

Market Leader Upper Intermediate provides much of the language and topics needed to succeed in the BEC Vantage exam. The practice tests are based, as far as possible, on the vocabulary studied in each unit, but in the real exam the vocabulary could cover a much wider spread. The authentic texts provide a wide range of vocabulary.

BEC Vantage Exam: Task-specific practice

Unit 1

READING

Expanding Vocabulary

- When expanding business vocabulary, make sure that students are aware of possible partnerships and collocations. There are many exercises in *Market Leader* focusing on this area.
- For new words, ask students to suggest synonyms and alternative ways of saying the same thing, which will help them prepare for the longer reading texts (Parts One, Two and Three). There are several *Market Leader* Reading exercises which ask students to find the meaning of words and expressions in the text.

READING PART ONE (Matching) page 2

Summarising paragraphs

- When studying texts, ask students to summarise the main point of each paragraph in one sentence. This helps them to focus on key points, which are tested in this part. Remind students that the wording in the question will usually be a paraphrase of what is in the text, so encourage them to think of different vocabulary to summarise the main point.
- Ask students to underline other key points and find alternative ways of expressing them.

1 B 2 D 3 C 4 A 5 B 6 C 7 D

WRITING PART ONE (Short message: memo, email) page 3

- *Market Leader* provides a lot of writing skills practice, although many of the tasks require longer answers than expected in BEC Part One. However, the *Writing File* provides examples of short emails, which are very useful. The *Market Leader Business English Practice File* also offers extensive writing practice.
- One key point for this part of the BEC Vantage exam is to practise writing short, clear messages. Long, set phrases, which are used in reports or letters, are unnecessary here.
- Another key point is to ensure that students include **all three bullet points** in their responses.
- Many of the points ask students to: *explain why someone happens/has happened; give details of something; outline plans for something; give instructions; state where and when something is happening; request information; agree to requests; invite someone to do something* etc.
- In each unit, students can practise this type of communication. e.g. Unit 3 – *Your company wants to improve staff relationships. Write an email to all staff suggesting an improvement, asking for staff opinions, inviting them to a meeting next week.*

- Ask students to write their own tasks based on any part of each unit. The best ones can be practised by the class. Answers can be checked for errors by other students, linking in to Reading Part Five.

MODEL ANSWER

Dear all,

Please welcome John Sheridan, our new Communications Director, who brings his considerable expertise in communications to our organisation.

We have had some serious problems as a result of poor communication over the past few months, and we hope that Mr Sheridan will be able to put new systems in place so that this does not happen again.

Unit 2

READING PART TWO (Gapped text) page 4

- Study one paragraph closely, asking students to look at the backward and forward connections of each sentence and underlining all linkers of any kind. Understanding how sentences link together is good practice for this part.
- If possible, copy the texts or part of the texts with sentences missing. Jumble the missing sentences up and ask students to put them back. Even if it is unclear where some sentences go, this can also be a valid exercise as the class decide why there is no connection.
- Another option is to ask students to try to write this task using one of the texts. They will then have to consider carefully the link between sentences and this makes them more aware of what is required of them in this part.

1 E 2 B 3 F 4 C 5 A

WRITING PART ONE (Short message: memo, email) page 5

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- Ask students to write their own tasks based on any part of each unit. The best ones can be practised by the class. Answers can be checked for errors by other students, linking in to Reading Part Five.

MODEL ANSWER

Hi John,

I have to go to the States next week for an international meeting. I was wondering if you could meet the buyer from Grantley's instead of me. Grantley's is an Australian chain of high-fashion boutiques and we hope that they will sell our products. We can offer them 12% discount on all orders over 500 pieces.

Unit 3

READING PART FIVE (Editing – error spotting) page 6

- In business, we are constantly checking written communication for errors. A company's reputation can be damaged by a poorly written piece of public communication.
- Use a couple of paragraphs from an authentic text and ask students to look carefully at *articles, pronouns, auxiliary verbs, linking words, negative forms* etc. Ask them to try to add an extra word which looks as if it could be possible, but is not, in each sentence/line.
- Ask students to see if they can take any words out of a line so that the sentence/line still maintains its grammatical integrity. Point out that these unnecessary words are **not** the focus of the test, and this exercise helps them to see the difference.
- Ask students to check each other's writing for errors whenever they have written homework before they hand it to you.

1 TO	2 THAT	3 THERE	4 ✓	5 ✓	6 SO	7 OF	8 ALTHOUGH
9 NOT	10 SUCH	11 ✓	12 HAVE				

WRITING PART TWO (Business correspondence, short report, proposal) page 7

- *Market Leader* provides excellent practice for longer business communications, with samples of different types of communication in the *Writing File*. There is also plenty of practice in the *Market Leader Business English Practice File*.
- Encourage students to learn some of the set phrases used in formal writing for each type of communication.
- For the exam, ensure that they include **all the handwritten notes** in their responses.
- Being able to write within the time limitation is also vital, so focus on practising timed responses in class.
- By doing all the writing tasks set in the Course Book, students will have had excellent practice for them by the time they do the BEC exam.

MODEL ANSWER

Dear Mr Spiteri,

I have pleasure outlining the details of two venues which may be suitable for your conference.

The Taj Spa Hotel in Delhi has good rooms and business facilities. Although they do not offer extensive translation facilities, these can be arranged at extra cost. The delegate cost is \$195 per day, including all meals. This is an extremely competitive price for the quality of the venue.

We also recommend the Grand Playa Golf and Spa hotel in Tenerife. Although the meeting rooms are smaller than the Taj Spa, they can accommodate your delegates. This venue offers good facilities and extensive translation services. The standard delegate price is \$205 per day, but we have negotiated a discounted price of £185 with all meals.

The Grand Playa is slightly cheaper, but the Delhi Hotel is a better location for international flights.

Yours sincerely,

Unit 4

READING PART FOUR (Cloze – Vocabulary) page 8

- The vocabulary exercises in *Market Leader* are particularly useful for teaching word partnerships and collocations.
- Get students to find key words in a paragraph and ask them to think of three other words which have a similar meaning or which look similar. The class can then decide if they could replace the key word in the sentence. Some will work and others will not, in which case the class can try to explain why they do not work. Is it the partnership, the collocation, or the grammar that makes an option impossible?

1 C	2 A	3 D	4 B	5 D	6 C	7 A	8 A	9 C	10 D	11 C	12 A	13 C
14 D	15 B											

WRITING PART TWO (Business correspondence, short report, proposal) page 9

- *Market Leader* provides excellent practice for longer business communications, with samples of different types of communication in the *Writing File*. There is also plenty of practice in the *Market Leader Business English Practice File*.
- Encourage students to learn some of the set phrases used in formal writing for each type of communication.
- For the exam, ensure that they include **all the handwritten notes** in their responses.
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MODEL ANSWER

Thank you for your email about our meeting yesterday.

Unfortunately there seem to be a few things which I am not happy with. Firstly, we did not finalise the terms because, as I told you, I have to discuss the quotation with the Board of Directors first. Secondly, you indicated that we might need more of the computers and that you would need to do more research by visiting our premises for the day.

With regard to the price, I understood that this was the price before the 15% discount we agreed.

Furthermore, I explained to you that your payment terms are not acceptable to us as the finance department is only prepared to pay 20% up front.

I suggest that if we meet again on Friday 15th to discuss these issues further.

Kind regards,

Unit 5

READING PART THREE (Multiple choice) page 10

- Students at this level are generally very familiar with multiple choice questions. However, they may need to be reminded of how to approach this task. Again, remind them that the four options will usually be paraphrases of what is in the text and that they have to avoid *word spotting*. Also, exact words and expressions from the text which are used in the question are often part of the distractor.
- Take a paragraph from a text and ask students to underline the key words and to think of synonyms or other ways of expressing them. Then ask them to try to write four multiple choice questions for that paragraph, i.e. one correct answer and three distractors.

1 A	2 C	3 C	4 D	5 B	6 A
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WRITING PART ONE (Short message: memo, email) page 11

- *Market Leader* provides a lot of writing skills practice, although many of the tasks require longer answers than expected in BEC Part One. However, the *Writing File* provides examples of short emails, which are very useful. The *Market Leader Business English Practice File* also offers extensive writing practice.

- One key point for this part of the BEC Vantage exam is to practise writing short, clear messages. Long, set phrases, which are used in reports or letters, are unnecessary here.
- Another key point is to ensure that students include **all three bullet points** in their responses.
- Many of the points ask students to: *explain why someone happens/has happened; give details of something; outline plans for something; give instructions; state where and when something is happening; request information; agree to requests; invite someone to do something* etc.
- In each unit, students can practise this type of communication. e.g. Unit 3 – *Your company wants to improve staff relationships. Write an email to all staff suggesting an improvement, asking for staff opinions, inviting them to a meeting next week.*
- Ask students to write their own tasks based on any part of each unit. The best ones can be practised by the class. Answers can be checked for errors by other students, linking in to Reading Part Five.

MODEL ANSWER

Dear all,

I am aware that some of you are not very happy at work and I want to find out what the problems are. I'd like you to tell me what your particular problems are. You can speak to me on the phone or in my office, or come to a meeting on Monday next week to discuss.

Unit 6

READING PART FIVE (Editing – error spotting) page 12

- In business, we are constantly checking written communication for errors. A company's reputation can be damaged by a poorly written piece of public communication.
- Use a couple of paragraphs from an authentic text and ask students to look carefully at *articles, pronouns, auxiliary verbs, linking words, negative forms* etc. Ask them to try to add an extra word which looks as if it could be possible, but is not, in each sentence/line.
- Ask students to see if they can take any words out of a line so that the sentence/line still maintains its grammatical integrity. Point out that these unnecessary words are **not** the focus of the test, and this exercise helps them to see the difference.
- Ask students to check each other's writing for errors whenever they have written homework before they hand it to you.

1 IT	2 WITH	3 SLIGHTLY	4 ✓	5 OUT	6 ✓	7 DEEPLY	8 ✓
9 THAT	10 SUCH	11 TO	12 NEITHER				

WRITING PART TWO (Business correspondence, short report, proposal) page 13

- *Market Leader* provides excellent practice for longer business communications, with samples of different types of communication in the *Writing File*. There is also plenty of practice in the *Market Leader Business English Practice File*.
- Encourage students to learn some of the set phrases used in formal writing for each type of communication.
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MODEL ANSWER

Potential risks in the acquisition of BXK Manufacturing.

The company has stretched themselves financially due to the recent purchase of new equipment. The recession has hit them badly and they are looking for a buyer.

One risk is that we could also be hit by the recession. A further risk is that increasing foreign competition is putting pressure on our sales. A new Indian company has recently taken a large part of the market share, and they look set to take even more with competitive pricing and good quality products.

The price we have in mind may not be sufficient as there are two other companies interested in BXK. We may find that we cannot afford the company without increasing our borrowing.

Finally, rumours of the acquisition have unsettled our staff and productivity is down this month.

Unit 7

READING PART TWO (Gapped text) page 14

- Study one paragraph closely, asking students to look at the backward and forward connections of each sentence and underlining all linkers of any kind. Understanding how sentences link together is good practice for this part.
- If possible, copy the texts or part of the texts with sentences missing. Jumble the missing sentences up and ask students to put them back. Even if it is unclear where some sentences go, this can also be a valid exercise as the class decide why there is no connection.
- Another option is to ask students to try to write this task using one of the texts. They will then have to consider carefully the link between sentences and this makes them more aware of what is required of them in this part.

1 B 2 A 3 F 4 E 5 D

WRITING PART ONE (Short message: memo, email) page 15

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- In each unit, students can practise this type of communication. e.g. Unit 3 – *Your company wants to improve staff relationships. Write an email to all staff suggesting an improvement, asking for staff opinions, inviting them to a meeting next week.*
- Ask students to write their own tasks based on any part of each unit. The best ones can be practised by the class. Answers can be checked for errors by other students, linking in to Reading Part Five.

MODEL ANSWER

We need a new Project Manager to manage a team of 12 and oversee the new product range. We're looking for a good motivator with excellent communication and organisational skills. They also need to be creative, supportive and able to delegate. If you are interested in applying, complete an online application by Monday 7th May.

Unit 8

READING PART ONE (Matching) page 16

Summarising paragraphs

- When studying texts, ask students to summarise the main point of each paragraph in one sentence. This helps them to focus on key points, which are tested in this part. Remind students that the wording in the question will usually be a paraphrase of what is in the text, so encourage them to think of different vocabulary to summarise the main point.
- Ask students to underline other key points and find alternative ways of expressing them.

1 B 2 D 3 A 4 C 5 A 6 C 7 C

WRITING PART ONE (Short message: memo, email) page 17

- *Market Leader* provides a lot of writing skills practice, although many of the tasks require longer answers than expected in BEC Part One. However, the *Writing File* provides examples of short emails, which are very useful. The *Market Leader Business English Practice File* also offers extensive writing practice.
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- Ask students to write their own tasks based on any part of each unit. The best ones can be practised by the class. Answers can be checked for errors by other students, linking in to Reading Part Five.

MODEL ANSWER

I've arranged a team-building course for all sales staff. It is for two days and involves both indoor and outdoor activities. The aim of the course is to help you get to know each other better and to improve our communication skills. The course is 16th February at Woodgrow Hall, Leicestershire. A map is attached.

Unit 9

READING PART FOUR (Cloze – Vocabulary) page 18

- The vocabulary exercises in *Market Leader* are particularly useful for teaching word partnerships and collocations.
- Get students to find key words in a paragraph and ask them to think of three other words which have a similar meaning or which look similar. The class can then decide if they could replace the key word in the sentence. Some will work and others will not, in which case the class can try to explain why they do not work. Is it the partnership, the collocation, or the grammar that makes an option impossible?

1 D 2 B 3 A 4 C 5 B 6 C 7 D 8 A 9 D 10 B 11 C 12 A 13 D
14 B 15 B

WRITING PART TWO (Business correspondence, short report, proposal) page 19

- *Market Leader* provides excellent practice for longer business communications, with samples of different types of communication in the *Writing File*. There is also plenty of practice in the *Market Leader Business English Practice File*.
- Encourage students to learn some of the set phrases used in formal writing for each type of communication.
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MODEL ANSWER

Hi Delia and Richard,

I've investigated our options for financing and I agree that we should try to retain 75% of the shareholding. Regarding the grants available, unfortunately there are none larger than £50,000 so that option is out. The bank is happy, in principle, to discuss a loan of up to £100,000 with us in detail. The interest rate will depend on their analysis of the company and could be around 2%. Unfortunately, it's not the full amount required. However I've spoken to some business angels and found one who has the skills and experience to guide us through the expansion and is happy to offer a loan of £150,000 in exchange for a 30% share of the company. This is more than we wanted to give away, but we would benefit greatly from their skills and experience.

Unit 10

READING PART FIVE (Editing – error spotting) page 20

- In business, we are constantly checking written communication for errors. A company's reputation can be damaged by a poorly written piece of public communication.
- Use a couple of paragraphs from an authentic text and ask students to look carefully at *articles, pronouns, auxiliary verbs, linking words, negative forms* etc. Ask them to try to add an extra word which looks as if it could be possible, but is not, in each sentence/line.
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1 ✓	2 TO	3 FOR	4 I	5 DESPITE	6 WHICH	7 THAT	8 BEEN
9 OF	10 WHAT	11 ✓	12 DOWN				

WRITING PART TWO (Business correspondence, short report, proposal) page 21

- *Market Leader* provides excellent practice for longer business communications, with samples of different types of communication in the *Writing File*. There is also plenty of practice in the *Market Leader Business English Practice File*.
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MODEL ANSWER

Dear Mr Kendle,

I'm sorry to hear about the problems with the car you bought from us.

Work should be done under warranty, and we are retraining staff to ensure that employees with customer contact are aware of this. It is unacceptable that the service manager was rude to you, and I can confirm that he has been given a written warning.

I apologise for the near accident you had due to the brakes failure. This will not happen again, I assure you. We have implemented a system to check all models.

We will replace your vehicle with another more expensive model, and offer free services for the next five years as compensation for the inconvenience caused.

We hope you will accept our offer and look forward to being of service to you in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Unit 11

READING PART FOUR (Cloze – Vocabulary) page 22

- The vocabulary exercises in *Market Leader* are particularly useful for teaching word partnerships and collocations.
- Get students to find key words in a paragraph and ask them to think of three other words which have a similar meaning or which look similar. The class can then decide if they could replace the key word in the sentence. Some will work and others will not, in which case the class can try to explain why they do not work. Is it the partnership, the collocation, or the grammar that makes an option impossible?

1 C	2 C	3 A	4 B	5 D	6 B	7 D	8 B	9 C	10 D	11 A	12 C	13 B
14 B	15 A											

WRITING PART TWO (Business correspondence, short report, proposal) page 23

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MODEL ANSWER

Due to brake problems with Model HI54 vehicles, we have decided to recall all models manufactured in the last two years. Customers can return their cars to any dealership for checks, and faulty brakes will be replaced free of charge. We apologise for the inconvenience.

The problem may have been caused by a temporary production line breakdown two years ago, affecting about 5000 vehicles.

We assure you that customer safety is very important to us and we take complaints very seriously. It would be irresponsible of us to recall every vehicle each time there is a problem with a car. It takes time to discover if the problem is more widespread. We are absolutely certain that this problem will be resolved soon and that our other vehicle models are not affected.

Unit 12

READING PART THREE (Multiple choice) page 24

- Students at this level are generally very familiar with multiple choice questions. However, they may need to be reminded of how to approach this task. Remind them that the four options will usually be paraphrases of what is in the text and that they have to avoid *word spotting*. Also, exact words and expressions from the text which are used in the question are often part of the distractor.
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1 B 2 D 3 C 4 A 5 D 6 B

WRITING PART ONE (Short message: memo, email) page 25

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MODEL ANSWER

As you know, we are planning to merge with FD appliances, a French manufacturer, later this year. We have decided to do this in order to benefit from their state-of-the art manufacturing facilities and to increase market share. There will be a meeting on Friday in the boardroom to discuss any queries you may have.

Listening

Although the exam practice book does not focus on Listening, all the listening texts in *Market Leader Upper Intermediate* can be used for exam practice. In each unit of the exam practice book there are tips for students indicating which part of the BEC Vantage exam the Listening texts in each *Market Leader* unit can be used for. By dividing up some longer *Market Leader* Listening texts, you can prepare exam-type questions for students to practice.

Speaking

Although the exam practice book does not focus on Speaking, each *Market Leader Upper Intermediate* unit offers plenty of practice for speaking which will be useful for all parts of the BEC Vantage Speaking Test. In each unit of the exam practice book there are tips for students indicating which part of the BEC Vantage exam the Speaking elements in each *Market Leader* unit can be used for.

BEC Practice Test

READING pp. 26–30

PART ONE

1 D 2 B 3 A 4 C 5 A 6 C 7 D

PART TWO

8 A 9 D 10 B 11 F 12 C

PART THREE

13 C 14 A 15 D 16 B 17 B 18 C

PART FOUR

19 B 20 D 21 A 22 C 23 B 24 D 25 C 26 A 27 C 28 B 29 C 30 A 31 D
32 B 33 D

PART FIVE

34 THE 35 OF 36 WHILE 37 ✓ 38 HAVE 39 THAT 40 MORE 41 ✓
42 ARE 43 IS 44 ✓ 45 BEEN

WRITING p. 31-32

PART ONE

MODEL ANSWER

We have received numerous complains recently about poor customer service. As our reputation has been built upon good service, this is unacceptable. I have therefore arranged for all staff to attend regular customer service training, and I would like you to suggest ways to improve this situation.

PART TWO

MODEL ANSWER

I have been asked to investigate possible team-building courses for production staff who currently seem unhappy and demotivated. After careful analysis there are two which offer different types of training and which stand out.

The first is GG Training, a company specialising in outdoor challenges. The reviews were mostly positive, but some of the activities may be too much for some staff.

The second is VIX Corporate Training, who offer tailor-made courses focusing on specific problems, so might be more effective. Some reviews said there was too much theory, so it could be boring, but others reported the course was excellent.

VIX courses are more expensive than GG, but both are within our budget. I think that, although VIX courses are more expensive, the company would benefit more from their tailor-made course.