Learning Objectives and Test Format

ENGLISH BUSINESS

B2
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Foreword

The publication of the *Common European Framework for Languages: Learning, teaching and assessment* by the Council of Europe in the year 2001 marked an important step in the development of learning objectives, curricula, teaching materials and means of assessment. The definitions of the domains of language use, the level descriptions and the task-based approach to language use have had highly significant implications for the work of *telc – language tests*.

This publication of the learning objectives and test format, along with Mock Examination 1 for the *telc English B2 Business* examination, is the result of a long process of development of the examinations in English for vocational use and reinforces the position of this examination within the *Common European Framework of Reference* and within the system of *telc – language tests*, especially the vocationally-oriented examinations.

Looking back over the history of this examination, which has developed over 35 years and several revisions into an international examination in English for the workplace, it can be seen clearly that *telc – language tests* have always been in the forefront of positive changes and developments in language assessment. The continuing analysis and definition of the language needs of the target group have led to the development of a syllabus and examination not in business, commercial or economic English but in English at work.

As well as being based on the practical needs of language learners at their workplace, the *telc English B2 Business* examination and the *telc English B1 Business* examination are also based on the findings of discourse analysis as well as on those of other branches of linguistics. Language learners’ need for real language, based on what is happening in language terms at the workplace are reflected in the definition of the scenarios to be mastered at this level, the topics and the discourse features, all of which make up communication and competence.

Test Development
telc GmbH
Frankfurt am Main, Germany
Introduction

telc – language tests represent the outcome of the developments begun in the late 1960s in the field of language specifications and examinations in adult education by Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband (German Adult Education Association) and Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung (German Adult Education Institute). The first publication was issued in 1967 and within a short space of time the developments were supported by the Austrian and Swiss adult education associations and had an important effect on the teaching and learning of foreign languages in adult education institutions in several European countries. The syllabuses and examinations have been revised several times in keeping with developments in the teaching of foreign languages.

The learning objectives for the telc English B2 Business examination, previously called Certificate in English for Business Purposes, was the first syllabus and test of a language for occupational purposes but it was soon followed by English for Technical Purposes, English for the Hotel and Catering Industry as well as by syllabuses and examinations for occupational purposes in other languages.

The name English for Business Purposes rather than Business English was chosen to show that the learning objectives and specifications as well as the examination itself are not designed to teach and test specific knowledge of business or commerce in any one particular field but rather to provide the learner of English with certain language skills and competences as well as a knowledge of structures and forms found in many areas of English used for business purposes. More detail on this can be found in Chapter 2 of this publication.

The learning objectives and specifications described here are not intended as a complete list of English language requirements for this area of English. They allow course planners and teachers to see to what extent a course of this kind meets the language needs of learners in adult education institutions and in companies. The examination allows learners and teachers to see how far the learning objectives have been achieved.

The general aim is to promote the effective teaching and learning of the English necessary for use in the occupational domain and to provide learners with an achievable goal and a means of assessing their skills and competences in the English they use in their work. English is increasingly the major language for international business communication and this international aspect is firmly established and clearly reflected in the syllabus and in the examinations in telc English B1 Business and in telc English B2 Business.
The materials for this examination have been developed using the guidelines of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment, published by the Council of Europe, while retaining a close relationship to the actual learning situation in the classroom. The descriptors for the level referred to in the Common European Framework as B2 (Independent User) were used as guidelines for this syllabus and examination. The specifications and the examination were developed by international teams of experts for use in many European countries.

All pedagogical aspects of telc – language tests such as the development of test materials and examiner training, as well as the worldwide distribution and administration of the examinations are the sole responsibility of the telc GmbH in Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

This description of learning objectives is designed both for teachers who wish to prepare their learners for the telc English B2 Business examination, as well as for examiners, test constructors, course book writers, heads of language departments in schools, those responsible for in-company language training and personnel officers. Candidates are referred to the mock examination for this examination and the accompanying audio recordings where they will find the information they need about the examination.

The groups addressed will find their needs catered for by this set of specifications, syllabus and mock examination if they are primarily interested in the teaching and learning of English in a work-related context. As independent users of English, learners should be able to deal with everyday situations which arise in business life as well as with certain more specific cases where the use of English is required. Modern developments in business are taken into account as well as the use of English as a language for communication in an international business context. Teachers will recognise the integration of developments in communicative language teaching and the emphasis on real communication in business life. The individual needs of learners, teachers and course planners can be taken into account without losing sight in any way of the overall objectives of telc – language tests and the Common European Framework of Reference. The described objectives and the broad base of communication within an international business context provide an ideal framework for the communicative teaching and learning of languages which is necessary in the changing world of European business today.

Test Development
telc GmbH
Frankfurt am Main, Germany
The series of publications on telc – language tests sets out general recommendations for language teaching in adult education which are relevant at various levels of language learning. The series concerns itself in particular with the description of learning objectives for the competence levels of the Common European Framework of Reference and for various examinations in languages for general and specific purposes. Each set of specifications is complemented by a mock examination with the accompanying listening material. This present publication is designed to provide a set of guidelines for language teaching and language learning in courses leading to the telc English B2 Business examination.

The original point of departure for the development of telc – language tests was a system in which different learner needs and interests could be taken into account by providing a framework which allowed for individualised learning programmes. The programme was initially supported and financed by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Science and has been contributed to by several European countries.

Each level or step in the system represents a meaningful structuring of long-term learning objectives and relates to the Common European Framework of Reference. This structuring is not, however, meant to restrict the flexibility and freedom necessary for the development of learner-oriented materials by defining too narrowly each learning step. On the other hand, the structure should ensure that adults learning a foreign language will acquire a firm and meaningful basis for communication from the outset, and that this basis can be expanded to lead to increased mastery in fluency and correctness in oral and written communication at various levels.

At present the telc English programme consists of the following examinations:

The present levels in English, A1, A2 (Basic User), B1, B2 (Independent User) and C1 (Proficient User) in the telc – language test system, including English B1+B2 Business, were developed in the public sector of adult education and are designed to improve and facilitate language learning while at the same time shaping it to the needs of adults and making it efficient. In designing the syllabuses and examinations for general purposes, it was not the use of language for business or professional purposes that was considered of prime importance, but the use of language to promote general communication. The target group was defined in accordance with this principle. The specifications for English B2 Business are designed first and foremost for those who require or will require English within a business or professional context.
Learners aiming at the *telc English B2 Business* examination will have reached level B1. This means that they have acquired a basic communicative ability in the foreign language, that they have a fairly comprehensive vocabulary – including idioms – at their disposal, and that they have a working command of the most important grammatical rules. They will be aware that they can at least minimally satisfy the language requirements of common everyday situations.

By showing that they wish to continue their language learning, learners demonstrate that, apart from feeling a general interest in, or liking for, the foreign language, they also seek to gain a greater self-assurance in the use of the foreign language and to gain the ability to apply their knowledge of the language in more specific business contexts. They wish to be able not simply to cope, but to cope with greater facility. They seek increased confidence in situations which may arise in the foreign language and the assurance that they will be able not only to handle them – as far as language requirements are concerned – but to handle them skilfully, with the degree of adequacy and accuracy required in a business context. Particularly, they may wish to feel that their ability to handle situations is not confined to those they have been more or less specifically prepared for, but that it will extend to all those situations – including professional or business ones – they may be likely to encounter in their own personal circumstances.

After success in the examination *telc English B2 Business*, learners can prove that they are able to use the foreign language independently and for their own purposes, and specifically within the context of business situations. It can also be expected that learners will be able to cope with the requirements not only of situations in their own country but also with the demands made on them during stays in a foreign country, also those of more protracted duration.

Learner orientation is a prominent feature at all stages of the *telc – language tests*. Right from the start of a foreign language course it is recognised that adult learners bring with them their own expectations of the course they enrol for, their own learning objectives and their personal motivation together with their personal and professional experience. Yet, in spite of all this diversity, beginning learners have a good deal in common. Particularly, they all need to become familiar with the basic structures of the foreign language, with a basic vocabulary, with the phonological system, and – in the large majority of cases – with strategies for dealing with a number of common everyday situations. If it is possible, on this basis, to treat groups of beginners as more or less homogeneous groups, this becomes increasingly less feasible as the learners become more advanced. Provided the principle of learner orientation is given due attention in the course, learners will soon begin to develop their own ideas as to the ways in which they are likely to learn most effectively and they will also become clearer in their own minds as to
exactly what they actually need or wish to learn. Moreover, as learners rise above
the level of fixed phrases and more or less standardized short utterances, the
foreign language increasingly becomes a vehicle for the expression of their own
ideas, views and feelings in their own way; in short, for the expression of their
personality. And, as personalities differ, so the manner of expression will differ.

Learner orientation at higher levels, then, includes:

- encouraging the development of individual learning strategies,
- diversification of learning content and learning tasks to suit the learners' individual needs and interests,
- encouraging the development of personal communication strategies in accordance with the learner's own personality.

These features of learner autonomy are illustrated in the learning objectives which aim to provide an outline for course materials while allowing learners and teachers to modify and expand these according to the specific needs of the learners and their environment.
2 English for Business Purposes and Business English · What’s the Difference

English for Business Purposes and Business English
What’s the Difference?
As mentioned in the introduction to this publication, *telc English B2 Business* aims at general Business English.

- **telc English B2 Business** concentrates on skills in English and the transfer-ence of these to particular areas rather than the content of the areas them-selves. The areas of business are not the focus of the teaching or testing.
- **telc English B2 Business** is more concerned with the structure of discourse in English than specific vocabulary and grammar.
- **telc English B2 Business** concentrates on the discourse used in scenarios in work and work-related contexts rather than fixed business situations.
- **telc English B2 Business** can be approached at almost any level. The language and communicative skills gained can be modified to make them of most use to the learner. If necessary, it can also be taught in mixed-level classes.
- **telc English B2 Business** is based on the use of English rather than knowledge of business or commerce.
- **telc English B2 Business** can be taught to heterogeneous classes and is not limited to classes from one department, company or position.
- **telc English B2 Business** makes use of general material and tasks.
- **telc English B2 Business** focuses on text types rather than the specific content of business or commercial texts.
- **telc English B2 Business** can be taught to classes of pre-service learners as what is learnt can be transferred to various fields, companies and depart-ments.

This definition of the subject illustrates that it is in fact general English at the workplace or general Business English which is needed in many cases rather than what has up to now been known as Business English. English is used not only in international trade and business but also increasingly within companies, in exchange (written and spoken) between head offices, subsidiaries and branches as well as amongst colleagues and staff. English is used in many sectors, both export-oriented (engineering, electronics, optical, chemical and the food industry) as well as in service industries (telecommunication, transport, hotel and catering, banking and insurance).

English is used in many areas where no particular or specialist knowledge is necessary but rather the transfer of skills from areas of general use to work-related tasks, such as telephoning, conversations with customers and suppliers and colleagues from other departments and branches. It is in these areas that deficits are strongly felt and of particular importance for the image and presenta-tion of the company or department.
Written communication today is dominated by email, an area in which the transfer of style and language between the different areas of use requires particular sensitivity. An awareness of when email is the appropriate form of communication as well as which email style is appropriate should form part of any course in English in a work-oriented context.

These features of telc English B2 Business are reflected in the tasks and test format of telc English B1 and B2 Business examinations. The description of learning objectives and the examination tasks are based closely on the Common European Framework of Reference.
3 The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment
The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR) provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe.

- It describes in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively.
- It defines levels of proficiency which allow learners’ progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis.

The CEFR promotes an “action-oriented” approach to modern language learning. The descriptions of proficiency for the CEFR levels are formulated in terms of what learners can do in the language at their level. This focus on achievement is a fundamental philosophical choice: only positive formulations of levels of proficiency can be used as objectives. Furthermore, it was discovered that negative formulations for lower levels were found to be interpreted inconsistently.

The CEFR was developed by an international Working Party and smaller Authoring Group\(^1\) between 1993 and 1996 on the recommendation of the Intergovernmental Symposium held in Rüschlikon, Switzerland November 1991, on: “Transparency and Coherence in Language Learning in Europe: Objectives, Evaluation, Certification.” The Symposium considered that:

“It is desirable to develop a Common European Framework of reference for language learning at all levels, in order to:
- promote and facilitate cooperation among educational institutions in different countries;
- provide a sound basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications;
- assist learners, teachers, course designers, examining bodies and educational administrators to situate and co-ordinate their efforts;........”

The scale of defined levels included in the CEFR (“Common Reference Levels”) was developed between 1993 and 1996 in a Swiss National Science Research Council project organised as a follow-up to the Rüschlikon Symposium\(^2\)

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1 John Trim, Daniel Coste, Brian North, Joe Sheils

The initial, draft editions of the CEFR received very positive feedback in a large-scale structured survey. A revised version, taking account of formal and informal feedback, was made available in first published editions in 2001 for English (Cambridge University Press), French (Didier), German (Langenscheidt) and Portuguese (ASA) and in 2002 for Czech (Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci), Hungarian (Pedagógus-tvábbképzési Módszertani és Információs Központ), Italian (La Nuova Italia – Oxford) and Spanish (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte and grupo ANAYA).

The CEFR was officially approved by the representatives of all Council of Europe member states in April 1997 during the final conference of the medium term programme on “Language learning for European citizenship”. The European Union, in its European Council Resolution on the promotion of linguistic diversity and language learning invites member States “to set up systems of competence in language knowledge based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages developed by the Council of Europe, taking sufficient account of skills acquired through informal learning.”

One of the main aims of the Framework is to help partners in language teaching and learning describe the levels of proficiency required by existing standards and examinations in order to facilitate comparisons between different systems of qualifications. For this purpose the Descriptive Scheme and the Common Reference Levels have been developed.

With the categories of the Descriptive Scheme and the Common Reference Levels, the CEFR is constructed so as to accommodate these various forms and enable examination providers to profile their examination. Scales are provided for many of the parameters of language proficiency detailed in Chapters 4 and 5. This makes it possible to specify differentiated profiles for particular learners or groups of learners.

3.1. What is the Descriptive Scheme?

In CEFR Section 2.1. the Descriptive Scheme is summarised as follows:

Language use, embracing language learning, comprises the actions performed by persons who as individuals and as social agents develop a range of competences, both general and in particular communicative language competences. They draw on the competences at their disposal in various contexts under various conditions and under various constraints to engage in language activities involving language processes to produce and/or receive texts in relation to themes in specific domains, activating those
strategies which seem the most appropriate for carrying out the tasks to be accomplished. The monitoring of these actions by the participants leads to the reinforcement or modification of their competences.

From the point of view of the design and/or description of language examinations and assessments, the key elements in the descriptive scheme summarised above are the various components of communicative language competence, language activities and domains.

3.1.1. Communicative language competence
(Edited from CEFR Section 2.1.2)

Communicative language competence can be considered as comprising several components: linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic. Each of these components is postulated as comprising, in particular, knowledge and skills and know-how.

Linguistic competences include lexical, phonological, syntactical knowledge and skills and other dimensions of language as system, independently of the sociolinguistic value of its variations and the pragmatic functions of its realisations. This component, considered here from the point of view of a given individual’s communicative language competence, relates not only to the range and quality of knowledge (e.g. in terms of phonetic distinctions made or the extent and precision of vocabulary) but also to cognitive organisation and the way this knowledge is stored (e.g. the various associative networks in which the speaker places a lexical item) and to its accessibility (activation, recall and availability). Organisation and accessibility will vary from one individual to another and vary also within the same individual.

Sociolinguistic competences refer to the sociocultural conditions of language use. Through its sensitivity to social conventions (rules of politeness, norms governing relations between generations, sexes, classes and social groups, linguistic codification of certain fundamental rituals in the functioning of a community), the sociolinguistic component strongly affects all language communication between members of different cultures, even though participants may often be unaware of its influence.

Pragmatic competences are concerned with the functional use of linguistic resources (production of language functions, speech acts), drawing on scenarios or scripts of interactional exchanges. It also concerns the mastery of discourse, cohesion and coherence, the identification of text types and forms, irony, and parody. For this component even more than the linguistic component, it is clear
that the interactions and cultural environments in which such abilities are constructed have a major impact.

3.1.2. Language activities
(Edited from CEFR Section 2.1.3)

The language learner/user’s communicative language competence is activated in the performance of the various language activities, involving reception, production, interaction or mediation (in particular interpreting or translating). Each of these types of activity is possible in relation to texts in oral or written form, or both.

Reception and production (oral and/or written) are obviously fundamental. The former (receptive activities) in relation to reading, following the media, and in many forms of learning and the latter (productive activities) for their function in many academic and professional fields (e.g. oral presentations, written studies and reports).

In interaction at least two individuals participate in an oral and/or written exchange in which production and reception alternate and may in fact overlap. Even where turn-taking is strictly respected, the listener is generally already forecasting the remainder of the speaker’s message and preparing a response. Learning to interact thus involves more than learning to receive and to produce utterances.

Mediation makes communication possible between persons who are unable, for whatever reason, to communicate with each other directly. Translation or interpretation, a paraphrase, summary or record, provides for a third party a (re)formulation of a source text to which this third party does not have direct access.

3.1.3. Domains
(Reproduced from CEFR Section 2.1.4)

Language activities are contextualised within domains. These may themselves be very diverse, but for most practical purposes in relation to language learning they may be broadly classified as fourfold: the public domain, the personal domain, the educational domain and the occupational domain.

The public domain refers to everything connected with ordinary social interaction (business and administrative bodies, public services, cultural and leisure activities of a public nature, relations with the media, etc.). Complementarily, the personal domain comprises family relations and individual social practices.
The occupational domain embraces everything concerned with a person’s activities and relations in the exercise of his or her occupation. The educational domain is concerned with the learning/training context (generally of an institutional nature) where the aim is to acquire specific knowledge or skills.

The division of communicative activities presented in the previous section has been adopted partly because such a division enabled the development and organisation of scales of descriptors that are relevant to the types of activities undertaken in the occupational and educational domains that are of increasing importance to language policy makers.

3.2. What are the Common Reference Levels?

The Common Reference Levels provide a set of 6 defined criterion levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2) for use as common standards. These common standards are intended to help the providers of courses and examinations relate their products to a common reference system, and hence indirectly, to each other.

There are two fundamental points that should be made about the Common Reference Levels.

Firstly, they are based upon research\textsuperscript{3} rather than assumption. Secondly, they are not the only possible levels - just very recognisable ones. There is a variety of language use and communication beyond C2, there is some limited language use and communication beneath A1, and there are definable levels between at least the levels A2 and B1, B1 and B2, and B2 and C1.

3.2.1. Development

The Common Reference Levels and the descriptors defining them were produced in a three-year research project in a multi-lingual, multi-sector context. A simple yet comprehensive description of the process (North 2002) is given in the CEFR Case Studies publication (Council of Europe 2002), with a very short summary in Appendix B to the CEFR itself. A short technical report is given in North and Schneider (1998), a comprehensive documentation of the methodol-

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\textsuperscript{3} North, B. 2000: The development of a common framework scale of language proficiency. New York, Peter Lang.
Schneider, G. and North, B. 2000: Fremdsprachen können – was heisst das? Skalen zur Beschreibung, Beurteilung und Selbsteinschätzung der fremdsprachlichen Kommunikationsfähigkeit. Chur/ Zürich
ogy in North (2000) and a full project report (mainly in German) in Schneider and North (2000). In the project, carefully selected descriptors were scaled on the basis of the way in which teachers interpreted the descriptors when they used them to assess the performance of real learners. In the process of analysis, descriptors found to be interpreted in an inconsistent fashion were discarded. The way different descriptors describing similar content were calibrated to the scale showed a very high degree of coherence.

The methodology followed five phases:

- **Intuitive Phase**: Analysis of scales of language proficiency in the public domain and classification of elements from them according to categories of the Descriptive Scheme in Chapters 4 and 5 of the CEFR.

- **Qualitative Phase**: Verification that the metalanguage used by teachers was adequately represented, and that the descriptors were interpreted as describing the category and level intended; this was done in some 32 workshops with teachers.

- **Quantitative Phase**: Teacher assessment of representative learners at the end of a school year using questionnaires made up of the best descriptors; assessment by all participating teachers of videos of some of the learners in the survey to identify and compensate for subjectivity; placement of descriptors and learners onto the same mathematical scale through a Rasch model analysis.

- **Interpretation Phase**: Analysis of coherent bands on the scale of descriptors to produce the set of Common Reference Levels; summary of those levels in a holistic scale (CEFR Table 1), a self-assessment grid describing language activities (CEFR Table 2) and a performance assessment grid describing different aspects of communicative language competence (CEFR Table 3). Integration of the scales for different aspects of the Descriptive Scheme into Chapters 4 and 5.

- **Replication Phase**: Repetition of the project, this time for French and German with scale values producing a correlation of 0.99 to the original values; validation in the DIALANG project (correlation 0.90), Basle University project (correlation 0.90), Eurocentres (correlation 0.88) and ALTE (correlation 0.97). Details are to be found in the CEFR Case Studies publication (Council of Europe 2002).
3.2.2. Points of Common Reference

The selection of 6 Common Reference Levels rather than 9 or 12 is partly a question of convention and partly a reflection of the very consistent way in which content (certain tasks, settings, abilities) clustered on the scale. The intention was to produce a scale of levels based upon the framework provided by the Council of Europe’s existing specifications for Waystage and The Threshold Level, as had been suggested by Wilkins (1978). Throughout the world, Threshold and its related specifications have had a strong influence on the development of course books and examinations. Threshold has also much influenced the authors of scales of language proficiency, and therefore it was not surprising that much of the content of descriptors edited from existing scales of language proficiency matched the content of the Waystage and Threshold specifications. What the Common Reference Levels therefore provide is an objective, consensus scaling of teachers’ interpretation of formulations related to the Council of Europe specifications produced in the 1970s and since then so widely reflected in course books and examinations. The high degree of corroboration of the order of scaling achieved in the replication studies undertaken in different contexts that were referred to at the end of the previous section suggests that this “common frame of reference” is shared to a considerable degree by language professionals in Europe. It is important to realise that whilst the 6 levels make sense as points of reference, they are not the only possible levels. Indeed the analysis behind them actually produced a scale of 9 bands of approximately equal size.

It may well be appropriate to subdivide the levels in order to plan modules and show learners their progress. Chapter 3 of the CEFR proposes that institutions should develop a “branching approach.” The first example given in CEFR Section 3.4. concerns primary or lower secondary education. A set of 6 mini-levels might be related to the Common Reference Levels as shown below:

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### CEFR Levels Branching Scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>Basic User</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>A2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1.1</td>
<td>A1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2.1.1</td>
<td>A2.1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B</th>
<th>Independent User</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With regard to curriculum development, the six mini-levels might, for example, be used to organise a syllabus for 3 years of instruction, with one milestone per semester.

With regard to testing, the figure above might show how grades on a school examination targeted at Level A2 relate to the Common Reference Levels. A few very gifted learners might already be at B1 (Grade 6). Some may fail to reach the standard set (Grades 1 and 2). Of those who attain the standard, it may be feasible and desirable to distinguish a satisfactory but borderline performance (Grade 3) from a good one (Grade 4) and from a performance that is clearly above the criterion level (Grade 5).

There is no reason why an examination provider should report 6 grades rather than 4 or 3. The point is that different teaching and testing institutions will want to divide the levels in different ways in different contexts and that it therefore makes sense to restrict the points of common reference to six broader, more easily recognised levels.

### 3.2.3. Characteristics of the Common Reference Levels

When considering the CEFR levels, it is worth mentioning that CEFR Section 3.6. “Content Coherence in Common Reference Levels” is in many respects more useful than Table 1 “Common Reference Levels: global scale” since it gives the kind of detail that is very useful in “getting a fix” on the levels.

### 3.2.4. Profiling

CEFR Table 1 gives a summary of global language proficiency. Global proficiency is a useful shorthand to answer the question “What level am I?” or “What level is this book?” However, as pointed out in introducing the CEFR, the concept of so-called “partial competences” is very relevant on a multi-lingual continent and much information can be gained by profiling different skills. There is even an implicit order of difficulty in the series: Reception, Interaction, Production, Mediation that can be exploited in language policy. In the first foreign language one might test (and profile) all four. In the third foreign language one might be happy to encourage just spoken and written Reception. A profiling approach can thus encourage plurilingualism.

Many examinations and assessment procedures in any case only set out to evaluate a part of the construct “communicative modern language ability” at a
particular range of proficiency. Even when an examination attempts to cover all aspects of “communicative modern language ability,” there may be differences of emphasis which affect outcomes.

The **Descriptive Scheme** (Chapters 4 & 5) of the Framework can be used to profile what is being assessed, and the **Common Reference Levels** (Chapter 3) can be used to state the degree of proficiency expected in each aspect. Table 2 in the CEFR offers one example of a profiling grid derived from descriptors in Chapter 4 (Communicative Language Activities) that was produced for the European Language Portfolio. Table 3 in the CEFR offers an example of a profiling grid derived from descriptors in Chapter 5 (Communicative Language Competence) that was produced for an assessor training conference.
telc English B1 Business follows the format of all telc general language examinations at this level. What learners at level B1 are expected to master in terms of dealing with language tasks is of a different nature to what can be expected at level B2. Although telc English B1 Business can be used as an initial step towards telc English B2 Business, it is not a necessary prerequisite. However, for placement purposes, it should be ascertained that learners wishing to take a course leading to the telc English B2 Business should have reached level B1. The level descriptions and the learning objectives for the telc English B1 Business will be helpful in this.

Detailed information on the examination at level B1 can be found in the handbook supplementing the publication Learning Objectives and Test Format for telc English B1. Some of the main differences are described below to provide a general overview for those intending to run courses leading to the telc English B2 Business.

telc English B1 Business is based on definitive lists of language specifications and a limited lexical inventory. This is a major difference to the undefined lexical inventory at level B2.

The same applies to the inventory of topics which is also a closed list at level B1 including several areas of general language use but with the emphasis on topics connected with work and occupation. At level B2 the candidates' personal choice of topics and interests must be taken into account without however losing sight of the purpose for which the syllabus, course and examination are intended.

The format of the telc English B2 Business differs from that at level B1 to take the changing and extended needs of learners at this level into account. Learners at level B2 are expected to be able to deal with more multi-faceted tasks, for instance, reading a text for different purposes. They can also be expected to deal with certain tasks more quickly than can be expected of learners at level B1. All this is reflected in the examination format. The general approach of the examination is nonetheless a task-based approach and the format can be clearly recognised as belonging to The European Language Certificates system. The same applies to the marking criteria used for the marking of the sub-test Writing and the oral examination.
The learning objectives for this examination are closely based on the categories presented in the publication *Learning Objectives and Test Format* for the *Certificate in English* at level B1. The descriptive categories task, domain, topics, skills and competences as well as the inventories of scenarios, topics, language functions, strategies, notions, topics, vocabulary and grammar described for level B1 can be seen as the basic requirements for the *telc English B2 Business*, although it is clear that these require additional elements if the learner is to be able to function competently as an independent user of English.

The description in the *Common European Framework of Reference* for the independent user at level B2 states that he/she can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. [He/She] can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. [He/She] 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.

This description makes it clear that a definitive list of items cannot be provided. The learner must demonstrate that he/she can function independently, something which necessitates a degree of choice in the subject matter concerned as well as an individual focus on certain language elements. Any attempt to define a range of topics and vocabulary, to name but two of the inventories provided at level B1, can only remain arbitrary and incomplete.

For this reason, no definitive inventories are provided in this publication. Level B2 assumes a considerably higher degree of communicative competence than level B1 and the requirements of English for use in business mean that various aspects of language competence at this level have to be taken into account:

This examination deals primarily with one domain (occupational). All the following should be considered with this in mind.

Learners should be expected to demonstrate that they can react using language with self-assurance, fluency, appropriacy, coherence and correctness.

The topics and texts which are dealt with, although all from business contexts, may relate to areas which the learner has no close experience of. A knowledge of the area concerned is not assumed.
The tasks are more complex in the sense of higher level treatment and demand a more comprehensive understanding of the text.

The texts used are authentic, i.e. there is no or minimal adaptation or simplification as far as the language is concerned. The level is taken into account in the type of task.

Similarly, the productive tasks the learner is expected to carry out are also more complex and demanding, e.g. description/explanation, negotiation. These should be carried out appropriately and successfully.

The learner is also expected to be able to communicate under more difficult conditions, e.g. where non-standard language is used or background noise is present or in cases where the communication does not follow standard patterns.

The tasks are more open-ended in their approach so that the learners’ own needs and interests can be taken into account. This also means in some cases less input.

Especially in a business context, communication does not only mean achieving understanding, but at level B2, means achieving this competently and efficiently. This involves, more than at level B1, the understanding and use of discourse and compensation and avoidance strategies.

For all these reasons, the text types, tasks and time allowed for the completion of certain sub-tests differs from those given in telc – language tests examinations at level B1 although the telc English B2 Business examination is clearly recognisable as an examination in The European Language Certificates system.

5.1 Scenarios

The basis for all communication, in whichever domain, is the purpose of the communication and the strategies and language employed to achieve this purpose. The language used does not consist of merely the words, sentences and functions but is all these in combination with each other and other elements (topics, non-verbal features etc.) in a meaningful communicative framework. The defining of this framework for instance as “exchange” or “speech event” depends to a certain extent on the approach used (linguistic, anthropological, ethnomethodological, sociological, philosophical etc.) and the branch (of applied linguistics) referred to. In the particular context defined here and as part of the general approach of telc – language tests, the primary concern is language. Thus the most important
factor for the purposes of the learning objectives is the acceptance by all partners in the communicative act of its conventions and elements in as far as they relate to the language used. Our main interest is in these conventions insofar as they relate to language. There may be other non-linguistic conventions which have a great deal to do with communication but do not necessarily affect the language used. These language conventions may be specific to particular languages, levels and domains. It is the definition of these parameters which makes them useful as part of the learning objectives for a particular syllabus, language course or language examination. Here the language is English, the level is B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference and the domain the occupational.

“Discourse analysis is concerned with the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used” (McCarthy, Discourse Analysis for Language Teachers, 1991). It covers “spoken and written language over and above concerns such as the structure of the clause or sentence”. McCarthy (ibid) uses the term genre – “a unique combination of stylistic structure and mode” (Coulthard, An Introduction to Discourse Analysis, 1977) and gives examples such as soap operas, news programmes, discussions, prayers, planning talks and others to cover various areas of life in different cultures in which discourse plays a part. Language learners may not always be aware of the conventions of all the various genres, depending on how familiar these are in their own language and culture. It is therefore important to establish a common basis for the teaching and learning of genre conventions. Depending on how far-reaching a genre is, it may consist of various interactive sequences, some or all of which are also defined by language and social conventions. The learning objectives for the telc English B2 Business refer to language exchanges which all fall into the area of business communication, whether this is seen as one specific genre or not. Business communication follows certain patterns and conventions, most of which are easily identifiable to the participants in the communication in their own and other languages. Within this larger area (business communication), specific communicative exchanges with their own patterns can be identified. These particular scenarios may be specific to the genre concerned, business communication, or may occur with varying emphases and realisations in several genres. The participants in these individual scenarios, as in genres, have specific intentions and interests which they realise in terms of language and communication in a more or less standardised form (telc, Das Zertifikat Deutsch für den Beruf, 1995). It is the conventions of this standardised form which can be used as a basis for the description and hence teaching of productive skills.

The scenario approach formed the basis for the development of telc examinations at level B1 in 8 languages following on from the development of telc examination Deutsch für den Beruf. The features of scenarios are described in the descrip-
tion of Learning Objectives and Test Format for the Certificate in English (1998) and are extended here to demonstrate how the scenario approach applies to the telc English B2 Business.

Scenarios are predictable sequences of communication which acquire their coherence from shared schematic knowledge. They permit the combination of individual components of language and communication in authentic contexts. These contexts and their features should be easily identifiable by the language learners. Where this identification is not immediately possible, it is the task of the language teacher and the course to facilitate this, so that communication can take place on the basis of shared assumptions. Without this basis, the language user will not be in a position to complete the tasks required of her/him at work and at this level of language, but will find her/himself in a state of recurring frustration as the communication he/she engages in will not produce the results expected. This state of affairs is quite clearly neither desirable for the learner nor for the employer who is relying on his staff to carry out certain tasks at work where the appropriate use of language is necessary. The level and the type of tasks are described in the Common European Framework of Reference. It is the realisation of these in terms of language that forms the work of course planners, teachers and learners.

Scenarios take place in a given sequence that is dependent on the social and cultural context. This sociocultural and intercultural aspect is an integral component of communication and not an element that is simply added on. In terms of English in a work-related context, this social and cultural context represents, for instance, conventions of international business behaviour as well as appropriate language use when English is being used as a lingua franca rather than solely or largely by native speakers. The conventions for the scenario are established by the type of English used and its users. Even in the case of native-speaker use of English, various business and language conventions apply in the most common scenarios, which may vary from one country and culture to another, even where English is the official and/or native language. The identification of all these cannot form part of a standard course and will depend on the learners’ and the employers’ needs and interests. In most general cases, however, the learner should be able to deal with the communication in a way which will cause as little offence, ridicule or misunderstanding in as many cultural contexts as possible. Most current text books for English in a work-related context devote a large part of the material to these aspects of business communication.

Scenarios reveal authentic communication in authentic contexts and are thus much closer to language reality than isolated language functions. Not only do they show language functions within these contexts, they also provide the op-
portunity to present other individual components (strategies, notions, structures, special intercultural features, different registers, markers etc.) This relates to the differences described above between Business English and English for Business Purposes. The latter involves being able to use these features in the appropriate scenarios rather than the knowledge of specific specialist structures and vocabulary. The contexts are those of international and national business where English is used for the realisation of specific communicative and business goals.

Scenarios incorporate both verbal and non-verbal communication. These aspects depend on such things as the number of participants, the setting (e.g. meeting-room, hotel lobby, reception area of company), the co-presence of other factors, the telephone or electronic media such as videoconferencing, as well as the intended audience. All these factors should be taken into account in real and simulated business contexts.

Scenarios make it possible to distinguish between spoken and written communication. There is a clear difference between written and spoken scenarios and the part played by written scenarios is possibly greater in the occupational than the personal domain. The features described for scenarios in general apply equally to written scenarios with of course, different realisations and emphases.

Scenarios have the advantage that they can be related directly to tasks and thus to activities that can be employed in teaching and in tests. The background to the scenario approach and the factors in the scenario need not necessarily concern language learners. The learners’ concern is how they can learn and use the language to achieve their purposes. It is the material designers’ and teachers’ job to define the language necessary for these purposes so as to make sure they can be achieved. Some background knowledge of applied linguistics is useful for this.

The job of language testers is to work out how the realisation of scenarios can be tested. Clearly in their broadest sense, scenarios can be realised in many different ways. In the case of the telc English B2 Business, the relevant scenarios are those most commonly occurring in this domain. The list and description of these scenarios is by no means intended as exhaustive but, as with all the other inventories for this syllabus and examination, to be taken as illustrative of the principles underlying the learning objectives and the choice of and rationale behind the tasks in the examination.

What is important for teachers is that the learners understand and accept the common conventions of scenarios and can enact these verbally and non-verbally in a way appropriate to the communicative and business context. In most cases
the identification of the scenarios will have been done by the producers of the teaching material but there may also be scenarios relevant to the learners and their field of work which are not dealt with specifically in the teaching material being used. The treatment of scenarios in the classroom will most probably involve a certain amount of role-playing, unavoidable if a range of scenarios is to be presented and practised. How closely or restrictively defined these “roles” are will depend on the teacher, the learners and the classroom material, but need not be regarded as inauthentic if the aim is to provide the learners with the means of achieving their purpose.

For testers, it is important that scenarios are identified which can be tested practicably and, to as great an extent as possible, realistically. Whether the candidates have understood and accepted the scenario conventions is tested using the criterion Task Management in the oral examination. This understanding of the nature of the scenario (the candidates are by no means expected to formulate this explicitly!) forms an important part of the achievement of the learning objectives for all of telc examinations and as such is given the same weighting as the criteria Expression and Language. The range of scenarios which can be tested will most probably be smaller than the range of scenarios which can be taught and in each individual examination it will only be possible to test three specific scenarios, identified as being the most important for English Business at this level. Two of these are description/explanation and discussion, the third varies from examination to examination. There are also several scenarios which cannot be tested but the realisations of which may form part of the learning objectives for this subject. One example is the job interview. As in the classroom, the testing in the examination may involve a certain amount of role-playing, inevitable if the examination tasks are to be set as fairly as possible. However, nothing will be expected of the candidate which is completely inauthentic.

It is important that the task is formulated in such a way that the nature of the scenario can be clearly identified by the candidate and he/she can deal with it in an appropriate way. The details of what is meant by this are given in the individual descriptions of the scenarios. They involve such aspects as length of the entire scenario and its realisation within a time limit, phases and length of these, length of turns, weighting of turns and turn-taking, pauses, use of functions and strategies, achievement of intention and attempts at this, register, body language, as well as others. Although a certain amount of interdependence is inevitable, the candidate’s awareness of these aspects of communication and task management need not be affected by his/her range of language or pronunciation. That it is quite possible for candidates at level B2 and below this to understand the structure of discourse and communicative acts without either being explicitly aware of this or mastering a particularly high level of language is
shown in the recordings used for training and information purposes for this and other examinations in telc range.

**Scenarios and their characteristics**
The scenarios listed here are intended as examples of scenarios occurring in the occupational domain. The list is neither exhaustive nor definitive. In several cases, two or more scenarios may be subsumed in a further scenario, for instance small talk forms a part of many other scenarios, including job interviews, but can nonetheless be defined alone in terms of its particular features. If part of another scenario, it may be defined as a phase in the scenario (greeting, preliminaries).

Those scenarios which form a part of the oral examination have been described and analysed more closely in terms of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario type</th>
<th>General information (setting, number of participants, topic, language level)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phases</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linguistic features</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• contextual</td>
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<tr>
<td>• lexical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-linguistic features</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• length of turns</td>
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<td>• social and cultural aspects</td>
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<td>• body language</td>
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</table>

The particular features of this enactment

The analysis was carried out using recordings of language learners dealing with language tasks in the oral examination for the *telc English B2 Business*. These realisations of the scenarios demonstrate that scenarios possess certain universally accepted features and are enacted in accepted ways even at different levels of language competence and in simulated communicative settings. They also serve to demonstrate that tasks are realised in the form of scenarios and that the formulation of the task results in the appropriate scenario being enacted. This has implications for the setting of communicative tasks in language examinations. The scenarios have been transcribed verbatim with a minimum of specialist transcription conventions so that they are as accessible as possible to the user of this publication. Language errors have not been edited as these do not affect
the communicative course of the scenario or lead to any misunderstandings in the intentions of the participants. Examples of the following scenarios are provided using the descriptive framework given above:

- Description/Explanation
- Discussion
- Exchange of Information

**Scenario analysis**

**Scenario type: Presentation**
(Oral Examination Part 1: Description/Explanation)

**General information**

Setting: informal presentation e.g. in classroom or seminar
Number of participants: 2 (A and B) (E = examiner)
Topic: Incoterms

**Transcript of Scenario**

A: You can look at this picture while I’m going to explain everything. I would like to talk about incoterms. Incoterms is the abbreviation for International Commercial Terms. They were first discussed by the Chamber of Commerce in Paris in 1923, and they were first published by the EHK in Paris in 1936. They stipulate the passing point of the risk and the costs of transportation from the seller to the buyer, and they also stipulate the buyers’ and the sellers’ responsibilities, hm, that means who reserves cargo space, who provides, hm, who arranges for the insurance, and the last point, who provides the documents. And I would like to explain two of them or maybe three. And first of all, I would like to talk about 'ex works'. That abbreviation is e x w. And it means that the seller only has to make the goods available at his premises so that the buyer can pick them up. And the buyer has to pay all the costs and also to care for, hm, care about, hm, care of the risk. And, hm, this is the best condition for the seller as he hasn’t to pay anything. Another incoterm is d d p, this means ‘delivered duty paid’ and then the seller pays for the cost for the insurance and the transportation and he also pays the duty. So, the buyer hasn’t to pay anything at all and that’s the best condition for the buyer, and a similar term is d d u, hm, the only difference is that the buyer .... that, that the seller doesn’t pay, hm, he doesn’t pay the duty. So that’s, that’s, that’s it now.

E: Do you have any questions?

B: Did anyone make these incoterms up, or did it happen that they, that they exist? I mean, someone think, okay, we have to anything we use in the international commercial thing.... three, three letters....
A: As I said, it was the Chamber of Commerce in Paris which first discussed these terms, and I think they were, hm, or businessmen had the idea that there should be something which defines what the responsibilities are or so that they have something to put into their contracts, so....

B: And these incoterms are used in, in a normal speech way, so, so you can buy something d d p?

A: Hm, yes, the incoterms are used, hm, when you place an offer or something like that, so that the other person only knows when, hm, when she or he sees this incoterm he knows, hm, what hm, what is the meaning of this incoterm.

B: Is there a catalogue for them?

A: Yes, these are the most of the, of the incoterms and you can find them in the, in the Internet. I have also some other pages if you like to have some, hm,... if you would like to have some ..... (laughing)

E: Okay.

**Discourse Structure**

This scenario has a fairly fixed structure. One participant describes or explains something, speaking extensively, to one or more other participants in the discourse. Following this lengthy turn, there may be a series of shorter turns, where questions are asked by those who were listeners in the initial phase. The structure remains the same whether the description is informal, as in this case, or more formal, as in the case of a lecture or business presentation.

**Phases**

- Defining roles
- Naming topic
- Defining topic more closely
- Outlining (global and detailed) structure
- Giving explanation
- Ending explanation
- (Indicating questions are appropriate)
- Asking for additional information
- Referring to content already given
- Asking for additional information
- Answering
- (Ending question phase)
- (The brackets indicate the phases taken on by the examiner in this case)

**Linguistic features**

**Contextual features**

The speakers need not necessarily know each other
There may be little shared knowledge
One speaker dominates the first part of the discourse. In the second part, the number of turns taken is fairly equal. However, they are not always of equal length; the “explainer” tends to speak more than the “listener”.
Grammatical features
Future tense
Demonstrative pronouns
Present simple tense
Past tense
Comparative forms
Passive

Language functions
Explaining
Inquiring
Expressing uncertainty
Offering

Discourse features
Compensation strategies
Hesitation
Checking strategies
Linking parts of discourse
Little overlapping
Emphasis and focussing strategies
Reference
Question strategies

Lexical features
Specific lexis (possibly specialist language)
Names
Density of lexis
Linking words
Few idioms

Non-linguistic features
It is noticeable that this scenario consists of two distinct parts, the actual description in which one interlocutor has one long turn and the question part, consisting of a more or less equal number of turns, however with the explainer dominating slightly as far as length of turn is concerned. There are few noticeable pauses in either of the parts. The social and cultural context is a Western European university setting. This is reflected in the seating arrangement (both speakers remain seated throughout the scenario), the fairly informal language and the body language, all of which indicate that both speakers feel relaxed in this scenario.
Particular features of this enactment
As this scenario is enacted in an examination setting, some of the turns and phases are taken or realised by the examiner. This is generally the case in examination situations, and does not imply that the participants in the scenario would not take on these phases themselves if no third person were involved. In the scenario described here, the examiner introduces the question phase (perhaps unnecessarily) and also ends the discourse.

Scenario type: Discussion
(Oral Examination Part 2: Discussion)

General information
Setting: informal discussion
Number of participants: 2 (A and B)
Topic: Ethical behaviour at work

Transcript of Scenario
A: I don't, I don't like people who pretend to be ill, because it's unfair to, yeah I think so, it's unfair to the other people who work there, which have to do, who has to do the work for them too. What do you think about that?
B: I have the same opinion, because ... these are mostly these people who never want to work very much and they always try to, to, to get out of work by pretending something like, "Oh, I'm so ill and I can't get another appointment at the doctor than, than now at this time of work", and I, I don't like to work with such people, because it's, it's really unfair, it's, it's very unfair, because normally the others who remain in the company have to do also their work and sometimes you don't do it very good, and or you do it good, and then they come and they say, "Oh, that's not okay", and hm, I think that's, that's really unfair.
A: It's unfair, the colleagues, but, hm, I think there is more. Because of the insurance. You have, you have to pay your insurance and when, and if there are a lot of people who are pretending to be ill, the insurers' fee increases.
B: I don't know about this.
A: You have... When you're more than six weeks ill, you don't get the money from, from your company, you get the money from the insurance. And if you're ill a long time, you get the money from, from the insurance and they have to pay and... they have don't ....they don't have a lot of money, and so.... the fees have to, to increase and...
B: But I think the problem is not only that there are people who wants to be ill, but also ... some doctors, because they often.... say very easily: 'Okay, stay at home for the next three weeks' or something like that, and I think that's, that's a very important point.
A: Very unethical too, yes. I think so.
B: Yeah. But I think there is another interesting point here, it's the fourth one, also about colleagues. It's accepting praise for someone else's ideas. I think that's
very, very interesting and also important thing, because for me working is also to see what I have done and or what I have produced or, I don’t know, and I think it’s very unfair to, to take the result of someone else’s work and show it to others and say: “Oh, I’m the best and I have done this” and ... that’s really unfair.

A: Yes, it’s hard to work with such people. And in the morning when I, when I’m going to go to the job, for my job and I think about such people I don’t like to go there and that’s hard and.... but there’s the sec... the third point: to use work facilities for private purposes. That’s a interesting point, because ... at, at my work I, I can call privately, or I can make, not a lot, but copies, or take a pencil home or such things. I think the people don’t do that very much, but I, I think that’s okay when you don’t look at it’s five o’clock pointly and I’m going or I go, I go now. When I, when I stay a few minutes longer or I’m doing something for the company, it’s not so unethical when, when you call your children at home for a minute or something like this.

B: Yes, that’s another thing, but... I think the problem are also again these people (laughing), most of them are often ill, ... who for example don’t know the limits of some things. These people who are three hours in using the Internet or doing two hours in telephone call and later they say: “Oh, please help me with my work, it’s too much” and then they want to go home at 5 o’clock and that’s, that’s not okay, and I think for everyone it’s not very motivating, it’s, it’s, it’s not okay, because so... in, in my case I, I made this experience before and ... it was very hard to go to work every morning, because I thought “Oh, I have to work so hard and... no, nobody sees it” but they also didn’t see that there were people who tried to take every kind of advantage of the company. Every kind of goods: pencils, paper, using the Internet, and in my case it was a company which .... has the products like shoes and apparel and they also took these things at home without paying and I think that’s not the right thing.

Discourse Structure
This scenario has a fairly loose structure but is marked by an equal number of turns although of varying length. The discourse is based on a topic input (internally agreed on or imposed from outside) in which there is mutual interest.

Phases
(The brackets indicate the phases taken on by the examiner in this case)
Stating opinion
Agreement with reason
Reinforcement
Expressing uncertainty/lack of knowledge
Clarification of opinion
Change of sub-topic
Agreement
Return to main topic
Introduction of new sub-topic
Relating sub-topics
Generalisation
(Conclusion)
Linguistic features

Contextual features
Speakers know each other well enough to assume mutual interest and carry out a discussion on such a topic.
A certain amount of shared knowledge can be assumed.

Grammatical features
Historic present (simple and continuous)
Reported speech
Ellipsis
Personal pronouns
Adverbs of time

Language functions
Explaining
Giving reasons/justifying
Expressing opinions
Expressing lack of knowledge/uncertainty
Agreeing

Discourse features
Turn-giving and taking
Face-saving
Linking parts of discourse
Reference
Cooperative strategies

Lexical features
General lexis connected with work
Adjectives
Idiomatic lexis
Redundancy
Interpersonal phrases

Non-linguistic features
The language of this scenario is fairly informal, although the phases would be largely the same in a more formal setting. The length of the turn taken depends on the function being fulfilled, in some cases agreement is merely expressed without further elaboration, with the turn functioning as an indication that the discourse has not finished.
Particular features of this enactment
In this case the discussion is based on a given topic so the knowledge of this input can be assumed and the reason for the discussion does not need to be stated explicitly. The discourse is also ended by the examiner.

Scenario type: Exchange of Information
(Oral Examination Part 3: Task)

General information
Setting: Semi-formal, goal-oriented work context
Number of participants: 2 (A and B)
Topic: Fire at company

Transcript of Scenario

A: So, I heard we had a fire last night. What, what happened?
B: That's right. I don't know exactly, but I guess that was some shortcut in our installation system. At least firemen told so. And – we had a fire. It was quite, quite unexpected actually.
A: Anybody injured?
B: No, no. But we lost quite a few goods.
A: Who's responsible for it?
B: I think that this installation made the company XY.
A: They made a mistake.
B: I think so, because they sent one of their electrician last week and he did some, some repair there and ...
   But I don't know the right answer, because or I think it will take her some time.
A: Weren't you responsible to confirm it's good?
B: Yes, that's right. But you know, I'm not electrician.
A: Yeah, I know. No, it's just for information.
B: But the insurance I have informed already.
A: Ah, we get the money from insurance.
B: I hope so, because the representative comes this afternoon.
A: And who's responsible for it?
B: You mean which company?
A: No, to deal with the insurance.
B: So, I think I will take care about that and if you would have a time this afternoon...
A: No, I'm off today.
B: Okay, so then I will....
A: So you will take care with the insurance that we get the money.
B: Yeah, that's right.
A: Do you have any idea about the amount of damage?
B: No. it's not got out yet. But I think if we had about 2000 Marks in our stock I guess we should calculate that amount.
A: Can we fulfill our obligations to deliver to this company tomorrow?
B: No. Or, unless we, we take some deliveries from our other stocks. I should contact then my colleagues in...
A: So you’re responsible?
B: Oh yeah.
A: That’s good. (laughing) You’re responsible for everything. That’s good. How long have you been working for this company?
B: So, you fire me? (laughing) For two years.
A: So we still don’t know exactly what happened, we know what happened during last night?
B: (Nodding)
A: Is the police involved?
B: You meaned...? So, I guess firemen informed them about this case.
A: I guess they have to check.
B: They are sure to make some investigation. I think so too.
A: When can we operate? When can we come back to the ... to our plant? Are we allowed to go in there?
B: No. They are still there. I can’t say that actually, one, one thing what we could do, probably we should to think about.... temporarily premises somewhere in the near.
A: Because if we can’t use the hall and we have to, we have to do something.
B: I can ask my colleague to check the possibilities.
A: I suggest we have a meeting tomorrow morning to check what has to be done...
B: Okay.
A: ... because we can’t, we can’t manufacture if we can’t use the hall and yeah, we have to make a schedule what we will do and who is responsible to do and we have to find out when can we come back to our hall to see what we really effect.
B: Should I invite or so a person from insurance to this meeting?
A: No. you make this clear with them today.
B: Okay.
A: You, please, you invite the other people from production who are involved and we have to invite the people from the order processing to see which orders are affected by these problems here.
B: Okay.

Phases
(Opening interaction)
Establishing topic
Defining topic
Asking for and giving information
Confirming understanding
Elaboration
Comments
Establishing action to be taken
(Closing interaction)
(The brackets indicate the phases taken on by the examiner in this case)

Linguistic features

Contextual features
The roles of the speakers are defined in the task description as boss and employee.
The number of turns taken and their length is fairly equal.
Grammatical features
Past tense
Future tense
Question forms
Passive
Modal verbs

Language functions
Explaining
Inquiring
Expressing uncertainty
Suggesting
Requesting

Discourse features
Face-saving strategies
Compensation strategies
Avoidance strategies
Question strategies
Linking parts of discourse
Overlapping
Emphasis

Lexical features
Specific lexis
Linking words
Pronouns
Idioms

Non-linguistic features
This scenario consists quite clearly of an interchange on one topic with which both speakers are familiar. The tone is fairly informal, despite the defined roles, as would be the case in a Western European setting.

Particular features of this enactment
As this scenario is enacted in an examination setting, the opening and closing phases of the discourse are not verbalised, probably because the speakers regard them as given. This is generally the case in examination situations, and does not imply that the participants in the scenario would not take on these phases themselves if no constraints were involved.
5.2 Productive Language Skills (Production, Interaction, Mediation)

**Oral Communication**
A learner at level B2 should have a repertoire of language which enables him/her to

- express needs, wishes, opinions and feelings, also on behalf of a company or a superior. These should be expressed in largely correct language as well as being culturally appropriate. The learners should also be able to defend these opinions and give reasons for them.

- react to requests and questions, also those of an official nature. The reactions may need to be complex and detailed and should be understandable as well as linguistically and culturally appropriate.

- take part in discussions and meetings in the occupational domain, give explanations, make announcements, give descriptions and opinions without noticeable effort and without requiring too much concentration on the part of the interlocutor(s).

- contribute to the course and progress of discussions, meetings and negotiations and to the solution of problems and conflicts which may occur at work.

- mediate effectively between a speaker of English and a speaker of the learner’s language, conveying meaning and nuances effectively.

- explain processes and details from his/her own field of work in a way which is comprehensible to a person not entirely familiar with the specialist background.

**Social Contacts/Socialising**

A learner at level B2 can

- initiate and take part in exchanges of a social nature which may occur in work-related situations (e.g. before and after business meetings or during breaks at conferences or while a visitor is waiting to see a colleague).

- react to unexpected questions and utterances without the need for preparation and use discourse strategies such as checking questions, confirmation and back-channelling.

- deal with all situations arising in this context at work with no apparent effort and be able to
· pass on complex information.
· make clear and detailed statements on his/her field of work.
· use language fluently, accurately and effectively on a wide range of general academic, vocational, or leisure topics, marking clearly the relationships between ideas.
· communicate spontaneously with good grammatical control without much sign of having to restrict what he/she wants to say, adopting a level of formality appropriate to the circumstances.
· engage in extended conversation on most general topics in a clearly participatory fashion, even in a noisy environment.
· sustain relationships with native speakers without unintentionally amusing or irritating them or requiring them to behave other than they would with a native speaker.
· convey degrees of emotion and highlight the personal significance of events and experiences.

*Common European Framework of Reference*

**Explaining, Giving information/Presentations**

A learner at level B2 can

- give a fairly extensive presentation of information without recourse to notes.
- describe events, objects, processes and other aspects of his/her work clearly and in a structured manner.
- emphasise important points appropriately.
- demonstrate the importance or value of certain points and give reasons for these.
- give supporting details for arguments.
- give illustrative examples.
- react to questions and requests from listeners.
- give a clear systematically developed presentation, with highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail.
• depart spontaneously from a prepared text and follow up interesting points raised by members of the audience, often showing remarkable fluency and ease of expression.

Common European Framework of Reference

Discussion

A learner at level B2 can

• grasp the main points related to a topic from the field of work and explain these clearly.

• discuss a work-related topic even though he/she may have no direct experience of this topic.

• exchange complex information, check that this has been understood as well as confirm that he/she has understood. All this can be carried out without noticeable effort.

• give opinions and express feelings on work-related and possibly controversial topics.

• provide details and defend a point of view.

• react to utterances made by the interlocutor appropriately.

• make suggestions to resolve a conflict.

• keep up with an animated discussion, identifying accurately arguments supporting an opposing point of view.

• express his/her ideas and opinions with precision, present and respond to complex lines of argument convincingly.

Common European Framework of Reference
Written Communication
The learner should have a repertoire of language which enables him/her to

• formulate precise written statements of a general business nature involving dealing with routine correspondence (enquiries, offers, orders, appointments, reminders, deliveries, complaints, applications, travel arrangements).

• write simple reports, presentations and summaries as well as other short texts.

A learner at level B2 can

• express news and views effectively in writing, and relate to those of others.

• convey information and ideas on abstract as well as concrete topics, check information and ask about or explain problems with reasonable precision.

• write letters conveying degrees of emotion and highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences and commenting on the correspondent’s news and views.

• take messages communicating enquiries, explaining problems.

• write notes conveying simple information of immediate relevance to friends, service people, teachers and others who feature in his/her everyday life, getting across comprehensibly the points he/she feels are important.

• write clear, detailed texts on a variety of subjects related to his field of interest, synthesising and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources.

• write clear, detailed descriptions of real or imaginary events and experiences marking the relationship between ideas in clear connected text, and following established conventions of the genre concerned.

• write an essay or report which develops an argument, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view and explaining the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

• synthesise information and arguments from a number of sources.

Common European Framework of Reference
5.3 Receptive Language Skills

Reading
The learner should have a broad active reading vocabulary, but may experience some difficulty with low-frequency idioms which will enable him/her to

- understand correspondence of a general business nature.
- understand gist and details of factual articles and discussions in newspapers and magazines.
- understand the language of business correspondence even when the factual details are not familiar.

A learner at level B2 can

- read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, and using appropriate reference sources selectively.
- read correspondence relating to his/her field of interest and readily grasp the essential meaning.
- scan quickly through long and complex texts, locating relevant details.
- quickly identify the content and relevance of news items, articles and reports on a wide range of professional topics, deciding whether closer study is worthwhile.
- scan longer texts in order to locate desired information, and gather information from different parts of a text, or from different texts in order to fulfil a specific task.
- obtain information, ideas and opinions from highly specialised sources within his/her field.
- understand specialised articles outside his/her field, provided he/she can use a dictionary occasionally to confirm his/her interpretation of terminology.
- understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints.
- understand lengthy, complex instructions in his field, including details on conditions and warnings, provided he/she can reread difficult sections.

**Common European Framework of Reference**

**Listening**
The learner should be able to understand discussions within the scope of their accustomed area of work as well as on topics of general interest in the business world. This involves

- understanding a conversation at normal speed.

- participating in meetings held in English, both in terms of comprehension and participation.

- understanding dates, times, letters and numbers given over the telephone.

A learner at level B2 can

- understand the main ideas of propositionally and linguistically complex speech on both concrete and abstract topics delivered in a standard dialect, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation.

- follow extended speech and complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar, and the direction of the talk is sign-posted by explicit markers.

- with some effort catch much of what is said around him/her, but may find it difficult to participate effectively in discussion with several native speakers who do not modify their language in any way.

- follow the essentials of lectures, talks and reports and other forms of academic/professional presentation which are propositionally and linguistically complex.

- understand recordings in standard dialect likely to be encountered in social, professional or academic life and identify speaker viewpoints and attitudes as well as the information content.

- understand most radio documentaries and most other recorded or broadcast audio material delivered in standard dialect and can identify the speaker’s mood, tone etc.
- understand most TV news and current affairs programmes.
- understand documentaries, live interviews, talk shows, plays and the majority of films in standard dialect.

*Common European Framework of Reference*
Language Tests and Examinations
There is no inherent value in language tests and their results; it is what we can learn from these results and how they can be applied that is of importance, for learners and examination candidates as well as for their teachers, course planners and employers or prospective employers. All users of language tests and examinations are interested in what they can do with the results they achieve and what these results say about their language competence. Very few candidates take language examinations for fun or for no particular purpose.

The results of tests of achievement in a foreign language should provide information for all users of the examinations on what successful candidates have achieved in this particular area of language competence. A holder of the telc English B2 Business wants to prove that he/she can use English at level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference and for this proof to be accepted by others. Information on the standards applied in the setting, running and marking of the examination must therefore be available to all those using a language test as proof of language competence.

telc – language tests have shown that they meet high testing and evaluation standards in all respects. In order to gain national, and academic recognition as well as recognition in branches of industry, The European Language Certificates examinations have been submitted to rigorous procedures in which various criteria have been applied to ascertain whether internationally and academically acceptable standards are being met. What follows is a brief description of these standards and how they apply to telc examinations.

In order to be able to provide useful information on the language competence of successful candidates, a language test must fulfil certain criteria. The question of how language competence can be measured and what quality in terms of examinations means cannot be discussed in complete detail here. These issues form part of the discipline of applied linguistics and are dealt with in full in findings and publications from this area of research. Further specific information on the quality standards applied to telc – language tests and how these are put into practice can also be found on telc website.

To be at all useful as a measurement of language competence, a language examination must be valid, reliable and objective as well as, particularly if taken by large numbers of candidates, practicable to administer and evaluate.

The validity of a language test is measured in terms of to what extent it tests what it purports to test. In the case of the telc English B2 Business, what is being tested is competence in the use of the English language in the occupational domain, rather than, for instance, knowledge of business and commerce,
knowledge of mathematics or anything else. The validity of a language test can be defined in terms of content and construct validity. Content validity refers to the content and type of questions of the examination concerned. A test can be considered to be valid in terms of content if it contains tasks which the learner can be expected to perform successfully considering the level achieved and the areas in which he/she will be expected to perform. In the case of this particular examination, the telc English B2 Business, both the level and the domain, occupational, are defined in the Common European Framework of Reference. More detailed information is also available in the publication Working in Europe as well as in Chapter 3 of this publication.

Construct validity is measured in terms of how the results of a particular language test compare with the results achieved by the same candidate in another test, examination or selection procedure as well as with what we understand to be the nature of language. In the case of telc English B2 Business the construct applied is the use of language to carry out tasks defined in the Common European Framework of Reference rather than, for instance, an abstract knowledge of grammatical rules or the historical background of the language concerned. What is being assessed is what the candidate can do with the language. The definitions of communicative competence and the appropriate and adequate fulfilment of a particular task are based on expert judgements made by native speakers and other competent users of the language as well as, for instance, on the Common European Framework of Reference. The European Language Certificates are closely linked to the Common European Framework of Reference and the view of language competence described there, and make wide-ranging use of the judgement of experts (native speakers and non-native speakers) in the fields of language and business as well as language use in the occupational domain.

The definition of the validity of language tests is of necessity largely based on expert judgement rather than on statistical analysis. The greater the transparency of a particular test, the more possibilities exist for experts to pass judgement on the validity of the test. The question is whether what is being tested corresponds to the appropriate or declared view of language and language competence. This question can only be answered if what is tested is clearly defined in terms of its level and content as well as in terms of what are considered to be the relevant aspects of language for this area of communication and this level of competence. The more aspects of the test which are defined, the more assessment is possible of its validity.

Clearly, a test can only assume to be a reflection of real life and not a replication of real life. However, if a test claims to be one of communicative competence, then this must be clearly reflected in the type of test tasks, texts and items. To
what extent these represent a realistic reflection of communicative competence in real life can only be judged if both the test itself and the learning objectives it is based on are made available to a large number of experts and other users and potential users of the examination. A test can only be seen to be valid if it clearly tests what it sets out to test rather than other factors influencing performance. *telc – language tests*, by providing defined learning objectives, inventories of language specifications as well as mock examinations, allow users of the examinations to judge how far the examination fulfils their requirements and those it sets itself and how far the test results can be used to assess language competence in real life situations.

Each examination in *telc* system is accompanied by a published description of the learning objectives for the examination as well as of the specifications for these learning objectives. Also published and available for reference and for teaching purposes are one or more mock examinations for each examination. These illustrate clearly which testing methods are applied and how scoring is carried out. Reference to these publications as well as to other definitions of language level and communicative competence, such as the *Common European Framework of Reference*, make an assessment of the validity of *telc – language tests* possible for their users.

One method of measuring the **reliability** of a test is to assess how far the results achieved would be the same if the test were taken by other candidates under the same conditions. Two candidates with the same level of language competence should get the same results from the test as should the same candidate with two versions of the same test. In this case, expert judgement alone cannot be used to provide dependable results but statistical analysis must be applied. In the case of *The European Language Certificates*, reliability is achieved not simply through expert evaluation but also through extensive pre-testing and post-test statistical evaluation leading, at all stages, to the replacement of tasks, texts or items which do not meet the standards required.

**Objectivity** in a test is particularly important in the case of internationally recognised language examinations, such as *telc – language tests*. In practical terms this means that every question must have a correct answer and no answer should be considered by competent users of the language to be ambiguous. No test result should be influenced by the means of evaluation and no marks awarded which are based on or influenced by such things as personal antipathy or sympathy, a personal view of the world or the nationality of the candidate or scorer. This means that in order to be objective as well as administratively practicable, as much of the marking as possible should be systematic and automated. Clearly not all aspects of language evaluation, in particular the assessment of productive skills,
can be carried out automatically. In order for the assessment of productive skills to be as objective as possible, a clearly defined set of marking instructions and criteria must be set out and available to all users of the examination. All examiners must be carefully trained in the application of the criteria. The criteria must be easy to use for all concerned and their principal and most important users, the examiners themselves, must be given the opportunity to align their application of the criteria to the defined standards at regular intervals.

Finally, a language test, if it is to be taken by large numbers of candidates at regular intervals, must be **practicable** to administer and mark. This criterion need not be in any way contradictory to the three already mentioned as many features of objective marking lead per se to practicable methods of evaluation which can be applied internationally in a variety of local circumstances without prejudicing the candidates’ performance in any way. Each of the examinations in *telc – language tests* system is accompanied by clear, detailed instructions on the administrative procedures for running the examinations smoothly. The types of tasks, texts and items place no unnecessary strain on the candidates, particularly as they have been given every opportunity to familiarise themselves with all aspects of the examination – except of course the actual examination questions themselves!

With their results, all candidates are provided with a detailed breakdown of their scores as well as with a procedure for appeals should this be felt to be necessary. The criterion of fairness is applied at all stages as this relates closely to the testing criteria of validity, reliability and objectivity and cannot be ignored in the case of internationally recognised standardised tests such as *telc – language tests*. 
Learners beginning a course leading to telc examination in telc English B2 Business will have at their disposal a basic grammar and a core vocabulary similar to that described in detail in the publication Learning Objectives and Test Format for The European Language Certificates examination Certificate in English at level B1. At level B2 the emphasis is on expanding these resources and also at the same time making the most effective use of them and extending this use into other areas of language competence. This means that learners must be able to function independently of a set syllabus and to pursue their own personal and occupational interests in their acquisition and application of language competence. In the case of the telc English B2 Business, the emphasis in courses will be on language use in the occupational domain, which in turn implies focus on specific lexis, formal use of language and sophisticated and varied language skills. All these are given in some detail in the descriptions of level B2 in the Common European Framework of Reference.

These inventories do not attempt to provide restricted lists of language items for this level as this would contradict the definition of level B2 in the Common European Framework. The language items most necessary for functioning as an independent user of language are described in detail in the Learning Objectives and Test Format for the Certificate in English at level B1. The decision to do without definitive and exhaustive lists was taken for several reasons and applies equally to all the language inventories below.

Any attempt to provide lists at this level will be found to be unsatisfactory as so much of what needs to be learnt in a language course at level B2 depends on the needs of the individual learner or the particular group. This is particularly so in the case of English, with the rapid changes taking place in its features as well as areas of use. These changes have come to mean that English can no longer be seen as consisting simply of two variations, GB and US English and as only being used with or among native speakers. In view of these changes, it is not the learning of specific lists of items, whether vocabulary or grammar, that is important but rather learning how to make use of such items so as to make communication effective in as many situations as possible. Language users at level B2 must be able to employ the language at their disposal, must know how to make the best use of the vocabulary they have at hand as well as how to use the discourse features and strategies appropriate to the context they are in. The concrete realisation of the inventories will of course continue to be carried out in text books and teaching material, although teachers and learners will be obliged to make selections, deletions and additions to these. The intention here is to provide teachers and course planners with guidelines for these modifications and adjustments to course material in English for Business Purposes at level B2.
B2 so as to enable them to equip their learners with the necessary basis to pass the *telc English Business* examination.

**Inventory F: Language Functions**

In the following inventory, the examples given for each category illustrate the sorts of exponents which might be expected at this level and in the domain of *English for Business Purposes*. These examples should be understood in terms of an extension to the examples given for the *telc English B1* and not as an exhaustive list but as illustrations. This list is fairly long as the exponents here can also be seen as examples of language dealt with in the other inventories. This list is based on existing lists of functions for this level as well as on new insights into the structure of discourse. Clearly, language functions alone are not enough to communicate effectively at this level, but must be combined with competence in the use of other language elements. How language functions are applied in communication and how they are combined with each other will depend on the use to which the language is put (in this case in a work-related context) and the learners’ specific requirements. Mastery of the necessary verbal exchange patterns is particularly important at this level and for this purpose.

**F 1 Social Contacts**

**F 1.1 Addressing someone: reacting to being addressed**

Excuse me, have you got a moment?
I wonder if I might have a word?
You must be Mr Smith.
Yes, sir/madam.
What can I do for you?

**Telephone:**
It’s most urgent that I speak to Mr Smith.
Can I speak to whoever is responsible for . . .
Could you put me through to the . . . department.
Mr Smith is in a meeting/not in the office at the moment/away for a couple of days/off sick/at a conference/on the other line.
Can I help/take a message/get him to call you back?

**Written communication:**
Dear Mr. . . ./Ms. . . ./Mrs. . . ./Miss. . . ./Sir(s)/Madam/Gentlemen
To whom it may concern
For the attention of . . .
To . . . (Memo)
F 1.2 Introducing oneself and other people; reacting to introductions
May I introduce our sales manager?
Allow me to introduce our Marketing Director.
May I introduce myself?
Perhaps I could start by introducing myself.
John, this is Tom.
John, I’d like you to meet a colleague of mine.
I don’t know if you know each other already, but . . .
Pleased to meet you.
I’ve heard a lot about you.
Actually we’ve already met.

F 1.3 Opening a conversation; greeting and reacting to greetings
How are things?
How’s business?
How are you doing?
Good to see you.
Please excuse me. I’ll be with you in a minute.
(I’d like to) welcome (you) to our firm.
Thank you. We’re very pleased to be here.

F 1.4 Enquiring about someone’s health; reacting to such enquiries
I hope you’re feeling better after your operation.
I’m feeling much better now.
I’m fine, thanks

F 1.5 Saying goodbye to someone, taking one’s leave
Would you excuse me for a moment?
I look forward to seeing you again before too long.
See you.
Please give my regards to . . . .
It’s been a very useful meeting. Thanks for coming.
Telephone:
Well, that’s all for now.
Thanks for calling.
Written communication:
With best wishes.
I look forward to hearing from you soon.

F 1.6 Expressing one’s best wishes to someone for something; reacting to good wishes
Have a good trip.
Have a safe journey home.
I hope everything goes well.
Written communication:
We wish you all the very best in your new venture.
We wish you every success.
Thank you very much for your best wishes.
F 1.7  **Expressing compliments/other forms of recognition; reacting to compliments, etc.**

It's most impressive/efficient/well organised.
We're glad you like it/think so.

*Written communication:*
We would like to congratulate you/compliment you on the high standard of your work.

F 1.8  **Expressing thanks; reacting to thanks**

We’d like to express our thanks for your assistance.
We appreciate how much effort you have put into this.
On behalf of my colleagues and of myself, may I thank you for . . . .
It was our pleasure.
Only too pleased to help.
Glad you liked it.

F 1.9  **Apologising and reacting to apologies**

We would like to/do apologise for this error.
We owe you an apology.
We greatly regret the misunderstanding. Please accept our apologies.
We are sorry if this has caused you any inconvenience.
Think nothing of it.
Thank you. Let's hope it doesn't happen again.
Thank you for your apology, but we would like to know what you are actually going to do about it.

F 1.10  **Extending invitations/offering something; reacting to invitations/offers**

We would like to invite you to visit us.
I was wondering if/whether you might like to . . . .
Would you like/care to join us for dinner?
When would be convenient?
Another time perhaps.

F 2  **Feelings and Moods**

F 2.1  **Expressing liking/empathy/preference/happiness**

What I would really enjoy would be . . .
If there's one thing I really like, it's . . .
On the whole we would prefer . . .
. . . would be preferable to . . .
sooner rather than later
. . . would suit me better.
He appreciated what you did for him.
I love a good meal.

F 2.2  **Expressing concern, worry, hope**

Are you sure?
We're very concerned about . . .
I can't help wondering about . . .
We do hope that . . .
Can you assure us that . . .?
I presume that you have thought about . . .
Can we rely on them/trust them?

**F 2.3 Expressing what one would like to do/to happen**
We would greatly appreciate . . .
We would not be so keen on . . .
That would be great/super.
If only the prices of the materials were not so high!

**F 2.4 Expressing sadness/sympathy/regret**
If there’s one thing I really can’t stand, it’s . . .
Unfortunately, . . .
It would have been useful, but . . .
I was looking forward to seeing you.
I’m afraid I can’t touch shellfish.
I had hoped it would have been possible.

*Written communication:*
We were very disappointed with your reaction to our offer.
We regret your decision to pull out of the project.
We were extremely pleased to hear . . .
We were very sorry to hear . . .
May we express our deepest sympathy.
The news is very encouraging.
We regret your decision to withdraw from the project.

**F 2.5 Expressing pleasure, displeasure**

*Written communication:*
We were very pleased with . . .
We were (very) disappointed with . . .

**F 2.6 Expressing satisfaction/dissatisfaction, approval/disapproval**
Your latest delivery was not up to standard.
The accommodation is very satisfactory/not satisfactory.

*Written communication:*
We are very satisfied/pleased with . . .
We are not satisfied with . . .
We are (not) in favour of your proposal to . . .

**F 2.7 Expressing indifference/nonchalance**
It makes little difference whether we hold it on the 26th or the 27th.
F 3 Expressing opinions
F 3.1 Expressing belief, conviction
I’m quite sure that . . . .
I’m absolutely certain.
I know for a fact that . . . .
There’s no question about it.

F 3.2 Expressing importance
It’s extremely important/It’s essential
It’s a matter of absolute urgency.

F 3.3 Expressing uncertainty
I’m not absolutely sure.
It’s not completely clear whether . . .
There are still a lot of questions to be answered.

F 3.4 Assuring or confirming, insisting
Absolutely!
We can assure you that . . .
Don’t worry!
No problem!
I can confirm that.
I must insist on . . .
Written communication:
We are pleased to confirm that . . .

F 3.5 Contradicting, negating, challenging, criticising
If I may say so, that’s not quite the case.
By no means.
Not at all.
I take your point / I see what you mean, but . . .
You must remember / Don’t forget . . .
On the other hand . . .
Written communication:
We must point out that . . .
We feel we have to draw your attention to . . .
We are obliged to correct your statement that . . .
There seems to have been a misunderstanding regarding the offer.
We would like to make it absolutely clear that this was never the case.

F 3.6 Agreeing/rejecting, taking sides, defending
That’s all right by me.
I disagree.
That’s no good.
That won’t work.
We see it rather differently.
Written communication:
We are in full agreement with your analysis of the problem.
We are happy to accept your proposal.
We are unable to agree with a number of the points you made.
May I correct you there.
Actually, ...

F 3.7 Admitting/ not admitting
That has to be taken into account.
I take your point.
I must admit that ...
We are willing/prepared to accept some responsibility for ...
We don’t see that we have anything to answer for.
We admit no liability.
This has nothing to do with the present discussion.

F 4 Informing, Describing, Explaining
F 4.1 Naming, defining, identifying something
The export sales department
Sally Jones, our Chief Buyer, ...
The order consists of over 100 different items
What we need is ...
It’s the agent who’s responsible.

F 4.2 Giving reasons/justifying
In view of ...
As a result of the latest figures, we have decided ....
As agreed at our last meeting, we shall not ....
In line with company policy, ....
In accordance with Paragraph 4 of the contract, ....
... for the following reasons;
The date was changed so that everybody could attend.
The location was changed so as to allow more people to attend.

F 4.3 Indicating cause and effect
Owing to ...
As a result of ...
... caused ...
... resulted in ...

F 4.4 Explaining/indicating the object, intention, function of something
... is designed for easy access.
... is designed to open automatically ... is intended to ...
The purpose/idea/point of the meeting is to discuss ...
The new system allows greater flexibility.
Written communication:
For the attention of G. Brown
Attention Sales

F 4.5 Relating what oneself or others (have) said/Reporting
He explained the main features of the product.
I was informed of the problem.
The chairman provided a full report.
It was agreed/reported/explained/etc. that . . .
According to Mr Taylor, . . .
It seems that there have been some problems.
I hear that Mr Taylor is leaving.

F 4.6 Drawing conclusions
That means that our output will decrease.
This proves that . . .
That explains why . . .
In that case . . .
If that is the case, . . .
Obviously . . .

F 5 Committing oneself or others to do something (Suasion), negotiating
F 5.1 Promising to do something; saying that you can’t do something
We can assure you that it will be done today.
Definitely.
Sorry, I can’t manage it.
I won’t be here that day. I’ll be flying back from the States.

F 5.2 Offering to do something; reacting to such offers
If we can be of assistance, don’t hesitate to let us know.
May I be of assistance?
We could change the date if you like.
We would be happy to do it.
Thank you. That’d be very helpful.
Thanks, but I don’t think that’ll be necessary.

F 5.3 Getting people to speak or (not) to do things
What’s your opinion on this?
What’s your reaction to this?
Written communication:
We would be very interested to hear your reaction to this proposal.
We would be very grateful for any information you can provide.

F 5.4 Requesting, ordering
I was wondering if you could help me.
Written communication:
We would like to ask you to send us samples.
We would like to order the following:
We would be grateful if you would . . .
We are writing to confirm our order for . . .
We must insist that . . .
Unless the delivery arrives within the next ten days, we will . . .

F 5.5 Requesting and giving permission
Would it be OK for us to . . . ?
That’s OK with me.
Written communication:
Would you allow us /grant us permission to conduct further tests?
If you have no objection, we would like to . . .
In reply to your request, we are happy to permit you to . . .

F 5.6 Suggesting; reacting to suggestions, counter-proposing
Would eight o’clock be convenient?
May I recommend . . . ?
If I might make a suggestion, why don’t you . . . ?
Have you thought about . . . ?
Fine. Let’s try it.
I don’t think that would work.
That’s out of the question, I’m afraid.
Written Communication:
We would like to suggest/recommend . . .
Have you considered . . .?
We followed your suggestion/recommendation.
We investigated your suggestion, but . . . .
We could not take up your suggestion because . . . .

F 5.7 Giving advice, warning, advising against something; reacting to advice, warnings
A second opinion would be advisable.
You’d better make sure/ensure that the arrangements are OK.
Look out for platform changes.
I wouldn’t if I were you.
I’ve tried that, but it doesn’t work.
That sounds as if it is worth trying.
I’m not sure if that would help.
Written communication:
We would not advise you to go ahead.
Our advice is to stay near the centre of town.
We feel that we should warn you of the small risk that . . .
Your advice was very helpful and we have considered it carefully.
F 5.8  **Forbidding**
I wonder if you’d mind not . . . .

*Written communication:*
We would like to point out that under the terms of the contract you are not permitted to . . . .

F 5.9  **Complaining**
. . . . is too . . .
. . . . is not . . . enough
The trouble is that . . . .
You told me that . . . .
According to your information, it should . . . .
You should have let us know at once.

*Written communication:*
We are writing to complain (most strongly) about . . .
The quality is (totally) inadequate.

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**Inventory S: Discourse Strategies**

In order to complete communicative tasks, the language user needs a number of discourse strategies. Many of these are listed in the inventory of discourse strategies which forms part of the description of learning objectives for *telc* examination *English B1*. At level B2, these are extended by other elements of sociolinguistic competence which enable the learner to structure and maintain discourse in a variety of circumstances. The type of strategies remains much the same as at level B1 but the linguistic realisation of these strategies will take place at a more sophisticated level. The strategies for face-to-face and mediated communication are listed here for reference with additional elements for this level. The user is referred to the description of learning objectives for level B1 for exponents of the strategies. At this level no exhaustive list of strategies can be provided as their realisation and use will depend to a great extent on the learners’ own needs as well as on their areas of work and interest.

S 1  **Structuring the discourse (e.g. opening/maintaining/ending a conversation, depersonalisation)**
On the one hand/on the other hand, . . .
On balance, . . .
So, to sum up, . . .
Well, I think that’s all there is to say.
Well, I think we have covered everything/all the main points.
I think we’ll have to leave it here.
I think it would be better to leave that until our next meeting.
Thank you for your comments. We shall now have to go away and think things over.

S 2  Entering the discourse (e.g. attracting attention, initiating)
Perhaps I could start off by saying . . .
Let me put it like this:

S 3  Interactional Strategies (e.g. referring, self-disclosure, informality)
Don’t quote me, but . . .
As for your question about reliability, . . .

S 4  Structuring one’s own contributions to the discourse (e.g., intervening, turn-taking)
Could I come in here?
Can I answer that point?
To summarise what has been said, . . .

S 5  Formulating one’s own contributions to the discourse (e.g. precision, exaggeration, contextualisation)
As far as cost is concerned, . . .
I’m glad you mentioned cost, because . . .
As a matter of fact, . . .
Can I take up the question of . . .

S 6  Cooperation strategies to support the continuation of the discourse (e.g. face-saving, use of codes)
Anyway, . . .
I’m not sure that I fully understand what you’re saying.
Are you telling me that . . .
Let me just check that I’ve understood you properly/correctly.
I don’t quite see the point.
What are you trying to say exactly?
Am I making myself clear?
Let me put it another way.
In other words, . . .
Let me give you a practical example.
What’s that in figures?

S 7  Cooperation strategies to compensate for inadequate language skills (e.g. reservation)
That may be true. However/Nevertheless/Even so/Despite that/In spite
of that . . .
Although you have a point there . . .

S 8  Strategies on the telephone (e.g. back-channelling, reinforcing)
Could I just check that I’ve got all that.
Would you mind repeating that please?
Letter-writing strategies (e.g. distancing, integrating)

re Order No. 89/26
With reference to . . .
In reply to your letter of . . .
With reference to . . .
re
According to our agreement, . . .

Mediation strategies

I think what Bob wants to say is . . .
To summarise briefly the course of the discussion, . . .
That means that you can’t smoke here.
He’s not very pleased about what has happened.
To put that in simple understandable terms, . . .
I think that means . . . But I’m not sure, I’ll have to look it up.
Maybe you should ask Helen, she knows all about it.

The realisation of these discourse strategies will, depending on the context of language use, involve such discourse elements as intensifiers (e.g. absolutely, awfully, thoroughly), downtoners (e.g. as it were, to some extent, entirely), indicators of degree of certainty (e.g. apparently, I assume), indicators of degree of exactness (e.g. approximately, precisely), affirmers of truth (e.g. actually, it goes without saying), indicators of viewpoint and attitude (e.g. in my experience, frankly speaking, from my point of view it seems), concessives (e.g. after all, for that matter), focusers (e.g. come to think of it, what I'm getting at is, incidentally), summatives, (e.g. altogether, anyhow, for one thing), indicators of approval (e.g. all right, well done, fair enough), equivalents of yes (e.g. absolutely, you bet, I wouldn’t say no) and no (e.g. forget it, by no means), and interjections (e.g. goodness, good heavens, good, right).

It is clear that the appropriate use of these depends very much on the structure of the discourse, the relationship between the partners in the discourse and the phase of the scenario. The examples of exponents given are to illustrate what is meant by the discourse elements referred to. It is not necessary at this level for the learner to master all or only these exponents. However, all language users at level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference should have the language means at their disposal to recognise and deal with the need for these discourse strategies appropriately.

Mediation

In the Common European Framework of Reference mediation is described both in its function as an activity and a strategy. Although some of the processes employed in the use of the strategy of mediation are described in the Common
European Framework of Reference, there are no descriptive scales yet available. In this description of the learning objectives and the test format for the telc English B2 Business, mediation is interpreted more broadly than in the Common European Framework of Reference and is taken to mean the bridging of gaps, either between users of one language and users of another or between those in possession of certain knowledge and those not. The process of mediation involves three elements, all of which may use one or different languages. However one of the elements may also be a text or an area of knowledge. The user of the language would then mediate between this area and a listener or a group of listeners, for instance in a description or explanation of possibly complicated work processes. This would require the use of simplification, paraphrase and equivalences, among other things, all strategies which play a part in direct mediation between languages (translation/interpreting). This extended understanding of mediation is reflected in the oral examination for the telc English B2 Business in the sub-test of the oral examination Description/Explanation. Similarly, in the sub-test Writing, the candidate may be asked to express notes (from the boss) in a fuller form and in a more appropriate register for a business letter. This is also a form of mediation, not involving direct or even casual translation from one language to another but rather the translation of ideas or content from one medium or person to another. Translation is not one of the learning objectives of telc – language tests but many of the strategies involved in the form of mediation described here can also be useful for translation, whether simultaneous or consecutive. The exponents given in the inventory of strategies serve to illustrate what is meant by mediation in this context and the references to mediation in this publication are meant to be understood in this broader sense.

Inventory N: Notions

The exponents given in this inventory are by no means intended as exhaustive, but serve simply to act as examples of the type of language meant. Here again, a language user at level B2 would modify and extend this list to suit his/her own needs and objectives as well as the task he/she wishes to carry out. However, any language user at this level should be able to provide a range of suitable exponents for the notions listed below as well as others.

N 1  Ascribing a characteristic to an object/an occurrence/facts/a person
The product contains a number of interesting features.
This component could well . . .
This machine will not rust.
N 2  **Expressing belonging (possession, being part of)**
The rented machine remains the property of . . .
It consists of . . .
our own design
a member of
. . . is a part of the . . . group of companies
the parent company
a subsidiary

N 3  **Classifying an occurrence/facts by location, direction**
the second column/row of figures
The office is located in the city centre.
Our results show an upward/downward trend.

*Letter:*
Our prices are as follows:
Details are given above/below.

N 4  **Classifying an occurrence/facts by time**
Please let us know as soon as possible.
within the next few days
every six weeks
quarterly/annually
We will dispatch the goods on receipt of your order.
Payment is due on . . .

N 5  **Classifying an occurrence/fact by manner**
Your complaint will be looked into thoroughly.
I think we should proceed with caution.

N 6  **Expressing possibility/capability**
This would permit/allow us to . . .
The situation should/is likely to/will probably improve.
There’s a slight chance that . . .
. . . is out of the question.
. . . must be/can’t be true.

N 7  **Expressing necessity/obligation**
Under the terms of the agreement, you are required/obliged to . . .
. . . is absolutely necessary.

N 8  **Expressing a condition/prerequisite and its consequences**
We agree to your proposal on condition that . . .
The terms of sale are that . . .
The penalty for failing to deliver on schedule is . . .
### N 9 Comparing

- in comparison with
- It’s similar to/the same as . . . .
- The earlier you leave, the sooner we can meet.
- twice as big as . . . .
- It costs half as much as its nearest competitor.
- Whereas

### Inventory T: Topics

The topics listed in the language specifications for *telc – language tests* examination *English B1* cover most of the important areas of adult life. For the occupational domain, the topic list for the *telc English B1 Business* should be seen as a starting point for work leading to the *telc English B2 Business*. At level B2 the language user should master the language needed for most familiar, contemporary topics, in particular those related to his/her own field of work or interest or of personal or occupational significance (*Common European Framework of Reference*). The topics listed here are of a general nature and do not include any areas which may be regarded as taboo in certain cultures or countries. This does not of course mean that learners at this level should not be able to talk about these topics but they cannot form part of a general international syllabus for reasons of sensitivity and fairness. This applies to all examinations in *telc – language tests* system at all levels. Some additional exponents are given below for some of the topics listed for level B1 to provide examples of the type of language expected at level B2 and for this particular domain. These are a representative selection of items chosen to illustrate the range of vocabulary, grammatical structures and language functions expected at this level. Clearly the changing needs of *English Business* mean that this list can in no way be regarded as definitive or exhaustive.

#### T 1 People

**T 1.1 Education, Training and Experience**

- Thank you for sending me an application form, which I enclose along with my curriculum vitae.
- We are looking for a candidate with a degree in business administration.
- He joined our company three years ago and has been working in Sales since then.
- Her marketing background has proved most useful.

**T 1.2 Performance and Capability**

- The candidate has always been very flexible and can adapt quickly to new situations.
- She has adjusted very well to her new department.
- He is quite skilled at negotiating between labour and management.
- His cooperation leaves a lot to be desired.
T 1.3 Occupation, Type of Job
She began as a secretary and has since become an executive in a major US corporation.
He has a position in the personnel department, helping to plan training schemes.
His job as a porter brings him into contact with a great deal of people.
Her experience in Sales has led to her being promoted.

T 2 Home, Housing and Place of Work
T 2.1 Staying at a Hotel
If there are any messages for me, I can be reached at . . .
May I have a no-smoking room, please?
Put that on my bill, please.
Could the night porter give me a wake-up/an early morning call at six?
I’ll be checking out on Wednesday morning.

T 2.2 Furniture and Equipment
His job requires his having a telephone answering machine at home.
He’s on the list for a new PC.

T 2.3 Rent and Other Expenses
We must reduce our overheads if we’re going to save money.
Don’t worry, I can put it on my expense account.

T 3 Places
T 3.1 Type, Size and Location of Place
The R & D department has expanded so rapidly that it has since moved to Building E.
They are a well-established company with subsidiaries in over ten countries.
Your city is the most convenient distribution centre in the area.
Milwaukee is situated/located approximately ninety miles north of Chicago.

T 3.2 Public Services, Buildings – Facilities (Parks, Leisure Facilities, etc.) and Sight-seeing
The conference should be held somewhere that offers good traffic connections.
Our choice of facilities will be greatly determined by the overheads.

T 4 Occupations
T 4.1 Conditions of Work, Working Hours and Holidays
They operate around the clock on a 3-shift system.
Since flexitime has been introduced, employee productivity has actually increased.
As the conference was held in Paris, he took his family along and made it a working holiday.
A substantial salary will be paid, along with an insurance scheme, pension fund plus fringe benefits.

T 4.2 Wages and Salaries
The factory workers are unhappy with their wages.
He has requested an increase in salary.
They are discussing an incentive scheme for their employees.
Tax has already been deducted from your income.
With the cut in income tax, the politicians say that many people don’t need a pay rise to maintain living standards.

T 4.3 Professional Organizations and Trade Unions
Figures have been issued showing that wage increases are now at their lowest level for five years.
The TUC has been requested to use its influence to help deal with the matter.
The representative spoke on behalf of his union.

T 5 Everyday life
T 5.1 Shops, Trades and Services
They have a very effective advertising policy.
Although they guarantee the quality of their product, their after sales service is not very efficient/leaves a lot to be desired.
Do you have a fax machine?
We have received more enquiries by email than by phone.

T 5.2 Consumer Goods and their Description
Only one magazine gives you the world of business every week.
The car is very fuel-efficient.

T 5.3 Sizes, Weights, Measurements, Quantities, Prices, Currency
The container’s dimensions are 20’ x 8’ x 8.6’ and its gross weight is 20 tons.
Prices are index-linked and fluctuate with the stock market.
Retail prices have risen at a rate of 4.8% annually.
What is the currency unit being used?
Can you give me a quote from your price list?
We would like to order two dozen items at $3.50 each.

T 6 Illness and Accident (Health and Hygiene)
The accident rate in the factory has been cut by 50 %.
Has he been paying his medical health contributions?

T 7 The Environment
When launching new products, firms today have to take into account government environmental policy.
In the end, the consumer pays for protecting the environment.
One drawback to the plan of building the factory nearby is its possible effect on the river.
Some European countries are offering tax rebates on environmentally safer cars.

T 8 Current Affairs and Topics of General Interest
There has been considerable movement on the stock exchange.
There are still those who forecast slow growth for the economy next year.
The issue of smoking and advertising is in the news again.
In the next election the trade deficit will most certainly be an issue.
Inventory L: Lexis

The requirements of level B2 in the occupational domain cannot, as has already been made clear, be defined in terms of a list of lexical items. Learners are expected to be able to communicate freely in their own areas as well as in the general areas belonging to the occupational domain. They are also, however, expected to have control of discourse features necessary for communication at this level and a greater degree of control and complexity is expected from them. This may involve being aware of various ways of expressing certain notions and terms as well as being able to qualify (in all respects) what they say. The lists provided for the *telc English B1* form the basis of the lexical repertoire for learners at this level.

No list of lexical items in the sense perhaps expected by teachers and materials designers is provided. This is a closer alignment to the definition of level B2 in the *Common European Framework*. Many lists are available for learners requiring English for use in the occupational domain at this level and all learners will need to refer to their own specialist areas of lexis. In the case of lexis as well as grammar, reference can be made to the inventories provided above and the examples given. These can be used for examples of lexical items and grammatical structures which learners at level B2 should be expected to understand and master to an appropriate degree. However, and more importantly, the language user at this level must be in a position to understand the context of a text even when unfamiliar lexical items occur and deduce the meaning of these from other discourse and grammatical features.

The topics listed above refer to general areas rather than specific areas of business. The exponents are taken from the business environment, corresponding to the domain relevant for this examination in the *Common European Framework of Reference*. Depending on his/her own field, the learner may be able to deal with specific lexis from the following areas of work, most of which can be subsumed in the general topic areas listed above. As well as the general areas listed above, the following topics may form a part of courses leading to this examination as well as the examination itself, although no specific knowledge of the area concerned will be assumed. Much of the lexis from the areas listed below is work-related in general, with specific items to be added in courses according to learners’ needs:
• administration
• budgets
• business environment
• costs
• customer service
• delivery
• distribution
• finance
• general management
• human resources
• legal
• marketing
• prices
• production and operations
• purchasing
• research and development
• sales

Word Formation
In the Common European Framework of Reference definition of vocabulary range at level B2, the learner is not expected to have every necessary item of vocabulary at his or her fingertips but rather to have the means to describe and express his/her needs with a certain degree of circumlocution where lexical gaps occur without hindering communication. This circumlocution may take place with the help of affixes, a list of which is given here as these can often help the language user with gaps in lexis.

Suffixes
-able -ful -ize
-al -hood -less
-ance -ial -like
-ant -ian -ly
-ary -ic -ment
-atic -ical -ness
-ation -ify -or
-ed -ing -ory
-ee -ion -tion
-en -ish -ward(s)
-ence -ism -wise
-er -ist -y
-ese -ity
-ever -ive
### Prefixes

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### Inventory G: Grammar

The same principles apply to an inventory of grammar as to an inventory of lexical items. Although a high level of grammatical control is to be expected at this level without systematic errors in basic structures, nonetheless slips may still occur, although these should be correctable by the learner and should not lead to misunderstanding. Examples of grammatical structures the learner should be expected to recognise as correct, even if unusual, are given below and further examples can be found in the exponents for the inventories given above. As well as possessing a certain familiarity with these structures, the learner may also be able to use them in formulaic phrases and discourse features without necessarily having the complete background knowledge involved. It is the use of grammatical structures to take part in discourse and to communicate effectively without causing misunderstanding or offence which is important here, rather than the absolute mastery of particular grammatical forms. Every language user, whether native or non-native has a repertoire of grammatical structures, the choice of which depends on the context of use, the type of discourse (e.g. spoken or written) as well as individual or idiosyncratic features. This applies to all languages, but in the case of English and particularly *English when used in a work-related context*, the situation is even more complex, making the construction of a list of grammatical structures an almost impossible task. Exponents of discourse grammar can be found in the relevant inventory for *telc English B1*. English is used by so many different speakers of various cultural and linguistic backgrounds as a first or second language as well as being a lingua franca in a number of clearly defined entities, that inevitably sub-contexts of use will develop in which varieties of English will come to be considered as appropriate or even correct. This makes the area extremely dynamic and fast-changing and so users of this publication and the *telc English B2 Business* are obliged to remain informed on research and ongoing developments. Despite this dynamism, however, there will be certain features of grammar which remain more or less constant and which
will also remain of importance for those dealing primarily with speakers, who use English as their first language. Some examples of these features which go beyond those expected at level B1, are given here for reference. They are not to be considered as business grammar but rather as grammatical features users at this level should be familiar with. The exponents given as examples are taken from work-related contexts and highlight examples of language often found in these contexts. They serve to illustrate exponents for several of the preceding inventories relevant for language users at this level.

G 1  **Subject and verb: their order and concord**

G 1.1  **Common cases of subject-operator inversion**

At no time did we see any real signs of economic breakdown.
Hardly had she arrived when she set out for a look around town.
No sooner had we put down our glasses than the waiter was refilling them.
Only when things get worse will they start looking at staff relations.

G 1.2  **Cases of subject-verb inversion**

Here comes our sales representative.
Then came the depression.
“Are you taking those samples to London?” asked the sales director.

G 1.3  **Nouns showing peculiarities of concord**

The class/committee/crew/crowd/enemy/jury/majority/minority/party/population/press/profession/staff is/are …
A number of solutions has been suggested.
The number of self-employed in Britain is growing.
Fifteen per cent of the workforce are now self-employed.
Ninety-five per cent of Texas’ 205,000 educators are expected to pass a basic reading and writing test.
The rest of the money is …
The rest of the group is/are…
A total of 409 people have applied.
A total of £409 has been charged.
Politics is/are …

G 1.4  **Other cases**

There’s paper and pencils in your top drawer if you need them.
What we don’t want around here is/are troublemakers.
All we want is the simple facts.
It’s always the female employees who suffer most.
Five pounds/dollars is too much for me to pay.
He told them not to poke their noses into other people’s business.
London business life in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
G 2  The verb

G 2.1 Use of simple present tense in commentary
The operator places the component on the belt, and his colleague adds the . . .

G 2.2 Non-present uses of simple present tense
I couldn’t believe it. Just as we arrived, up comes Ben and slaps me on the back as if we’re life-long friends.
The ten o’clock news says that there’s going to be a bad storm.
I hear that Mr Simpson has gone into hospital.
Mrs Smith called. She says she can meet you at 4.

G 2.3 Other uses of simple present tense
I wish you were here.
I hope you get well soon.

G 2.4 Use of past tense
It’s time we went to bed.
I was wondering – you didn’t get anything in the mail?
I was thinking about getting some sandwiches. Are you hungry?

G 2.5 Further cases of the (especially ‘unfinished’ use of) present perfect, including its progressive aspect
I’ve been busy lately.
“I’ve been looking at those new computers”, he said. “I first saw them at the trade fair in Paris.”
I’ve (just) been having a chat with your agent.

G 2.6 Further cases of (more involved) uses of the past perfect, especially as anterior version of the present perfect, also cases where there is interchangeability with the past tense
Mitchell was in the kitchen when he heard the front door open. He hadn’t eaten. He had been here more than two hours, waiting for her.
It had been a sporting goods store at one time – Mitchell remembered it because he had stolen a football from the place when he was a kid.
I ate my lunch after Sandra came / had come back from town.

G 2.7 Further cases of the use of the progressive:
I think this place is going downhill. It’s getting to be like a neighbourhood bar.
Most companies are adjusting production figures to reduced markets.
You know what I mean, I’m not being insulting, Mitch.
Don’t worry. We were just testing our new fire alarm.
They complain they are being unfairly singled out, and their terms of employment are being changed in midstream.
Aren’t you supposed to be interviewing me?
G 2.8 Further uses of won’t / will / shall
Even if there’s a strike, the exhibition won’t be cancelled.
It will be about five o’clock in Dubai now, I suppose.
He is so inefficient that he will go for days without reporting to headquarters.
We agreed to meet one day, and I expect we shall.

G 2.9 Will/shall be + -ing
This time next week we’ll/will/shall be sunbathing in Tenerife.
I’ll be leaving (for New York) in a few minutes.
Will you be staying at the Hilton as usual?

G 2.10 Further uses of to be going to
You’re quite certain he is going to buy the company then, are you?
I can see we’re going to be great friends.
The boss was going to be very pleased with him indeed for completing the contract so quickly, he
decided.
If you’re going to be at the office on Saturday, I want to stop by and pick up the report.
If you’re going to get angry I’m going to get angry, too.

G 2.11 Passive structures
He could/may/might/must/should(n’t) have been promoted.
Land used to be regarded as a good investment.
The table seems to have been moved.

G 2.12 Be to
What are we to do?
They were to have done that yesterday.
He was to become one of the greatest entrepreneurs of his time.

G 3 The noun
G 3.1 Nouns always used as singulars
advice, furniture, information, knowledge, news, progress, (usually) the United States,
the United Nations.

G 3.2 Nouns always used as plurals
Customs, goods, people, police, stairs, surroundings, thanks, wages.

G 3.3 Cases of personification
She lost half her cargo in a storm.
Isn’t she a lovely cat?
England has always been proud of her navy.
Hurricane Hetty blew herself out before reaching the coast.

G 3.4 Further uses of the ’s- genitive
Britain’s economic troubles are by no means over yet.
McDonald’s won’t take me.
You can see St Paul’s from Fleet Street.
She’s a friend of my sister’s.
Dickens’/Dickens’s novels.

G 3.5 **The of construction used with animate nouns**
The reputation of a Prime Minister will not suffer from a small incident like that.
It means ignoring the needs of business people.
The outrage of most people is absolutely genuine and very deep.

G 4 **Articles**
G 4.1 **Use and non-use of the indefinite article**
She’s a director of the company. – She’s managing director of the company.
Her husband is a university professor. – Her husband is Professor of Business Studies at Manchester University.

G 5 **Pronouns**
G 5.1 **Further uses of personal pronouns**
What would you do if you were me/him/her/us/them?
You’re taller than me/him/her/us/them.
When I say this to you it is because I want to help.
It’s the agents who are responsible, isn’t it?

G 5.2 **Non-use of possessives**
He looked me in the face / touched her on the arm / kissed her on the cheek.

G 5.3 **Use of independent possessives**
She’s a friend/colleague of mine/yours/his/hers/ours/their.

G 5.4 **Use of relative which**
They could not reach an agreement, which was exactly what I had predicted.

G 5.5 **Alternating singular/plural reference**
Everyone/Everybody thinks he has/they have a right to be here.

G 5.6 **Further uses of some**
If I’d got some other boss I wouldn’t have stayed.
Is something wrong?
How about some strawberries?

G 5.7 **Uses of one**
There’s no need to give him a company brochure because he’s already got one.
She’s the one to consult.
She is not one to neglect her own interests.
One must be careful about one’s/his investments.
It had been a sporting goods store at one time.
G 6  Adjectives and adverbs
G 6.1  Postposition of attributive adjective
somebody very rich
nothing new
the person opposite
the best person available
I know a man suitable for the job.

G 6.2  Irregular forms of comparison
elder/eldest, farther/farthest

G 6.3  Additional structures
The bathroom is not as large as the kitchen.
The lake is less deep than the river.
The cheaper/sooner, the better.
The older we are, the wiser we become.

G 6.4  Positions of adverbs
These secretaries with good foreign language skills usually are not easy to find.
Our expectations may have been too optimistic, especially in the long term.

G 7  Subordinate clauses
In order to carry out the more demanding communicative tasks which are involved at level B2 the learner should be able to cope with sentences of greater complexity (including multiple subordination) than those usually dealt with at lower levels. The following sentences may serve to exemplify the degree of complexity envisaged, especially for reading ability.

It was decided during the annual general meeting which was held at the Blackhill Conference Centre last week, that the new board of directors, after being duly elected, would write a report in which they would set out their ideas of the direction in which they thought the firm should go.
Last week, while the strike was going on, the production of the AZ X 52, which is so urgently required in Hong Kong, had to be halted so that technicians, who had been called in from another plant, could repair the drive band motor mechanism which had failed due to the fact that there was no-one available to assure its maintenance.
The telc English B2 Business is designed as a test of language and not as a test of business or commercial knowledge. This is the guiding principle which should underlie the teaching and preparation of examination candidates, especially in the case of heterogeneous groups.

Teachers should aim at developing their course participants' language abilities and their ability to complete tasks in a work context using English. All the skills are tested in the examination and so emphasis should be placed on all skills during the course. The sub-test Listening Comprehension uses recorded material which the candidates hear only once. This should be practised adequately in the classroom.

It is important that candidates are familiar with the examination format and the examination procedure. The mock examination can be used for preparation for both the content of the examination as well as the formalities and the time schedule.

What follows here is a description of the sub-tests in the examination. Examples of all these can be found in the mock examination as well as information on marking. More detailed information on the running of the examination can be found in the publications concerning the organisation and running of the examination.

The Written Examination

Reading Comprehension
This sub-test consists of three to six texts taken from various areas of work and business with a total maximum length of not more than 1500 words. The candidate is required to answer 20 questions on the texts. The time allowed for this sub-test and the sub-test Writing is 120 minutes. The time recommended for the sub-test Reading Comprehension is 60 minutes. One point is awarded for each correct answer, making a maximum total of 20 points for this sub-test possible. Some examples of sources for the texts are given below. The questions can test details of language or content or the gist of the text as a whole. Questions may also concern the type and source of text or the attitude taken by the writer. Scanning for specific points may also be tested. Questions can be based on the whole text or on parts of it. The questions may not necessarily follow the order in which the information is given in the text.

The type of question and the information asked for will depend on the text type and the intention with which the text is read. The candidate may be placed in a
situation in which he/she is required to read the text for a specific purpose. This situation will be described in the introduction to the text. There will be a variety of texts in each exam with the number of questions per text depending on the length, type and language of the text.

**Examples of text types**
- agendas
- company/product descriptions
- contracts
- emails
- faxes
- instructions
- legal documents
- letters
- letters of application
- magazine articles
- memos
- newspaper articles
- reports
- specialist books
- technical specifications/manuals
- telephone messages
- text books
- training programmes
- ...

**Writing**
This sub-test consists of two parts. The time recommended for this sub-test is 60 minutes. A maximum total of 25 points may be awarded for this sub-test, 20 points for Part 1 and 5 points for Part 2.

In the first part the candidate is required to write a letter based on input (e.g. a letter received or notes). The letter written by the candidate should not be more than two DINA4 pages of handwriting and should be written on the sheets provided. The piece of writing should be clearly recognisable as a contemporary business letter in terms of structure, opening and close (salutation and closing formula), reference, linking, clarity and modernity. All these are taken into account in the marking of this sub-test. The marking criteria for this sub-test should be referred to for further details. Although business correspondence nowadays consists of up to 70% of email, letter writing is still considered to be an important task.

In the second part the candidate is required to write an email, memo or other short piece of correspondence based on input (e.g. an email or memo received or notes). Some examples of emails the candidate may be asked to write are
given below. Here, the candidate is only required to write the body of the correspondence. The piece of writing should not be more than one DINA4 page of handwriting and should be written on the sheet provided. The piece of writing should be clearly recognisable as what is required in terms of content, structure, clarity and modernity. All these are taken into account in the marking of this sub-test. The marking criteria for this sub-test should be referred to for further details. The discourse conventions of the different types of writing should be taken into account.

**Examples of emails**
- apologising for non-attendance
- asking for more details
- confirming arrangements
- informing of nomination
- making simple arrangements
- promising information
- requesting a meeting/telephone call
- suggesting a meeting/telephone call
- turning down a request or invitation
- ...

**Listening Comprehension**
This sub-test consists of three parts. All the texts in this sub-test are only heard once by the candidates. The candidate is required to answer a total of 20 questions. The time allowed for this sub-test depends on the length of the recording but will not exceed 30 minutes. One point is awarded for each correct answer, making a maximum total of 20 points for this sub-test possible. Some examples of sources for the texts are given below. Answering the questions correctly will not depend on knowledge of specific vocabulary. The questions will follow the order in which the information is given in the text.

In the first part the candidate is required to answer six true/false questions based on what is heard. The questions test the gist of the text rather than specific details.

In the second part the candidate is required to answer between 5 and 10 multiple-choice questions. The questions in this part test specific details of the text.

In the third part the candidate is required to answer between 5 and 10 multiple-choice questions. The questions test the candidate’s ability to select specific information and match this to information or descriptions given within the context of one situation.
In all parts of this sub-test, the situation in which the text is to be heard is clearly described to the candidate and the candidate is given time to read the description of the situation and the instructions.

**Examples of text types**
- announcements
- instructions
- lectures/presentations/talks
- meetings
- publicity films/tours
- radio programmes
- telephone answering machine messages
- ...

**Language Elements**
This sub-test consists of two parts. The candidate is required to answer 20 questions testing recognition of structures as well as selection and understanding of contextualised vocabulary. The time allowed for this sub-test is 30 minutes. Half a point is awarded for each correct answer, making a maximum total of 10 points for this sub-test possible. In both parts, the texts will be of the type the candidate may be expected to read, produce or correct at work. Some examples of text types are given below.

The first part consists of a text with 10 words or phrases which are underlined. The candidate has to decide if the words or phrases underlined are correct within the context of the text and if this is not the case, choose the correct word or phrase from two alternatives.

The second part consists of a text with 10 words or phrases missing. A choice of 15 words or phrases is given and the candidate is expected to choose the correct word or phrase for each gap.

**Examples of text types**
- descriptions
- emails
- faxes
- instructions
- letters
- memos
- reports
- ...
The Oral Examination

This sub-test consists of four parts, three of which are marked. Candidates are examined in pairs. Each oral examination with two candidates should take no longer than 16 minutes or 24 minutes with three candidates, should there be an odd number taking the examination. A maximum total of 75 points may be awarded for this sub-test, which is then divided by three to get the final score. The marking criteria for this sub-test should be referred to for further details.

Part 0: Introduction: Social Contacts (30-60 seconds per candidate)
The candidates should introduce themselves to each other and give and ask for information about themselves and their work. No prompts are provided as at this level learners should be able to conduct this type of interchange without outside help. This part of the oral examination serves both the purpose of acting as an ice-breaker and setting the scene for the rest of the oral examination as well as assessing the candidates’ ability to perform this type of communicative task. This type of informal small talk is equally important in business contexts as in purely social contexts. Neither candidate should dominate the conversation but should provide and ask for information in turn.

Part 1: Description/Explanation (3 minutes per candidate)
In this part each candidate is expected to talk extensively without an undue amount of hesitation or repetition. The topic should be chosen by the candidate and the description/explanation prepared before the examination, but the candidate should not read a prepared text aloud. The emphasis in the examination is on the structure of the description/explanation which is not to be considered as a formal presentation but as a structured description of an object, process, product or skill, as the realisation of a situation where a user of English describes or explains in detail some aspect of working life. Some ideas are given below. This list is not intended to be restrictive or exhaustive but to give examples of subjects which may be chosen by the candidates.

Examples of topics for presentation/description

Topic
- (company) product
- (hobby as) business venture
- city/town as a place to work
- company structure
- job
- management or business book
- manufacturing process
- ...
Skill
- management
- negotiating
- presenting
- translating
- ...

Field
- inco terms
- shipping regulations
- software development
- ...

System
- adult education
- chambers of commerce
- insurance
- salary
- school system
- transport system
- ...

The source of the information is not important as long as the candidate is able to deal with questions on the description/explanation in an appropriate way. This may include answers such as *I’m afraid I don’t know but I could try and find out.* The candidate should also be able to pronounce words and phrases used in the presentation/description correctly.

**Part 2: Discussion (2 minutes per candidate)**

In this part the candidates should enter into a discussion on a topic which they have received before the examination and prepared their ideas on during the preparation time. The stimulus for the discussion may be in the form of statements or a text on a topic connected with working life. The candidates should show that they are able to express their own opinions but also to react to the ideas and opinions expressed by their partner. Some examples of topics for this part of the examination are given in the following list which again is not intended to be restrictive or exhaustive.

**Examples of topics for discussion**
- advertising
- fair trading
- issues of training
- older workers
- recruitment
- technology
- the environment
- tourism
- training and education
- work and ethics
- work and health
- ...

**Part 3: Task (2 minutes per candidate)**

This part of the examination may take the form of a negotiating or consensus-finding task or the enactment of a scenario from working life. The candidates receive information on the task to enable them to prepare for it during the preparation time. They should demonstrate that they are able to express language functions appropriately, react spontaneously to their partner’s utterances as well as provide details on certain matters. This task may also require the use of discourse features specific to telephoning. Some examples of the various types of task are provided in the mock examination.

The conversation necessary to carry out the task could be with
- accountants/lawyers/advertising agencies
- clients
- colleagues in own and other branches/subsidiaries
- customers
- representatives of other companies
- staff (superior and subordinate)
- suppliers
- visitors to companies
- ...

about
- finances
- forecasting
- plans
- projects
- routines
- services
- supplies
- targets
- ...
to
- explain
- negotiate
- solve problems
- understand matters
- ...

at/in
- conferences
- exhibitions
- meetings
- other countries
- parties/receptions
- restaurants
- workplace/office
- ...

by means of
- face-to-face contact
- telephone
- ...

The use of a dictionary provided by the examination centre is permitted during the preparation for the oral examination.
Marking Instructions for B2 WRITING Subtest

The Writing subtest is assessed by licensed telc Raters. In the case of disagreement, the marks awarded by Rater 2 are taken in preference. Further spot-checks are regularly carried out at the telc head office. In such cases the telc rating becomes the final score.

Criterion 1: Content (Guiding Points)

Assessment is made on the basis of the number of guiding points that have been included and processed.

It is assumed that the piece of writing is recognisable as such (business letter).

A guiding point can only be counted for marking purposes if

- it is recognisable as the point given in the task, i.e. the candidate demonstrates that she/he has understood the intention of the guiding point and dealt with it using the appropriate language;
- it is dealt with as part of or in a full sentence.

| A | 4 points | All six guiding points have been included and processed appropriately. There is no evidence of misinterpretation. |
| B | 3 points | At least four of the guiding points have been included and processed appropriately. |
| C | 1 point | At least two of the guiding points have been included and processed adequately. |
| D | 0 points | Only one guiding point has been included and processed adequately or none of the guiding points have been included. |

Criterion II: Communicative Design

Assessment is based on

- the appropriacy of the order in which the guiding points have been included in relation to the message of the piece of writing and the addressee;
- the appropriacy of the register and the linking language used (discourse features);
- the formal characteristics of the piece of writing (e.g. date, reference line, salutation, closing formula);
- the impression the piece of writing would make in the business context given (register, consistency of style).

| A | 8 points | The design is appropriate in all respects. |
| B | 6 points | The design is appropriate in most respects. |
| C | 3 points | The design is largely inappropriate and would cause a bad impression in a business context. |
| C | 0 points | The design is inappropriate. |
Criterion III: Language

Assessment is based on syntax, morphology and spelling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>There are no or only very occasional errors. None of the errors are in basic structural or lexical items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>There are a few errors but none in basic structural or lexical items and none which would make a bad impression in a business context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The errors made are of a basic nature and the piece of writing would need to be corrected before being sent out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>There are so many errors that the piece of writing is either incomprehensible or would need to be re-written before being sent out.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part 2

Part 2 is marked according to the following criteria:

Assessment is based on the completion of the task as a whole.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>The content is correct, the style is appropriate and there are no lexical or structural errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The content is correct, the style is appropriate but there are a few lexical or structural errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Because of its inappropriate style or lexical and structural errors, the message would only be of limited use in a business context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>The message would be of no use in a business context.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If **Criterion I** is awarded a “D” when the candidate’s letter or email does not relate to the task given, the Rater should mark “yes” under “Wrong topic?”.

If the mark awarded for **Criterion I** and/or **Criterion III** is “D”, the whole letter or email must be awarded zero points, i.e. the Rater should mark “D” for all criteria.
Marking Criteria for Oral Examination

A maximum total of 75 points may be awarded. This is then divided by 3 giving a final total out of 25 points. The oral examination has a weighting of 25% of the final total for the examination. The candidates' performance is assessed according to the following criteria:

Criterion 1: Expression
Criterion 2: Task Management
Criterion 3: Language
Criterion 4: Pronunciation and Intonation

For each of these criteria, a mark is given on the scale A-B-C-D which corresponds to the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion 1: Expression</th>
<th>7 points</th>
<th>appropriate in all respects with an accompanying level of accuracy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 points</td>
<td>appropriate in most respects with no impairment of communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>frequently inappropriate so that communication may be impaired.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 points</td>
<td>more or less inappropriate in all respects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criterion 2: Task Management
Assessment is based on
1. the degree of active participation in the discourse (initiating, turn-taking, helping the interaction along and ending the interaction);
2. the use of discourse strategies appropriate in real or simulated business contexts;
3. the use of compensation strategies as and when necessary;
4. fluency (producing long stretches of language without unnecessary pauses requiring concentration on the part of the listener).

In terms of task management, the candidate's performance is

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion 2: Task Management</th>
<th>7 points</th>
<th>appropriate in all respects.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 points</td>
<td>appropriate in most respects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>frequently inappropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 points</td>
<td>more or less inappropriate in all respects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Criterion 3: Language
Assessment is based on the candidate's range of grammar and the degree of grammatical control demonstrated, i.e. the number of errors, as well as monitoring and self-correction strategies.
The accuracy of the language used by the candidate is

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>7 points</th>
<th>5 points</th>
<th>3 points</th>
<th>0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>high (no or only occasional errors.)</td>
<td>satisfactory (a number of errors in more complex structures which, however, do not impair or hinder communication and/or make a bad impression in a business context).</td>
<td>unsatisfactory (a number of errors in simple structures or errors which considerably impair communication and/or make a bad impression in a business context).</td>
<td>so poor that communication is almost impossible.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criterion 4: Pronunciation and Intonation
Assessment is based on pronunciation and intonation.
Although still recognisable as a non-native speaker of English, the candidate’s pronunciation and intonation is

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4 points</th>
<th>2 points</th>
<th>1 point</th>
<th>0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>clear and natural with no features which might disturb or impair communication.</td>
<td>not always entirely clear and natural with definite interference from the native language.</td>
<td>not clear or natural and only comprehensible with concentration on the part of the listener.</td>
<td>so unclear that the candidate is (almost) impossible to understand.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examiner Training and Examiner Licences

For reasons of quality assurance, all those wishing to obtain an examiner’s licence for The European Language Certificates system must fulfil certain requirements.

The requirements for attendance at an examiner training session are as follows:

- Teaching experience over several years in the examination subject concerned. To gain a licence telc English B2 Business, it is not enough to have taught only general English or English for beginners.

- Knowledge of the learning objectives for the examination subject concerned. As the telc system is not only one of examinations but also of syllabuses, it is necessary to have read the relevant description of syllabus and learning objectives as preparation for an examiner training session.

- Knowledge of the test format for the examination subject concerned.

- Knowledge of the telc Examination Regulations for The European Language Certificates.

- Knowledge of the internationally recognised levels of the Council of Europe Common European Framework of Reference.

- Native or near-native language competence (level C1).

Examiner trainers are obliged to make sure that participants at examiner training sessions fulfil all these requirements before they are awarded examiner’s licences.

Examiner’s licences are awarded for a particular examination subject and not for a language in general. Examiner’s licences are not awarded for English but for both telc English Business examinations at level B1 and at level B2.
Publications for Further Reference


Jan A. van Ek, John L. Trim: Vantage Level, Strasbourg, 1996
Learning Objectives
and Test Format

ENGLISH B2
BUSINESS

Two main characteristic features of The European Language Certificates are examination papers based on clearly formulated language tasks and standardised and objective marking criteria. All telc examinations are based on closely defined learning objectives relevant to the level according to the Common European Framework of Reference. The learning objectives provide useful information on the background to the examination as well as the language inventories for the level and subject concerned. They enable teachers, course planners and materials designers to produce teaching material and implement courses in the relevant subject. This description of the learning objectives will also be useful for heads of training departments and personnel managers as well as in-company trainers involved in the planning and carrying out of pre-service and in-service courses for trainees and company employees in English in a work-related context at Level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference leading to the telc English B2 Business examination.

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