



Level 2 Certificate in Business Administration (New 2012)

Examination Guidance for Candidates

For Syllabus Effective from: May 2012

Introduction

This document is designed to support students preparing for the Level 2 Certificate in Business Administration (2012) examination.

The document is presented in **five parts**:

A. Examination Format

B. Coverage of Topics in the Examination

C. Question and Answer Formats (this includes sample questions and answers)

D. Command Words and their meanings

E. Examination Techniques

This document should be read in conjunction with the syllabus for the qualification.

While the document is primarily intended for use by candidates, it is a very useful document for teachers to use in the delivery of the qualification and in preparing students for the examination.

A Examination Format

This qualification is assessed by a written examination. The format of the examination is as follows:

- There are four (4) questions, each carrying 25 marks. The paper has a total of 100 marks.
- All questions are compulsory; you must answer all 4 questions
- The time allowed for the examination is 2 hours
- Question 1 is an 'in-tray' exercise which requires you to complete a series of tasks, including producing a particular type of written business communication. This may either be a letter, memo, email, or information sheet.
- Questions 2, 3 and 4 are short answer questions, each consisting of a number of parts

B Coverage of Topics in the Examination

The questions in each examination paper will test all the topics in the syllabus. This means that you need to have a good understanding of all the syllabus topics. Each question will probably test more than one topic area.

The table below shows the approximate number of marks from each topic area that will be in every examination paper.

Topic Areas	Approximate number of marks in each examination paper
1. Structure of Business Organisations	15 marks
2. Working in an Administrative Role	20 marks
3. Communication in Business Organisations	20 marks
4. Reception and Mail Services	25 marks
5. Business Procedures and Information Management	20 marks

Question 1

Question 1 is always presented as a scenario of a 'real world' office environment where you are working as a member of the administrative staff. The scenario will give you information about the work environment – for example what your work involves, who you work with, dates of events, etc. You are then presented with a series of tasks to complete. The first of these tasks is to produce the written communication that is appropriate for the situation given in the scenario.

In producing the written communication you need to:

1. Decide whether a letter, email, memo or information sheet would be the most appropriate form of written communication based on the situation. Your decision should be based mainly on the purpose of the communication (this information will be given in the scenario), as well as other factors such as the need for speed and confidentiality. You will be asked to give reasons for your choice of communication. Three (3) marks are allocated in the question for producing the appropriate written communication and giving valid reasons for your choice.
2. Think about how you should lay out and format the written communication you have chosen. The layout of an email is different from that of a memo, letter or information sheet, so you need to have a clear idea of how you are going to present your written communication. Appendix 1 in the syllabus shows the acceptable layout and format for each type of written communication. You also need to think about the tone and style of your writing. Your writing should be businesslike with appropriate paragraphing and formal language. The vocabulary used should relate to the purpose of the communication. Three (3) marks are allocated for layout, tone and vocabulary.
3. Select the relevant information from the scenario that you need to include in your communication. This information may be specific to the scenario (e.g. dates, names, events, locations, references, instructions etc.) or it may be related to other syllabus topics. The scenario will sometimes indicate information related to other syllabus topics that you need to include in the communication. This will not be required in all questions, so you need to carefully read and select the information required.

In producing your written communication, you need to present the information in a clear and logical way to demonstrate your understanding of the purpose of the communication, as well as your knowledge and understanding of any syllabus topic that is to be included. Two (2) marks are allocated in the question for selecting and including the relevant information. Where information relating to other syllabus topics is required in the communication, five (5) marks are allocated to presenting the correct information.

4. Check your written communication to ensure that you have only included the necessary information and have correctly spelt any names and technical terms used in the scenario. Two (2) marks are allocated for correctly spelling names and technical terms and for not including irrelevant information.

Question 1 is the only question that will require you to produce any form of written communication. An example of Question 1 is given on the next page. Comments are provided to show how the points outlined above apply.

Question 1 will always be presented this way – different scenarios will be used but tasks (a) and (b) will always have similar requirements to the question in the example.

The other tasks in the question, (c) and (d), will require you to present information related to topics in the syllabus within the context of your job outlined in the scenario.

This question requires information related to Syllabus Topic 1 to be included in the written communication. You would gain 5 marks from the 7 marks in Part (a)(i) for presenting the correct information about the role of HR in your communication.

This identifies the purpose of the communication. It also indicates the vocabulary to be used in the communication as well as information related to the context that is to be included (i.e. date of induction). In this case, you would gain the other 2 marks from the 7 marks in Part (a)(i) for stating the specific date of the induction and recognising the need to include the information about the role of HR.

Question 1

Scenario

You work as an Administrative Assistant in the Human Resources Department of Heartlands Ltd, a publishing business. The Human Resources Manager, Tina Zarzecki, recently held an Induction Day with some new employees. You attended the induction to take notes. As the focus of the day, Tina outlined the main roles of the Human Resources Department.

The induction day went very well and Tina now wishes to follow up in writing to thank the employees for their attendance and to remind them of the information presented. The induction day was held exactly one week ago.

(a) Produce the written communication that Tina will send as follow-up to the induction. In producing the written communication you must:

(i) include the relevant information indicated in the scenario (7 marks)

(ii) use the appropriate layout, tone and vocabulary to suit the purpose of the communication. (4 marks)

(iii) check the accuracy of the communication. (2 marks)

(b) State **two** reasons why you have chosen to use the form of written communication you produced. (2 marks)

All new employees are given a copy of the Staff Handbook. However, Tina would like to update the 'Business Procedures' section of the Handbook before it is sent to the new employees and has asked you to provide her with some notes.

Answer the questions below as notes for Tina to use when updating the Handbook.

(c) Explain the importance of policies and procedures to a business and why all staff should follow them. (4 marks)

(d) Describe each of the following procedures and give one reason why each is important:

- Health and Safety
- Waste Management
- Quality and Process Improvement

(6 marks)

(Total 25 marks)

Based on the purpose of the communication, an email or memo would be appropriate.

Of the 4 marks, you would gain 1 mark for producing the appropriate written communication, i.e. either a memo or an email for this scenario. The other 3 marks you would gain for using the correct layout for the memo or email and using appropriate vocabulary and tone.

For this scenario, you would gain the 2 marks for correctly spelling 'Tina Zarzecki' and 'Induction' in your email or memo.

Your answers to parts (b), (c) and (d) are separate from the written communication you have to produce. Your answers to these questions should be in the form of short notes.

The model answer for this question is given on the next page.

Question 1

(a) Model Answer - *Other wording is acceptable as long as the information given is correct.*

MEMORANDUM

To All attendees at induction event

From Tina Zarzecki, Human Resources Manager

Ref TZ/*Candidate's initials*

Date *Date of examination*

INDUCTION DAY - *specific date*

Thank you for your attendance at the Induction Day for new employees held on (date of exactly one week before examination). I would like to remind you of the main points of my presentation.

As new employees, the Human Resources (HR) Department can provide you with a wealth of information and advice as it is not only concerned with recruiting and selecting new staff but is also responsible for:

- Training and development – this includes organising and monitoring any agreed training and managing the performance of the appraisal system.
- Maintaining staff records – all staff employment records and personal records are kept and updated by the HR department so it is important that they are informed of any changes to these details.
- Employee relations – this includes handling grievances, disputes, claims and complaints as well as managing other HR policies and procedures.
- Managing payroll and benefits – they manage all salary deductions, salary scales, pensions and record leave/holiday arrangements.

(13 marks)

(b) I have chosen to use a memo to communicate this information because a memo is an internal document which can be filed by the recipient for reference at a later date.

(2 marks)

(c) All businesses need to have policies and procedures in place to provide staff with direction **(1)** and ensure consistency to enable the business to be successful **(1)**. It is important for all staff in an organisation to follow all policies and procedures to ensure that tasks are completed in the correct way and that these tasks are carried out in a standard way by all staff **(1)**. This will ensure that the business runs more smoothly and helps to maintain a good reputation **(1)**.

(4 marks)

(d)

- Health and Safety policies and procedures are a legal requirement and are in place to protect everyone on a business' premises including employees and visitors **(1)**. Health and safety is the responsibility of all staff and so it is important for all staff to follow health and safety procedures to prevent personal injury and any legal claims against the business **(1)**.
- Waste management policies and procedures cover how the business handles, recycles and disposes of waste in order to meet organisational objectives and legal requirements **(1)**. These are important for corporate social responsibility and cost saving reasons. Waste of any materials costs an organisation money, reducing profits, and is harmful to the environment **(1)**.
- Quality and process improvement policies and procedures relate to how daily work activities are carried out to meet agreed standards **(1)**. They are important for quality assurance and to maintain standards in the quality of goods and services provided to customers **(1)**.

(6 marks)

(Total 25 marks)

Questions 2, 3 & 4

Questions 2, 3 and 4 are short answer questions consisting of a number of parts. A brief background to provide the context for the questions and answers is given first. This is then followed by the questions; there will be no more than four (4) parts to each question – (a), (b), (c) and (d). Each part will show the number of marks allocated to it.

An example of this type of question is shown below:

Question 2

You have been working as an Administrator at Clack and Clack, a law partnership. Most of your time is spent working in the stationery store. A new administrative apprentice has recently been recruited and you have been asked to help her get used to the job.

- (a) Describe **three** features of a partnership business. (6 marks)
- (b) State **four** activities that are carried out by a Stationery Clerk. (4 marks)
- (c) (i) List **three** skills and **three** personal qualities that are needed for the role of a Stationery Clerk. (6 marks)
- (ii) Give **one** reason **each** to show why the three skills listed in (c)(i) are important to the role of the Stationery Clerk. (6 marks)
- (d) Give **three** reasons why it is important to accept constructive feedback. (3 marks)

(25 marks)

Part-questions will highlight in bold the 'number of things' you need to give. You can see this above. The number of marks for each part-question is based on this – e.g. part (a) requires you to describe 3 features for 6 marks; this tells you that each description is worth 2 marks.

This is the background information for the question. Your answers need to be relevant to the background information, where appropriate. You need to read this carefully to identify the key points.

Every part-question will begin with a command word – these are underlined in the example question. Command words tell you the level of detail you need to give in your answer. For example, you would need to give greater details for your answer to part (a) than you would for part (c)(i). A list of command words and their meanings is given on page 10.

The model answer for this question is given on the next page.

Question 2 – Model Answer

- (a) Describe **three** features of a partnership business.
- Owned by the partners **(1)** who have all contributed capital **(1)**
 - Partners have equal control over the business **(1)** unless stated otherwise in the Partnership Agreement **(1)**
 - Usually unlimited liability **(1)** and all partners are jointly and severally liable for the debts of the business **(1)**
 - Can be limited liability **(1)** but would state LLP after the company name **(1)**
- (Any 3 x 2 marks)
- (b) State **four** activities that are carried out by a Stationery Clerk
- Ordering stationery to meet staff needs
 - Checking deliveries against Delivery Note
 - Reporting shortages to suppliers
 - Storing stationery in an appropriate way
 - Completing stock record cards
 - Issuing stationery to staff
 - Carrying out regular stock checks
 - Dealing with out-of-date and damaged stock in line with company policy
- (Any 4 x 1 mark)
- (c) (i) List three skills and three personal qualities that are needed for the role of Stationery Clerk.
- Skills:
- Interpersonal
 - Time management
 - Computer
 - Communication
 - Research
 - Customer service
 - Organisation
- (Any 3 x 1 mark)
- Personal Qualities:
- Positive attitude
 - Reliability
 - Initiative
 - Co-operation
 - Attention to detail
 - Confidence
 - Flexibility
 - Responsibility
- (Any 3 x 1 mark)

- (ii) Give **one** reason **each** to show why the three skills listed in (c)(i) are important to the role of Stationery Clerk.

Skills:

- Interpersonal **(1)** - to deal with a diverse range of colleagues **(1)**
- Time management **(1)** - to prioritise tasks and complete work within agreed timeframes **(1)**
- Computer **(1)** - to prepare documents, research suppliers **(1)**
- Communication **(1)** - to speak and write clearly, to communicate with colleagues at all levels in the organisation, to create a good impression of the organisation to suppliers **(1)**
- Research **(1)** - to find accurate supplier information quickly as well as judge the reliability of sources of information **(1)**
- Customer service **(1)** - to deal effectively and professionally with internal customers/colleagues **(1)**
- Organisation **(1)** - to organise store room and electronic files **(1)**

(Any 3 x 2 marks)

- (d) Give three reasons why it is important to accept constructive feedback.

- Identifies areas which require improvement
- Identifies areas which are being performed to required standards
- Identifies what support can be given and how
- Can be used to improve own performance and team performance
- Improves team relations

(Any 3 x 1 mark)

(Total 25 marks)

D

Command Words and their meanings

Below is a list of command words that are likely to be used in examination questions. It is important that you understand how to respond to different command words as this can affect your success in the examination.

Command words provide guidance on what the examiner is asking you to do. They also guide you on the approach that you need to take in answering the questions.

This list has been provided to help you to understand how to answer questions where the command words are used.

Apply	To put to something to practical use
Compare	To explain the similarities and differences between different items
Contrast	To distinguish between items being compared by focusing on differences
Define	To give the specific meaning of words, terms, etc. It may be the definition from a textbook or your own words.
Demonstrate	To show or prove especially by reasoning, evidence etc.
Describe	To imagine and give information that paints a complete picture.
List	To remember items and write them in the form of a list – no need to go into details.
Explain	To make the meaning of something clear, often by making comparison or giving examples. Explanations often require about three or more sentences.
Give	To outline your points briefly.
Identify	This requires selective use of your knowledge; you need to apply bits of your knowledge to the situation identified in the question.
Illustrate	To clarify or explain by use of examples. If appropriate, you could also draw a diagram as a way of illustrating.
Outline	To give the main features or general idea of something.
Show	To explain or make clear; prove
Suggest/Recommend	To put forward (a plan, idea etc.) for consideration
State	To write what you are asked about in a clear, simple and ‘to the point’ way; no need to explain.

E Examination Techniques

- 1 Revise all topics within the syllabus.
- 2 Make sure you are familiar with the examination format.
- 3 Read and follow the instructions on the front page of the examination paper.
- 4 Decide on a time allowance for each question that suits you – 45 minutes for Question 1 and 25 minutes for each of Question 2, 3 & 4 is reasonable. Your time allowance should include time to check your answers.
- 5 Read all questions carefully before answering, paying attention to the number of marks allocated for each part. Quickly write down ideas for answers as they come to you so you don't forget them later.
- 6 Underline the key facts in the scenario/background information and the command words in the questions. This will help you to focus on what you are required to do.
- 7 Produce your answers in the format and level of detail required, referring back to the key facts and command words. Make sure Question 1 is produced using the acceptable layout and format – the Appendix in the syllabus provides guidance on the layout and format of different forms of written communication.
- 8 Check each answer as soon as you have completed it. Have you given the answer required? Have you answered all parts of the question?

For further guidance on preparing and sitting examinations, please see 'Your guide to examination success'. This can be downloaded from the 'Student' pages of the LCCI website, www.lcci.org.uk.

Tel. +44 (0) 2476 518951
Email. internationalenquiries@ediplc.com
www.lcci.org.uk



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