



**Master Consultants Ltd**  
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# **COURSE OUTLINE**

## **INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS ENGLISH & LETTER WRITING**

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### ***Module 1 - Business Letters Examined***

Language used in business letters today:

- clear uncomplicated wording
- business and technical terms
- the importance of good English

What “business letters” are:

- their objectives
- styles or manners of writing

Features of a business letter examined:

- the letterhead:
  - what it might contain
- the date of the letter
- the addressee
- the greeting
- the reference(s)
- the body or message
- the writer’s designation
- the closing expression

Layout of business letters:

- indentation, justification, blocked style

Appearance of business letters:

- attracting favourable attention
- enhancing appearance
- ensuring letters are read

### ***Improving English: Part 1 - Dictionaries and Vocabulary***

English language in business letters:

- using an English-English dictionary to check:

- spellings of words
- meanings of words
- alternative words

syllables:

- single-syllable and multi-syllable words
- stressed or accented letters

online dictionaries

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### Thesaurus

#### Increasing vocabulary:

- suffixes - additions at the ends of words:
  - examples and uses of common suffixes
- prefixes - additions to the start of words:
  - examples and uses of common prefixes

## **Module 2 - Enquiries, Quotations, Estimates, Orders, Acknowledgements**

### Enquiries and responses:

- products:
  - goods, services and combinations

### Letters of enquiry:

- reasons for “making enquiries”:
  - methods of making them
  - why letters of enquiry might be written

### Circular-type enquiry letters

### Quotations:

- in quotation forms
- in letters
- covering letters to quotation forms

### Estimates:

- when and why they are issued
- what they contain
- estimates given in letters

### Tenders:

- when and why they are issued
- information they contain

### Proforma invoices:

- when and why they might be issued
- information they contain

### Ordering and orders:

- what is involved in the process
- when orders should be “in writing”
- placing orders orally and in order forms
- placing orders in letters

### Repeat orders:

- action to avoid incorrect deliveries, overcharging, etc

### Increasing order sizes

### Acknowledgement or confirmation of orders:

- using preprinted forms
- in letters

### The meaning of “credit” in business:

- buying and selling “on credit”
- sales invoices

### Checking creditworthiness:

- trade and bank references

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referees  
trade enquiry agents

**Forms:**

reasons for the use of forms in business  
manual and computerised production

Exchanges of letters

***Improving English: Part 2 - Sentences and Paragraphs***

**Sentences:**

writing complete sentences  
the subject and predicate of a sentence  
starting with a capital letter, ending with a full stop

**Paragraphs:**

grouping sentences with similar topics  
separating paragraphs  
single-sentence paragraphs

**Continuity:**

presenting the message in a logical sequence  
common order of paragraphs complimentary  
closes

***Module 3 - Letters Concerning Employment and Promotion (1)***

Receiving and writing letters

Letters with different objectives

Letters seeking employment:

why they might need to be written

presentation:

the paper  
handwriting, typing, electronic production  
the layout of letters  
the envelope

contents - a balance between:

providing all required information  
providing information in a brief but appealing style  
examination of a specimen employment application form

letters written by:

a person seeking a "first job"  
a person seeking alternative employment  
a person who has lost a previous job  
people wishing to "return" to work

Newspapers advertisements:

box or voucher numbers

Postscripts to letters:

why they are used  
where they may be positioned

Attachments to employment application letters:

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recommendations, references, testimonials  
certificates, diplomas, school reports  
curriculum vitae - CV

Examination of letters written:

to call applicants for employment interviews  
to unsuitable applicants  
to promise positions soon

Finite verbs:

subjects and objects of sentences  
when to use "I am" or "We are" in closing expressions

### ***Improving English: Part 3 - Compound Sentences and Conjunctions***

Compound sentences:

building from two or more sentences and/or phrases

Conjunctions:

linking or "joining words"

common conjunctions:

examples of their use in compound sentences

Correct use of who and whom

### ***Module 4 - Letters Concerning Employment and Promotion (2)***

Job vacancies:

how they might arise, and be "filled"

Meaning and process of recruitment

Internal recruitment:

personnel already working in the business

why letters might need to be written:

seeking internal transfer

seeking promotion

External recruitment:

sources of new employees from outside the business:

school, colleges, universities, professional bodies

advertising in newspapers and/or journals using

websites

Letters replying to employees' letters:

positive replies

negative replies

Copies of a letter to others in addition to the addressee:

why that might be necessary

the initials c.c.

advantages of emails

Letters of appointment:

terms and conditions of appointment

Letters of rejection:

treatment of unsuccessful applicants

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why information may be retained on file  
Employee recommendations and references:  
    requesting a reference from a former employer  
    giving information about a former employee  
        direct to a prospective employer  
    reference for an employee's retention

### ***Improving English: Part 4 - Nouns and Pronouns***

Nouns:

    proper nouns

    number:

        singular and plural

        forming plural nouns

    gender:

        male, female, common and neuter

    possessive nouns:

        showing ownership or use by

        singular and plural nouns

Pronouns:

    use in place of nouns:

        avoiding repetition, improving the flow of sentences

    personal pronouns:

        1st, 2nd and 3rd persons, singular and plural

    subjective pronouns

    objective pronouns

    possessive pronouns

    emphatic pronouns

    interrogative pronouns

    demonstrative pronouns

    indefinite pronouns

    matters to remember when using pronouns

### ***Module 5 - Letters Concerning Accounting, Other Financial Matters***

Accounting/financial terms and expressions:

    term and terms

    account and accounts

    the ledger

    assets

    liabilities

    debtors

    creditors

    capital

    income and expenditure

    profit - net and gross

    loss - net and gross

Documents used in accounting for credit:

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invoices:

- why they are issued, what they contain

credit notes:

- reasons for issue, what they contain

statements of account:

- information they contain

- when and why they are sent to credit customers

Credit terms commonly used in business:

- monthly accounts

- fixed periods of credit

credit control:

- why this is essential in business

credit limits:

- why they are set, their value in credit control

Objectives of accounts or financial letters:

- overdue account letters

- final warning or final demand letters

- reminder about credit limit

- informing a new credit customer of terms and credit limit

- exchange of correspondence about accounts matters

References on business letters:

- why they are used

- their value to the addressor and addressee

- creating references for business letters

### ***Improving English: Part 5 - Adjectives***

The role performed by adjectives in

- describing or qualifying the meanings of nouns and pronouns

- using nouns and pronouns as adjectives possessive adjectives

difference between adjectives and pronouns

comparison of adjectives:

- positive, comparative, superlative:

- examples of their use:

- errors to be avoided

avoiding errors commonly made with adjectives

indirect articles:

- using 'a' and 'an' correctly

direct article:

- when and when not to use 'the'

numbers:

- cardinal and ordinal

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## ***Module 6 - Letters Between Employees***

### Communication:

- the essential features

- oral, written, audio, visual communication

- external communication:

  - contacts outside the business

- internal communication:

  - need for effective communication within the business

  - vertical and horizontal or lateral communication

  - when communications should be “in writing”

Types of letters written between employees, including:

- arranging meetings

- admonishing a subordinate

- final warning letters

- congratulating/rewarding subordinates

### Memoranda:

- respects in which they might differ from “full” letters

- why these differences are permissible

- calling a meeting:

  - comparison between a “full” letter and a memo

- information about customers purchase/stores

- requirements

- admonishing subordinates

## ***Improving English: Part 6 - Abbreviations and Verbs***

### Abbreviations:

- what they are

- when they can be used

- when they should not be used

- lists of commonly used abbreviations

  - with “full” meanings and explanations

- abbreviations of country and place names

- dates

- currencies, weights and measures

- technical words and terms

### Verbs:

- tenses:

  - present, future and past

  - conjugations:

    - simple and continuous

- agreement in number

- forming continuous present tenses

- forming simple past tenses

- forming continuous past tenses

- forming simple future tenses

- forming continuous future tenses

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### **Module 7 - Sales Letters (1)**

The primary aim of sales letters

Categories of sales letters

Sales terms and expressions:

- products - goods and services

- buyers - customers and clients, consumers, commercial buyers

The five steps leading to a transaction

Conjugating the verb To Sell:

- mistakes to be avoided

Essential features of effective sales letters:

- layout and general appearance

- letterheads

- the wording

- styles and tones of writing:

  - the affect of buying motives

  - the contents/the message

First approach sales letters:

- to whom they are written

- the importance of persuasion

- two letters introducing the same products

  - examined, compared and contrasted

- longer letters containing detailed information:

  - following the five steps to a transaction

Postscripts (PS):

- when and why they might be used in sales letters

- examples of their use

Sales literature:

- catalogues and brochures

- price lists

- letters accompanying sales literature:

  - letting the literature "do the talking"

Discounts:

- when and why they might be offered:

  - trade discount

  - quantity discount

  - regular custom discount

  - prompt payment discount

Manufacturers' warranties and guarantees:

- why they are offered

- their value in selling

### **Improving English: Part 7 - Adverbs**

What they are

Kinds:

- showing time, place, degree, manner

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Positioning  
Comparison:  
positive, comparative, superlative

*This Module contains Specimen Letters (56) to (59)*

### **Module 8 - Sales Letters (2)**

Sales circulars:  
how they might differ from individual letters  
circumstances in which they might be used  
specimens examined  
addressees of sales circulars  
Circulars about matters other than sales:  
specimens examined  
Responses to enquiries:  
the information provided  
the response time  
whether to write or not  
compliment slips:  
what they are  
their uses  
specimens examined  
Confirmations of orders:  
welcoming new customers  
building good relationships  
Additional or related sales

### **Improving English: Part 8 - Prepositions**

Showing the connection or relationship between words  
Commonly used prepositions  
Combinations of prepositions  
Verbs needing specific prepositions  
Verbs implying prepositions  
Adjectives needing special prepositions  
Pronouns which follow prepositions

*This Module contains Specimen Letters (60) to (65)*

### **Module 9 - Sales Letters (3)**

Follow-up sales letters:  
reasons why they might be written  
offering something new or extra  
letters as “reminders” of first approach visits  
letters following-up first approach letters  
preprinted follow-up letters

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providing additional information/quotations  
expectations from follow-up letters:  
    keeping information before prospects  
follow-up letters to prospective clients  
sales follow-ups in the form of circulars  
Letters aimed at customer retention:  
    the need to retain existing customers:  
        keeping customers “informed”  
    letters to existing trade customers  
    letters about increased prices/charges  
    letters accompanying new sales literature  
    letters to “lapsed” customers  
    circulars to existing consumer customers  
The buying motives of wholesalers:  
    what they look for in products  
The buying motives of retailers:  
    what they look for in products  
Sale or return terms:  
    what is involved  
    their value in making sales

### ***Improving English: Part 9 - Positive and Negative Sentences***

Using the adverb “not” to change:  
    statements of fact, questions, replies, answers,  
        responses and commands  
From positive to negative sentences  
Positioning of the word “not” with:  
    verbs made up of two words  
    verbs made up of three words  
Using shortened words isn’t and aren’t

### ***Module 10 - Letters Concerning Complaints***

Complaints and complainants  
Justified complaints:  
    common reasons why they might arise  
    extenuating circumstances  
Unjustified complaints:  
    common reasons why they might arise  
Types of letters involving complaints which  
    might have to be written  
Objectives of letters concerning complaints  
Tones of letters concerning complaints  
Aiming to settle complaints amicably  
Examples of letters making complaints  
    with examples of letters of reply to them concerning:  
        incorrect delivery of order  
        faulty manufacture of goods

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faulty machinery/equipment  
breach of agreement  
Follow-ups to complaints  
Introductory statements in letters:  
    their use as references  
Positioning and emphasis of letter references  
Signing “for and on behalf of”  
The use of “Messrs”

### ***Improving English: Part 10 - Punctuation***

Stress, emphasis, tone and inflexion in speaking  
Why punctuation is needed in writing  
Ways in which punctuation helps writers and readers  
Examples showing the importance of punctuation  
A business letter examined twice:  
    (i) with punctuation marks, and (ii) without punctuation marks  
Using capital letters:  
    to begin sentences  
    for important names and proper nouns  
    for the word I  
Punctuation marks:  
    Full stops or period points:  
        to end sentences  
        indicating pauses  
        indicating abbreviations  
    Commas:  
        indicating short pauses

*This Module contains Specimen Letters (82) to (92)*

### ***Module 11 - Letters on Miscellaneous Topics (1)***

Occupations, professionals and “the Professions”  
Private letters:  
    social letters  
    letters to those whose occupations affect the writers  
    how private letters differ from business letters  
Examples (two in each) of “exchanges” of letters  
    between:  
        a government department and a citizen  
        an accountancy firm and a client



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the College Principal and a College Member  
a bank manager and a bank customer  
a school headmaster and a parent  
a lawyer and a client

How “official” letters might differ from other business letters

Signing letters on behalf of a firm

Signing letters “for” a senior:

the word “for” typed or handwritten  
the initials p.p. typed or handwritten

### ***Improving English: Part 11 - More about Punctuation***

The uses of:

Colons

Semicolons

Dashes:

separating parts of sentences, linking words

Colon and dash

Brackets

Question marks

Exclamation marks

Quotation marks/inverted commas:

direct speech and indirect or reported speech

Apostrophes:

showing possession

showing the omission of letters

### ***Module 12 - Letters on Miscellaneous Topics (2)***

The value of letter references

Copies of letters

Files and records

The functions of filing

Filing schemes:

alphabetic

numeric

chronologic

geographic

subject

Previous correspondence

The use of copies in a practical situation:

a Specimen Letter of complaint

and a reply to it

Specimen Letters:

seeking sponsorship for an event

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from a prospective importer to a business in another country  
and a response from the exporter  
giving advance notice of a possible delivery delay  
sending a donation to a charity

Feedback:

what it involves and its importance in communications  
acknowledgements of orders, etc follow-up if feedback  
is not forthcoming;  
problems which can be avoided

### ***Improving English: Part 12 - The Confusion of Words***

The confusion of words:

same pronunciation but different meanings  
same pronunciation but different meanings and spellings  
similar sounding but different meanings and spellings  
lists of words commonly confused,  
with example sentences  
and explanations to help avoid errors

### ***Developing Writing Style***

#### ***The Effects of Modern Technology***

Dangers of the “debasement” of languages:  
misunderstandings and misconceptions caused  
by shortcuts and abbreviated words  
Common faults and errors to avoid