

UNIT

1

The working day

This unit teaches language and vocabulary for describing jobs, responsibilities and daily routines at work. It also revises the difference between the present simple and the present continuous tenses.

Students are introduced to a number of skills for reading and listening which will be developed and practised in later units. The listening activity gives students practice in predicting the content of a talk before they hear the recording. The reading text requires students to skim in order to understand the overall meaning and then scan to check specific pieces of information.

Although none of the tasks in the unit exactly replicate exam questions, some are designed to give students the skills and practice needed to deal with them (see table below).

	BEC	BULATS
Getting started	Speaking Part 1	Speaking Part 1
Vocabulary: <i>Company departments</i>	Reading Part 2	
Talking point: <i>Personal assistants</i>	Speaking Part 1	Speaking Part 1
Photocopiable activity 1	Speaking Part 1	Speaking Part 1
Photocopiable activity 2	Reading Part 5	Reading Part 1 Section 3 Reading Part 2 Section 5

Notes on unit

Getting started

This section introduces some common job titles and ways of talking about responsibilities. It is also intended as a get-to-know-you activity in which students can introduce themselves and give a brief outline of their jobs. If students are in employment, they can exchange their own business cards at the end and point out any particular details on them.

Vocabulary: *Company departments*

As well as introducing some vocabulary to name common company departments, this activity introduces students to the kind of exercise they will find in Part 2 of the BEC Reading Paper. If you wish to begin exam preparation immediately, you could follow this up with the relevant exam skills section. If students are in employment, they could, of course, extend the activity by talking about the departments in their own companies and naming the main activities carried out and the people who work in each one.

Listening: *Personal assistants*

You will probably want to adapt the first speaking activity, according to how familiar students are with the job of a PA. For example, if students are already in employment, you could begin by asking them if they have a PA and what he or she does. The people with PAs could then work together and compare ideas for the initial brainstorming activity.

Some of the students might actually be PAs. In this case, the PAs could work together, or work alone, to brainstorm a list of things that they do. They then compare their list with what the rest of the class have thought of.

After students have listened to the complete interview, you could extend the activity by using it to practise guessing words from context. Ask students to turn to the transcript and find or underline the words *manic*, *hectic*, *meticulous* and *springboard*, or any others that you feel will be unfamiliar to them. They then talk in pairs and decide on the probable meaning of each word from the context. Emphasise that they should look at the whole sentence, and also the sentences before and after, to help them decide.

Talking point: *Personal assistants*

For this activity, some of the questions will not be suitable for pre-service students. As an alternative, you could ask them to think of a job that they would like to do in the future and ask the following questions (shown on the board or OHP).

- 1 *Why would you like to do this job?*
- 2 *Do you know anyone who already does this job?*
- 3 *What personal qualities do you think you need for this job?*
- 4 *Does the job have any disadvantages?*
- 5 *What do you think is the most difficult part of this job?*
- 6 *Do you think that this job could be a springboard for a different career?*

Reading: *Changing places*

As well as a reading text, this activity is intended as language presentation for the grammar work on the present simple and the present continuous. If students ask, you may need to point out that the present simple is also sometimes used for narrative, especially when giving a summary of a story or TV programme, as in the article (e.g. *In the kitchen he successfully **cooks** several pancakes and ... he **makes** the beds correctly*). The final section, which asks students for their reaction to the article, is best kept as a short discussion. This is because talking about it in depth will require language which is rather beyond students at this level (e.g. hypothesising). If students are all from the same company, it might also be a sensitive issue.

Grammar workshop

The grammar will be revision at this level, but students still often need practice with question and negative forms and with the correct use of the two tenses. This section aims to help them by linking the two tenses with common time phrases.

Photocopiable activity 1

This is intended as a first-day activity for students. It allows students to get to know each other by asking some basic questions about their jobs or studies. At the end of the activity, you can collect the handouts and use them as a record of each student's previous learning experience, and the reasons why they have chosen to study Business English.

Photocopiable activity 2

This text provides some further reinforcement of the difference between the present simple and the present continuous. It also introduces students to multiple-choice questions of the kind they will find in the BEC or BULATS exam. Exercises 4 and 5 give students another opportunity to record the difference between the two tenses (as in the Grammar workshop in the Student's Book). If your students are already confident with this, you may prefer to go straight to Exercise 6.

Photocopiable activity 1

Personal information

Getting started

Note down answers to the following three questions. Then compare your notes with a partner.

- 1 Where did you study English before this class?
- 2 When did you start studying English?
- 3 Why did you decide to study Business English? Choose A, B or C.
 - A I need to use English in my work.
 - B I will need to use English in my future job.
 - C I am still studying and I am not sure what my future job will be, but I think this type of English will be useful.

Talking point 1

1 Work in pairs. According to your partner's answers, choose four suitable questions from below to ask. Ask some further questions of your own, if you like.

- What is your job?
- Who do you work for?
- Where do you work?
- When do you use English in your job?
- Do you travel a lot in your job?
- What do you study?
- Where do you study normally?
- What are your plans for the future?
- What job would you like to do?

2 Now introduce your partner to the rest of the class.

Talking point 2

1 Which ways of communicating do you use most in your job, or which do you prefer? Choose two of the following.

- phone
- memo
- email
- text messages
- face-to-face conversation

2 Compare your preferences with a partner and talk about the means of communication that you chose. Ask and answer the following questions.

- What do you use (email/memos/the phone, etc.) for?
- What are the advantages of communicating with people in this way?
- What are the disadvantages?
- Are there any situations when communicating with people in this way is not a good idea?

Photocopiable activity 2

The hotel manager

Reading

- 1 Below you will find an article which describes a week in the life of the manager of a chain of hotels. Skim the article quickly and choose two adjectives to describe Piet Krens's week.
stressful ☐ organised ☐ hectic ☐ lonely ☐ boring ☐ exciting ☐ relaxing ☐
- 2 Compare your ideas with a partner.

My Week

TRAVELSTOP

A week in the life of Piet Krens, Chief Executive of the Dutch hotel chain Travelstop.

Monday October 10

I start each day with a session on the exercise bike before I leave for work. My normal routine is to spend Mondays at our Amsterdam office. Each day, before I meet anyone, I check my two text messages. One gives the number of the previous night's room occupancies and the other tells me how many reservations we took over the Internet. My first meeting on Mondays is usually with Mehmet Demircan, our sales and marketing director. Today, we're discussing plans for our new advertising campaign.

Later, I always have an 'A to Z meeting', looking at possible sites for new hotels with our executive team.

Tuesday October 11

This is a day in the Hague, so once I have finished on the exercise bike, I drive up for a weekly meeting with the managing director, Natalie Jansson. Tuesday is usually my only day here so I try to be sure I go for a wander and meet the team. I enjoy catching up with them but I don't much care for the journey here because the traffic is so heavy. I have some special anti-stress music that I always listen to when I'm in the car. It helps me to relax.

Wednesday October 12

Today, I'm checking our two most recent hotels in Arnhem and Eindhoven. Whenever I visit a hotel, I walk around and take notes. Then, depending on how urgent the matters are, I either phone when I'm back in the car or talk about them at our next meeting. This Wednesday, I'm also checking a possible new site for a hotel at Tilberg.

Thursday October 13

It's only a short session on the bike this morning as we have our board meeting on Thursdays. I meet over breakfast with our chairman, Eric du Vert, and Jan den Ouden, our chief financial officer. I always look forward to our breakfast meetings although our debates can sometimes frighten the other customers! Normally we spend most of the time on financial issues, but today we're also discussing the approval for the Tilberg site.

Friday October 14

I use Fridays as a day to meet key contacts in the industry and analysts. Usually the analyst and I carry out a review of the forecasts and we devote one Friday in each month to looking at the past month's results. In the afternoon, I review the week to come and organise papers. I'm not keen on formal communications and would rather pick up the phone than dictate a memo or write an email. Fortunately most of our management team feel the same, so our phone bills are high but our paper bills are not!

- 3 Scan the article to find out when Mr Krens does the following activities (1–9). Choose from: *every day*, *every week*, or *one particular day* (e.g. *Monday October 10*).
- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 do exercise ... <i>every day</i> ... | 6 receive sales figures via text message |
| 2 meet the MD in the Hague | 7 have an 'A to Z' meeting |
| 3 visit the hotel in Arnhem | 8 organise papers |
| 4 have breakfast with the chairman | 9 visit Tilberg |
| 5 discuss the advertising campaign | |

Photocopiable activity 2

The hotel manager

4 Put these things in the correct place in the table below, then answer the questions which follow.

- Things which he does every day
- Things which he does every week
- Things which are not part of his routine

Every day	Every week	Not part of his routine
<i>do exercise</i>		

- Which tense is used for the actions which he does every day or every week?
- Which tense is used for the things which are not part of his routine?

5 Complete the following sentences with a suitable verb in the correct tense.

- 1 Mr Krens *does* exercise every morning before he goes to work.
- 2 On Mondays, he usually the sales and marketing director.
- 3 On Wednesdays, he always one or two hotels outside Amsterdam. Today, he hotels in Arnhem and Eindhoven.
- 4 He still for approval of the Tilberg site.
- 5 On Friday afternoons, he his diary for the week to come.

6 Scan the article again and choose the correct answer, A, B or C.

- 1 What is the 'A to Z' meeting about?
A financial results
B possible future hotels
C recently opened hotels
- 2 How does he feel about his breakfast meeting?
A He enjoys it.
B He is nervous about it.
C He feels bored by it.
- 3 How often does he review past results with the analyst?
A daily
B weekly
C monthly
- 4 What is his favourite method of communication?
A phone
B memo
C email

Vocabulary

1 The article contains a number of expressions to talk about likes and dislikes. Put the following expressions in the correct column, using the context in the article to help you.

I enjoy
I don't much care for
I look forward to
I'm not keen on

like	dislike
<i>I enjoy</i>	

2 Complete the following sentences about your likes and dislikes.

- 1 In my job/studies, I enjoy (activity)
- 2 I don't much care for (activity)
- 3 I look forward to (a day/time/month) because
- 4 I'm not keen on (a day/time/month) because
- 5 I'd rather than because

3 Work in pairs and read your sentences to each other. Do you like/dislike the same things?

Answer key

Photocopiable activity 2

Reading

- 1 Suggested answers
organised hectic
- 3 2 every week 3 Wednesday October 12 4 every week 5 Monday October 10 6 every day
7 every week 8 every week 9 Wednesday October 12

4 Every day	Every week	Not part of his routine
do exercise receive sales figures via text message	meet the MD in the Hague have breakfast with the chairman have an 'A to Z' meeting organise papers	visit the hotel in Arnhem discuss the advertising campaign visit Tilberg

- The present simple is used for actions which he does every day or every week.
 - The present continuous is used for things which are not part of his routine.
- 5 Suggested answers (other verbs are possible)
2 meets 3 visits; is visiting 4 is still waiting 5 checks
- 6 2 A 3 C 4 A

Vocabulary

1 Like	Dislike
I enjoy I look forward to	I don't much care for I'm not keen on

Student's Book activities

Getting started

- 2 Diane 3 Bernard 4 Gamal 5 Leila 6 Beverley 7 Jenny 8 Guy 9 Richard

Company departments

Vocabulary

- 2 b 3 g 4 a 5 c 6 e

Personal assistants

Listening

- 2 taking phone calls, answering letters and emails, taking notes in meetings, prioritising appointments, welcoming visitors, looking up information
- 4 2 f 3 b 4 d 5 a 6 e

Changing places

Reading

- 3 Donald Eisner: Paragraph 2
Alex Jennings: Paragraph 3
Both men: Paragraph 4
- 4 2 True 3 False 4 True 5 False 6 True 7 False 8 True

Grammar workshop

Present simple and present continuous

- 1 Present simple: usually, always, every week, twice a month, never, often, every month, sometimes, generally
Present continuous: now, at the moment, this week, currently, at this moment in time, this month, today
- 2 2 need 3 spend 4 Are you making 5 are reviewing
6 does not work 7 are also looking 8 do you want 9 reminds 10 don't realise

Transcript

2 Listening (page 11)

I = Interviewer; S = Sally

- I: Sally, I'm not sure many people are clear about what the job of PA really is. So, what exactly do you do?
- S: Well, normally I arrive at the office at about half past nine. My first job is to check my email. Every day there are lots of requests for meetings with Richard from producers, directors, lots of people. I prioritise these and I fit them into Richard's diary around his other appointments. Before any meeting, Richard needs background information, so I often do research or look up information. During meetings, I take notes and then afterwards I type the minutes and file them. And I deal with correspondence, take phone calls, and welcome visitors to the office.
- I: What kind of atmosphere do you work in?
- S: Oh, it's very busy. There are all kinds of people: producers, directors, actors, coming and going all the time. And sometimes it seems like the phone never stops ringing.
- I: What do you like best about your job?
- S: The people I work with. They're very positive and helpful.
- I: And what do you like least?
- S: Well, you can be under a lot of pressure to meet deadlines. There are always so many things happening. It can be quite manic sometimes.
- I: Do you have a good working relationship with your boss?
- S: Oh yes, we get on very well. He has a hectic schedule and he's out of the office a lot of the time, so trust is very important. He relies on me to work efficiently if he's not there.
- I: What kind of qualities do you think a PA needs?
- S: Organisation is the most important thing, definitely. You need to be quite meticulous when you're planning your employer's appointments.
- I: Anything else?
- S: Yes, you need to stay calm, even in a difficult situation. And you need a good telephone manner and good communication skills.
- I: Do you have any words of encouragement for anyone who is thinking of becoming a PA?
- S: Being a PA is a valuable career. It gives you a really good idea of how an organisation works and how people make decisions. And it can be an ideal springboard for a career in many other business areas, from marketing to finance.