

English for Office Skills (8960)

Qualification handbook



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1 English for Office Skills

1.1 Overview

The City & Guilds English for Office Skills examinations are designed to meet the needs of organisations which value the accurate use of written English in their transactions. Typical candidates for these assessments are clerical or secretarial staff who may not have to draft original documents, but are certainly expected to prepare final drafts, or prepare documents for publication. The principal skills tested are linguistic accuracy (spelling, syntax, vocabulary and punctuation), comprehension (listening and reading) and proof-reading.

As with English for Business Communications (8959), assessment is undertaken mainly through practical tasks based on realistic documents. Because spelling is one of the principal skills tested, the use of dictionaries is not allowed in these examinations.

2 English for Office Skills Level 1

2.1 Aims and Objectives

Aim

The aim of the examination is to measure the candidate's accuracy in the use and transcription of English at an elementary level, and the ability to perform simple office-related tasks in accordance with spoken and written instructions.

Target Population

The examination is suitable for candidates whose first language is English or for speakers of other languages who wish to acquire certification for their accuracy in English usage. Candidates may include people working in or studying for the following occupational areas:

- text and document production (eg secretaries, typists and typesetters)
- office administration
- proof-reading
- sub editing

The subject areas tested support some of the underpinning knowledge required for the UK NVQ Level 1 in Administration.

Objectives

Candidates should be able to demonstrate the following:

Listening

- spell difficult words in a given context
- transfer a spoken message into written form

Reading

- demonstrate an understanding of a written passage
- identify and correct grammatical errors in a written text
- proof-read documents, with and without access to the original

Writing

- distinguish correct word forms for a given context
- provide appropriate punctuation to a given text

2 English for Office Skills Level 1

2.2 The examination paper structure

The English for Office Skills Level 1 examination consists of a 1 hour written examination divided into 2 sections:

Section A – Dictated Spelling and Listening Comprehension.

Section B – Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Accuracy.

SECTION A – 15 minutes

1 Spelling (20%)

20 sentences are read aloud. One word from each sentence is repeated. The candidate must spell the repeated word. The context of sentences relates to the office or business environment.

2 Listening Comprehension (10%)

A short, simple message is read aloud twice. The candidate should use the information from the passage to complete a form or to communicate a message to a third person. The language used in the passage is that of natural spoken English.

SECTION B – 45 minutes

3 Reading Comprehension (10%)

The candidate studies a written passage taken from a newspaper or magazine article. He or she must then complete sentences which are based on information in the passage.

4 Syntax (15%)

The candidate studies 15 sentences, each of which contains 1 error of grammar or syntax. The candidate must identify and correct each error.

5 Vocabulary (10%)

The candidate studies 10 sentences, each of which contains a word whose spelling is easily confused with another. Two alternative words are given, and the candidate must select the most appropriate word for the context.

6 Punctuation (10%)

The candidate reads a short passage from which punctuation and capitalization have been omitted. The passage must be re-written correctly. Colons and semi-colons are not tested in the Level 1 examination.

7 **Proof-reading (A)** (10%)

The candidate compares 2 short tables of figures and must identify 10 errors in the second table. Errors need not be corrected.

8 **Proof-reading (B)** (15%)

The candidate proof-reads a business letter, memorandum or other communication prior to despatch. The document contains 15 errors of typography, spelling and/or punctuation which must be identified. Errors need not be corrected.

Assessment

To be awarded a Pass, candidates must achieve a total of 60 marks (60%). A First Class Pass will be awarded to candidates achieving 75% or more.

3 English for Office Skills Level 2

3.1 Aims and Objectives

Aim

The aim of the examination is to measure the candidate's accuracy in the use and transcription of English at an intermediate level, and the ability to perform office-related tasks in accordance with spoken and written instructions.

Target Population

The examination is suitable for candidates whose first language is English or for speakers of other languages who wish to acquire certification for their accuracy in English usage. Candidates may include people working in or studying for the following occupational areas:

- text and document production (eg secretaries, typists and typesetters)
- office administration
- proof-reading
- sub editing

Subject areas tested support some of the underpinning knowledge required for UK NVQ Level 2 in Administration.

Objectives

Candidates should be able to demonstrate the following:

Listening

- spell difficult words in a given context
- transfer a spoken message into written form

Reading

- demonstrate an understanding of a written passage
- identify and correct grammatical errors in a written text
- proof-read documents, with and without access to the original

Writing

- distinguish correct word forms for a given context
- provide appropriate punctuation to a given text

3 English for Office Skills Level 2

3.2 The examination paper structure

The English for Office Skills Level 2 examination consists of a 1 hour written examination divided into 2 sections:

Section A – Dictated Spelling and Listening Comprehension tests

Section B – Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Accuracy.

SECTION A – 15 minutes

1 **Spelling** (20%)

20 sentences are read aloud. One word from each sentence is repeated. The candidate must spell the repeated word. The context of sentences relates to the office or business environment.

2 **Listening Comprehension** (10%)

A short message is read aloud twice. The candidate should use the information from the passage to complete a form or to communicate a message to a third person. The language used in the passage is that of natural spoken English.

SECTION B – 45 minutes

3 **Reading Comprehension** (10%)

The candidate studies a written passage taken from a newspaper or magazine article. He or she must then complete sentences which are based on information in the passage.

4 **Syntax** (20%)

The candidate studies a continuous passage which contains 10 errors. The candidate must identify and correct each error.

5 **Vocabulary** (10%)

The candidate studies 10 sentences, each of which contains a word whose spelling is easily confused with another. Two alternative words are given, and the candidate must select the most appropriate word for the context.

6 **Punctuation** (15%)

The candidate reads a short passage from which punctuation and capitalization have been omitted. The passage must be re-written correctly. All punctuation may be tested at level 2.

7 **Proof-reading (A)** (5%)

The candidate compares 2 short tables of figures and must identify 5 errors in the second table. Errors need not be corrected.

8 **Proof-reading (B)** (10%)

The candidate proof-reads a business letter, memorandum or other communication prior to despatch. The document contains 10 errors of typography, spelling and/or punctuation which must be identified. Errors need not be corrected.

Assessment

To be awarded a Pass, candidates must achieve a total of 60 marks (60%). A First Class Pass will be awarded to candidates achieving 75% or more.

4 Tips for Candidates and Centres

This examination is available at Levels 1 and 2 – both take 1 hour each.

The aim at both levels is to measure the candidate's accuracy in the use and transcription of English and the ability to perform office related tasks in accordance with spoken and written instructions. Candidates must be able to work quickly and precisely – many candidates fail simply because they run out of time.

SPELLING

20 sentences are read aloud. One word from each sentence is repeated. The candidate must spell the repeated word. A spelling list from which the twenty words will be chosen is attached.

Preparation for Spelling Test

- Candidates need regular spelling tests (using the City and Guilds' list) in order to prepare for this part of the paper
- It's a good idea to use the format of reading a sentence and then repeating the word when practising for the examination.
- Candidates should make sure they understand the instruction about alterations:

Alterations to Spellings

Example:

| SPELLING | ALTERATION (if needed) |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| • thirty | |
| • similar | similar |
| • usual | |

LISTENING COMPREHENSION

A message is read out twice by the invigilator. Candidates then use the information given in the message to complete a form to communicate the message to a third person.

Preparation for Listening Comprehension

Candidates need lots of practice, before the examination, in taking down a variety of messages on a variety of forms, including telephone message pads, booking forms and diaries.

Tips for Listening Comprehension

- Use the initial 10 seconds wisely – look at where different information should go on the form
- At the first reading, make rough notes on as much as possible then identify any information missed in the 20 seconds allowed
- At the second reading, make rough notes of any information not taken the first time
- Fill in the information quickly and precisely in the following 2 minutes

READING COMPREHENSION

The candidate studies a written passage from a newspaper or magazine article and then completes sentences based on the information in the passage.

Preparation for Reading Comprehension

In addition to reading and understanding suitable passages, candidates need to practise inserting words or phrases into sentences whilst ensuring the sentence remains grammatically correct. They should also avoid unnecessary repetition.

NB words may need to be inserted in the answers in a different order to that in which they appear in the passage.

Tips for Reading Comprehension

Candidates are advised to spend no more than 10 minutes on this task.

It is a good idea to read the questions first so that candidates know the information they are looking for in the passage. Check the sentence makes sense after inserting a word or phrase.

Example:

Passage

What is wrong with this answer?

The financial services industry is preparing itself to deal with the problems which may be caused by the “millennium bug”.

Firms in the **...financial services industry ...**sector are particularly anxious about the “millennium bug”.

Answer: the word ‘industry’ is not needed.

Example:

Passage

What is wrong with this answer?

There is still far too much talk and not enough action.

There is too little **...talk...** and an excess of **...action...**

Answer: the words ‘talk’ and ‘action’ are in the wrong places. It should read:

There is too little ... **action** ... and an excess of **...talk** ...

SYNTAX

- Candidates are asked to correct grammatical errors.
- At Level 1 there are 15 sentences with 1 error in each.
- At Level 2 there are 10 errors in a continuous passage.

Preparation for Syntax

Candidates need to learn and practise using a wide range of grammatical constructions, eg

- Agreement of subject and verb
- Correct use of negatives
- Use of pronouns
- Correct choice of to/too/two
- Correct choice of of/off/have
- Correct choice of they're/their/there
- Choosing the correct tense
- Correct use of a/an
- Correct choice of who/what/which/that.
- Correct use of comparatives and superlatives.

Suggested materials

Any English Grammar book should provide practice.

Reading good English newspapers and magazines can help candidates get used to reading correct English and make it easier for them to spot errors.

Tips for Syntax Exercise

Candidates should make sure they identify the error precisely. They should only write out the correction.

1. Either of them **are** acceptable to me.

.....**is**.....

VOCABULARY

The candidate should select the correct word from a choice of two similar words and insert the correct word in the sentence.

Preparation for Vocabulary

The preparation for the vocabulary exercise is the same as that for Syntax. The vocabulary lists on pages 19 and 20 should be studied carefully in advance of the examination.

Example:

She had never... **heard**....that speaker before. (heard/herd)

PUNCTUATION

The candidate is asked to write out a passage inserting the correct punctuation.

All punctuation may be tested at Level 2. Colons and semi colons are not tested at Level 1.

Preparation for Punctuation

The preparation for the punctuation exercise is the same as that for Syntax.

Tips for Punctuation Exercise

Candidates should be aware of the following:

- Sentences start with capital letters
- All proper nouns (names) have capital letters. eg Margaret, Kowloon, The Bank of Hong Kong
- The letter 'I' on its own is always a capital
- Speech marks go **before** and **after** *the actual words said*. eg She said, "I don't want to share a room"
- Don't forget the final full stop
- Two or more adjectives together are separated by a comma. eg My loyal, dedicated and highly efficient staff
- Additional information (which could be bracketed) is separated from the rest of the text with commas. eg James, the new assistant, went home

PROOF-READING

Section A

In the first section candidates are asked to compare 2 tables of figures and correct the errors.

Candidates must identify the errors on the **incorrect** (second) version.

Candidates should simply ring the error:

Example:

£1 234 £1 243

Candidates **must not correct** the errors.

PROOF-READING

Section B

Candidates should identify the errors (15 at level 1, 10 at Level 2) precisely by putting a ring around them. The errors will be spelling, typing, punctuation and inconsistencies (eg incorrect form of verb). These are all elements previously tested.

Candidates should simply ring the error:

Eg plamm^oed

Candidates **must not correct** the errors.

Preparation for Proof-reading

Sample papers give the best practice as the same types of errors occur in all papers.

ENGLISH FOR OFFICE SKILLS – LEVEL 1
EL-OFFN 11 – Spelling List

NB Words tested may include those listed here, and their derivatives (eg recommend/recommendation). Alternative American spellings are acceptable.

| | | | |
|--------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| A | Computer | G | Planning |
| Absence | Conscious | Government | Privilege |
| Accommodate | Convenient | Guarantee | Probably |
| Achieved | Correspondence | Guard | |
| Acknowledge | Criticism | | R |
| Acquaintance | | H | Receive |
| Acquire | D | Height | Recommend |
| Address | Deceive | | Referred |
| Aggravate | Decision | I | Reference |
| Agreeable | Deficient | Immediately | Relieved |
| Amateur | Definite | Importance | |
| Apparent | Desirable | Independent | S |
| Appropriate | Despair | Instalment | Scarcely |
| Argument | Desperate | | Seize |
| Attention | Disappointed | L | Secretaries |
| Audio | Disastrous | Liaison | Separate |
| Awful | Dissatisfied | Losing | Shining |
| | | Lying | Similar |
| B | E | | Sincerely |
| Bachelor | Efficient | M | Specimen |
| Bargain | Eighth | Maintain | Successful |
| Beautiful | Embarrass(ed) | Maintenance | Surprising |
| Beginning | Enthusiasm | Manufacture | |
| Believed | Equipped | Minutes | T |
| Breathe | Epecially | Mortgage | Technical |
| Budgeted | Exaggerated | | Transferred |
| Business | Excellent | N | Truly |
| | Exercise | Necessary | |
| C | Expenses | Negotiate | U |
| Calculation | Extremely | Noticeable | Unnecessary |
| Category | | | Usual(ly) |
| Certainly | F | O | |
| Clothes | Familiar | Occasion | V |
| College | Fascinate | Occurred | Valuable |
| Colleagues | February | Omitted | View |
| Coming | Foreign | | |
| Committee | Forty | P | W |
| Comparative | Friend | Parliament | Wednesday |
| Completely | | Particularly | *** |

ENGLISH FOR OFFICE SKILLS – LEVEL 2
EL-OFFN 12 – Spelling List A-H

NB Words tested may include those listed in the Level 1 Spelling List in addition to those here, and their derivatives (eg recommend/recommendation). Alternative American spellings are acceptable.

| A | Calibrate | E | G |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Abbreviate | Calm | Easily | Generally |
| Abundant | Cancel | Ecological | Generous |
| Accelerate | Cancellation | Economically | Gimmick |
| Accessory | Capitalise/ize | Editorial | Governess |
| Accomplish | Carriage | Effortless | Governor |
| Accountant | Catastrophe | Eighteenth | Graceful |
| acquiesce | Clearance | Elaborate | Gracious |
| Admittance | Coalesce | Elapse | Gradually |
| Allowance | Coarse | Embargo | Grammatical |
| Alteration | Colonial | Embellish | Grandiose |
| Amenable | Colonel | Embezzle | Grateful |
| Amend(ment) | Commentary | Emphasis | Gratuity |
| Analytical | Commission | Envelope | |
| Answer | Conference | Equality | H |
| Application | Conscientious | Erratic | Habitual |
| Answer | Constituent | Erroneous | Halve |
| Application | Contradictory | Exceed | Happiness |
| Appreciate | Coordinate | Exceptional | Harmful |
| Apprenticeship | | Excessive | Harmless |
| Appointment | D | Exempt | Heart |
| Ascertain | Dangerous | Exhibition | Hierarchy |
| Associate | Damage | Expediency | Hitch |
| Attached | Database | | Honestly |
| Authoritarian | Deceptive | F | Honorary |
| Authority | Decisive | Facsimile | Horrendous |
| | Defendant | Faithfully | Hostility |
| B | Defensive | Familiarity | Humorous |
| Balance | Definition | Feasible | Hygienic |
| Barrier | Deliberation | Forecast | Hypocritical |
| Belligerent | Delete | Fourteen | |
| Beneficiary | Demarcation | Fraught | |
| Board | Dependable | Fundamental | |
| Brief | Despondent | | |
| Bureau(x/s) | Dilemma | | |
| | Disassociate | | |
| C | Discourteous | | |
| Cabinet | Doubtful | | |

ENGLISH FOR OFFICE SKILLS – LEVEL 2
EL-OFFN 12 – Spelling List

NB Words tested may include those listed in the level 1 list in addition to those here, and their derivatives (eg recommend/recommendation). Alternative American spellings are acceptable.

| | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|
| I | Journalism | Methodical | Ought | Reassure |
| Ideally | Judiciary | Meticulous | Overwhelm | Recapitulate |
| Idiosyncrasy | Justice | Miniature | | Reckoning |
| Ignorance | Juxtapose | Misconceive | P | Recommendation |
| Illegal | | Misconstrue | Painstaking | Recompense |
| Illiterate | K | Misdemeanour | Paragraph | Redundant |
| Illuminate | Knowledgeable | Misappropriate | Parallel(ed) | Reinforce |
| Imaginary | Kneel | Miscellaneous | Paradox | Relevant |
| Imminent | Kilometre | Moderately | Partially | Reliable |
| Impartial | | Monetary | Peak | Reservation |
| Impatient | L | Monstrous | Pedestrian | Respectful |
| Impeccable | Laboratory | Mournful | Perceive | Responsible |
| Impediment | Laughter | Multiplicity | Performance | Restaurant |
| Impolite | League | Municipality | Permanent | Roster |
| Implement | Legislature | Mutual | Permissible | Rota |
| Implacable | Leisurely | | Persevere | Rudimentary |
| Impulsive | Lenient | N | Personality | |
| Inaccessible | Lessen | Necessarily | Persuade | S |
| Inaccurate | Liability | Necessity | Phraseology | Saboteur |
| Inadequacy | Listen | Negligible | Possessive | Sacrifice |
| Inadvertently | Literally | Negotiable | Practice | Satisfactory |
| Incalculable | Location | Neighbour | Practise | Scrupulous |
| Incidentally | Loose | Neither | Precedence | Segregate |
| Inconclusive | Lucrative | Nevertheless | Preference | Sensitivity |
| Inconvenience | Ludicrous | Notable | Principle | Significant |
| Incorruptible | | Notorious | Processor | Statistician |
| Increasingly | M | Notwithstanding | Proprietor | Status quo |
| Indifference | Magazine | Nuisance | Psychology | Subsequent |
| Indiscriminate | Malign | | Punctually | Summary |
| Indispensable | Management | O | | Supposedly |
| Insensitive | Managerial | Obedient | Q | Surfeit |
| Insufficient | Mandatory | Obituary | Questionable | Susceptible |
| Intellectual | Manoeuvre | Obsolete | Questionnaire | |
| Introductory | Marginal | Occurrence | Queue | T |
| Irrevocable | Material | Official | Quotation | Technician |
| | Mathematician | Omission | | Twelfth |
| J | Meaningful | Operative | R | |
| January | Measurement | Optimum | Rationale | * * * * * |
| Jeopardy | Mechanical | Orator | Reappraisal | |

ENGLISH FOR OFFICE SKILLS – LEVEL 1
EL-OFFN 11 – Vocabulary List

| | | |
|--------------|--------------|---------|
| accent | ascent | |
| access | excess | |
| accord | accordance | |
| adapted | adopted | |
| advice | advise | |
| affect | effect | |
| board | bored | |
| check | cheque | |
| cited | sited | |
| complemented | complimented | |
| continually | continuously | |
| defer | deter | |
| device | devise | |
| draft | draught | |
| eminent | imminent | |
| ensure | insure | |
| exact | extract | |
| knew | new | |
| later | latter | |
| lead | led | |
| leant | lent | |
| loan | lone | |
| loose | lose | |
| luxuriant | luxurious | |
| meter | metre | |
| of | off | |
| personal | personnel | |
| perspective | prospective | |
| practice | practise | |
| principal | principle | |
| re-form | reform | |
| relief | relieve | |
| role | roll | |
| sociable | social | |
| stationary | stationery | |
| suit | suite | |
| taught | taut | |
| their | there | they're |
| to | too | two |
| weather | whether | |
| were | where | |

ENGLISH FOR OFFICE SKILLS – LEVEL 2

EL-OFFN 12 – Vocabulary List

Candidates may be tested on any of the vocabulary on the Level 1 List, in addition to the vocabulary below.

| | |
|---------------|---------------|
| adverse | averse |
| ambiguous | ambivalent |
| aspired | inspired |
| avert | overt |
| biannual | biennial |
| childish | childlike |
| complementary | complimentary |
| confirmation | conformation |
| contemptible | contemptuous |
| council | counsel |
| deduce | deduct |
| deduction | reduction |
| definite | definitive |
| elapsed | lapsed |
| elicit | illicit |
| eligible | illegible |
| expand | expend |
| expansive | expensive |
| formally | formerly |
| gilt | guilt |
| hoard | horde |
| honorary | honourable |
| impending | pending |
| infer | imply |
| inferred | implied |
| instant | instantaneous |
| intense | intensive |
| intimated | intimidated |
| loath | loathe |
| moral | morale |
| negligent | negligible |
| objection | objective |
| phase | phrase |
| plain | plane |
| raised | razed |
| rational | rationale |
| recourse | resource |
| refuse | refute |
| sedate | sedated |
| straightened | straitened |
| urban | urbane |

5 English for Office Skills Sample Papers

8960-11-011
(EL-OFFN 11)
Sample 1

Instructions to Invigilators

NB It is recommended that, in addition to the Invigilator, there should be a Reader for Section A. The Reader may prepare the text while the Invigilator supervises the completion of the pre-examination administration.

The use of dictionaries is not permitted.

Time allowed: 1 hour

Tell candidates to open their examination papers and then start timing the examination.

Instructions to Readers

*NB Read aloud the text which is **not** in italics. Read at normal reading speed.*

Question 1 Spelling

You will hear twenty sentences. One word from each sentence will be repeated. Write the repeated word against the correct number in the space provided. If you wish to make an alteration please use the right-hand column.

Read out the following sentences. After each sentence, repeat the word in bold. Allow 10 seconds between each sentence.

- 1 The spotlight was **shining** directly into her eyes.
- 2 He **omitted** to tell them about the delivery.
- 3 When did you **receive** the information.
- 4 The company **usually** gives its employees a holiday bonus.
- 5 The builder chose the site because of the **view**.
- 6 He always **seized** every opportunity.
- 7 The **liaison** officer consulted his opposite number.
- 8 She was **sincerely** sorry about the incident.

- 9 It was a **privilege** to work for him.
- 10 The boy was happy to be in **familiar** surroundings.
- 11 She **transferred** the files to another directory.
- 12 The mistake was **completely** understandable.
- 13 The new equipment was a **bargain**.
- 14 He was warned to be more careful with his **expenses**.
- 15 I am sure **exercise** is good for you.
- 16 The **maintenance** contract was due for renewal.
- 17 We agreed that he should pay by **instalments**.
- 18 He hoped that the correct **decision** would be made.
- 19 Did the programme hold your **attention**?
- 20 I have always wanted to make your **acquaintance**.

(20 marks)

Question 2 Listening Comprehension

Look at the form. (10 seconds.) Listen carefully to the message and complete the form.

You will hear the message twice.

Ready?

Hello, this is Scott Incorporated. I'd like to leave a message for Jo Austin. Could you tell her the meeting tomorrow is in the Production Manager's office at 2.15 pm? Can she please bring the Development file and the details of possible overseas contacts? Please ask her to confirm both the place and the time. Thank you.

(10 marks)

(Wait 20 seconds before reading the message again. After the second reading allow candidates 2 minutes to complete the form.)

This is the end of Section A. Turn to Section B and complete the questions in Section B.

English for Office Skills

Level 1

This paper must be returned with the candidate's work, otherwise the entry will be void and no result will be issued.



8960-11-011
(EL-OFFN 11)
Sample 1

Candidate's name (Block letters please)

Centre no

Date

Time allowed: **1 hour**

Answer **all** questions in Section A and Section B.

Section A - Spelling

- Listening Comprehension

Section B - Reading Comprehension

- Syntax
- Vocabulary
- Punctuation
- Proof-reading (A)
- Proof-reading (B)

Your answers should be written in the question booklet in the spaces provided.

All answers must be written in ink.

For examiner's use only

| Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q5 | Q6 | Q7 | Q8 | Total |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-------|
| 20 | 10 | 10 | 15 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 15 | 100 |
| | | | | | | | | |

SECTION A

1 SPELLING

You will hear twenty sentences. One word from each sentence will be repeated. Write the repeated word against the correct number in the space provided. If you wish to make an alteration please use the right-hand column.

| | SPELLING | ALTERATION (if needed) |
|----|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | | |
| 6 | | |
| 7 | | |
| 8 | | |
| 9 | | |
| 10 | | |
| 11 | | |
| 12 | | |
| 13 | | |
| 14 | | |
| 15 | | |
| 16 | | |
| 17 | | |
| 18 | | |
| 19 | | |
| 20 | | |

(20 marks)

2 LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Look at the form. Listen carefully to the message and complete the form. You will hear the message twice.

MESSAGE FORM

To

Department

From

Department

Date

TELEPHONED

CALLED TO SEE YOU

MESSAGE

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Message taken by

(10 marks)

3 READING COMPREHENSION

Read this passage carefully in order to complete the sentences which follow with an appropriate word or phrase.

You are advised to spend no more than 10 minutes on this task.

DEVELOPMENTS IN AIRLINE TICKETING

Remember how you used to book an airline ticket? Now things have changed. All you have to do is ring your travel agent or the airline, book and pay for a flight over the phone. Then turn up at the airport, check in and board. No ticket is necessary.

This is how electronic ticketing (e-ticketing) works. And although it has not quite ushered in paperless travel – a boarding pass is issued, and a fax sent confirming itinerary and receipt of payment – it is widely used for domestic services.

There is now no need to deliver tickets to the traveller's office or home, and panics over tickets on departure are no longer an issue. Last minute changes to a journey are possible without altering the ticket.

The itinerary is also proof of payment for the return ticket. This reassures customs and immigration officials on arrival at your destination that your visit is only temporary. It can also act as a reminder if the trip has to be cancelled and a refund arranged.

It is said that the benefits are cost saving for the airlines. On the other hand, e-ticketing makes it more difficult for passengers to change airlines as they still have to find someone to issue a paper ticket so that it can be altered and used for travel with another carrier.

However, passengers have as yet seen no benefit from the savings made by airlines. The system is still inefficient which means that travellers are paying a high price in inconvenience for the considerable savings of which the airline alone is aware.

Passengers are entirely in the hands of the carrier holding the e-ticket reservation. Paper tickets are still essential if a system crashes, if refunds are needed or if there is a last minute change of mind about the timing or destination of the flight. Until ticketless travel is easier, more reassuring and cheaper, there is no benefit to the traveller.

- 1 Booking and payment for a flight under the electronic ticketing system involves the use of a
- 2 Paperwork is still required by the e-ticketing scheme to produce a and a confirmation of.....
- 3 In past years anxiety was caused by.....which did notbefore departure.
- 4 A return ticket can the authorities of a traveller's intention to leave the country after his visit.
- 5 The main benefit to the airline iscost.
- 6 Passengers have not benefited from the new system because of in its operation.
- 7 Failure of the flight booking computer system necessitates.....
- 8 At present the main beneficiaries under the new scheme are

(10 marks)

4 SYNTAX

In each of the following sentences, there is ONE error of grammar or syntax. Circle the error and write the correction in the space provided.

- 1 None of the candidates were right for the job.
- 2 Less students sat the exam this year.
- 3 Of the two offices I prefer mine better.
- 4 He would of gone to the meeting if he had known about it.....
- 5 I believe they're slower than what we are.
- 6 She told us they were bored of the job.
- 7 It don't seem right to me.
- 8 We need to find them papers quickly.
- 9 We use to enjoy the outing to the exhibition.
- 10 They rung up the supplier yesterday.
- 11 He said they done it really well.
- 12 She sat besides the area representative.
- 13 The trainee promised to do it hisself.
- 14 She was stood at the door waiting.
- 15 There's seventeen desks in the office.

(15 marks)

5 VOCABULARY

Write the correct word, in the space provided, to complete each sentence. Make your choice from the words that follow each sentence.

- 1 I never told them.....to go. (were/where)
- 2 She already..... the answer to that problem. (knew/new)
- 3 Does it matterthey come? (weather/whether)
- 4 It was time for them to.....their work. (check/cheque)
- 5 He was generous and often..... his friend money (leant/lent)
- 6 The paper arrived.....late. (too/two)
- 7 The man did not come to read the..... (meter/metre)
- 8 I promised I would and not repeat the error. (re-form/reform)
- 9 She was always a.....person. (sociable/social)
- 10 The new office block was very(luxuriant/luxurious)

(10 marks)

6 PUNCTUATION

Re-write the following passage, providing appropriate punctuation.

i told him last night that id already found all the papers he needed for the meeting they were on the principals desk do you think he believed me

(10 marks)

7 PROOF-READING (A)

In the first table there are no typographical errors. In the second one, however, there are TEN. Identify each error exactly on the second table by putting a circle around it.

EXAMPLE: £1 234 £1 243

Do NOT correct the errors.

CORRECT VERSION

| NEW OPENINGS FOR EXPERIENCED RECEPTIONISTS | | |
|--|-------|------------------------|
| LONDON BRIDGE | 17.5K | IT Experience |
| MAYFAIR | 11K | 8-1 pm/1-6 pm |
| WEST END | 18K | International Co |
| HAMPSTEAD | 10K | 8.30-1.30 pm/1.30-5.30 |
| MARBLE ARCH | 15.5K | Elegant Office |
| CITY | 15K | Benefits package |
| Stop dreaming! Call us now! | | |

INCORRECT VERSION

| NEW OPENINGS FOR EXPERIENCED RECEPTIONISTS | | |
|--|-------|-------------------------|
| LONDON BRIDGE | 17.5K | IT Expereince |
| MAYFAIR | 111K | 8-1 am/1-6 pm |
| WESTEND | 18K | International co |
| HAMPSTEAD | 1oK | 8.30-1.30 pm/1.30--5.30 |
| MARBIE ARCH | 15.5K | Elegant Offices |
| CITY | 51K | Benefits package |
| Stop dreaning! Call us now! | | |

(10 marks)

8 PROOF-READING (B)

In the letter below there are FIFTEEN errors. Identify each error exactly by putting a circle around it.

EXAMPLE: c^ompetition.

Do NOT correct the errors.

MU/BNW

Date as postmark

Hogbens Limited.
64 South Street
PALMERSTON NORTH

Dear Sirs

49 Rangitikei Street, Palmerston North

I am writting to inform you that the sale of the abov3e property has now been agreed with the agents, Callesens of Palmerston North:

Our clients, Mr and Mrs Kato, are anxious that matters should proceed as quickly as possible, as they wish to move into theproperty in time for the forthecoming holiday season.

I should therfore be grateful if you could contact me tis week to arrange a date for carrying out a survey of the premises so that our clients may make arrangements for teh carrying out of essential works.

We look forward to hearing from you

Yours Faithfully

Maurice Urquhart
General manager

(15 marks)

END OF EXAMINATION

ENGLISH FOR OFFICE SKILLS - LEVEL 1 – SAMPLE PAPER 1

ANSWERS

1 SPELLING

| | | | |
|----|-----------|----|--------------|
| 1 | shining | 11 | transferred |
| 2 | omitted | 12 | completely |
| 3 | receive | 13 | bargain |
| 4 | usually | 14 | expenses |
| 5 | view | 15 | exercise |
| 6 | seized | 16 | maintenance |
| 7 | liaison | 17 | instalments |
| 8 | sincerely | 18 | decision |
| 9 | privilege | 19 | attention |
| 10 | familiar | 20 | acquaintance |

20 marks

2 LISTENING COMPREHENSION

| | | |
|----|----------------------|-----|
| 1 | Jo Austin | (1) |
| 2 | Scott Incorporated | (1) |
| 3 | Meeting tomorrow | (1) |
| 4 | Production Manager's | (1) |
| 5 | Office | (1) |
| 6 | 2.15pm | (1) |
| 7 | Development file | (1) |
| 8 | Overseas contacts | (1) |
| 9 | Confirm place | (1) |
| 10 | Confirm time | (1) |

10 marks

3 READING COMPREHENSION

| | | |
|---|---------------------------|-----|
| 1 | telephone | (1) |
| 2 | boarding pass | (1) |
| | booking/payment/itinerary | (1) |
| 3 | tickets | (1) |
| | arrive | (1) |
| 4 | reassure | (1) |
| 5 | reduced/lower | (1) |
| 6 | inefficiencies | (1) |
| 7 | paper tickets | (1) |
| 8 | the airlines | (1) |

10 marks

4 SYNTAX

| | | |
|----|---------------|--------------|
| 1 | were | was |
| 2 | less | fewer |
| 3 | better/prefer | omit/like |
| 4 | of | have |
| 5 | what | omit |
| 6 | of | with/by |
| 7 | don't | doesn't |
| 8 | them | those/the |
| 9 | use | used |
| 10 | rung | rang |
| 11 | done | did/had done |
| 12 | besides | beside |
| 13 | hisself | himself |
| 14 | stood | standing |
| 15 | There's | There are |

15 marks

5 VOCABULARY

- 1 where
- 2 knew
- 3 whether
- 4 check
- 5 lent
- 6 too
- 7 meter
- 8 reform
- 9 sociable
- 10 luxurious

10 marks

6 PUNCTUATION

I told him last night that I'd already found all the papers he needed for the meeting. They were on the Principal's desk. Do you think he believed me?

10 marks

7 PROOF-READING (A)

| NEW OPENINGS FOR EXPERIENCED RECEPTIONISTS | | |
|--|-------|-------------------------|
| LONDON BRIDGE | 17.5K | IT Experience |
| MAYFAIR | 11K | 8-1 am/1-6 pm |
| WESTEND | 18K | International co |
| HAMPSTEAD | 10K | 8.30-1.30 pm/1.30--5.30 |
| MARBIE ARCH | 15.5K | Elegant Offices |
| CITY | 51K | Benefits package |

Stop dreaming! Call us now!

10 marks

8 PROOF-READING (B)

MU/BNW

Date as postmark

Hogbens Limited.
64 South Street
PALMERSTON NORTH

Dear Sirs

49 Rangitikei Street, Palmerston North

I am writing to inform you that the sale of the above property has now been agreed with the agents, Callesens of Palmerston North:

Our clients, Mr and Mrs Kato, are anxious that matters should proceed as quickly as possible, as they wish to move into the property in time for the forthcoming holiday season.

I should therefore be grateful if you could contact me this week to arrange a date for carrying out a survey of the premises so that our clients may make arrangements for the carrying out of essential works.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

Maurice Urquhart
General manager

15 marks

8960-12-012
(EL-OFFN 12)
Sample 1

Instructions to Invigilators

NB It is recommended that, in addition to the Invigilator, there should be a Reader for Section A. The Reader may prepare the text while the Invigilator supervises the completion of the pre-examination administration.

*The use of dictionaries is **not** permitted.*

Time allowed: 1 hour

Tell candidates to open their examination papers and then start timing the examination.

Instructions to Readers

*NB Read aloud the text which is **not** in italics. Read at normal reading speed.*

Question 1 Spelling

You will hear twenty sentences. One word from each sentence will be repeated. Write the repeated word against the correct number in the space provided. If you wish to make an alteration please use the right hand column.

Read out the following sentences. After each sentence, repeat the word in bold. Allow 10 seconds between each sentence.

- 1 He is **impatient** to try the new programme.
- 2 We are extremely **grateful** for your help.
- 3 The terms of the agreement are **negotiable**.
- 4 We expect these figures to **peak** in August.
- 5 His **appointment** is for later in the day.
- 6 She is very **conscientious** in her work.
- 7 You must let me have all the **relevant** information.
- 8 I tried to **persuade** him to take the course.
- 9 We shall see the results of the agreement in **January**.
- 10 The college offered an **introductory** course in computing.

- 11 We expect to **implement** the new policy immediately.
- 12 There appears to be a **discrepancy** in the figures.
- 13 I **disassociate** myself from any dealings with that firm.
- 14 Do you have any particular **preference**?
- 15 He was able to **ascertain** that the information was correct.
- 16 The document must be checked for **grammatical** errors.
- 17 I expect a **summary** of the article by Monday, at the latest.
- 18 The office was on the **twelfth** floor of the building.
- 19 We must have a **quotation** by the end of next week.
- 20 Have you seen the first issue of the new **magazine**?

(20 marks)

Question 2 Listening Comprehension

Look at the diary. (10 seconds.) Listen carefully to the message and complete the diary

You will hear the message twice.

Ready?

Hello, it's John here. I won't be able to get to the office this evening, so I'd be glad if you'd update my diary. I've made a few appointments today so you'll need to enter them for next week. On Monday, at ten o'clock, I've a meeting with Carol about the new designs. In the afternoon I am going to visit Apex Computers. I must be there for 2.00pm. Tuesday is clear at the moment, but on Wednesday at nine thirty, I have to attend a sales meeting in the Conference Room. Thanks

(10 marks)

(Wait 20 seconds before reading the message again. After the second reading allow candidates 2 minutes to complete the form.)

This is the end of Section A. Turn to Section B and complete the questions in Section B.

English for Office Skills

Level 2

This paper must be returned with the candidate's work, otherwise the entry will be void and no result will be issued.



8960-12-012
(EL-OFFN 11)
Sample 1

Candidate's name (Block letters please)

Centre no

Date

Time allowed: 1 hour

Answer **all** questions in Section A and Section B.

Section A - Spelling

- Listening Comprehension

Section B - Reading Comprehension

- Syntax
- Vocabulary
- Punctuation
- Proof-reading (A)
- Proof-reading (B)

Your answers should be written in the question booklet in the spaces provided.

All answers must be written in ink.

For examiner's use only

| Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q5 | Q6 | Q7 | Q8 | Total |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-------|
| 20 | 10 | 10 | 20 | 10 | 15 | 5 | 10 | 100 |
| | | | | | | | | |

SECTION A

1 SPELLING

You will hear twenty sentences. One word from each sentence will be repeated. Write the repeated word against the correct number in the space provided. If you wish to make an alteration please use the right-hand column.

| | SPELLING | ALTERATION (if needed) |
|----|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | | |
| 6 | | |
| 7 | | |
| 8 | | |
| 9 | | |
| 10 | | |
| 11 | | |
| 12 | | |
| 13 | | |
| 14 | | |
| 15 | | |
| 16 | | |
| 17 | | |
| 18 | | |
| 19 | | |
| 20 | | |

(20 marks)

2 LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Look at the form. Listen carefully to the message and complete the form. You will hear the message twice.

The image shows an open notebook with a dark grey cover and a central binding with five rings. The pages are white with rounded corners. On the left page, the dates Monday 22, Tuesday 23, Wednesday 24, and Thursday 25 are written in a simple black font. On the right page, the dates Friday 26, Saturday 27, and Sunday 28 are written in the same font. The notebook is centered on the page.

(10 marks)

3 READING COMPREHENSION

Read this passage carefully in order to complete the sentences which follow with an appropriate word or phrase.

THE BANKING REVOLUTION

The long battle to make banking in Britain easier and more accessible is nearing its conclusion as the prospect of carrying out most transactions from the comfort of one's own home or office draws closer to millions of customers.

Lengthy queues for tills and inconvenient opening times caused such irritation among account holders that banks were forced to introduce cash dispenser points, and then telephone banking.

With more than 3 million customers now handling their accounts over the phone, the banks are concentrating on an easier solution which gives customers even more control over their financial affairs - online banking.

Banks all over the world are moving onto the Internet with some institutions offering banking on the Web. A few have chosen to concentrate exclusively on personal computer banking, but this restricts customers to obtaining information solely via their own computer. As people become familiar with the Web, Internet banking is expected to dominate the online market. In Europe the number of online customers is predicted to increase from 2,600,000 to 9 million by 2001. In the United States and Canada the rise is even greater - from 7 million in 2000 to 18 million in 2002.

The great advantage of Internet banking is that customers can log on to their bank's Website from anywhere in the world which has access to the net, including cybercafes, libraries and eventually roadside kiosks. Most online services will allow them to check balances, order cheque books, transfer funds between accounts and pay bills - all functions which would otherwise require a visit, or at least a letter, to the bank. Another tremendous advantage of 24-hour online banking, whether over the telephone or by computer, is the freedom it gives. People can decide when and where they would like to bank.

Although few people will want to do their banking at 2.00 am, the fact that they could is a great attraction. The knowledge that the banks never close, so therefore customers never have to worry about missing their services, means that customers feel in control of their affairs.

Another point is that the bank is actually in your home. This means that anyone who is housebound could do their banking business literally from an armchair. Equally people who work unsociable hours or have heavy family commitments can benefit from this new approach.

Banking has come a long way since the days when people had to give up their valuable lunch hour to deposit a cheque, pay a bill, or withdraw cash.

1 Bank customers were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the bank because of

2 Banks tried to overcome the problem of inflexible hours by the use of and later..... banking.

3 To give customers greater flexibility in handling their accounts.....has been introduced.

4 Other than one's home, and are two locations from which Websites can be accessed

5 Two of the most common services used by customers are and both of which are available online.

6 The 24-hour service offered by online banking gives customers a feeling of

7 Online banking is particularly useful for those who

(10 marks)

4 SYNTAX

In the following passage there are TEN unmarked errors of grammar or syntax. Circle the errors and write the corrections in the space provided. An example has been given.

I have to report, ladies and gentlemen^(an), that this gentlemen.....
year our industry has not done good. In fact it
has rather done badly. This is due to a number of
factors, many of them are beyond our control. Our
industry generally has not been helped by the
somewhat hysterical attention for the media,
especially the press. These people don't know
nothing about our products. The detrimental effects
of this was not noticed for some time
and events moved very quickly. This year we must
take less risks, and be prepared for a greater
amount of problems. With this in mind I am sure we
can move confidently in to the future, and again
enjoy prosperity.
.....
.....
.....
.....

(20 marks)

5 VOCABULARY

Write the correct word, in the space provided, to complete each sentence. Make your choice from the words that follow each sentence.

- 1 What will the new manager play? (role/roll)
- 2 As director and actor he hasresponsibilities. (dual/duel)
- 3 The plan offered a edged investment. (gilt/guilt)
- 4 What can be from this report? (implied/inferred)
- 5 The teacher tried to his students from leaving the course.
(defer/deter)
- 6 The secretary sighed with when the letter arrived.
(relieve/relief)
- 7 Her hat..... her outfit perfectly. (complemented/complimented)
- 8 She bought a magnetic to hold paper clips.
(device/devise)
- 9 If the packet is too heavy, the receiver will have to pay postage.
(access/excess)
- 10 We were on the same staff for years.
(colleagues/colleges)

(10 marks)

6 PUNCTUATION

Re-write the following passage, providing appropriate punctuation.

a spokesman for a leading banking company said the point about 24 hour banking whether over the telephone or by computer is the freedom it gives in terms of our customers options to decide when and where to bank the fact that were open around the clock is a major advantage customers never have to worry about missing us

(15 marks)

7 PROOF-READING (A)

In the first table there are no typographical errors. In the second one, however, there are FIVE. Identify each error exactly on the second table by putting a circle around it.

EXAMPLE: £1 234 £1 243

Do NOT correct the errors.

CORRECT VERSION

NORTHERN BANK

PERSONAL LOANS

| Loan amount | 60 monthly repayments | 48 monthly repayments | 36 monthly repayments | 24 monthly repayments |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| 15,000 | 319.85 | 382.66 | 487.95 | 699.48 |
| 10,000 | 213.24 | 255.11 | 325.30 | 466.32 |
| 8,000 | 178.44 | 211.85 | 268.01 | 381.04 |
| 4,000 | 95.19 | 111.80 | 139.85 | 196.49 |

Reductions in monthly payments are usually achieved by extending the repayment period.

INCORRECT VERSION

NORTHERN BANK

PERSONAL LOANS

| Loan amount | 60 monthly repayments | 48 monthly repayment | 36 monthly repayments | 24 monthly repayments |
|-------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| 15,000 | 319.85 | 382.66 | 478.95 | 699.48 |
| 10,000 | 213.24 | 255.11 | 325.30 | 466.32 |
| 8,000 | 178.44 | 211.85 | 268.01 | 381.04 |
| 4,000 | 95.19 | 111.80 | 239.85 | 196.49 |

Reductions in monthly payments are usually achieved by extending the repayment period

(5 marks)

8 PROOF-READING (B)

In the notice below there are TEN errors. Identify each error exactly by putting a circle around it.

EXAMPLE: cop^ompetition.

Do NOT correct the errors.

CAR PARKING

Work on the main office block will start next week. We shall close the rear car Park from Friday, so that the builders can access the site first thing on Monday morning.

The company will allow senior managers of of staff to use the main car park on a first come, first served basis. This car park will be open from dawn to dusk,

Special places have been kept for disabled drivers who hold orange permits. Visitors should park in this car park.

Other member of staff will be able to park their cars on the top two floors of the multistorey park in West Street. The company will pay half the pakring charge but please keep your receipts. These will be checked each week and staff will be reimbursed.

It is expected that the builders will be on site for 8 weeks'.

END OF EXAMINATION

(10 marks)

ENGLISH FOR OFFICE SKILLS - LEVEL 2 SAMPLE PAPER 1

ANSWERS

1 SPELLING

| | | | |
|----|---------------|----|--------------|
| 1 | impatient | 11 | implement |
| 2 | grateful | 12 | discrepancy |
| 3 | negotiable | 13 | disassociate |
| 4 | peak | 14 | preference |
| 5 | appointment | 15 | ascertain |
| 6 | conscientious | 16 | grammatical |
| 7 | relevant | 17 | summary |
| 8 | persuade | 18 | twelfth |
| 9 | January | 19 | quotation |
| 10 | introductory | 20 | magazine |

20 marks

2 LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Monday 22

10 am **(1)** – meeting **(1)** with Carol **(1)** about new designs **(1)**
2 pm **(1)** (latest) **(1)**– visit Apex Computers**(1)**

Tuesday 23

Wednesday 24

9.30 am **(1)** – Sales meeting **(1)**
in conference room **(1)**

Thursday 25

Friday 26

Saturday 27

Sunday 28

10 marks

3 READING COMPREHENSION

- 1 inconvenient banking hours/long queues at the tills (1)
- 2 cashpoints (1) telephone (1)
- 3 online/Internet banking (1)
- 4 cybercafes/libraries/roadside kiosks (any 2) (2)
- 5 checking balances, ordering cheque books, transferring funds, paying bills
- any two (2)
- 6 freedom/being in control (any 1) (1)
- 7 are house bound/work unsociable hours/have heavy family commitments (any 1) (1)

10 marks

4 SYNTAX

- | | | | | |
|----|---------------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| 1 | good | (1) | well | (1) |
| 2 | rather done | (1) | done rather | (1) |
| 3 | due | (1) | owing | (1) |
| 4 | them | (1) | which | (1) |
| 5 | for | (1) | of | (1) |
| 6 | don't/nothing | (1) | (omit)/anything | (1) |
| 7 | was | (1) | were | (1) |
| 8 | less | (1) | fewer | (1) |
| 9 | amount | (1) | number | (1) |
| 10 | in to | (1) | into | (1) |

20 marks

5 VOCABULARY

- 1 role
- 2 dual
- 3 guilt
- 4 inferred
- 5 deter
- 6 relief
- 7 complemented
- 8 device
- 9 excess
- 10 colleagues

10 marks

6 PUNCTUATION

A spokesman for a leading banking company said, "The point about 24-hour banking, whether over the telephone or by computer, is the freedom it gives in terms of our customers' options to decide when and where to bank. The fact that we're open around the clock is a major advantage. Customers never have to worry about missing us."

15 marks

7 PROOF-READING (A)

PERSONAL LOANS

| Loan amount | 60 monthly repayments | 48 monthly repayment | 36 monthly repayments | 24 monthly repayments |
|-------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| 15,000 | 319.85 | 382.66 | 478.95 | 699.48 |
| 10,000 | 213.24 | 255.11 | 325.30 | 466.32 |
| 8,000 | 178.44 | 211.85 | 268.01 | 381.04 |
| 4,000 | 95.19 | 111.80 | 239.85 | 196.49 |

Reductions in monthly payments are usually achieved by extending the repayment period.

5 marks

CAR PARKING

Work on the main office block will start next week. We shall close the rear car park from Friday, so that the builders can access the site first thing on Monday morning.

The company will allow senior managers of staff to use the main car park on a first come, first served basis. This car park will be open from dawn to dusk.

Special places have been kept for disabled drivers who hold orange permits. Visitors should park in this car park.

Other members of staff will be able to park their cars on the top two floors of the multistorey park in West Street. The company will pay half the parking charge but please keep your receipts. These will be checked each week and staff will be reimbursed.

It is expected that the builders will be on site for 8 weeks.

10 marks

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