

Foundation Level

Paper 3

English for Business

Extended Syllabus

INTRODUCTION

Extended Syllabuses are part of a comprehensive package of support materials offered by SIAT. This package includes past question papers, Model Answers and a range of How to Pass books, all of which are designed to offer help and guidance to teachers and candidates, and to enhance chances of success in SIAT examinations.

What are they?

Extended Syllabuses specify in detail the learning and assessment requirements of SIAT examinations.

Each one, produced by the subject Chief Examiner, will state in detail the following:

- Aims and assessment objectives of the examination
- Syllabus topics and syllabus coverage in examinations
- Examination format
- Guided learning hours
- Candidate answer guidance
- Pass mark information and mark allocation
- Recommended reading list and support material
- Detailed listing of syllabus topics and syllabus elements

Who are they for and how can they be of use?

They are designed for:

- Teachers who will find them invaluable when designing courses and planning lessons.
- Candidates who will find them essential because they can be used as checklists when preparing for examinations. Candidates will also be able to refer to Extended Syllabuses when planning revision programmes.

Paper 3 English for Business

Aims

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

- read and understand basic business-related English texts
- write basic English for simple, brief business communications.

Assessment Objectives

The examination will assess the candidate's ability to:

- demonstrate understanding of simple business-related communications
- read, interpret and respond to simple business texts and data
- adapt simple forms of office correspondence and other data to produce completed formats such as charts, tables, booking forms and report forms
- write in continuous English simple business style letters and memos based on given information.

Syllabus Topics

1. Composing a simple business letter or memo
2. Basic business reading comprehension
3. Business information processing
4. Business text and data reformulation

In addition, candidates will be expected to demonstrate a level of linguistic competence as outlined in syllabus topics 5 to 8.

Coverage of Syllabus Topics in Examinations

There will be 4 compulsory questions corresponding to the 4 syllabus topics listed above. Questions 1 and 2 carry 30 marks each. Questions 3 and 4 carry 20 marks each.

Examination Format

Candidates will be assessed via a 2 hour examination consisting of 4 questions as follows:

Question 1 involves the composition of a letter or memo, based on given information. The content of the letter or memo should be between 150 and 200 words of simple business style communication dealing with such topics as:

- retail orders
- customer enquiries
- requests for information
- replies to complaints
- reminders about tasks in hand
- communications between work colleagues

The stimulus will be rubric information giving data on which to base the response.

Question 2 involves understanding and responding to a passage of business-related prose of about 300 words. The stimulus for the exercise will be:

- a passage on a business-related topic in language appropriate to the level
- a series of statements about the content and information in the passage.
- Candidates must identify whether the statements are true or false, and provide supporting evidence.

Question 3 involves a 'read and think' comprehension test, based on some graphic or numerical display, requiring very short answers. The stimulus for the question will be data in the form of a table or a chart relating to, for example:

- company car fleet hire charges
- office accommodation agencies
- conference facilities at a hotel
- company branches and staffing details

Question 4 involves a 'read and write' reformulation task using data to complete forms or diagrams. The stimulus for the question will be selected from:

- data or information in written notes
- a conversation about a business related situation
- a record of a telephone message or fax

Guided Learning Hours

SIAT recommends that 70-80 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. SIAT experience indicates that the number of GLHs can vary significantly from one training centre to another.

Candidate Answer Guidance

Answer Formats

Each question requires an answer that is:

correct in formal terms regarding:

- grammar, punctuation, spelling and layout
- good non-literary business communication at a basic level

appropriate in terms of:

- adopting a simple, low grade business role if required
- fitness for the occasion and any simple social role required
- displaying simple politeness in giving straightforward information or a simple opinion

adequate in practical business terms in the sense that:

- the purpose of the communication is achieved
- the task is successfully completed
- the correct format is chosen
- essential matters are included and dealt with
- irrelevant information is excluded
- order, clarity, balance and relevance are evident

While candidates will receive credit for good grammar, accuracy, style, layout, and maturity of expression, the scope of these criteria will be limited, since comparatively little continuous prose will be demanded. Candidates will be able to display good comprehension without risking a loss of marks through poor production.

Candidates are allowed to take one dictionary into this examination which may be either English or foreign language/English; the SIAT 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.

Candidates are also recommended to refer to the Model Answers and past question papers for English for Business Level 1 which are available from the LCCIEB and which give advice on layout and presentation.

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.

Candidate Performance Measurement

Pass Mark Information

Pass 50%
Credit 60%
Distinction 75%

Mark Allocation

Marks are awarded for: accuracy in spelling, punctuation, grammar; appropriacy of content, tone, style, length, format; clarity and suitability of communication.

A typical weighting of marks for a complete written paper would be:

- clarity and appropriacy of layout 20%
- style, tone, suitability to the task 30%
- content and communication of message 20%
- accuracy of grammar, spelling etc 30%

TOTAL 100%

Recommended Reading List and Support Material

Reading List

Title	Publisher	ISBN Code	Order Code
How to Pass English for Business First Level	LCCIEB	1-86247 0030	0122 ARLA
How to Pass English for Business First Level, Teacher's Guide	LCCIEB	1 86247 0650	0116 ARLA

Support Material

Model Answers and past question papers for LCCIEB English for Business, Level 1 are recommended.

Syllabus

1 Composing a simple business letter or memo

Candidates must be able to:

- 1.1 Compose a letter or memo on the basis of given data with a particular aim or instruction
- 1.2 Adopt an appropriate style or tone for the particular purpose
- 1.3 Employ consistent business letter/memo conventions regarding:
 - 1.3.1 layout, addresses, salutation, complimentary close, and signature
 - 1.3.2 conventions of simple business letter/memo language
 - 1.3.3 paragraphing
- 1.4 Display coherence and cohesion to ensure fluent reading of the letter/memo
- 1.5 Avoid over-use and unnecessary copying from the rubric
- 1.6 Ensure that the length of the letter/memo is adequate for the stated purpose
- 1.7 Ensure that the finished letter/memo is mailable /sendable

2 Basic business reading comprehension

Candidates must be able to:

- 2.1 Demonstrate an ability to read and understand a passage
- 2.2 Use the information in a passage to determine the validity of the series of statements
- 2.3 Select appropriate and brief information from a passage to support their opinions about the statements
- 2.4 Transfer accurately to their answer paper all words selected from a passage
- 2.5 Avoid the inclusion of all unnecessary words in their answers

3 Business information processing

Candidates must be able to:

- 3.1 Read and understand a table or chart
- 3.2 Compare the information in order to answer simple questions based on the data contained in a table or chart
- 3.3 Answer using a single word, a name or figure
- 3.4 Avoid the use of all unnecessary information

4 Business text and data reformulation

The candidate must be able to:

- 4.1 Understand given material or data
- 4.2 Select from material to complete a chart or list
- 4.3 Use material to complete a business related form (eg a form for staffing rotas, accident report form, order or delivery form, or a chart showing a simple company staffing structure)
- 4.4 Use appropriate, precise and accurate wording

5 Linguistic competence (structures)

Candidates must be able to:

- 5.1 Recognise and use the following verb forms:
 - 5.1.1 the simple present (eg *I enclose...*)
 - 5.1.2 the present continuous (eg *I am enclosing...*)
 - 5.1.3 the simple past (eg *You ordered...*)
 - 5.1.4 the present perfect (eg *I have invoiced...*)
 - 5.1.5 the future expressed with the present tense plus a time marker (eg *I am writing the report today*)
 - 5.1.6 the future expressed with *will* and *going to* (eg *We will be going to despatch the goods*)

- 5.1.7 imperatives (eg *Please refer to our letter of...*)
- 5.1.8 the modals *can, may, would, must* and *will* (eg *We can offer you a discount*)
- 5.2 Recognise the following verb forms:
 - 5.2.1 the passive voice (eg *Letters are sent/ Letters are being sent*)
 - 5.2.2 the past continuous (eg *I was ordering...*)
 - 5.2.3 the past perfect (eg *He had invoiced...*)
 - 5.2.4 the modals *could, shall* and *should* (eg *What software should we purchase?*)
- 5.3 Recognise and use the following types of adjectives:
 - 5.3.1 possessive adjectives (eg *We refer to your letter of...*)
 - 5.3.2 demonstrative adjectives (eg *He chose these samples*)
 - 5.3.3 descriptive adjectives, comparatives and superlatives (eg *The report was very good, The sales figures are better*)
- 5.4 Recognise the more complex descriptive adjectives *quite* and *rather* (eg *Sales will be quite good next month*)
- 5.5 Recognise and use the locative adverbs *here, there, anywhere* and *inside* (eg *Please come inside on arrival*)
- 5.6 Recognise the locative adverb *nowhere* (eg *There is nowhere cheaper now*)
- 5.7 Recognise and use the following types of pronouns:
 - 5.7.1 possessive pronouns (eg *The calculator is mine / Yours is the desk by the window*)
 - 5.7.2 indefinite pronouns (eg *Can anyone assist you? / Everything is under control*)
 - 5.7.3 the relative pronoun *who* and simple clauses with *that* (eg *The Operations Manager, who was present at... / The items that must be sent*)
- 5.8 Recognise the indefinite pronouns *somebody, nobody* (eg *Is somebody coming to mend the photocopier?*)
- 5.9 Recognise the relative pronoun *whom* (eg *To Whom it may concern*)

- 5.10 Recognise and use the determiners *a* and *the* (eg *The memo you wrote / A training schedule*)
- 5.11 Recognise and use the demonstratives *this, that, these* and *those* (eg *Take these files with you*)
- 5.12 Recognise and use the quantifiers *a lot of* and *some of* (eg *A lot of new trainees are joining the company*)
- 5.13 Recognise the quantifiers *enough* and *much* (eg *We have enough stock*)
- 5.14 Recognise and use the interrogatives *when, where, why, what, how far, how much* and *how many* (eg *When did you write? / How many did you buy?*)
- 5.15 Recognise and use the subordinate clauses following *if, that, because, where* and *when* (eg *We shall repeat the order, if delivery is prompt / Please cancel the meeting, because our speaker is ill*)

6 Linguistic competence (concepts)

Candidates must be able to understand and express the following concepts:

- 6.1 Spatial relationships:
 - 6.1.1 geographical location *north, south*
 - 6.1.2 distance *near, far*
 - 6.1.3 directions *left, right, straight on*
- 6.2 Time:
 - 6.2.1 days of the week
 - 6.2.2 telling time
 - 6.2.3 sequence *first, then*
 - 6.2.4 *starting, finishing*
 - 6.2.5 frequency *once, twice*
- 6.3 Quality:
 - 6.3.1 shape *round, square*
 - 6.3.2 dimension *size, length, weight*

- 6.4 Evaluation and opinion:
 - 6.4.1 a limited range of adjectives
 - 6.4.2 *cheap/expensive*
 - 6.4.3 *better/worse*
 - 6.4.4 *easy/difficult*

7 Linguistic competence (vocabulary)

Candidates must be able to use vocabulary in the following areas:

- 7.1 Social exchanges (eg *greetings, forms of address and introduction, leave-taking, expressing interest in job-related activities, leisure pursuits*)
- 7.2 Social arrangements (eg *making suggestions, issuing invitations, responding by acceptance or declining, making simple arrangements for meetings and functions, food and drink*)
- 7.3 Travel arrangements (eg *types of travel – rail/road/air, simple booking arrangement, arrival and departure, destinations, durations of journeys, arrangements for meeting clients, hotel bookings and facilities, services available*)
- 7.4 The workplace:
 - 7.4.1 organisations (eg *simple job titles/occupations, relationships within the organisation*)
 - 7.4.2 office items (eg *furniture and simple equipment in everyday use, correspondence methods, daily office routines*)
 - 7.4.3 orders (eg *cardinal numbers to 4 digits, ordinal numbers to 2 digits, approximations*)
 - 7.4.4 quantities (metric), dates for delivery and despatch, availability of goods
- 7.5 Products and services:
 - 7.5.1 basic description of products in the candidate's own organization
 - 7.5.2 simple faults, symptoms and remedies
 - 7.5.3 simple operational instructions for basic equipment
 - 7.5.4 shapes, dimensions, texture, colour, materials
 - 7.5.5 simple evaluation and opinion about familiar items and procedures

- 7.6 Accommodation:
 - 7.6.1 features, furniture
 - 7.6.2 services (eg *gas/electricity*)
 - 7.6.3 regional varieties, differing types

8 Linguistic competence (functions)

Candidates must be able to recognise and use expressions of:

- 8.1 Desires:
 - 8.1.1 positive desires (eg *I want to ask your advice*)
 - 8.1.2 negative desires (eg *I do not want to work here*)
 - 8.1.3 enquiring about desires (eg *What do you want to do about the missing computer?*)
- 8.2 Preferences (eg *I would prefer a job in Accounts / I would rather not travel to ...*)
- 8.3 Apology (eg *I am so sorry you missed your flight*)
- 8.4 Gratitude and pleasure:
 - 8.4.1 *Thank you very much for...*
 - 8.4.2 *The lunch was very pleasant indeed*
- 8.5 Social conventions:
 - 8.5.1 greetings (eg *Good morning / How are you? / How are things?*)
 - 8.5.2 responding to greeting (eg *I'm fine, thank you / I am very well*)
 - 8.5.3 addressing a customer (eg *Please excuse me, Sir/Madam*)
- 8.6 Communication repair:
 - 8.6.1 *Could you repeat the last item please?*
 - 8.6.2 *Sorry, when do you want delivery?*
 - 8.6.3 *Excuse me, but I missed your instruction*