

Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English 3

TEACHER'S BOOK

*Examination papers from
University of Cambridge
ESOL Examinations:
English for Speakers of
Other Languages*



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CPE content and marking

The structure of CPE: *an overview*

The CPE examination consists of five papers:

Paper 1	Reading	1 hour 30 minutes
Paper 2	Writing	2 hours
Paper 3	Use of English	1 hour 30 minutes
Paper 4	Listening	40 minutes (approximately)
Paper 5	Speaking	19 minutes

Material used throughout CPE is as far as possible authentic and free of bias, and reflects the international flavour of the examination. The subject matter should not advantage or disadvantage certain groups of candidates, nor should it offend in areas such as religion, politics or sex.

Paper 1 Reading

The CPE Reading paper consists of four parts and 40 questions. The time allowed to select answers and record them on the answer sheet is one hour and thirty minutes.

Texts

The length of CPE texts varies from 130 words to 1100 words, depending on the task. The total length of texts over all four parts is approximately 3000 words. The texts cover a range of recently published material and may be of the following types:

- informational
- opinion/comment
- discursive
- descriptive
- advice/instructional
- narrative
- imaginative/journalistic
- persuasive
- complaint
- combined, e.g. narrative/descriptive, information/opinion

Materials from fiction, non-fiction, journals, magazines, newspapers and promotional and informational material may be included.

Reading texts may contain some lexis unknown to candidates and understanding of these words may be tested if it can reasonably be expected that the meaning can be deduced from context (one of the skills tested in the paper).

Test focus

The tasks in the Reading paper test candidates' ability to:

- understand lexical appropriacy
- understand the gist of a text and its overall function and message
- interpret the text for inference, attitude and style
- select the relevant information from the text required to perform a task
- infer underlying meaning
- demonstrate an understanding of how text structure operates

Paper 1 outline

Part	Task type and focus	Number of questions	Task format
1	Four-option multiple-choice lexical cloze Idioms, collocations, fixed phrases, complementation, phrasal verbs, semantic precision	18	Three modified cloze texts, from a range of sources. Each text contains six gaps and is followed by six four-option multiple-choice questions.
2	Four-option multiple choice Content/detail, opinion, attitude, tone, purpose, main idea, implication, text organisation features (exemplification, comparison, reference)	8	Four texts on one theme, from a range of sources. Two four-option multiple-choice questions per text.
3	Gapped text Cohesion, coherence, text structure, global meaning	7	One text from which paragraphs have been removed and placed in jumbled order after the text. Candidates must decide from where in the text the paragraphs have been removed.
4	Four-option multiple choice Focus as for Part 2	7	One text with seven four-option multiple-choice questions.

Marks

Candidates record their answers in pencil on a separate answer sheet. One mark is given for each correct answer in Part 1; two marks are given for each correct answer in Parts 2–4. The total score is then weighted to 40 marks for the whole Reading paper.

Marking

The Reading paper answer sheet is directly scanned by computer.

Paper 2 Writing

The CPE Writing paper requires candidates to answer two questions. Candidates are asked to write between 300 and 350 words for each answer. The time allowed is two hours.

Test focus

All questions specify the role of the reader, the role of the writer and the purpose for writing. Candidates are expected to show that they are sensitive to the kind of writing required to fulfil a task.

Part 1 tests candidates' ability to complete a task with a discursive focus. For example, candidates may be required to defend or attack a particular argument or opinion, compare or contrast an argument, explain a problem and suggest a solution or make recommendations having evaluated an idea.

In Part 2, candidates may be required to demonstrate a range of skills including narrating, analysing, hypothesising, describing, giving reasons, persuading and judging priorities.

Tasks

In both sections candidates are asked to complete non-specialist tasks with a range of formats. Presentation, register and style should be appropriate to the task and the effect on the target reader should always be borne in mind by the candidate.

In Part 1 candidates are asked to produce one piece of writing (300–350 words) in response to instructions and a short text totalling approximately 100 words. The task focus is on productive language, so the language of the text is well within the reading competence expected of CPE candidates and may come from a variety of sources, for example, extracts from newspapers, magazines, books, letters or advertisements. Visuals, such as a diagram, simple graph or picture, may be included with the text to support or extend a topic. In order to complete the tasks successfully, candidates need to use the text provided in an appropriate way by, as it states in the instructions, discussing the points raised and expressing their own opinions. They should avoid simply reproducing the text in their answers.

In Part 2, candidates have a choice of tasks within a variety of formats. Each task is contextualised by instructions of no more than 70 words. One of the optional tasks (question 5) is on background reading texts. There are three alternatives in question 5 and candidates may select one of these based on their reading of the set texts. The list of set texts is published by Cambridge ESOL in the Examination Regulations. Each text normally remains on the list for two years.

Paper 2 outline

Part	Task type and focus	Number of tasks and length	Task format
1	<p>Candidates are expected to write within the following formats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an article • an essay • a letter • a proposal <p>Discursive – presenting and developing arguments, expressing and supporting opinions, evaluating ideas, etc.</p>	<p>One compulsory task</p> <p>300–350 words</p>	<p>A contextualised writing task giving candidates guidance to the context through instructions and one short text which may be supported by visual prompts.</p>
2	<p>Candidates are expected to write within the following formats for questions 2 to 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an article • a letter • a proposal • a review • a report <p>Candidates are expected to write within the following formats for question 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an article • an essay • a letter • a review • a report <p>Describing, persuading, narrating, evaluating, making recommendations, giving information, summarising, etc.</p>	<p>Four questions from which candidates choose one.</p> <p>One of the choices includes a question on each of the three set texts.</p> <p>300–350 words</p>	<p>A contextualised writing task specified in no more than 70 words.</p>

Assessment

An impression mark is awarded to each piece of writing using the general mark scheme. Examiners use band descriptors to assess language and task achievement. Each piece of writing is assigned to a band between 0 and 5 and can be awarded one of three performance levels within that band. For example, in Band 4, 4.1 represents weaker performance within Band 4; 4.2 represents typical performance within Band 4; 4.3 represents strong performance within Band 4. Acceptable

CPE content and marking

performance at CPE level is represented by a band of 3. All tasks carry the same maximum mark.

The general impression mark scheme is used in conjunction with a task-specific mark scheme, which focuses on content, range of structures, vocabulary, organisation, register and format and the effect on the target reader of a specific task.

American spelling and usage is acceptable.

Band 5	<p>Outstanding realisation of the task set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• sophisticated use of an extensive range of vocabulary, collocation and expression, entirely appropriate to the task set• effective use of stylistic devices; register and format wholly appropriate• impressive use of a wide range of structures• skilfully organised and coherent• excellent development of topic• minimal error <p>Impresses the reader and has a very positive effect.</p>
Band 4	<p>Good realisation of the task set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• fluent and natural use of a wide range of vocabulary, collocation and expression, successfully meeting the requirements of the task set• good use of stylistic devices; register and format appropriate• competent use of a wide range of structures• well organised and coherent• good development of topic• minor and unobtrusive errors <p>Has a positive effect on the reader.</p>
Band 3	<p>Satisfactory realisation of the task set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• reasonably fluent and natural use of a range of vocabulary and expression, adequate to the task set• evidence of stylistic devices; register and format generally appropriate• adequate range of structures• clearly organised and generally coherent• adequate coverage of topic• some non-impeding errors <p>Achieves the desired effect on the reader.</p>
Band 2	<p>Inadequate attempt at the task set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• limited and/or inaccurate range of vocabulary and expression• little evidence of stylistic devices; some attempt at appropriate register and format• inadequate range of structures• some attempt at organisation, but lacks coherence• inadequate development of topic• a number of errors, which sometimes impede communication <p>Has a negative effect on the reader.</p>
Band 1	<p>Poor attempt at the task set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• severely limited and inaccurate range of vocabulary and expression• no evidence of stylistic devices; little or no attempt at appropriate register and format• lack of structural range• poorly organised, leading to incoherence• little relevance to topic, and/or too short• numerous errors, which distract and often impede communication <p>Has a very negative effect on the reader.</p>
Band 0	<p>Negligible or no attempt at the task set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• incomprehensible due to serious error• totally irrelevant• insufficient language to assess (fewer than 20% of the required number of words – 60)• totally illegible

Marking

The panel of examiners is divided into small teams, each with a very experienced examiner as Team Leader. The Principal Examiner guides and monitors the marking process, which begins with a meeting of the Principal Examiner and the Team Leaders. This is held immediately after the examination and establishes a common standard of assessment by the selection of sample scripts for all five questions in Paper 2. These are chosen to demonstrate the range of responses and different levels of competence, and a task-specific mark scheme is finalised for each individual question on the paper. This summarises the content, organisation, range of structures and vocabulary, register and format which would be found in a satisfactory response to the question. The overall effect on the target reader is also specified. The accuracy of language, including spelling and punctuation, is assessed on the general impression scale for all tasks. Examiners refer to these mark schemes as they mark each script. A rigorous process of coordination and checking is carried out before and throughout the marking process.

Paper 3 Use of English

The CPE Use of English paper consists of five parts and 44 questions. The time allowed for completing all five parts and recording answers on the answer sheets is one hour and thirty minutes.

Test focus

This paper tests the ability of candidates to apply their knowledge of the language system. Parts 1 and 4 focus on both grammar and vocabulary; Parts 2 and 3 focus primarily on vocabulary and Part 5 focuses on an awareness of the use of language and summary writing skills.

Paper 3 outline

Part	Task type and focus	Number of questions	Task format
1	Open cloze Grammatical/lexico-grammatical	15	A text containing fifteen gaps. Each gap corresponds to a word. Candidates must write the missing word.
2	Word formation Lexical	10	A text containing ten gaps. Each gap corresponds to a word. Prompts for the missing words are given beside the text and must be transformed to provide the missing word.

3	Gapped sentences Lexical (e.g. collocation, phrasal verbs, patterns in which lexical items occur)	6	Questions are made up of three discrete sentences. Each sentence contains one gap. The gapped word is common to the three sentences. Candidates must write one word which is appropriate in all three sentences.
4	Key word transformations Lexical/lexico-grammatical	8	Discrete items with a lead-in sentence and a gapped response to complete using a given word. Candidates write between three and eight words.
5	Comprehension questions and summary writing task Question focus: awareness of use of language (recognising and understanding the force of lexical items, rhetorical and stylistic devices and referencing) Summary tests information selection, linking, sentence construction	4 questions on the texts and 1 summary writing task	Two texts with two questions on each text. The summary task requires selection of relevant information from both texts. Candidates write between 50 and 70 words for the summary tasks.

Marks

One mark is given for each correct answer in questions 1–25.

Two marks are given for each correct answer in questions 26–31.

Up to two marks may be awarded for questions 32–39.

Two marks are given for each correct answer in questions 40–43.

Fourteen marks are available for question 44. Up to four marks may be awarded for content (see test keys for content points) and ten for summary writing skills.

The ten marks for summary writing skills are divided into five bands using the summary mark scheme opposite.

5.2 5.1	<p>Outstanding realisation of the task set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • totally relevant • concise and totally coherent • skilfully organised, with effective use of linking devices • skilfully reworded, where appropriate • minimal non-impeding errors, probably due to ambition <p>Clearly informs and requires virtually no effort on the part of the reader.</p>
4.2 4.1	<p>Good realisation of the task set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mostly relevant • concise and mostly coherent • well organised, with good use of linking devices • competently reworded, where appropriate • occasional non-impeding errors <p>Informs and requires minimal effort on the part of the reader.</p>
3.2 3.1	<p>Satisfactory realisation of the task set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generally relevant, with occasional digression • some attempt at concise writing and reasonably coherent • adequately organised with some appropriate use of linking devices • adequately reworded, where appropriate • some errors, mostly non-impeding <p>Adequately informs, though may require some effort on the part of the reader.</p>
2.2 2.1	<p>Inadequate attempt at the task set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some irrelevance • little attempt at concise writing, so likely to be over-length and incoherent in places OR too short • some attempt at organisation, but only limited use of appropriate linking devices and may use inappropriate listing or note format • inadequately reworded and/or inappropriate listing • a number of errors, which sometimes impede communication <p>Partially informs, though requires considerable effort on the part of the reader.</p>
1.2 1.1	<p>Poor attempt at the task set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considerable irrelevance • no attempt at concise writing, so likely to be seriously over-length and seriously incoherent OR far too short • poorly organised, with little or no use of appropriate linking devices and/or relies on listing or note format • poorly reworded and/or over-reliance on listing • numerous errors, which distract and impede communication <p>Fails to inform and requires excessive effort on the part of the reader.</p>
0	<p>Negligible or no attempt at the task set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not demonstrate summary skills • incomprehensible due to serious error • totally irrelevant • insufficient language to assess (fewer than 10 words) • totally illegible

Marking

Candidates record their answers on separate answer sheets which are processed by trained markers. The mark scheme is adjusted at the beginning of the marking procedure to take account of actual candidate performance and then finalised. Part 5 is marked by a panel of trained examiners monitored by Team Leaders and a Principal Examiner.

Paper 4 Listening

The CPE Listening paper contains four parts with 28 questions and is approximately 40 minutes in length. The instructions which begin each section of the Listening paper are written and spoken. They give the general context for the text and explain the task. Candidates write their answers on the question paper while listening. Five minutes are allowed at the end of the test for them to transfer their answers onto a separate answer sheet.

Texts

Different text types appropriate to the particular test focus are used in each part of the paper. They may be any of the following types:

Monologues:

- documentaries/features
- instructions
- commentaries
- lectures
- news broadcasts
- public announcements
- publicity/advertisements
- reports
- speeches
- stories/anecdotes
- talks

Interacting speakers:

- chat
- conversation
- discussion
- interview
- scripted drama
- transaction

Each text is heard twice. Recordings contain a variety of accents corresponding to standard variants of English native speaker accent. Background sounds may be included before speaking begins, to provide contextual information.

Test focus

The tasks in the Listening paper test candidates' ability to:

- select the relevant information from the text required to perform a task
- understand the gist of a text and its overall function and message
- identify and distinguish fact and opinion
- infer underlying meaning
- identify participation and role of different speakers in the discourse
- recognise attitude

Paper 4 outline

Part	Task type and focus	Number of questions	Task format
1	Three-option multiple choice Gist, detail, main idea, function, purpose, topic, speaker, addressee, feeling, attitude, opinion	8	Four short extracts from monologues or texts involving interacting speakers with two questions per extract.
2	Sentence completion Specific information, stated opinion	9	Candidates complete gaps in sentences with information from a monologue or prompted monologue.
3	Four-option multiple choice Opinion, gist, detail, inference	5	A text involving interacting speakers (e.g. interview) with multiple-choice questions.
4	Three-way matching Stated and non-stated opinion, agreement and disagreement	6	Candidates match statements on a text to either of two speakers or to both when they express agreement.

Marks

One mark is given for each correct answer.

For security reasons, several versions of the Listening paper are used at each administration of the examination. All tests are constructed to equal levels of difficulty using statistical information obtained by pre-testing the tasks on students before the live examination. After tests have been taken, the performance of the candidates in each of the versions is compared and marks adjusted to compensate for any slight imbalance in levels of difficulty.

Marking

Candidates record their answers on separate answer sheets which are processed by trained markers. The mark scheme for each version of the Listening paper is adjusted at the beginning of the marking procedure to take account of actual candidate performance.

Paper 5 Speaking

The CPE Speaking Test is conducted by two Oral Examiners (an Interlocutor and an Assessor) with pairs of candidates. The Interlocutor is responsible for conducting the Speaking Test and is also required to give a mark for each candidate's performance during the whole test. The Assessor is responsible for providing an analytical assessment of each candidate's performance and, after being introduced by the Interlocutor, takes no further part in the interaction. The Speaking Test takes 19 minutes for each pair of candidates and is divided into three parts.

NB The CPE Speaking Test is designed for pairs of candidates. However, where a centre has an uneven number of candidates, the last three candidates will be examined together. Oral Examiner packs contain shared tasks which are particularly appropriate for these groups of three. This test takes 28 minutes.

Test focus

The tasks in the Speaking Test require candidates to interact in conversational English in a range of contexts. Candidates demonstrate their ability to do this through appropriate control of grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation and interactive communication.

Tasks

The paired format gives the opportunity for a range of interaction types – candidates speak to the Interlocutor in Part 1, to each other in Part 2, and to each other and the Interlocutor in Part 3. The three parts of the test are designed so that candidates deal with progressively more complex ideas and tasks, moving from personal topics to decision-making and discursive activities.

The focus of Part 1 is general interactional and social language. The Interlocutor asks each candidate three different questions, which require candidates to give information about themselves and to express personal opinions.

In Part 2 both candidates are involved in the same decision-making activity based on visual prompts. The candidates are first asked a question relating to one or more of the pictures. This introductory question gives candidates the chance to familiarise themselves with the topic and visuals before going on to the decision-making task. Candidates should be able to express their own opinions, invite the opinions and ideas of their partner and negotiate a decision.

In Part 3, the candidates speak on their own for two minutes, answering a question presented on a card. This gives them the opportunity to develop a topic individually, and to show their ability to sustain and organise a more extended contribution. The follow-up discussion allows candidates to explore the topics of the long turns in greater depth.

At the end of the Speaking Test, candidates are thanked for attending, but are given no indication of their level of achievement.

Paper 5 outline

Part	Task type and focus	Length of parts	Task format
1	Conversation between the Interlocutor and each candidate General interactional and social language	3 minutes	The Interlocutor encourages the candidates to give information about themselves and to express personal opinions.
2	Two-way conversation between the candidates Speculating, evaluating, comparing, giving opinions, decision making, etc.	4 minutes	The candidates are given visual and spoken prompts, which generate a discussion.
3	Long turn from each candidate followed by a discussion on topics related to the long turns Organising a larger unit of discourse, expressing and justifying opinions, developing topics	2 minute long turn for each candidate 8 minutes following the long turns	Each candidate in turn is given a written question to respond to. Candidates engage in a discussion to explore further the topics of the long turns.

Assessment

Candidates are assessed on their own individual performance and not in relation to each other, according to the following analytical criteria: Grammatical Resource, Lexical Resource, Discourse Management, Pronunciation and Interactive Communication. These criteria are interpreted at CPE level. Assessment is based on performance in the whole test and is not related to particular parts of the test.

Both examiners assess the candidates. The Assessor applies detailed, analytical scales, and the Interlocutor applies the Global Achievement Scale, which is based on the analytical scales.

Grammatical Resource

This refers to the accurate application of grammar rules and the effective arrangement of words in utterances. At CPE level a wide range of grammatical forms should be used appropriately and competently. Performance is viewed in terms of the overall effectiveness of the language used.

Lexical Resource

This refers to the candidate's ability to use a wide and appropriate range of vocabulary to meet task requirements. At CPE level the tasks require candidates to express precise meanings, attitudes and opinions and to be able to convey abstract ideas. Although candidates may lack specialised vocabulary when dealing with unfamiliar topics, it should not in general terms be necessary to resort to simplification. Performance is viewed in terms of the overall effectiveness of the language used.

Discourse Management

This refers to the candidate's ability to link utterances together to form coherent monologue and contributions to dialogue. The utterances should be relevant to the tasks and to preceding utterances in the discourse. The discourse produced should be at a level of complexity appropriate to CPE level and the utterances should be arranged logically to develop the themes or arguments required by the tasks. The extent of contributions should be appropriate, i.e. long or short as required at a particular point in the dynamic development of the discourse in order to achieve the task.

Pronunciation

This refers to the candidate's ability to produce easily comprehensible utterances to fulfil the task requirements. At CPE level, acceptable pronunciation should be achieved by the appropriate use of strong and weak syllables, the smooth linking of words and the effective highlighting of information-bearing words. Intonation, which includes the use of a sufficiently wide pitch range, should be used effectively to convey meaning and articulation of individual sounds should be sufficiently clear for words to be understood. Examiners put themselves in the position of the non-EFL specialist and assess the overall impact of the communication and the degree of effort required to understand the candidate.

Interactive Communication

This refers to the candidate's ability to take an active part in the development of the discourse, showing sensitivity to turn taking and without undue hesitation. It requires the ability to participate competently in the range of interactive situations in the test and to develop discussions on a range of topics by initiating and responding appropriately. It also refers to the deployment of strategies to maintain and repair interaction at an appropriate level throughout the test so that the tasks can be fulfilled.

Candidates are not penalised for asking for clarification, from either the Interlocutor or the other candidate (as long as this is not excessive). However, if the interaction breaks down and the candidate has to be supported by the Interlocutor or the other candidate, this is taken as evidence of weak interactive ability and is penalised accordingly.

Global Achievement Scale

This scale refers to the candidate's overall effectiveness in dealing with the tasks in the three parts of the CPE Speaking Test. The global mark is an independent impression mark, which reflects the assessment of the candidate's performance from the Interlocutor's perspective.

Throughout the Speaking Test candidates are assessed on their language skills and in order to be able to make a fair and accurate assessment of each candidate's performance, the examiners must be given an adequate sample of language to assess. Candidates must, therefore, be prepared to provide full answers to the questions asked by either the Interlocutor or the other candidate, and to speak clearly and audibly. While it is the responsibility of the Interlocutor, where necessary, to manage or direct the interaction, thus ensuring that both candidates are given an equal opportunity to speak, it is the responsibility of the candidates to maintain the interaction as much as possible. Candidates who take equal turns in the interchange will utilise to best effect the amount of time available.

Marking

After initial training, Oral Examiners are required to attend coordination sessions to maintain standardisation of marking. These sessions involve watching and discussing sample Speaking Tests recorded on video, and then conducting mock tests with volunteer candidates. The sample tests on video are selected to demonstrate a range of task types and different levels of competence, and are pre-marked by a team of experienced Oral Examiners.

In many countries, Oral Examiners are assigned to teams, each of which is led by a Team Leader who may be responsible for approximately fifteen Oral Examiners. Team Leaders give advice and support and also monitor Oral Examiners on a regular basis during live tests. The Team Leaders are responsible to a Senior Team Leader within their country, who is the professional representative of Cambridge ESOL for the oral examinations. Senior Team Leaders are appointed by Cambridge ESOL and attend annual coordination and development sessions in the UK. Team Leaders are appointed by the Senior Team Leader in consultation with the local administration.

Grading and results

Grading takes place once all scripts have been returned to Cambridge ESOL and marking is complete. This is approximately six weeks after the examination.

Grading

The five CPE papers total 200 marks, after weighting. Each paper represents 20% of the total marks available. A candidate's overall CPE grade is based on the total score gained by the candidate in all five papers. It is not necessary to achieve a satisfactory level in all five papers in order to pass the examination.

The overall grade boundaries (A, B, C, D and E) are set using the following information:

- statistics on the candidature
- statistics on the overall candidate performance
- statistics on individual items, for those parts of the examination for which this is appropriate (Papers 1, 3 and 4)
- the advice of the Chief Examiners, based on the performance of candidates, and on the recommendation of examiners where this is relevant (Paper 2 and Paper 3 Part 5)
- comparison with statistics from previous years' examination performance and candidature

Special consideration

Special consideration can be given to candidates affected by adverse circumstances immediately before or during an examination. Examples of acceptable reasons for giving special consideration include illness and bereavement. All applications for special consideration must be made through the centre as soon as possible after the examination affected.

Irregular conduct

The cases of candidates who are suspected of copying, collusion or breaking the examination regulations in some other way will be considered by the Cambridge ESOL Malpractice Committee. Results may be withheld because further investigation is needed or because of infringement of the regulations.