



# Press Information

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## **BEC Leading the Way in Business Language Learning**

Tens of thousands of people in China are taking one of the world's leading business English examinations, from University of Cambridge ESOL examinations (Cambridge ESOL).

The Business English Certificate (BEC) is now the leading English language test for the workplace in China, with nearly 70,000 students sitting the exam. The number of BEC entries in China has doubled in just three years and continues to rise steeply. This is evidence that people in China are keen to improve their business skills in a growing international marketplace. More than ever, a good knowledge of English is needed to succeed in international business and commerce. Having the relevant language skills is an advantage in the job market and increases the opportunities to work abroad.

He Meizi, Development Manager for Cambridge ESOL in China says:

“So many Chinese people are taking BEC as they understand that it is excellent preparation for an international marketplace in which English is the language of communication. Unlike other tests, BEC covers all four skills - speaking and writing as well as reading and listening, which means that someone with a BEC certificate can actually use the language as well as understanding it, which gives them a real advantage when it comes to applying for jobs.”

BEC is an ideal qualification for someone wanting to prepare or improve their business career. It is available in three levels: BEC Preliminary, BEC Vantage and BEC Higher, and is recognised by universities and employers all over the world as proof that the learner has the language proficiency required to use English effectively in the workplace.

BEC is part of a range of Cambridge ESOL examinations taken by over two million people every year, in more than 130 countries. It has been developed on the basis of an extensive programme of academic research and all the written tests are marked by specialist examiners in the United Kingdom. The speaking test is carried out face-to-face by highly trained examiners in China, and recordings of the test are sent to Cambridge for quality control.

BEC is the oldest international examination for the workplace in China. Cambridge ESOL has worked with the National Exams in Education Authority (NEEA) since 1992 in promoting and administrating the BEC

In addition to the traditional paper-and-pen tests, Cambridge ESOL will be launching a computer-based version of BEC in 2008, offering test-takers in China greater flexibility and choice. Speaking tests will continue to be conducted face-to-face.

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#### **Notes to Editors:**

#### **About Cambridge ESOL**

University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group, a not-for-profit organisation and a department of the University of Cambridge. It is part of the Cambridge Assessment group, which is Europe's largest assessment agency. We provide examinations in English language for over 2 million people every year, in more than 130 countries, as well as a range of qualifications for language teachers.

Our examinations are developed on the basis of a long-term process of academic and practical research, to ensure that they are accurate, fair, reliable and relevant, and that they encourage learners to develop the skills they need to use English effectively in the real world.

University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations is a founder member of the Association of Language Testers in Europe and works closely with testing organisations, schools and academics throughout the world to support the development of language testing in theory and practice

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