name	
Student ID	
Date	

Speaking Exam Assessment Criteria	grade	Comments
* Grammar and vocabulary: accurate and appropriate usage		
* Discourse management: adequate coherence, fluency and relevance		
* Pronunciation: generally appropriate use of stress, intonation and individual sounds		
* Interactive communication: responding, turn-taking		
* Overall performance: effectiveness in dealing with the tasks		
Final Grade		

Business English Language Portfolio Assessment Form

Business English Minor

Name	
Student ID	
Date	

		Grade	Comments
Writing skills	Assignment 1		
	* Realisation of the task: all content points included		
	* Accurate use of language: minimal errors in grammar, spelling and vocabulary		
	* Wide range of structure and vocabulary		
	* Effectively organised, with appropriate cohesive devices		
	* Appropriate tone and format		
	* Overall positive effect on the reader		
	Assignment 2		
	* Realisation of the task: all content points included		
	* Accurate use of language: minimal errors in grammar, spelling and vocabulary		
	* Wide range of structure and vocabulary		
	* Effectively organised, with appropriate cohesive devices		
	* Appropriate tone and format		
	* Overall positive effect on the reader		
	Assignment 3		
	* Realisation of the task: all content points included		
	* Accurate use of language: minimal errors in grammar, spelling and vocabulary		
	* Wide range of structure and vocabulary		
	* Effectively organised, with appropriate cohesive devices		
	* Appropriate tone and format		
	* Overall positive effect on the reader		
	Assignment 4		
	* Realisation of the task: all content points included		
	* Accurate use of language: minimal errors in grammar, spelling and vocabulary		
	* Wide range of structure and vocabulary		
	* Effectively organised, with appropriate cohesive devices		
	* Appropriate tone and format		
	* Overall positive effect on the reader		
Speaking skills	Assignment 5		
	* Grammar and vocabulary: accurate and appropriate usage		
	* Discourse Management: coherence, fluency, relevance		
	* Pronunciation: appropriate use of stress, intonation and clear individual sounds		
	* Overall performance: effectiveness		
	General		
	* Portfolio presentation: design and layout		
	* Professional development		
	Final Grade		

Further comments:

--