BUSINESS ENGLISH II

INSTRUCTOR'S HANDBOOK

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Business English II Instructor's Handbook?

It is a **15-unit set of complete lesson notes** for teaching career, workplace, and professional communication in a Quebec CEGEP context. It combines curriculum planning, language teaching, classroom activities, assessment, worked examples, teacher notes, and differentiated pathways.

2. How many units does the handbook contain?

The handbook contains **15 units**, organized into three five-unit parts:

a. **Units 1 to 5:** Know Your Value and Research a Real Employer
b. **Units 6 to 10:** Apply for a Real Job and Analyse a Real Organisation
c. **Units 11 to 15:** Present Professionally on Your Research

3. What is the central competency?

The central competency is:

To communicate effectively in English in professional, workplace, and career-development contexts.

5. What does the competency-based approach mean in this course?

The course integrates language skills around meaningful professional tasks. Reading can become the source for a report, and the report can provide evidence for a presentation. Grammar is introduced when students need it to complete the task rather than being taught only as an isolated rule.

6. What are the main principles of the teaching framework?

The handbook emphasizes:

1. Integration
2. Authenticity
3. Progression over performance
4. Differentiated pathways
5. The Double-Threshold Rule

7. What does authenticity mean in the handbook?

Whenever possible, students work with real job postings, real organisations, authentic sources, and real-world communication situations rather than classroom exercises with no clear professional purpose.

8. What is the course progression?

The course moves from knowing and presenting one's own value to applying for employment, analysing a workplace, and finally presenting research professionally.

Part 1: Know your value and research a real employer.

Part 2: Apply for a real job and analyse a real organisation.

Part 3: Present professionally on your research.

10. How is grammar integrated into the course?

Grammar is connected directly to the communication task of each unit. For example:

a. Unit 1: verb tenses for professional self-introduction
b. Unit 2: concession clauses and imperatives
c. Unit 3: modals of possibility
d. Unit 4: past tenses and reported speech
e. Unit 5: present perfect for relevant experience
f. Unit 6: narrative past for STAR answers
g. Unit 7: modals of request and passive voice
h. Unit 8: indirect and embedded questions
i. Unit 9: noun clauses for reporting
j. Unit 10: comparatives and superlatives
k. Units 11 to 13: conditionals, frequency adverbs, concession and conditional structures
l. Units 14 and 15: spoken grammar consolidation

11. What is the "Show It, Not Tell It" approach?

It is a recurring feature of the lesson notes in which students examine **worked examples** rather than receiving only abstract explanations. Examples include value propositions, arguments, STAR answers, business letters, recommendation sentences, and persuasive paragraphs.

12. What is included in each unit?

Depending on the unit, the lesson notes include:

1. Why the unit matters
2. Competency connection
3. Learning objectives
4. Grammar or communication focus
5. Class plans
6. Worked examples
7. Test questions and practice
8. Authentic or real-world tasks

9. Extension activities
10. Homework
11. Teacher notes
12. Assessment criteria

13. What is the Learning Buddy System?

It is a structured peer partnership that begins in Unit 1 and continues throughout the course. Learning Buddies provide a consistent audience for practice, feedback, interviews, research, and reflection.

14. What do Learning Buddies do?

Their roles develop across the course. They may:

a. Respond to a partner's diagnostic speech
b. Help construct and test concession sentences
c. Give feedback on cover-letter drafts
d. Take turns as interviewer and candidate
e. Provide feedback on research from the outline stage onward

15. Is peer interaction formally connected to progression?

Yes. A short **Learning Buddy Reflection Log** can be attached to each Progression Portfolio checkpoint, identifying help received from a partner and explaining how it was used.

16. What is the Progression Portfolio principle?

Students are evaluated partly on **growth over time**, not only on the quality of one isolated piece of work. The cover letter, formal correspondence, and research portfolio are the three major writing checkpoints.

17. What is the Double-Threshold Rule?

Production and Reception must each reach 60% independently, and the overall course grade must also reach 60%. A strong performance in one dimension cannot compensate for failure in the other.

18. What are the differentiated pathways?

The handbook provides three pathways:

i. **Foundation:** templated production, sentence frames, fixed vocabulary, and shorter interview question sets.
ii. **Intermediate:** a given structure with self-chosen content and examples.
iii. **Advanced / Mastery:** fully independent production, with Mastery students presenting without notes and mentoring a Foundation-pathway partner.

19. How are students placed on different pathways?

A short **Unit 1 diagnostic** is used to identify an initial pathway. The pathway can then be revisited at major checkpoints.

20. Does differentiation change the competency?

No. The pathways change the **level of support and degree of independence**, while maintaining the central communication competency.

21. What is Daily Real-World Language Contact?

The handbook proposes three low-stakes formative activities that encourage students to encounter business English beyond the classroom:

Weekly Business English Journal

LinkedIn / Company Website Scavenger Hunt

English at Work Audio Log

22. What is the Weekly Business English Journal?

Students record one real encounter with business English each week, summarize it in three to five sentences, and identify one grammar structure they practised.

23. What is the LinkedIn / Company Website Scavenger Hunt?

Students explore a target company's website or LinkedIn page and record new vocabulary or a useful sentence structure.

24. What is the English at Work Audio Log?

Students make a short **one- to two-minute spontaneous oral description** of a work-related event, including experiences from part-time employment or volunteer work.

25. What are the diversified interaction structures?

The handbook identifies three structured interaction formats:

I. Circle of Voices
II. Two Stars and One Wish
III. Gallery Walk

26. What is Circle of Voices?

Students take turns summarizing their research in a circle. Each student contributes for about one minute and cannot simply repeat what another student has already said. The structure encourages listening and synthesis.

27. What is Two Stars and One Wish?

Students give peer feedback by identifying **two specific strengths and one specific area for improvement**.

28. What is the Gallery Walk?

Students display drafts around the classroom while classmates circulate, read them, and leave questions or comments.

29. What are the major professional tasks across the course?

Students progressively work with:

a. Personal value propositions
b. Employer research
c. Reading and listening strategies
d. Cover letters
e. Mock interviews
f. Panel interviews
g. Formal workplace correspondence
h. Workplace analysis reports
i. Recommendations
j. Research portfolios
k. Professional presentations

31. What is the role of the STAR method?

The **STAR method** is used in Unit 6 to structure interview answers. Students learn to present professional experiences through a clear situation, task, action, and result structure.

32. What is the difference between the mock interview and panel interview?

The **Unit 6 mock interview** introduces and practises interview communication using the STAR method. The **Unit 8 panel interview** develops that skill in a more demanding interview setting.

33. What is assessed in Unit 10?

Unit 10 focuses on the **Workplace Analysis Report** and includes the **Listening Exam**, which is worth 15%.

34. What happens in Units 11 to 15?

Students move toward recommendations, portfolio planning, comprehensive review, research development, final presentations, and course reflection.

35. What is the Research Portfolio?

The Research Portfolio is the major production task in **Unit 13**. Students develop and present research in a selected format and receive feedback before completing the assessed work.

36. What happens in Units 14 and 15?

Students deliver their final presentations across the two units. Unit 15 also includes the **Final Speaking Exam**, worth 10%, and a course reflection.

37. How are Quebec and Cameroon contexts used?

Each unit includes an **Extension Activity: Quebec and Cameroon Context**. These activities allow instructors to connect professional communication to relevant local and cross-cultural contexts.

38. Why are cross-cultural activities included?

The handbook recognizes that professional communication takes place across different cultural and workplace contexts. The activities allow students to compare perspectives and adapt communication accordingly.

39. Does the handbook support adaptation to other contexts?

Yes. It explicitly allows instructors to replace placeholder examples with **local employers, real postings, and community organisations** that are more relevant to their students.

40. Is the course intended to be taught in exactly the same order everywhere?

No. The handbook states that it may be adapted to local realities. The pedagogical backbone remains the same, while examples, organisations, and some sequencing can be adapted.

41. What assessment materials are included?

The handbook contains evaluation criteria and grids for the major assessments, including:

1. Cover Letter
2. Mock Interview
3. Formal Correspondence
4. Panel Interview
5. Listening Exam
6. Workplace Analysis Report
7. Research Portfolio
8. Final Speaking Exam

It also includes student-friendly self-check rubrics.

43. Does the handbook include classroom management and teaching strategies?

Yes. In addition to lesson content, it includes teacher notes, common classroom challenges and strategies, peer interaction structures, differentiated pathways, homework guidance, and classroom routines.

44. What makes this an Instructor's Handbook rather than a student textbook?

The handbook is designed to support the **instructor's planning and delivery**. It includes competency connections, class plans, teacher notes, assessment procedures, extension activities, marking criteria, differentiation guidance, and classroom strategies alongside the language content.

45. What is the overall purpose of the handbook?

The handbook gives instructors a complete framework for teaching **career, workplace, and professional communication** through authentic, competency-based tasks. It connects language development, professional communication, assessment, progression, differentiation, and real-world workplace contexts across all 15 units.

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