

## Level 3 Certificate in English for Commerce



International  
Qualifications from EDI

### Syllabus

Effective from October 2001



## INTRODUCTION

EDI is a leading international awarding body that was formed through the merger of the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examinations Board (LCCI) and GOAL, a leading online assessment provider. EDI now delivers LCCI International qualifications (LCCI IQ) through a network of over 5000 registered centres in more than 120 countries worldwide. Our range of business-related qualifications is trusted and valued by employers worldwide and recognised by universities and professional bodies.

### Level 3 Certificate in English for Commerce

#### Aims

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

- write apt and accurate English which is suitable for its intended purpose within the syllabus topic requirements, relating to
  - **general** commercial/business/industrial topics
  - formal business letters
- read and understand English texts based on **general** commercial/business/industrial topics.

#### Target Audience and Candidate Progression

This qualification is intended for candidates who have reached a standard in English usage which will enable them to write acceptable English without embarrassment. Candidates would be expected to be at the Council of Europe's Vantage Level (B2).

This qualification is intended for those candidates who have progressed beyond, or above, the standard of English for Commerce Level 2.

English for Commerce Level 3 is the highest award, in this category, offered by LCCI IQ. However, candidates wishing to demonstrate a more advanced level of speaking and listening skills can enter for the LCCI IQ Spoken English for Industry and Commerce (SEFIC) examination at Level 4. Candidates wishing to take a higher level written examination in business and commercial English should take English for Business, Level 4.

## Structure of the Qualification

The level 3 Certificate in English for Commerce is a single unit qualification that consists of the range of topics detailed below.

### Syllabus Topics

The candidate is required to:

- 1 Write on a subject requiring a general knowledge of commercial or industrial practice/ procedure and employ report or memo format if required.
- 2 Answer questions testing comprehension of a passage connected with general commercial/business/industrial affairs.
- 3 Summarise a passage on general commercial/business/industrial topics.
- 4 Write a business letter as from an organisation to an individual concerning a specific transaction.

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

### Guided Learning Hours

EDI recommends that 140-160 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. EDI experience indicates that the number of GLHs can vary significantly from one training centre to another.

## ASSESSMENT

### Assessment Objectives

The examination will assess the candidates' ability to:

- respond adequately to given stimulus information and instructions
- give opinions in continuous written English on **general** commercial, economic or industrial issues
- employ report or memo formats if required
- assess written material in order to answer questions which test the ability to
  - detect the thread of an argument
  - discard irrelevant information
  - assess and evaluate opinions
  - give succinct answers
- produce a summary of a given text
- write a business communication in letter format
- use a suitable tone where required

- employ suitable linguistic forms used in a **general** commercial/business environment so as to:
  - be sufficiently accurate in English to express themselves adequately
  - be able to understand and use common idiomatic forms
  - be able to understand subtleties of details and meaning in English material presented to them
  - make limited use of the one dictionary allowed during the examination.

## **Coverage of Syllabus Topics in Examinations**

There will be 4 compulsory questions corresponding to the 4 syllabus topics listed above.

All questions are awarded equal marks (25).

### **Examination Format**

Candidates will be assessed via an examination lasting 3 hours. The 4 compulsory questions are as follows:

**Question 1** involves writing 400 - 500 words on any **one** of 6 topics offered. A report, memorandum or other specified presentation will be offered as one of the choices. The subject matter will relate to general commercial, business or industrial matters.

**Question 2** requires the candidate to answer questions based on a passage of about 700 words concerning general commercial, business or industrial affairs.

**Question 3** offers a passage of about 500 words which candidates are required to summarise in no more than 180 words. They must use their own words as far as possible and supply an appropriate title for the summary. The subject matter will be of a general commercial, business or industrial nature.

**Question 4** supplies a rubric which poses a problem within a business setting. The candidate is given a business status and is required to reply appropriately using accepted letter format.

### **Oral Test Options**

For those English for Commerce candidates who wish to gain certification of their speaking and listening skills there is at Level 3 an optional Oral Test which is administered by the Centre.

**Candidates and Centres should be aware that many colleges and universities require a Pass in the Oral Test as a compulsory part of their entry requirements.**

In this test the candidate will be provided with 5 minutes' private preparation time followed by 2 minutes' general conversation as a warm up and 8 minutes' conversation based on the topic selected by the Examiner in line with the written examination syllabus. Candidates will be notified of the topic when they are given sample questions at the start of the preparation element of the test.

The syllabus topics for the Oral Test are as follows:

- 1 Earning a living
- 2 Production and sale of goods
- 3 Trade
- 4 Money

- 5 Transport
- 6 Communications
- 7 Education
- 8 Travel and tourism

The candidates are awarded a Pass (P) or a Fail (F) and are assessed according to the following criteria:

- 1 Vocabulary and conversation skills
- 2 Comprehension
- 3 Fluency and active contribution
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Pronunciation

For further information, a guidance document for oral Examiners plus an accompanying tape is available from EDI free of charge.

It should be noted that Centres are required to tape record a minimum of 6 oral tests per candidate entry (all candidates if the entry is less than 6) and to send these tapes to EDI for moderation along with the completed results forms.

Alternatively, where administratively feasible, a compatible level of Spoken English for Industry and Commerce (SEFIC) may be taken in lieu, by Combined Entry Procedure. For details see separate SEFIC guide or contact EDI.

### **Answer Formats**

This examination will test, at a higher level, the linguistic skills and general commercial/business/industrial knowledge examined at Level 2 with the addition of a comprehension test.

Candidates must pay attention to the rubric for each question which identifies the answer format required.

**Question 1** - An essay ranging from 400 - 500 words is required from a choice of 6 topics. Credit will be given for:

- structure and paragraphing
- close adherence to the topic requirements/developing an argument/using supportive illustrations
- style and tone of presentation
- mechanical accuracy

**Question 2** - Candidates are required to answer questions testing comprehension of a passage of about 700 words which will have a general commercial/business/industrial content. Answers will require a full understanding of the passage, rather than the testing of factual points. Answers should be given in complete sentences unless otherwise indicated.

**Question 3** - A passage of about 500 words is offered. Candidates are required to summarise the passage in no more than 180 words.

They should ensure that:

- the word summary target is not exceeded
- an apt title is provided
- the main points of the passage are identified
- superfluous information is discarded
- personal wording is used where possible
- the finished summary is a condensed, structured version of the original, bearing strong evidence of good paraphrasing.

**Question 4** - The rubric offers the candidate a role which necessitates the writing of a business letter relating to a specified problem. The length of the letter is not prescribed so the candidate is required to accommodate the reply to ensure that it is:

- adequate in that it responds to the requirements of the rubric
- adequate in terms of the brevity of its content
- in an accepted business letter format
- correct in terms of the style and tone required
- correctly structured and paragraphed
- mechanically accurate so as to be mailable.

In general, candidates should be aware that marks are awarded for:

- an understanding of specialised and idiomatic English prose in so far as they can detect subtleties of detail and respond adequately in a similar vein
- content, accuracy in spelling, layout, punctuation and grammar
- the satisfactory completion of the communication task, which will depend on the appropriacy of the candidate's choice of style, tone, length and format.

Candidates are allowed to take one dictionary into this examination. It may be either English or foreign language/English. EDI cannot undertake to advise on which dictionary 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 valuable examination time.

Candidates are recommended to refer to the Model Answers and past question papers for English for Commerce Level 3. These are available from EDI and give advice on past performance, layout and presentation.

## **Mark Allocation**

Percentage allocations in each question are shown in brackets. All questions carry equal marks.

### **Question 1 - The Essay (25% of total)**

- Content (40)
- \*Accuracy (40)
- Style (20)

\* Marks are deducted for errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation.

## Question 2 - Comprehension task (25% of total)

An average of 10 questions may be asked, the marks for which may vary according to the depth and difficulty of specific points in the text or gained from information across the text.

## Question 3 - The summary (25% of total)

- Title (8)
- Summary (60)
- Accuracy (32)

## Question 4 - The business letter (25% of total)

- Layout (20)
- Content (40)
- Style and impression (20)
- Mechanical accuracy (20)

## Certification

Successful candidates will be awarded the Level 3 Certificate in English for Commerce on the achievement of the percentages and grades below:

Pass	50%
Merit	60%
Distinction	75%

## Support Material

Model answers and past question papers are available from the LCCI website [www.lcci.org.uk](http://www.lcci.org.uk)

## Varieties of English

EDI will accept any of the main varieties of English (British, North American, Australian) in candidates' answers as long as the candidates are **consistent** in the variety they use.

## How to offer this Qualification

To offer this qualification you must be an LCCI IQ registered examination centre. To gain centre approval please contact Customer Support on 08700 818008 between the hours of 0830 and 1700 (GMT) Monday to Friday or by email on [centresupport@ediplc.com](mailto:centresupport@ediplc.com).

Alternatively you may contact your Regional LCCI Office or Co-ordinating Authority

## Syllabus Topic

## Items Covered

### 1 Writing an essay

Candidates must be able to:

- 1.1 Assess the topics offered and select **one** suitable to their interest and knowledge
- 1.2 Assess the requirements of the rubric and plan the composition accordingly
- 1.3 Meet the rubric guidance and not offer irrelevant information
- 1.4 Adopt an appropriate style and tone as required
- 1.5 Employ the conventions of essay writing regarding:
  - 1.5.1 introduction/conclusion
  - 1.5.2 paragraphing
  - 1.5.3 punctuation
  - 1.5.4 spelling/grammar
- 1.6 Offer viewpoints, opinions and comparisons where required
- 1.7 Ensure that the finished essay is:
  - 1.7.1 legible and of the required length
  - 1.7.2 accurate and free from errors

### 2 The comprehension test: requires candidates to answer questions based on a passage of a general commercial/business/industrial nature.

Candidates must be able to:

- 2.1 Demonstrate an ability to read and understand the passage
- 2.2 Evaluate the thread of argument or opinion
- 2.3 Identify weaknesses and/or inconsistencies in the information provided
- 2.4 Assess the importance of the information provided in relation to the questions asked
- 2.5 Provide answers based on an understanding of the whole text, rather than the extraction of isolated facts, where required
- 2.6 Give succinct answers on complete sentence format where required
- 2.7 Use their own words to paraphrase information where the questions require this technique

### **3 Summarising a passage**

Candidates must be able to:

- 3.1 Summarise a passage of about 500 words in no more than 180 words
- 3.2 Offer an apt title
- 3.3 Ensure that the main points of the passage are identified
- 3.4 Identify and discard superfluous material
- 3.5 Use their own wording where possible
- 3.6 Ensure that the finished summary is a condensed version of the original showing:
  - 3.6.1 a retention of the style and tone of the original
  - 3.6.2 the use of linking devices, where practicable, to ensure smooth continuity of the sentence structure
  - 3.6.3 strong evidence of good paraphrasing

### **4 Writing a Business Letter**

- based on a role given to the candidate
- answering a specified business problem

Candidates must be able to:

- 4.1 Respond to the requirements of the rubric
- 4.2 Identify and accept the business role offered
- 4.3 Employ consistent business letter writing conventions regarding
  - 4.3.1 layout, addresses, salutation, complimentary close and signature
  - 4.3.2 conventions of business letter terminology
  - 4.3.3 correct structure
  - 4.3.4 paragraphing
- 4.4 Display coherence and cohesion to:
  - 4.4.1 ensure an acceptable, tactful and courteous form of business communication which is
  - 4.4.2 correct in terms of the required style and tone

4.5 Ensure that the letter is mechanically accurate so as to be mailable

## 5 Linguistic competence (structures)

Candidates must be able to use:

5.1 Subordinate clauses (e.g. *The report, as you said, was ...*)

5.2 Introductory adverbials expressing

5.2.1 attitude (e.g. *frankly, honestly*)

5.2.2 declarative sentences (e.g. *naturally, obviously*)

5.2.3 defining a viewpoint (e.g. *theoretically speaking*)

5.2.4 argument structure (e.g. *nevertheless, otherwise*)

5.3 The anaphoric use of pronouns; using pronouns, possessives, pro-adverbials *there, then* and the verb *do* when referring back (e.g. *His manager lived there long before he did*)

## 6 Linguistic competence (concepts)

Candidates must be able to express:

6.1 (Non) existence (e.g. *to destroy, to create, to occur, to discover*)

6.2 Location

6.2.1 nouns (e.g. *place/position*)

6.2.2 verbs (e.g. *to be situated/arranged*)

6.2.3 relative position - preposition (e.g. *at the back of*) adverbs (e.g. *below, at the side*)

6.3 Distance (e.g. *remote*)

6.4 Motion (e.g. *to flow, to come along*)

6.5 Direction

6.5.1 destination (e.g. *is there a direct route?*)

6.5.2 adverbs (e.g. *backwards/clockwise*)

6.5.3 prepositions (e.g. *up, down, towards*)

6.6 Arrangement (e.g. *pattern, set*)

6.7 Dimension

6.7.1 size (e.g. *enormous/tiny*)

- 6.7.2 verbs (e.g. *to become, to get bigger*)
- 6.7.3 weight (e.g. *load, weigh*)
- 6.7.4 volume (e.g. *content, to contain*)
- 6.7.5 nouns (e.g. *depth, length*)
- 6.8 Time
  - 6.8.1 indication (e.g. *whenever*)
  - 6.8.2 duration:
    - prepositions (e.g. *throughout*)
    - verbs (e.g. *to continue*)
    - adverbs (e.g. *always, for good*)
  - 6.8.3 sequence (e.g. *next, later on*)
  - 6.8.4 simultaneousness (e.g. *meanwhile, while* + sub-clause)
  - 6.8.5 future reference (e.g. *soon*)
  - 6.8.6 past reference (e.g. *recent(ly)*)
  - 6.8.7 speed (e.g. *rapid(ly)*)
  - 6.8.8 frequency (e.g. *occasional(ly), weekly*)
  - 6.8.9 continuity (e.g. *to carry on*)
  - 6.8.10 performance/intermittence (e.g. *permanent(ly), sporadic(ally)*)
  - 6.8.11 commencement/end (e.g. *to begin, finish*)
- 6.9 Number
  - 6.9.1 fractions (e.g. *It's half of what we ordered*)
  - 6.9.2 minus/plus (e.g. *It's minus 5 degrees*)
  - 6.9.3 negative/positive
- 6.10 Quantity:
  - 6.10.1 determiners (e.g. *less, least*)
  - 6.10.2 percent/sum/total
  - 6.10.3 to add/to subtract/to multiply/to divide
- 6.11 Degree (e.g. *somewhat more expensive/hardly a bargain*)
- 6.12 Quality

#### 6.12.1 shape:

- adjectives (e.g. *circular, crooked*)
- nouns (e.g. *circle, curve*)

#### 6.12.2 visibility:

- nouns (e.g. *glance, darkness*)
- adjectives (e.g. *blind, invisible*)

#### 6.12.3 audibility (e.g. *silence, silent*)

#### 6.12.4 taste (e.g. *flavour*)

#### 6.12.5 smell (e.g. *odour, perfume*)

#### 6.12.6 texture (e.g. *smooth, rough*)

#### 6.12.7 age:

- adjectives (e.g. *elderly, mature*)
- nouns (e.g. *adolescent, maturity*)
- generation (e.g. *to be under, over age*)

#### 6.12.8 physical condition (e.g. *in good shape*)

#### 6.12.9 material (e.g. *aluminium, concrete*)

#### 6.12.10 genuineness (e.g. *false, imitation*)

### 6.13 Evaluation

#### 6.13.1 quality:

- adjectives (e.g. *perfect, poor, outstanding*)
- verbs (e.g. *to deteriorate, improve*)
- adverbs (e.g. *badly, excellently*)

#### 6.13.2 acceptability (e.g. *it's just/not quite what I wanted*)

also a range of adjectives (e.g. *(in)correct, (un)successful, (ab)normal, (un)usual, complex, particular, special*)

#### 6.13.3 expressions of opinion (e.g. *I'm against/I cannot accept .../It's useless*)

## 7 Linguistic competence (vocabulary)

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

### 7.1 Identification of people, roles and relationships

#### 7.1.1 appearance, personality, character and skills of people

#### 7.1.2 group descriptions (e.g. *work teams and personnel/business networks*)

## 7.2 Personal interests

7.2.1 hobbies, entertainment, sport, mass media

7.2.2 social discussions on current affairs, books, personal views and preferences

## 7.3 Travel

7.3.1 types of travel/modes of transport for business and personal use

7.3.2 description/analysis of journeys

## 7.4 Business accommodation - exchanging views on

7.4.1 types of premises, furnishings, layout/design, running costs

7.4.2 regional analysis of communication facilities for business

## 7.5 Making deals

7.5.1 prices, payments, exchange rates, discounts, terms and conditions, negotiating prices, quantities

## 7.6 The workplace

7.6.1 job descriptions, pay, hours of work, holidays, length of notice, task descriptions, routines

7.6.2 health, safety, security regulations, accident reports

7.6.3 operating instructions for equipment - faults, symptoms, remedies

7.6.4 technical assessments and proposals

7.6.5 prospects and the social life within the organisation

## 8 Linguistic competence (functions)

Candidates must be able to express:

8.1 Opinions (e.g. *(personally) I think you should ...*)

8.2 (Dis)agreement:

- strong (e.g. *exactly/definitely*)
- reluctant (e.g. *I suppose so*)
- with reservation (e.g. *that may be so/perhaps so*)
- strong disagreement (e.g. *nonsense!*)
- weak disagreement (e.g. *I'm not so sure*)

8.3 Communication

repair

8.3.1 *Did you mean ...?*

8.3.2 requesting clarification (e.g. *what is ... (exactly)?*)

8.3.3 correcting (e.g. *let me start/say that again*)

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and performance

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