

Exam Preparation Courses: BULATS

Business Language Testing Service

What is BULATS?

BULATS stands for the Business Language Testing Service. It is a service for companies designed to help them find out the level of language skills among their staff, trainees or job applicants. BULATS is used by businesses in over 30 countries for recruitment, training, benchmarking and staff development. It assesses language skills which are needed for the workplace and for students and employees on language courses or on professional/business courses where foreign language ability is an important element of the course.

At the moment, four different types of test are offered: the BULATS Computer Test, the BULATS Standard Test, the BULATS Writing Test and the BULATS Speaking Test. BULATS is a multilingual service, offering tests in English, French, German and Spanish. Tests of English are produced by the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations.

What level is BULATS?

BULATS provides tests for all learners of a foreign language. There is no 'pass mark'; candidates are placed in one of six levels. These levels are expressed as ALTE (Association of Language Testers in Europe) Levels which are linked to the Council of Europe Framework (CEF) levels. This is explained in the table above.

Who is BULATS suitable for?

BULATS is suitable for any learner who needs to use a foreign language at work. The test is carefully designed to be suitable for a wide range of people at work – technicians, secretaries or managers, in banking, in education or in manufacturing, in administration, research or marketing. It does not require any previous business experience, and so it is also suitable for students who may need to use the foreign language in the future.

What is involved in taking the BULATS exam?

BULATS provides a range of tests to meet different needs:

Test Type	Explanation
<i>The Computer Test - Online Version:</i>	A fast, accurate test of listening & reading skills online.
<i>The Computer Test:</i>	CD-Rom Version - a fast, accurate test of listening & reading skills via a CD.

<i>The Standard Test:</i>	A paper-based alternative to the computer test.
<i>The Speaking Test:</i>	Face-to-face evaluation of speaking skills.
<i>The Writing Test:</i>	Thorough evaluation of writing skills in a business context.

Test Content:

All the tests aim to be relevant to people using the language at work. They cover areas such as descriptions of jobs, companies and products, travel, management and marketing, customer service, planning, reports, phone messages, business correspondence and presentations. The tasks in the test are generally practical ones, e.g. taking a phone message, checking a letter, giving a presentation, understanding an article, writing a report.

What is in the Computer Test?

The BULATS Computer Test assesses your ability to use the language being tested by presenting questions via a computer. Questions appear on a screen and you answer them by clicking on a particular option or by typing in words or phrases.

How are the BULATS exam graded?

The Computer Test produces a report with the candidate's overall score (on a scale of 0–100) and ALTE and CEF levels, and their score on each section. Please refer to the [Mapping your Level / Grade grid \(www.kli.ie/map\)](http://www.kli.ie/map) for a breakdown of the results.

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