

## Midterm test

English II  
24 April 2013

### A. Vocabulary (2 points)

The following sentences were taken from the business section of English language newspapers. Complete each space with a suitable word or expression. The first letter(s) and a paraphrase of the meaning are given. You will need to conjugate a verb, and/or you may need to add a preposition. (0.4 points each)

1. The tax cuts recommended by the Tories' tax commission could be the start of a spell of bad news for David Cameron and his attempts to *r.....* his party.

(try to interest more people in [something] by changing it in some way)

2. The massive *l.....* of 10 per cent of the state labour force is scheduled to begin in October and stretch through March.

(dismissing people from their jobs)

3. Some of the more obvious palliatives, such as a higher *m..... w.....* and a more progressive Social Security tax, would have an almost instant effect on incomes.

(the lowest pay rate that an employer is allowed to pay an employee)

4. Mark Serwotka, PCS general secretary, said: "Civil and public servants are working harder than ever to provide the services we all rely on but, instead of rewarding them, the government is imposing cuts to their pay, raiding their pensions and trying to rip up their basic *w..... c.....*."

(the conditions which exist in their job, such as number of hours they are expected to work)

5. For the past three years it [Atos, the French IT business] has been under fire for its handling of work capability tests, which assess whether people are well enough to *a.....* work.

(present themselves as potential candidates for a job)

### B. Writing (12 points)

Write an application letter that would accompany your CV based on the job on page 4. Assume that the letter would be sent as a Word attachment. Do not invent qualifications or experience that you have not had. (Max. 1½ page) Your letter will be marked on relevance of content, control of the genre, discourse management, appropriacy and range of structures and vocabulary, and grammatical accuracy.

### C. Reading Comprehension (6 points)

Read the following text and answer the questions that follow it.

## Networking finds a new connection

By Maxine Boersma

1. Networking remains essential to career progression but it is evolving from canapes and the random exchange of business cards to filtering and targeting. It is no longer just about a “hard sell” and gathering bands of followers on social-media platforms but about the quality of contacts. Successful networkers now need to filter for
5. what or who is going to help them excel in their role.
- ...
10. “Digital Natives Challenge HR Leaders”, a 2012 survey of 154 alumni by executive search firm Egon Zehnder International, found that “Generation Y” employees are not satisfied by social media contacts alone and want more personal interaction with business partners. Miranda Pode, head of the UK financial services practice at **the firm**, welcomes this desire to network since it helps employees understand customer segmentation much better, enabling **them** to see patterns in different sectors that they can then bring to their own specialism.
15. “Good networking helps people observe the subtle interaction of suppliers, competitors and players in other sectors so they better understand how to resolve issues in their own business,” she says. “**This type of curiosity** is something we actively look for as a key indicator of future potential, which increasingly is what employers want to assess. We’ve invested heavily in new assessment tools to evaluate this, with curiosity as a key measure of someone’s career trajectory. Increasingly, we’re looking
20. for people who can think beyond their field. Employers often ask us to find non-executive director roles for people to enhance **this essential skillset**. Individuals who have this insight have good career potential as they can make sense of a vast array of organisations.”
25. PA Consulting Group, the management consultancy firm, ensures networking is a continuing core competence. According to chief operating officer, Andrew Hooke: “Networking is the most important soft skill in the professional services sector where your main resource is your people. It’s a feature we crave – interesting people with curiosity. I’ve been here 17 years and since the day I started, I’ve been encouraged to develop my own thought leadership.
30. “Even at induction stage, we stress that consultants need to show thought leadership in their market. We’re not looking just for research but immediate response. For example, PA’s viewpoint on the implications of the recent Great Western rail franchise was published 24 hours after the announcement was made.
35. “People should develop a wide, as well as a deep, network of contacts, at all levels. At PA we emphasise ‘making the connect’ – this is the point of common interest that allows you to connect to your audience to commence the relationship or strengthen it. ‘Making the connect’ can be personal as well as professional.
40. “Our senior people develop ‘visibility plans’ to show how they will nurture contacts with the next level above and to plan the journey to the top. We emphasise ‘giving’, too, reminding PA people that giving creates a different environment and feeling to the relationship or discussion. **This** need not be a business proposition – you can offer to help someone you meet, perhaps with a useful contact or point of view.
45. “Many organisations can be very controlling so it is important to trust your people to have an opinion. We help our people develop storytelling skills to bolster the clarity of their message and use professional actors to improve presentation skills during improvisation sessions. After all, facts tell but stories sell.”

*The Financial Times 13 March 2013*

What do the following expressions (highlighted in the text) refer to? (0.4 points each)

1. the firm (line 10);
2. them (line 13);
3. This type of curiosity (line 16);
4. this essential skillset (line 21);
5. This (line 41).

Decide whether each statement is TRUE or FALSE according to the text. Write your answer in the box. (0.5 points each)

6. The purpose of the article is to give advice about how to network.
7. Miranda Pode believes that more curious people reach higher positions.
8. If you have the ability to look outside your field you are less likely to be promoted.
9. Networking is important in management consulting because in management consulting people are the most important resource.
10. PA consulting Group sees networking as a 2-way process.
11. Networking is now considered a skill in its own right that an employee has.
12. When Pode says “facts tell but stories sell,” she means that personal presentation skills are much more important than the content of the presentation.
13. It is probable that Egan Zehnder International is a Human Resources/headhunting firm.

## Graduate Conference Producer – Portuguese Speaking

Employer: [ALBANY APPOINTMENTS](#)

Posted: 05 March 2013

Ref: LO881099

Location: London

Industry: [Marketing & PR - Conferences & events](#)

Level: Graduate

Contract: Permanent

Hours: Full Time

Salary: £23,000 + profit share



Are you a recent graduate? Are commercially driven? Are you fluent in English and Portuguese? Do you want to put together the content for commercially led business conferences? Are you a budding Conference Producer in the making? If so then read on...

A great opportunity for a highly driven and passionate recent graduate to start a career as a Conference Producer. This international company has been providing hugely successful business intelligence and networking opportunities since it begun over 20 years ago and has grown aggressively ever since. Conference Producers research and put together conference agendas. This involves in depth research into the target market, acquiring industry experts as speakers and writing a programme that is filled with intellectual content aimed for your target audience.

This company is very dynamic and is really looking for a graduate with a strong 'Business Mind'. They are looking for people who are able to assume responsibility quickly and make their own decisions.

### Tasks & Responsibilities:

- To develop commercially viable conferences based on in-depth market research into the relevant market and topic
- Identify new and interesting business trends
- To speak to business leaders worldwide – discussing developing issues – what's going to be vital in the future
- To write the promotionally-led programmes
- To work closely with the sales and marketing teams to ensure the on-going success of the campaigns

### The Successful Candidate:

- A recent graduate with a research based degree, must be fluent in English and Portuguese
- Commercially Minded with ability to assimilate complex information quickly
- Based in the UK
- Proven research and interpersonal skills
- To be entrepreneurial and ready to take responsibility early on

## Answers

### A. Vocabulary (2 points; 0.4 points each)

1. The tax cuts recommended by the Tories' tax commission could be the start of a spell of bad news for David Cameron and his attempts to *reposition* his party.
2. The massive *layoff* of 10 per cent of the state labour force is scheduled to begin in October and stretch through March. (dismissing people from their jobs)
3. Some of the more obvious palliatives, such as a higher *minimum wage* and a more progressive Social Security tax, would have an almost instant effect on incomes. (the lowest pay rate that an employer is allowed to pay an employee)
4. Mark Serwotka, PCS general secretary, said: "Civil and public servants are working harder than ever to provide the services we all rely on but, instead of rewarding them, the government is imposing cuts to their pay, raiding their pensions and trying to rip up their basic *working conditions*." (the conditions which exist in their job, such as number of hours they are expected to work)
5. For the past three years it [Atos, the French IT business] has been under fire for its handling of work capability tests, which assess whether people are well enough to *apply for* work. (

### B. Writing (12 points)

A good answer will explain how the applicant developed the skills and knowledge areas listed under *The successful candidate in the ad*. It will be written in an appropriate register and will demonstrate competence in the discourse organisation of an application letter.

### C. Reading comprehension (5 points; 0.5 points each)

1. the word = outplacement
2. it = outplacement support
3. that approach = trying to find a job as quickly as possible
4. that mindset = feeling the victim of circumstance
5. False
6. True
7. False
8. True
9. True
10. True
11. False
12. False
13. True