



BUSINESS ENGLISH CERTIFICATE

Preliminary

Reading and Writing

SampleTest

Time 1 hour 30 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Do not open this question paper until you are told to do so.

Write your name, centre number and candidate number on your answer sheets if they are not already there.

Read the instructions for each part of the paper carefully.

Answer all the questions.

Read the instructions on the answer sheets.

Write your answers on the answer sheets. Use a pencil.

You **must** complete the answer sheets within the time limit.

At the end of the test, hand in both this question paper and your answer sheets.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

READING

Questions **1 – 45** carry one mark.

WRITING

Part 1 (Question **46**) carries ten marks.

Part 2 (Question **47**) carries twenty marks.

READING
QUESTIONS 1 – 45

PART ONE

Questions 1 – 5

- Look at questions **1 – 5**.
- In each question, which sentence is correct?
- For each question, mark one letter (**A**, **B** or **C**) on your answer sheet.

Example:

Telephone message

Claudia Lang caught 9.30 flight - due here 11.30 now, not 12.30.

When does Claudia Lang expect to arrive?

- A** 9.30
- B** 11.30
- C** 12.30

The correct answer is **B**, so mark your answer sheet like this:

0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------	--------------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------------

1

To:	Conference Delegates
Subject:	April conference hotel bookings
Accommodation must be requested by 12 th March at the latest as hotel rooms cannot be guaranteed after that date.	
Conference Organiser	

- A** Some delegates' hotel bookings have been rejected as they were not requested before 12th March.
- B** To be sure of obtaining hotel reservations, delegates should book these before 12th March.
- C** Delegates' room bookings can only be taken by the hotel after 12th March.

2

I would be grateful if you would give this letter your urgent attention.

- A** Please deal with this letter as soon as possible.
- B** Thank you for answering my letter so quickly.
- C** I would like you to bring this letter with you.

2

3

Job Opportunity

Building company needs project manager with engineering degree and relevant experience in project management, possibly in another sector.

The company requires that applicants for this vacancy

- A** have studied project management.
- B** have been leaders of a project team.
- C** have worked in a building company.

4

Facing a public relations problem? Issue a press statement. Saying nothing to the media will make the situation worse.

For more specialist advice, visit prsolutions.com

This firm specialises in helping

- A** people who want to start a career in public relations.
- B** clients who don't want to have a poor public image.
- C** media companies who want better communications with the public.

5

AMT invites applications for a research grant, funded at £2000, on the theme of electronic marketing.

- A** AMT is asking for money to support IT research.
- B** AMT is offering financial backing for a research project.
- C** AMT is carrying out research into an area of marketing.

PART TWO

Questions 6 – 10

- Look at the contents page below. It shows some sections in a supplier's brochure.
- For questions **6 – 10**, decide which section (**A – H**) of the brochure each person on the opposite page should look at.
- For each question, mark one letter (**A – H**) on your answer sheet.
- Do not use any letter more than once.

Pollock Supplies

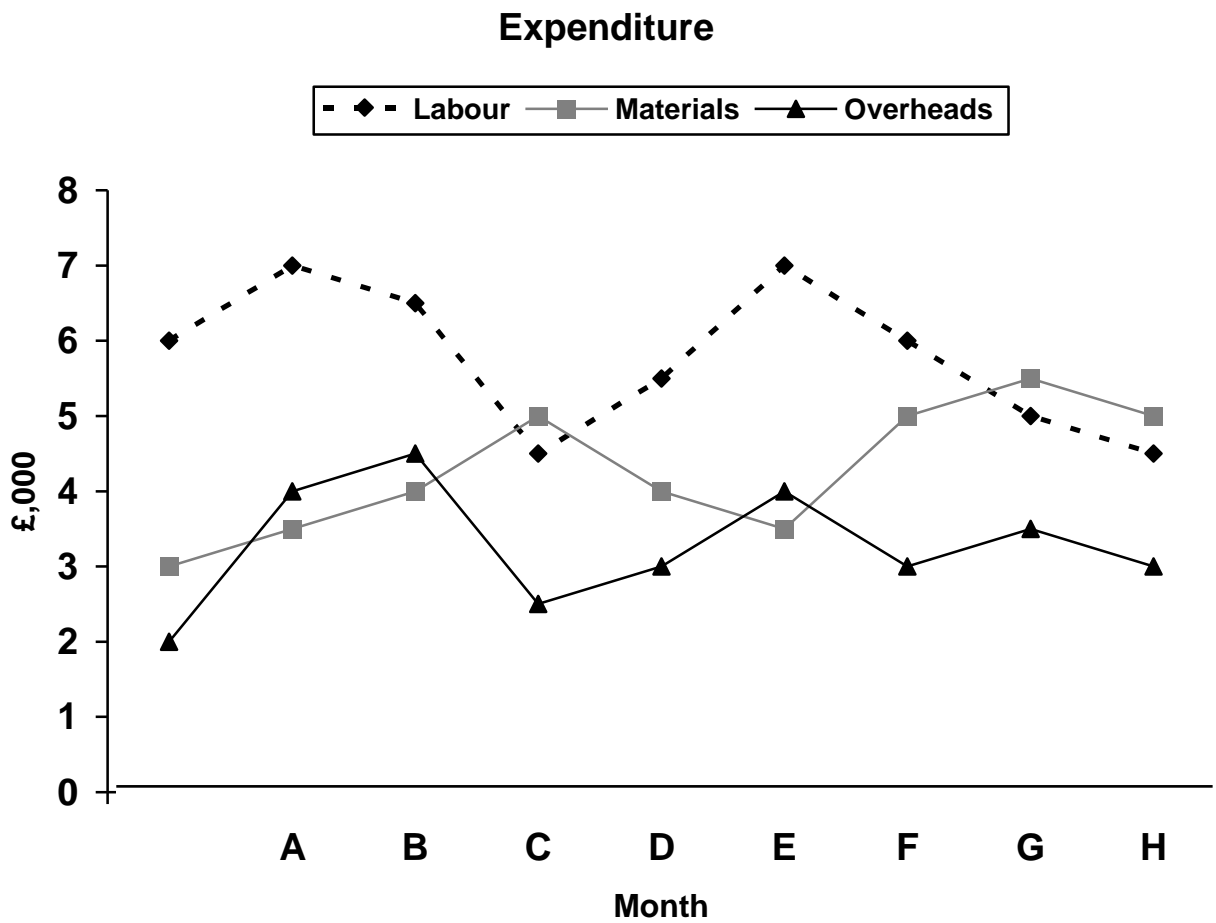
- A** Hardware – for all businesses, from banks to bookshops
- B** Catering supplies for office and workshop
- C** Cleaning and washroom supplies
- D** Printing services for every sector – restaurants and hotels our speciality
- E** Software – now including offers on engineering packages
- F** Storage systems – innovative furnishing
- G** Workwear – value your staff
- H** Stationery – quality paper products for all your needs

- 6 Fritz Bruehler's IT company is about to launch a range of new products and urgently needs new brochures for them.
- 7 Amina Basuti needs to order stronger shoes for the workers in the delivery section of the furniture store she manages.
- 8 The filing cabinets in the bank's main office are very old, and Kamal Turki is looking for modern replacements.
- 9 Xiao Li needs refills for the snacks and drinks machines that her company provides for its staff.
- 10 Anne Sullivan's company manufactures bathroom fittings and she needs to order some large envelopes to send catalogues to her customers.

PART THREE

Questions 11 – 15

- Look at the chart below. It shows a company's expenditure on labour, materials and overheads over a nine-month period.
- Which month does each sentence (11 – 15) on the opposite page describe?
- For each sentence, mark one letter (A – H) on your answer sheet.
- Do not use any letter more than once.



- 11 This month saw expenditure on labour decreasing while the opposite was true of materials costs, which rose sharply after dipping in the previous month.
- 12 In this month, spending on materials declined while overheads and labour costs both saw the beginning of a trend in the opposite direction.
- 13 This month's expenditure on overheads exceeded the cost of materials, with both showing an upward trend, although this was not the case with labour costs.
- 14 Labour costs continued to fall in this month and spending on materials and overheads also decreased.
- 15 In this month, overheads were not the cheapest category, and materials costs saw an increase although this was smaller than the rise in labour costs.

PART FOUR

Questions 16 – 22

- Read the article below about a businessman and his company.
- Are sentences **16 – 22** on the opposite page 'Right' or 'Wrong'? If there is not enough information to answer 'Right' or 'Wrong', choose 'Doesn't say'.
- For each sentence **16 – 22**, mark one letter (**A**, **B** or **C**) on your answer sheet.

John Moore

John Moore started his graphic design consultancy, Highland, in 1997. Although client numbers were low at first, they gradually increased. Today the list includes several large advertising agencies. And for the first time, one of his company's designs was recently put forward for an award. It narrowly missed winning, but the publicity did much to raise the company's profile.

'When I was at school, my trips to London always ended at a design exhibition,' says Moore. 'That started an interest in graphic design. However, the careers adviser thought it was better to study business at college, so I did marketing and economics instead of design.'

'I got my first job in the finance department of a well-known design consultancy. But as time went on, I realised I wanted to create things, and not be an administrator, so I left and took a risk setting up on my own. People are surprised that Highland still remains so small, with only seven people, which means that clients call me directly, rather than going through a PA. I'm not sure whether that's a reason for our success, though.'

'To be a really successful graphic designer, you need to be patient, with a good imagination, but you also need to be able to accept criticism of your work. Getting all those things in one person is rare.'

- 16** John Moore's company showed signs of success as soon as it was set up.
- A** Right **B** Wrong **C** Doesn't say
- 17** The improvement in Highland's reputation was the result of winning an award.
- A** Right **B** Wrong **C** Doesn't say
- 18** Moore was attracted to his field while he was still at school.
- A** Right **B** Wrong **C** Doesn't say
- 19** Moore followed advice that he was given about courses of study.
- A** Right **B** Wrong **C** Doesn't say
- 20** In his first job, Moore felt that he lacked the opportunity to be creative.
- A** Right **B** Wrong **C** Doesn't say
- 21** Moore has made a decision to keep Highland's staff numbers low.
- A** Right **B** Wrong **C** Doesn't say
- 22** Moore thinks he has the right qualities to be a good graphic designer.
- A** Right **B** Wrong **C** Doesn't say

PART FIVE

Questions 23 – 28

- Read the article below about changing the attitudes of a company's staff.
- For each question **23 – 28** on the opposite page, choose the correct answer.
- Mark one letter (**A, B** or **C**) on your answer sheet.

Changing staff attitudes at London Underground

London Underground's Dave Proffitt is trying to change the attitudes of staff towards their customers. It's easy to criticise the company, but with 275 stations all over London, it's the only way to get around the city quickly, so no competitive culture has developed. The 6,000 employees have not traditionally seen customer service as their responsibility, knowing that the millions of customers every day have little alternative to using the Underground trains.

An earlier attempt to improve customer service – when all staff were issued with large rule books – had no effect, as nobody opened them. So now London Underground has appointed another design agency to motivate its staff to care about customers. According to the agency, it's all about producing materials that are brief and use pictures, because it's essential that people who aren't normally interested in reading are attracted.

Using London Underground's established customer service topics, the agency has created a series of booklets, published on fairly cheap paper to try to prevent employee complaints about unnecessary expense when the company is short of money.

The contents link into the company's strategy of empowering staff, so the booklets do not consist of instructions about what to do, but instead help each employee to work out the best way that they as individuals can help customers. The booklet on reducing queues, for example, suggests that staff help customers to use machines for buying tickets, to prevent long queues at a ticket office. The result: customer feedback already shows increased satisfaction.

Proffitt wants teams of station staff to talk about the issues with their supervisors. At present they'll talk about safety but

not customer service. To encourage this, the booklets contain competitions, with the company offering small cash prizes, to get the staff to say how they'd react in certain situations. Entries to the competitions vary between 50 and 300 each month, but Proffitt insists that numbers are irrelevant to their main purpose.

The most successful part of this campaign is a series of funny posters getting staff to put themselves in their customers' shoes. They show examples of bad practice in different situations, like a ticket office being closed in a customer's face. The posters seem more effective than previous attempts to change behaviour. According to a recent survey, customers feel that staff are more helpful, though Proffitt knows there is still a long way to go.

- 23** According to the first paragraph, what causes poor customer service at London Underground?
- A** There are too many customers.
 - B** Staff have too much responsibility.
 - C** The company has too little competition.
- 24** What is significant about the new attempt to improve customer service?
- A** The new material was designed with its readers in mind.
 - B** Staff were asked for their opinions about previous materials.
 - C** London Underground decided not to involve an external agency.
- 25** According to the writer, why was cheap paper used for the booklets?
- A** to stop staff objecting to the money spent on them
 - B** to make them cheaper for people wishing to buy them
 - C** to allow money to be spent on making other improvements
- 26** What do the booklets focus on?
- A** finding ways to reduce waiting times
 - B** increasing co-operation among employees
 - C** encouraging staff to make their own decisions
- 27** Through the competitions, Proffitt hopes that staff will
- A** consider how to make London Underground safer.
 - B** discuss ways of behaving towards customers.
 - C** start to feel more positive about the company.
- 28** The posters are designed to make staff
- A** imagine themselves as customers.
 - B** remember the situations they need to deal with.
 - C** understand that they have different requirements from customers.

PART SIX

Questions 29 – 40

- Read the article below about managing change.
- Choose the correct word to fill each gap, from **A**, **B** or **C** on the opposite page.
- For each question **29 – 40**, mark one letter (**A**, **B** or **C**) on your answer sheet.

Managing Change

An important function of leaders is to manage the process of change. As the requirement to be more competitive increases, companies demand **(29)** higher levels of quality, service and overall speed. Sometimes managers are responsible **(30)** introducing change; at other times change **(31)** from outside the company.

According to a recent study, about 70 per cent of all changes that companies attempt to introduce actually fail. Mention change and **(32)** people automatically feel nervous. Some worry they may have to master new skills – ones that **(33)** be difficult. **(34)** fear their jobs will be at risk. Experts advise that **(35)** managers want their staff to **(36)** change, they need to explain to them how it will **(37)** their jobs long before the change happens. Getting staff used to a **(38)** of small changes can also prepare employees for major change, so **(39)** of asking people to agree to do something they've never done before, you'll already have a workforce that is comfortable **(40)** change.

- 29 A too B fairly C even
- 30 A of B for C to
- 31 A comes B makes C brings
- 32 A lots B most C plenty
- 33 A might B should C ought
- 34 A Another B Other C Others
- 35 A whether B if C unless
- 36 A accept B take C do
- 37 A touch B concern C affect
- 38 A number B quantity C degree
- 39 A instead B rather C except
- 40 A over B by C with

PART SEVEN

Questions 41 – 45

- Read the two emails below.
- Complete the form on the opposite page.
- Write a word or phrase (in CAPITAL LETTERS) or a number on lines **41 – 45** on your answer sheet.

To:	Kate Bond, production assistant
CC:	
Subject:	Assessment of suppliers

Please comment on Smithson, who provide our waste management service, limiting yourself to oil waste, the area you are responsible for.

The cost of Smithson's regular visits covered by contract is acceptable, though we're considering talking to them about extra visits, which we're spending too much on. What do you think?

Also – can you let me know who deals with Smithson with regard to production waste?

Thanks

Tony

To:	Tony Crewe, Purchasing Dept.
CC:	
Subject:	Smithson

Tony – their overall performance is pretty good, and their engineers couldn't be better. My only complaint is that when I email their office, the response time can be disappointing. But there's no longer a problem with getting advice from them about improving our waste management systems.

I agree with you about charges for extra visits, and it's Ginny Fisher who's responsible for production waste.

Kate

Assessment of Supplier

Service: Waste management

Supplier's name: Smithson

Comments made by (full name): **(41)**

Comments are on the subject of: **(42)** waste.

Supplier's greatest strength: **(43)** Their are excellent.

Supplier's greatest weakness: **(44)** Their is sometimes poor.

Action: **(45)** Renegotiate charges for their
..... visits.

WRITING
QUESTIONS 46 – 47

PART ONE

Question 46

- Your assistant Brian would like to attend an IT training day, and has asked your permission to go.
- Write a **Note** to your assistant:
 - refusing his request
 - explaining the reason for your decision
 - saying which training course he could attend instead.
- **Write 30 – 40 words.**
- **Write on your answer sheet.**

Brian,

PART TWO

Question 47

- Read this letter to your company from Sue Cowell.

With reference to your company's recent advertisement in the Times, I am very interested in applying for the job of Sales Manager.

I am currently working in a similar job in a smaller company and have been here for five years. However, I would welcome the opportunity to work with you and to develop my knowledge of other markets.

I would be happy to come for an interview and enclose my C.V. as requested.

I look forward to hearing from you.

- Write a **letter** to Ms Cowell:
 - telling her the date and time of an interview you would like her to attend
 - giving details of a presentation you would like her to make at the interview
 - asking her to provide a reference
 - advising her how to get to your company.
- **Write 60 – 80 words.**
- **Write on your answer sheet. Do not include any postal addresses.**

Dear Ms Cowell,

BLANK PAGE

BLANK PAGE

BLANK PAGE