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Short Notes — Communication Skills in English

BTEUP Diploma • 1st Semester (First Year — Common Curriculum, All 41 Branches) •

Short Notes

Session 2026-27

Short Revision Notes — prepared by KAMALDNP Academy from the official BTEUP 2026-27 syllabus. This is NOT a BTEUP board paper or publication.

These short notes cover the four units of **Communication Skills in English** from the BTEUP 2026-27 first-semester syllabus, which is common to all diploma branches. Each unit gives tight, exam-focused points on every topic named in the syllabus — definitions, standard formats and the differences examiners usually ask about.

Use these notes for **revision**: read a unit, cover the page and try to say the main points aloud, then attempt the likely question at the end of the unit. These are revision notes prepared by KAMALDNP Academy, not a BTEUP publication, so always match your final preparation with the official syllabus and your class notes.

Reading & Comprehension

Topics: Reading technical passages; understanding instructions and manuals; vocabulary building.

Reading technical passages

Reading comprehension means reading a passage and correctly understanding its facts, ideas and the writer's purpose. Technical passages use subject words, data, diagrams and short factual sentences, so they must be read slowly and carefully.

How to attempt a comprehension passage in the exam:

- Read the questions first, so you know what to look for.
- Read the passage once for the general idea, then again for details.
- Underline names, numbers, dates and key terms while reading.
- Answer in your own simple words, based only on the passage — do not add outside information.
- Keep answers short and to the point; copy exact technical terms where needed.

Two useful reading habits are **skimming** (reading quickly to get the main idea) and **scanning** (searching quickly for one specific fact, such as a value or a name). Good comprehension needs regular practice with unseen passages.

Understanding instructions and manuals

An **instruction** tells you how to do a task step by step, and a **manual** is a booklet that explains how to install, operate, maintain and repair a machine or device safely.

Features of instructions and manuals:

- Steps are given in correct order, usually numbered.
- Sentences are short and in command form, e.g. "Switch off the supply before opening the cover."
- Warnings and cautions are marked clearly, often with symbols.
- Diagrams, labels and tables support the written steps.

How to read a manual correctly: read the safety warnings first, check the list of parts and tools, follow the steps in order without skipping, and use the index or contents page to find a topic quickly. In the workshop and on the job, following a manual exactly prevents damage, accidents and wrong results, which is why this skill is tested.

Vocabulary building

Vocabulary is the stock of words a person knows and can use correctly. A diploma student needs both general words and **technical words** of his or her branch, because reports, manuals and exam answers all depend on the right word in the right place.

Ways to build vocabulary:

- Learn a few new words daily and use them in your own sentences.
- Use a dictionary to check meaning, pronunciation and spelling.
- Learn words in groups: synonyms (words of similar meaning), antonyms (opposite meaning) and one-word substitutions, e.g. "a person who repairs machines" — mechanic.
- Understand prefixes and suffixes, e.g. un-, re-, -tion, -able, to guess the meaning of new words.
- Read technical passages and note down branch terms with their meanings.

Note the difference between commonly confused pairs such as its/it's, principal/principle and affect/effect — these are frequently asked in objective questions.

Likely question: Read-type question: an unseen technical passage is given, followed by questions on its main idea, specific facts and the meanings of words used in the passage.

Writing Skills

Topics: Letters, emails, reports and notices; paragraph and essay writing; grammar in use.

Letters, emails, reports and notices

Formal writing follows a fixed format. A **formal letter** is written in block format: sender's address, date, receiver's address, subject line, salutation (Sir/Madam), body in three parts (introduction, details, conclusion), subscription (Yours faithfully) and signature — all parts aligned to the left.

An **email** has: To, Cc, Subject, greeting, short body paragraphs, a polite closing and the sender's name with contact details. Keep the subject line short and clear.

A **report** presents facts about an event, inspection or experiment under headings: title, introduction, observations/findings and conclusion or recommendations. Write in past tense and third person.

A **notice** informs a group about an event or instruction. Standard notice format: name of the institution at the top, the word NOTICE, date, a heading, the body answering what, when, where and whom to contact, and the name and designation of the issuing person. A notice is short, factual and usually placed inside a box.

Paragraph and essay writing

A **paragraph** is a group of sentences built around one main idea. Its parts are: a **topic sentence** stating the main idea, supporting sentences giving details, examples or reasons, and a closing sentence that rounds it off. All sentences must stay on the same idea — this is called **unity** — and follow a logical order, called **coherence**.

An **essay** is a longer piece of writing made of several paragraphs, with three main parts:

- **Introduction** — presents the topic and the writer's stand.
- **Body** — two or more paragraphs developing points with examples.
- **Conclusion** — sums up the discussion without adding new points.

For exam answers: plan your points first, write simple correct sentences, keep one idea per paragraph, and revise for spelling and punctuation at the end. A paragraph is normally 100–150 words; an essay 250–300 words unless the question says otherwise.

Grammar in use

Grammar in use means applying grammar rules correctly while writing and speaking, not only learning the rules. The areas most used in technical writing are:

- **Tenses** — present simple for facts and routines ("The motor rotates at 1440 rpm"), past simple for completed work in reports, present perfect for work connected with the present.
- **Articles** — a/an for general or first mention, the for a specific or already mentioned thing.
- **Prepositions** — correct use of in, on, at, by, with, from with time, place and instruments.
- **Active and passive voice** — passive voice is common in technical writing: "The readings were recorded."
- **Subject-verb agreement** — a singular subject takes a singular verb.
- **Direct and indirect speech** — used when reporting what someone said.

In the exam, grammar is usually tested through error correction, filling blanks and changing the voice or narration of given sentences.

Likely question: Write a formal letter to the Principal of your polytechnic requesting permission to organise a technical workshop in your department.

Speaking & Listening

Topics: Introducing yourself; group discussion; presentation skills; listening comprehension.

Introducing yourself

A **self-introduction** is a short, clear account of who you are, spoken when you meet a group, join a class or face an interview. A good introduction is brief (about one minute), confident and in a logical order.

Points to include, in order:

- Greeting and your name.
- Your place — city or village you belong to.
- Your education — school, and the diploma branch and institute you are studying in.
- Your family background, in one line only.
- Your interests, skills and strengths, with a small example.
- Your aim or goal, and a polite closing line such as "Thank you."

Delivery tips: stand straight, smile, make eye contact with the listeners, speak at a medium speed and avoid memorised, machine-like delivery. Practise aloud beforehand. In an interview, keep the introduction professional — do not add unnecessary personal details, and end in a way that invites the next question.

Group discussion

A **group discussion (GD)** is a discussion on a given topic by a group of about 8–12 candidates, used by institutes and employers to judge communication and teamwork. It usually lasts 15–20 minutes.

What is judged:

- Knowledge of the topic and quality of points.
- Clarity of speech and correct language.
- Listening to others and building on their points.
- Leadership — starting well, giving others a chance, summarising.
- Body language and confidence.

Do's: listen carefully, speak to the point, support points with examples, be polite while disagreeing ("I see your point, however..."), and help the group reach a conclusion. **Don'ts:** do not shout, interrupt again and again, speak off the topic, or stay silent throughout. A good participant also summarises the main points near the end if the group has not concluded.

Presentation skills

A **presentation** is planned speaking before an audience to inform or explain, usually supported by slides or charts. Its three parts are an **introduction** (greeting, topic and outline), the **body** (main points in a clear order, with examples, figures and simple visuals) and the **conclusion** (summary and thanks), followed by handling questions.

Skills that make a presentation effective:

- Know the topic well and prepare the order of points in advance.
- Slides: few words per slide, large clear fonts, one idea per slide, simple diagrams.
- Voice: clear, medium speed, proper pauses; avoid reading word by word.
- Body language: eye contact with the whole audience, natural gestures, no nervous movements.
- Time control: finish within the given time and leave time for questions.

Rehearse aloud at least once. Answer questions honestly; if you do not know an answer, say so politely instead of guessing.

Listening comprehension

Listening comprehension means listening to spoken English — a lecture, announcement, instruction or conversation — and understanding it correctly. Listening is an active skill: the listener must grasp the main idea, note important details and understand the speaker's purpose.

Barriers to good listening: noise and distraction, speaking speed, unfamiliar accent, unknown words, and the listener's own wandering attention. **How to improve:**

- Concentrate on the speaker; avoid side talk and mobile use.
- Listen for key words, numbers and signal words such as "first", "however", "therefore".
- Make short notes of main points while listening.
- Do not stop at one unknown word — guess its meaning from context.
- Confirm understanding by asking questions or repeating the instruction in your own words.

In the exam, a passage or talk is read out (or played) and questions are answered from what was heard, so note-taking practice is essential.

Likely question: What is a group discussion? Explain the skills and qualities that are judged in a candidate during a group discussion.

Workplace Communication

Topics: Resume writing; interview skills; telephone and email etiquette.

Resume writing

A **resume** (also called a CV or biodata in brief form) is a one- or two-page summary of a candidate's education, skills and experience, prepared to get an interview call. It must be honest, neat and easy to scan.

Standard sections of a resume, in order:

- Name and contact details — address, mobile number, email.
- Career objective — one or two lines matching the job.
- Educational qualifications — in a table, latest first, with board/university, year and percentage.
- Technical skills — machines, software, tools or languages known.
- Training, projects and industrial visits.
- Achievements and extra-curricular activities.
- Personal details — date of birth, languages known.
- Declaration and signature.

Use simple formatting, correct spelling and a professional email ID. Adjust the objective and skills for each job applied for, and never write false information — it is checked in the interview.

Interview skills

An **interview** is a formal face-to-face meeting in which an employer judges a candidate's knowledge, communication, confidence and suitability for a job or seat.

Before the interview: learn about the company or institute, revise your subject basics and your resume, keep documents ready, and dress neatly in formal clothes. **During the interview:**

- Greet the panel, wait to be asked before sitting, and maintain eye contact.
- Listen to the full question before answering; answer clearly and briefly.
- Be honest — if you do not know an answer, say "Sorry sir, I am not sure about this."
- Keep a positive attitude; do not criticise past teachers or employers.
- Common questions: introduce yourself, your strengths and weaknesses, why you want this job, and questions from your project and training.

After: thank the panel before leaving. Body language — posture, smile and a firm handshake — speaks as much as your words.

Telephone and email etiquette

Etiquette means polite and correct behaviour in communication. **Telephone etiquette:**

- Answer promptly and greet properly: "Good morning, KAMALDNP Academy, how may I help you?"
- Speak clearly, at medium speed, and state your name and purpose when you make a call.
- Listen without interrupting; note down names, numbers and messages carefully and repeat them back to confirm.
- Keep calls short and to the point; ask "Is this a good time to talk?" for long calls.
- End politely with thanks; let the caller put the phone down first.

Email etiquette: write a clear subject line, use a proper greeting and polite words (please, thank you), keep the message short with one topic per mail, check spelling and attachments before sending, reply within a reasonable time, and use Cc only for people who genuinely need the information. Avoid capital letters (it reads like shouting) and never forward office mail to personal accounts without permission.

Likely question: Draft a resume for a fresh diploma holder applying for the post of Junior Technician in an engineering company.

Quick Revision — One Line Each

- Skimming = quick reading for the main idea; scanning = searching for one specific fact.
- Formal letter: block format — addresses, date, subject, salutation, body, 'Yours faithfully', signature.
- Notice format: institution name, NOTICE, date, heading, body (what, when, where, contact), name and designation.
- A paragraph has unity (one idea) and coherence (logical order); its first sentence is the topic sentence.
- Essay = introduction + body + conclusion; the conclusion adds no new points.

- Passive voice is preferred in technical and report writing: 'The readings were recorded.'
- Self-introduction order: greeting, name, place, education, skills, aim — about one minute.
- In a GD, listening, clear points, polite disagreement and summarising score more than shouting or dominating.
- Presentation slides: one idea per slide, few words, large fonts; never read slides word by word.
- Resume sections: contact, objective, education (latest first), skills, training/projects, declaration.
- Interview rule: listen fully, answer briefly and honestly — never bluff an unknown answer.
- Email etiquette: clear subject, short body, check attachments before sending; all-caps reads like shouting.

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