



CÁMARA OFICIAL DE  
COMERCIO DE ESPAÑA EN GRAN BRETAÑA



**REGENT'S**  
UNIVERSITY LONDON

## **Business Spanish Qualifications**

Syllabus for the preparation of the

# **Advanced Diploma in Business Spanish**

The European Business School at Regent's University London is the National Examination Board and Centre for the Spanish Chamber of Commerce Exams in Business Spanish and has run the exams for the Business Spanish Qualifications on behalf of the Spanish Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain since September 1999.

The **Advanced Diploma in Business Spanish** developed by the European Business School's on behalf of the Spanish Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain is a well established and much sought-after qualification in the field of Languages for Business both in the industrial and the commercial job market.

In today's globalised world, this Language Award reflects the expanding role of Spanish as a language for international communication, particularly in the world of business. The European Business School and the Spanish Chamber of Commerce, fully supportive of that role, have revised the format and syllabi of the qualification, and bestowed it with a global flavour.

This qualification is ideal both for students of Spanish wishing to obtain an advanced business language qualification, as well as for professionals dealing with Spain, Spanish-speaking countries or the emerging US Hispanic market on a regular basis.

For employers, on the other hand, the Spanish Chamber of Commerce **Advanced Diploma in Business Spanish** is a reliable indicator of the highly developed linguistic skills of a current or prospective employee. The qualification is widely recognised in the UK, Spain and across Europe.

Candidates should be proficient users of the language and have in-depth knowledge of the practical Spanish business language skills currently required by both large international companies and small import/export traders with a view to preparing them for today's competitive job market.

Successful candidates will be able to function effectively, both orally and in writing, in a variety of areas within a Spanish-speaking business environment, i.e.: commerce, administration, finance, economics, export-import, etc.

## Language Requirements

The syllabus for the **Advanced Diploma in Business Spanish** integrates the requirements of the Proficient User Level (C1-C2) as defined by the Council of Europe in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*<sup>1</sup> and follows the specifications detailed for Spanish in the *Plan Curricular del Instituto Cervantes*<sup>2</sup>.

On a general level, candidates at this level can understand virtually everything, use quite sophisticated language and express themselves fluently dealing confidently in most situations. In particular, candidates seeking this qualification will be equipped with the following competences in the Target Language (TL):

READING COMPREHENSION	Can understand in detail a wide range of lengthy, complex texts (news items, articles and reports on a wide range of topics), identifying their content and relevance as well as finer points of detail, including attitudes and implied and stated opinions
	Can summarise information on a topic from a series of sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation of the overall result
WRITTEN PRODUCTION	Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, complex reports, articles or essays in an appropriate and effective style with a logical structure to present a case, or give critical appreciation of proposals
	Can express themselves with clarity and precision, use correctly the prescribed formulae in correspondence and relate to the addressee flexibly and effectively
ORAL PRODUCTION	Can produce clear, smoothly flowing speech with an effective logical structure, keep up his/her side of the dialogue and interact authoritatively with complete fluency as interviewer/ interviewee
	Can present a complex topic confidently and articulately and develop an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail, when putting a case (e.g. in a debate)

<sup>1</sup> Council of Europe (2001) *Common European Framework of Reference for Language: Learning, teaching, assessment*, Cambridge: CUP

<sup>2</sup> *Plan Curricular del Instituto Cervantes: Niveles de Referencia para el español* (2007) Biblioteca Nueva

	Can hold their own in formal discussion of complex issues and handle difficult and even hostile questioning
LISTENING COMPREHENSION	Has no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, delivered at fast native speed
	Can understand any native speaker interlocutor, even on abstract and complex topics of a specialist nature, given an opportunity to adjust to a non-standard accent or dialect

(CEFR 2001)

Furthermore, on a professional level, candidates seeking this qualification are expected to

- I.1 be well informed about current topics in business and economics relating to Spain and the Spanish-speaking world
- I.2 engage in all sorts of professional transactions well beyond routine situations in their particular line of work, participating and taking the initiative in interactions within the professional community where they might operate
- I.3 understand and obtain detailed, complex information from oral and written material in any format or topic, particularly texts aimed at specialised readers
- I.4 deliver prepared talks on areas of business and economics, produce work-related reports, business plans, draft proposals and business correspondence, etc. using complex and specialized language
- I.5 demonstrate an understanding of the values, attitudes and behaviours found in Spanish-speaking countries so as to engage successfully with partners from those countries

### Reference Levels

The examination follows closely the *Plan Curricular del Instituto Cervantes*. Level descriptors in the various linguistic areas associated with the Proficient level of competence in Spanish, are detailed in their volume 3<sup>3</sup>.

According to the aforementioned plan, candidates who achieve a C1-C2 level in Spanish will be fully conversant with the complex structures in the grammatical inventory of the language, whether at the morphological, phonetic or syntactic level.

As an indication, candidates will demonstrate an excellent degree of familiarity with

- the use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices

<sup>3</sup> *Niveles de Referencia para el español (C1-C2), I. Cervantes (2007)*

- the formation, values and meanings of all verb tenses in the indicative and subjunctive mood as well as imperative, infinitive, participle, gerund; the passive form, pronominal and modal auxiliary verbs;
- a wide variety of adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and other discourse markers
- variances in pronunciation and intonation patterns across the geographical usage area of Spanish.

The *Plan Curricular del Instituto Cervantes* (vol 2) provides an ample inventory of general and specific lexical areas (categorised as ‘nociones’) which successful candidates are expected to be familiar with. Candidates may refer to the sections in the inventory ‘Nociones Generales’ (here in brackets) for vocabulary areas such as

- quantitative notions (section 2)
- qualitative notions (5)
- evaluative notions (6)

and to the inventory ‘Nociones Especificas’ for vocabulary areas such as

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| • education (6)             | • travelling and transport (14)         |
| • work (7)                  | • economy and industry (15)             |
| • information and media (9) | • science and technology (16)           |
| • housing (10)              | • government, politics and society (17) |
| • public services (11)      | • geography and nature (20)             |
| • shopping and retail (12)  |   |

Refer to the *Plan Curricular* for further details on functions, pragmatic strategies, discourse types, etc.

## Testing procedures: General description

The examination consists of two sections - a **three-hour written** component and a **twenty-minute oral** component-, both based on texts and tasks related the following areas of business in the Spanish-speaking world:

## General

- The company: structure and organisation
- Macroeconomics; GDP; economic sectors
- Employers, employees, trade unions
- Import - export activities
- Products and services; customers and suppliers
- Entrepreneurship, starting a company
- International and multinational companies
- Franchising, Negotiations
- Marketing, advertising
- Banking systems, investments
- Financial markets: trading
- Law and taxation

## Specific

- Current economic and social affairs in Spain and Latin America
- The Spanish, Latin American and US Hispanic markets: business and companies
- Spain and the European Union
- Trade agreements and regional integration processes in Latin America: MERCOSUR, NAFTA, etc.

Texts will be from a variety of sources originating in any of the Spanish-speaking countries as relevant to the topic.

## **Examples of Tasks**

Candidates will demonstrate their ability to operate effectively in a Spanish-speaking business environment by carrying out some of the following tasks:

- Understand the meaning and tone of written texts related to the work field including the use of reference material in the areas of economics, business, finance, trade, etc. Draw appropriate conclusions from such material and identify any social and cultural significance contained within them.
- Work from written documents related to work field or specialised area in order to obtain specific information and/or summarise the main ideas in a clear, accurately and organised way.
- Deal with a variety of formal and informal correspondence, i.e.: business communications, letters and emails, application forms, etc.

- Discuss orally or in writing the content of document, graphs, tables, diagrams, etc. related to a particular business area or economic current affair in the Spanish speaking world.
- Deliver a short prepared informal or formal presentation on particular areas of economics, business, finance, trade, etc.
- Interact orally in all social and professional settings, i.e. professional and business visits, dealing with companies, suppliers, clients, etc.
- Take active part in meetings with native speakers of Spanish, including negotiating particular aspects of a business agreement.
- Exchange orally or in writing ideas and opinions about one's own and other countries and cultures as well as information about their economic and political life.

## Testing procedures: Sections of the examination

The examination consists of two sections and four papers; details are set out below.

Written component	1 hr 45 mins	Paper 1: Reading comprehension	(20 marks)
		Paper 2: Use of language	(20 marks)
	1 hr 15 mins	Paper 3: Written production	(30 marks)
Oral component	20 exam time (+ 20 prep time)	Paper 4: Oral production: presentation and interaction	(30 marks)
Total			100 marks

### Paper 1: Reading Comprehension (60 minutes)

Texts for this paper will be from authentic sources (articles from newspapers or specialized magazines, information items, reports, advertisements or announcements), may vary in length and contain some complex and unfamiliar language. Overall, candidates will be expected to read  $\pm$  1300 words.

- RC.1A Answer multiple choice questions on one or more work-related texts
- RC.1B Report, summarise, identify main points or comment upon one or more texts on current economic and business affairs in Spanish-speaking countries

Assessment will be based upon the ability of the candidate to:

- identify key points and obtain specific information accurately and promptly by scanning texts
- understand, be able to answer questions and/or to write a summary using the diverse reference material in well structured, clear and accurate language
- identify and interpret accurately any social and cultural significance of the information

### **Paper 2: Use of language (45 minutes)**

This paper tests candidates' knowledge of specialized lexis and particularly relevant concepts for specific professional purposes.

- UL.2A Complete gap-filling, matching exercises, etc. on technical, specialized vocabulary
- UL.2B Explain concepts related to business and economics in the Spanish-speaking world

### **Paper 3: Writing (1 hr 15 minutes)**

Candidates will be required to produce TWO texts based on general and/or specific business content. (I.e. a business letter, project, business report, proposal, etc.). Candidates will be expected to write  $\pm$  650 words.

- W.3A Report on information provided (i.e.: tables, diagrams, graphs, etc.)
- W.3B Business letter, project, proposal, application form, etc.

Assessment will be based upon the ability of the candidate to:

- demonstrate excellent grammatical variety and accuracy
- demonstrate knowledge, variety and accuracy of relevant and specialised vocabulary
- organise ideas and write using complex and accurate sentences
- convey the required information clearly in the required register
- write in the required format and use appropriate conventions

#### **Paper 4: Oral paper (20 minutes)**

Candidates will be given **twenty minutes** in which to prepare for the oral examination which will include

- a presentation on a set topic followed by questions and discussion with the examiner ( $\pm$  10 min)
- interaction with the examiner in a simulated business setting ( $\pm$  10 min)

Oral tasks may be of a varied nature: i.e.: related to topics dealt with in other parts of the examination, based on a business situation or on a set reading, in the form of a role-play, data graphs and tables, etc.

Candidates should present their information clearly and accurately, contribute actively to the conversation or discussion, take the role assigned and answer the questions of the examiner.

Assessment will be based upon the ability of the candidate to:

- use clear and precise information, appropriate to the context
- initiate and sustain conversation with the examiner
- present appropriate, well organised information on topic given
- use accurate and complex language and the register required
- respond appropriately to questions and comments

## **Award Requirements and Final Grade**

A minimum of 50 marks overall is required to pass the examination and qualify for the **Advanced Diploma in Business Spanish**.

Successful candidates will receive the Official Certification – issued by the Spanish Chamber of Commerce in the UK- indicating the grade corresponding to the marks achieved, as detailed below.

<b>Marks</b>	<b>Grade</b>
50 – 69	Pass = Aprobado
70 – 84	Credit = Notable
85 and above	Distinction = Sobresaliente

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

- Candidates must achieve both a minimum of 35 (out of 70) marks in the written test and a minimum of 15 (out of 30) in the oral test in order to pass the exam.
- A mark of 0 (zero) in any one of the four papers will automatically disqualify the candidate.
- No dictionaries or any other material are allowed into the examination room.

## INDICATIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY



### COURSEBOOKS

Aguirre, B.	1993	<i>El español por profesiones: Servicios Financieros: Banca y Bolsa</i> , Madrid: SGEL
Aguirre, B. & Hernández. C.	1990	<i>El lenguaje del Turismo y de las Relaciones Publicas</i> , Madrid: SGEL
Aguirre, B. & Rother, K.	1996	<i>El español por profesiones: Comercio Exterior</i> , Madrid: SGEL
Doyle, M.S. et al.	2001	<i>Éxito Comercial, Prácticas Administrativas y contextos culturales</i> , Boston: Heinle
Felices, A et al	2003	<i>Cultura y Negocios: el español de la economía española y latinoamericana</i> , Madrid: Edinumen
Galloway, V. Et al.	1998	<i>Saldo a favor</i> , New York: Wiley & Sons
García Vitoria, L.	1993	<i>Cuestión de Negocios</i> , Paris: Ophrys
Gómez de Enterría, J	1990	<i>Correspondencia Comercial en Español</i> , Madrid: SGEL
Iriarte, E & Nuñez, E	2009	<i>Empresa Siglo XXI: el español en el ámbito internacional</i> , Madrid: Edinumen
Lauterborn, W	2002	<i>Comunicaciones por teléfono</i> , Madrid: Arco/Libro
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Prost, G & Noriega, A	2003	<i>Al día: Curso superior de español para los negocios</i> , Madrid: SGEL
Tano, M	2009	<i>Expertos</i> , Barcelona: Difusión

### DICTIONARIES

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<i>Business Spanish Glossary</i>	(1995) Peter Collin Publishing
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<i>The Oxford Spanish Dictionary</i>	(2001) O.U.P.

### FURTHER READING

Becker, T.	2004	Doing Business in the New Latin America	Praeger
Bruton, K.	1994	Business culture in Spain	Butterworth & Heinemann

Crane, R. & Rizowy, C.	2005	Latin American Business cultures	Pearson
Duran, JJ	1999	Multinacionales españolas en Iberoamérica: Valor estratégico	Pirámide
García Delgado, JL	1999	España, economía ante el siglo XX	Espasa
Giner, S	2000	Los españoles	Plaza & Janés
Green, D	2006	Faces of Latin America (3rd edition)	L.A.B.
Lawlor, T. et al.	1998	Contemporary Spain: essays	Longman
Operé, F. et al.	2007	España y los españoles de hoy	Pearson

## USEFUL INTERNET RESOURCES

### Argentina

<http://www.clarin.com/>

<http://www.lanacion.com.ar>

### Bolivia

<http://www.la-razon.com/>

<http://www.lostiempos.com/>

### Chile

<http://www.elmercurio>

<http://www.tercera.cl/>

### Colombia

<http://www.dinero.com/>

### Costa Rica

<http://www.nacion.co.cr/>

### Cuba

<http://www.cubanet.org/>

<http://www.granma.cubaweb.cu/>

### Ecuador

<http://www.elcomercio.com/>

<http://www.eluniverso.com/>

### España

<http://www.elpais.com>

<http://www.lavanguardia.es>

<http://www.expansion.com/>

### Guatemala

<http://www.lahora.com.gt/>

### Honduras

<http://www.laprensahn.com/>

### Nicaragua

<http://www.laprensa.com.ni/>

### Panamá

<http://www.estrategia.cl/>

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### Perú

<http://www.elcomerciooperu.com/>

<http://www.elperuano.com.pe/>

### República Dominicana

<http://www.hoy.com.do/>

### El Salvador

<http://www.laprensa.com.sv/>

### Uruguay

<http://www.diarioelpais.com/>

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### BBC Mundo (noticias en español)

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