

General Description

Paper Format

The paper contains three parts.

The standard format is two candidates and two examiners.

One examiner acts as both assessor and interlocutor and manages the interaction by asking questions and setting up the tasks. The other acts as assessor and does not join in the conversation.

Timing

19 minutes.

Task Types

Short exchanges with the examiner and with the other candidate; a collaborative task involving both candidates; a two-minute long turn and follow-up discussion.

Marks

Candidates are assessed on their performance throughout the test.

PART	TASK TYPE AND FORMAT	TASK FOCUS	TIMING
1	Conversation between the interlocutor and each candidate. The interlocutor encourages the candidates to give information about themselves and to express personal opinions.	General interactional and social language.	3 minutes
2	Two-way conversation between the candidates. The candidates are given visual and spoken prompts, which are used in a decision-making task.	Speculating, evaluating, comparing, giving opinions, decision-making, etc.	4 minutes
3	Long turn from each candidate followed by a discussion on topics related to 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.	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

Introduction

The paired format of the CPE Speaking test (two candidates and two examiners) aims to offer candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to use their spoken language skills effectively in a range of contexts. The test takes 19 minutes. One examiner, the interlocutor, conducts the test and gives a global assessment of each candidate's performance. The other, the assessor, does not take any part in the interaction but focuses solely on listening to, and making an assessment of, the candidates' oral proficiency.

The test consists of three parts and each part of the test focuses on a different type of interaction. Candidates speak mainly to the interlocutor in Part 1, to each other in Part 2 and to each other and the interlocutor in Part 3. Candidates should familiarise themselves with the format of the Speaking test and the timings for each part. It is also helpful for candidates to know when they are expected to speak directly to the interlocutor and when to each other.

Candidates should make sure they speak clearly and audibly so that they can be heard, and to paraphrase effectively when they do not know or cannot remember a word. They should be able to handle the whole test confidently, yet should feel free to ask for clarification of instructions where needed.

The Speaking test requires candidates to demonstrate a fully operational command of spoken English, using language that is appropriate in a range of contexts. Successful candidates will be able to develop the interaction in the different parts with ease and flexibility. Preparation for the test will involve giving candidates every opportunity to speak and interact in as wide a range of situations as possible.

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

Part 1

This part of the test gives candidates the opportunity to show their ability to use general interactional and social language. The interlocutor asks each candidate a series of questions by addressing one question to each candidate in turn. The questions begin by asking candidates for general information about themselves and move on to more open questions requiring speculation or an opinion. The candidates do not need to talk to each other in this part of the test, though they may if they wish.

Candidates who find opportunities to socialise with others in an English-speaking environment will be well prepared for this part of the test. Candidates should be discouraged from preparing rehearsed speeches as answers are likely to become over-long and unnatural.

Part 2

The candidates are given spoken instructions and provided with a visual stimulus (one or several photographs or drawings) to form the basis for a task which they carry out together. First the candidates are asked a question which focuses on their reaction to aspects of one or more pictures and they are given a minute to talk about this. This introductory question gives candidates the chance to familiarise themselves with the topic and visuals. Candidates should be made aware that their responses need to go beyond the level of pure description and contain a speculative element.

After this, the interlocutor gives the candidates instructions for a decision-making task. The task is related to what the visuals represent and there is an audience and context for the candidates to consider as they work towards a specific outcome. Candidates should take notice of the title on the visual sheet, as this will help to remind them of the purpose of the task. Candidates are expected to interact with one another and work towards a negotiated completion of the task.

All classroom discussion in pairs and small groups provides excellent preparation for this part of the test. Candidates should be taught to make positive contributions to move the discussion forward and show a willingness to take turns, inviting others to speak, listening and responding, as well as initiating discussion themselves. Candidates should make sure they are listening attentively, so that they can pick up on their partner's points. In preparing for the Speaking test, it would be helpful to include activities that encourage students to express reactions to and opinions about visuals (e.g. photographs taken from magazines), as well as discussing the messages portrayed by these visuals.

Part 3

In Part 3, each candidate is given the opportunity to speak for a longer period of time (two minutes) without interruption. Each candidate in turn is given a card with a question on it and there are also some ideas on the card which the candidates can make use of if they choose. Candidates are expected to develop the topic and sustain an extended contribution. They should be able to organise their thoughts and ideas, and express themselves coherently in appropriate language. Candidates should pay attention while their partner is speaking, as they are asked to comment (for about a minute) after their partner has spoken and a further question on the same topic is directed to both candidates. Candidates should be made aware, however, that they should not speak during their partner's long turn.

In preparation for this part of the Speaking test, candidates would benefit from activities that build up their confidence for the two-minute long turn. They should focus on structuring extended contributions, for example, by using linking, counter-argument and summing up. It would be

helpful to time candidates as they speak, as they need a feel for how long two minutes is.

Following both candidates' long turns and follow-up questions, the interlocutor leads a discussion by asking questions which further explore the topics of the long turns. In order to make a fair and accurate assessment of each candidate's performance, the examiners must be given a reasonable amount of language to assess and this part of the test gives candidates a final opportunity to show what they are capable of. Candidates should, therefore, be encouraged to get used to formulating their ideas on a range of topics, while supporting their ideas with reasons and justifications.

Note: In cases where there is an uneven number of candidates at a centre, the last Speaking test of the session will be taken by three candidates together instead of two. The test format, test materials and procedure will remain unchanged but the timing will be longer: 28 minutes instead of 19.

ASSESSMENT

Candidates are assessed on their own individual performance and not in relation to each other. Both examiners assess the candidates according to criteria which are interpreted at CPE level. The assessor awards marks according to five analytical criteria: Grammatical Resource, Lexical Resource, Discourse Management, Pronunciation and Interactive Communication. The interlocutor awards a global achievement mark.

Grammatical Resource

This refers to the accurate application of grammatical 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 easily understood. Examiners put themselves in the position of the non-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.

Global Achievement

This is based on the analytical criteria and relates to the candidate's performance overall.

Typical Minimum Adequate Performance

A typical minimum adequate performance at CPE level can be summarised as follows:

Develops the interaction with contributions which are relevant, coherent and of an appropriate length. The range of grammatical forms and vocabulary is appropriate and used with sufficient accuracy and precision to deal with the CPE level tasks. Utterances are conveyed effectively and understood with very little strain on the listener.

MARKING

Assessment is based on performance in the whole test, and is not related to performance in particular parts of the test. The assessor awards marks for each of the five criteria listed above. The interlocutor awards each candidate one global mark.

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 to Oral Examiners, as required.

The Team Leaders are responsible to a Senior Team Leader who is the professional representative of Cambridge ESOL for the Speaking tests. Senior Team Leaders are appointed by Cambridge ESOL and attend an annual co-ordination and development session in the UK. Team Leaders are appointed by the Senior Team Leader in consultation with the local administration.

After initial training of examiners, standardisation of marking is maintained by both examiner co-ordination sessions and by monitoring visits to centres by Team Leaders. During co-ordination sessions, examiners watch and discuss sample Speaking tests recorded on video and then conduct practice tests with volunteer candidates in order to establish a common standard of assessment.

The sample tests on video are selected to demonstrate a range of nationalities and different levels of competence, and are pre-marked by a team of experienced assessors.

CPE**CAMBRIDGE LEVEL 5****Fully operational command of the spoken language.**

Able to handle communication in most situations, including unfamiliar or unexpected ones.

Able to use accurate and appropriate linguistic resources to express complex ideas and concepts and produce extended discourse that is coherent and always easy to follow.

Rarely produces inaccuracies and inappropriacies.

Pronunciation is easily understood and prosodic features are used effectively; many features, including pausing and hesitation, are 'native-like'.

CAE**CAMBRIDGE LEVEL 4****Good operational command of the spoken language.**

Able to handle communication in most situations.

Able to use accurate and appropriate linguistic resources to express ideas and produce discourse that is generally coherent.

Occasionally produces inaccuracies and inappropriacies.

Maintains a flow of language with only natural hesitation resulting from considerations of appropriacy or expression.

L1 accent may be evident but does not affect the clarity of the message.

FCE**CAMBRIDGE LEVEL 3 (Vantage)****Generally effective command of the spoken language.**

Able to handle communication in familiar situations.

Able to organise extended discourse but occasionally produces utterances that lack coherence and some inaccuracies and inappropriate usage occur.

Maintains a flow of language, although hesitation may occur whilst searching for language resources.

Although pronunciation is easily understood, L1 features may be intrusive.

Does not require major assistance or prompting by an interlocutor.

PET**CAMBRIDGE LEVEL 2 (Threshold)****Limited but effective command of the spoken language.**

Able to handle communication in most familiar situations.

Able to construct longer utterances but is not able to use complex language except in well-rehearsed utterances.

Has problems searching for language resources to express ideas and concepts resulting in pauses and hesitation.

Pronunciation is generally intelligible, but L1 features may put a strain on the listener.

Has some ability to compensate for communication difficulties using repair strategies, but may require prompting and assistance by an interlocutor.

KET**CAMBRIDGE LEVEL 1 (Waystage)****Basic command of the spoken language.**

Able to convey basic meaning in very familiar or highly predictable situations.

Produces utterances which tend to be very short – words or phrases – with frequent hesitations and pauses.

Dependent on rehearsed or formulaic phrases with limited generative capacity.

Only able to produce limited extended discourse.

Pronunciation is heavily influenced by L1 features and may at times be difficult to understand.

Requires prompting and assistance by an interlocutor to prevent communication from breaking down.

Pre-Waystage Level**Zero**

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**Certificate of Proficiency in English
Speaking Test**

Part 1 3 minutes

Interlocutor Good morning / afternoon / evening. My name is and this is my colleague And your names are ? Could I have your mark sheets, please?
Thank you.
First of all, we'd like to know something about you.
Where are you from (*Candidate A*)? And you (*Candidate B*)?
Select a further question for each candidate:

- Do you live locally?
- How close to your school or work do you live?
- What kind of journey did you have to get here today?
- Do you live with friends or family?
- What do you like about the area you live in?

Candidates

Interlocutor *Select a further question for each candidate:*

- Are you studying or do you work? Could you tell us something about it?
- Could you tell us something about the house or apartment you live in?
- What about your early school days? What were they like?
- Let's think about not working or studying. What do you do to relax?
- Could you tell us something about your plans for the future?
- Could you tell us something about why you are learning English?

Candidates

Interlocutor Thank you. Now, we'd like to ask you what you think about one or two things.
Select one or more questions for each candidate, as appropriate:

- Which countries in the world would you most like to visit?
- Apart from languages, what other skills do you think it will be important to learn in the future?
- What are employment opportunities like in this area?
- If you could change one thing about your education, what would it be?
- How easy do you think it will be to maintain the level of English you have achieved?
- How ambitious are you?

Candidates

Interlocutor Thank you.

**Certificate of Proficiency in English
Speaking Test**

Part 2 4 minutes

1 Photographic exhibition – Growing up

Interlocutor Now, in this part of the test you're going to do something together. Here are some pictures of children.

*Place picture sheet 1 in front of the candidates.
Select two of the pictures for the candidates to look at*.*

First, I'd like you to look at pictures * and * and talk together about what you think might have happened just before the photos were taken. You have about a minute for this, so don't worry if I interrupt you.

Candidates
⊙ 1 minute

Interlocutor

Thank you. Now, look at all the pictures.

I'd like you to imagine that a photographic exhibition is being assembled on the theme of Growing Up. All these photographs are to be included.

Talk together about the aspects of 'growing up' the photographers are trying to show. Then suggest two other aspects of growing up which you would like to see represented in the exhibition.

You have about three minutes to talk about this.

Candidates
⊙ 3 minutes

Interlocutor

Thank you. Retrieve picture sheet.

1

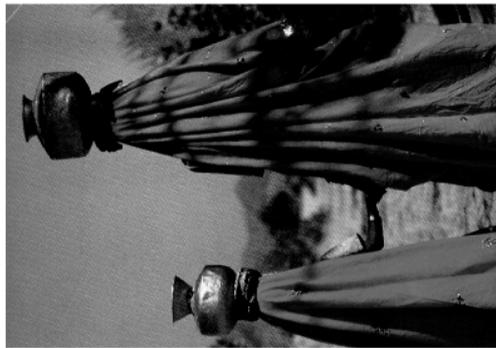
Photographic exhibition - Growing up



B



D



A



C

**Certificate of Proficiency in English
Speaking Test**

Part 3 12 minutes

11 Changing Lifestyles

Interlocutor

Now, in this part of the test you're each going to talk on your own for about two minutes. You need to listen while your partner is speaking because you'll be asked to comment afterwards.

So (Candidate A), I'm going to give you a card with a question written on it and I'd like you to tell us what you think. There are also some ideas on the card for you to use if you like.

A

All right? Here is your card, and a copy for you (Candidate B).

Hand over a copy of prompt card 11(a) to each candidate.

Remember (Candidate A), you have about two minutes to talk before we join in.

[Allow up to 10 seconds before saying, if necessary: 'Would you like to begin now?']

Candidate A
⊙ 2 minutes

Interlocutor

Thank you.

Select one appropriate follow-up question for Candidate B:

- What do you think?
- Is there anything you would like to add?
- Is there anything you don't agree with?
- How does this differ from your experience?

Candidate B
⊙ up to 1 minute

Interlocutor

Address one of the following questions to both candidates:

- Do you care about what you eat?
- Do you think our diets have become healthier?
- How confident can we be about food safety?

Candidates
⊙ 1 minute

Interlocutor

Thank you. Retrieve cards.

Prompt Card 11(a)

How are attitudes to food changing?

- food production
- methods of preparation
- social importance

11 Changing Lifestyles (cont.)

Interlocutor

Now (Candidate B), it's your turn to be given a question.

Hand over a copy of prompt card 11(b) to each candidate.

Here is your card, and a copy for you (Candidate A). Remember (Candidate B), you have about two minutes to tell us what you think, and there are some ideas on the card for you to use if you like. All right?

[Allow up to 10 seconds before saying, if necessary: 'Would you like to begin now?']

B

Candidate B
⊙ 2 minutes

Interlocutor

Thank you.

Select one appropriate follow-up question for Candidate A:

- What do you think?
- Is there anything you would like to add?
- Is there anything you don't agree with?
- How does this differ from your experience?

Candidate A
⊙ up to 1 minute

Interlocutor

Address one of the following questions to both candidates:

- To what extent is electrical equipment for the home good value for money?
- Is technology in the home always beneficial?
- How do you see technology for the home developing in the future?

Candidates
⊙ 1 minute

Interlocutor

Thank you. Retrieve cards.

Prompt Card 11(b)

What changes have resulted from the introduction of technology into the home?

- work
- free time
- communication

Interlocutor

Now, to finish the test, we're going to talk about 'changing lifestyles' in general.

Address a selection of the following questions to both candidates:

- To what extent can we change our lifestyle?
- Which event of the last century do you think has had the most impact on people's lifestyles?
- How influential is the media on the way we live?
- What are the greatest threats to our quality of life?
- Should we attempt to narrow the gap between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'?
- Does more always mean better?

Interlocutor

Thank you. That is the end of the test.

For Oral Examiners' Use Only

**Certificate of Proficiency in English
Speaking Test**

Part 1 3 minutes

Interlocutor Good morning / afternoon / evening. My name is and this is my colleague And your names are? Could I have your mark sheets, please?
Thank you.
First of all, we'd like to know something about you.
Where are you from (*Candidate A*)? And you (*Candidate B*)?
Select a further question for each candidate:

- What do you do?
- Do you live in this area?
- What do you like best about your city/town/village?
- When did you start learning English?
- Do you study any other languages apart from English?

Candidates

Interlocutor Select a further question for each candidate:

- How useful would a foreigner find it to speak your language?
- What aspect of your country do you think appeals to tourists?
- Could you tell us something about how you relax in your free time?
- What about sports? Do you prefer to watch or to take part?
- We'd like to know something about your ambitions. What do you hope to be doing in 10 years' time?

Candidates

Interlocutor Thank you. Now, we'd like to ask you what you think about one or two things.
Select one or more questions for each candidate, as appropriate:

- Some people think that the influence of the English language is too strong. What do you think?
- How easy or difficult is it nowadays for young people to find a job they really want to do?
- Moving on to making things, what sort of practical skills would you most like to have?
- Do you see yourself as an optimistic sort of person?
- People live longer now. If you could, would you like to reach 100?
- Thinking about the future, how much do you think your taste in music will change in the next 10 or 20 years?

Candidates

Interlocutor Thank you.

**Certificate of Proficiency in English
Speaking Test**

Part 2 4 minutes

2 Museum services – Limited budget

Interlocutor

Now, in this part of the test you're going to do something together. Here are some pictures of various activities associated with museums.

Place picture sheet 2 in front of the candidates.

Select two of the pictures A-E for the candidates to look at.*

First, I'd like you to look at pictures * and * and talk together about why people may be interested in objects like these. You have about a minute for this, so don't worry if I interrupt you.

Candidates

⊙ 1 minute

Interlocutor

Thank you. Now, look at all the pictures.

I'd like you to imagine that a small museum with a limited budget is reviewing the services it provides to visitors.

Talk together about the types of service museums should provide. Then decide which activities a museum with a limited budget should concentrate on.

You have about three minutes to talk about this.

Candidates

⊙ 3 minutes

Interlocutor

Thank you. Retrieve picture sheet.



2



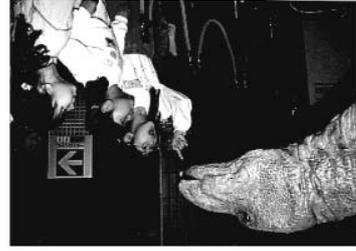
G



C



D



E



A

Museum services - Limited budget



B

**Certificate of Proficiency in English
Speaking Test**

Part 3 12 minutes

12 Chance and control

Interlocutor

Now, in this part of the test you're each going to talk on your own for about two minutes. You need to listen while your partner is speaking because you'll be asked to comment afterwards.

A

So (Candidate A), I'm going to give you a card with a question written on it and I'd like you to tell us what you think. There are also some ideas on the card for you to use if you like.

All right? Here is your card, and a copy for you (Candidate B).

Hand over a copy of prompt card 12(a) to each candidate.

Remember (Candidate A), you have about two minutes to talk before we join in.

[Allow up to 10 seconds before saying, if necessary: Would you like to begin now?]

Candidate A

⌚ 2 minutes

Interlocutor

Thank you.

Select one appropriate follow-up question for Candidate B:

- What do you think?
- Is there anything you would like to add?
- Is there anything you don't agree with?
- How does this differ from your experience?

Candidate B

⌚ up to 1 minute

Interlocutor

Address one of the following questions to both candidates:

- Which is more valuable, qualifications or experience?
- How important is it to achieve success in a career?
- How would you define a successful career?

Candidates

⌚ 1 minute

Interlocutor

Thank you. Retrieve cards.

Prompt Card 12(a)

How far is success in a career a matter of chance?

- education and training
- personal contacts
- natural ability

12 Chance and control (cont.)

Interlocutor

Now (Candidate B), it's your turn to be given a question.

Hand over a copy of prompt card 12(b) to each candidate.

Here is your card, and a copy for you (Candidate A). Remember (Candidate B), you have about two minutes to tell us what you think, and there are some ideas on the card for you to use if you like. All right?

[Allow up to 10 seconds before saying, if necessary: Would you like to begin now?]

.....

Thank you.

Select one appropriate follow-up question for Candidate A:

- What do you think?
- Is there anything you would like to add?
- Is there anything you don't agree with?
- How does this differ from your experience?

Candidate A

⌚ up to 1 minute

Interlocutor

Address one of the following questions to both candidates:

- How far is it possible to plan our lives?
- How optimistic are you about the future of the planet?
- What power does the individual have?

Candidates

⌚ 1 minute

Interlocutor

Thank you. Retrieve cards.

Prompt Card 12(b)

How far can human beings control the future of life on this planet?

- environmental issues
- education
- disease

Interlocutor

Now, to finish the test, we're going to talk about 'chance and control' in general.

Address a selection of the following questions to both candidates:

- How far does money control our lives?
- How far has the development of our civilisation been affected by chance discoveries or events?
- How far should parents try to influence the lives of their children?
- What controls should be put on scientific research?
- How important is long term planning for businesses?
- What happens when things are left to chance?

Interlocutor

Thank you. That is the end of the test.

GENERAL

Can candidates write answers on the question paper?

For Papers 1, 3 and 4 candidates may write on the question paper during the examination, but their notes will not be marked. Candidates must complete an answer sheet for these papers, which is then marked and/or scanned. For Paper 2 candidates write in the combined question paper/answer booklet.

Does it matter if candidates write in pen or pencil?

There are strict guidelines for using pen or pencil, depending on the paper.

- Paper 1 use a **pencil** to fill in the lozenges
- Paper 2 write your answers in **pen** on the combined question paper/answer booklet
- Paper 3 write in **pencil** on the answer sheets
- Paper 4 write in **pencil** on the answer sheet

Can I make a copy of the enclosed CD for other teachers?

Yes, you can copy freely from all the material included in the Handbook. It's a good idea for all CPE teachers to have their own copy of the Handbook to use.

How long is the whole exam?

	Questions	Length
Paper 1	40	1 hr 30 mins
Paper 2	2	2 hours
Paper 3	44	1 hr 30 mins
Paper 4	28	40 minutes
Paper 5		19 minutes

What is the percentage required to achieve a Grade C?

To pass the examination with Grade C it is necessary to achieve approximately 60% of the total marks available (200).

Must candidates achieve a pass on each paper to pass the examination?

No. Candidates cannot pass or fail any individual paper. The candidate's grade is based on his or her total score from all five papers. There are no 'hurdles' or minimum levels of achievement required. The statement of results gives a profile of performance in each paper.

Can candidates make notes on the question paper?

Yes, but their notes won't be marked.

Is the use of dictionaries allowed?

No.

PAPER 1 READING

What is the mark allocation?

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 out of a maximum 40 marks for the whole paper.

If candidates make a mistake in filling in their answer sheet, is this picked up by the computer?

If they omit a question, the computer accepts the answer sheet. If they fill in more than one lozenge for a question, the computer rejects it.

Do questions in the multiple choice task (Part 4) follow the order of the text?

Yes, with global questions at the end.

What about the danger in Part 3, for example, that if a candidate makes one mistake, this may have a knock-on effect on at least one other question?

The statistical analysis produced when material is pretested shows whether candidates are choosing wrong answers, so this potential problem can be spotted in advance and unsuitable materials are not included on the paper.

PAPER 2 WRITING

Do candidates have to write in pen or pencil?

Pen should be used, because compositions written in pencil may not be very legible.

How long are the set books retained?

They are normally retained for two years.

The set books for June and December 2004 are:

- LP Hartley, *The Go-Between*
- Brian Moore, *The Colour of Blood*
- Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*

The set books for for June and December 2005 are:

- Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*
- J.B. Priestley, *An Inspector Calls*
- Ann Patchett, *Bel Canto*

Why was discursive writing chosen as the compulsory task?

Discursive writing is a style often required in academic writing. It also requires a high level of language appropriate to CPE.

What's the difference between a report and a proposal?

A report normally focuses on past events, whereas a proposal is forward looking. For more details, see page 29.

Is there a short story task?

Candidates have the opportunity to use narrative techniques within task formats such as articles or letters for a magazine.

Is each part worth equal marks?

Yes.

Will supplementary answer paper be provided for candidates with large handwriting?

Candidates can use the blank pages in the question booklet to make notes or finish their answers, if necessary. Supplementary answer paper will also be provided if necessary.

PAPER 3 USE OF ENGLISH

If candidates write two possible answers to a question, how are they marked?

If both are correct, the candidate is awarded the mark(s); if one is incorrect, no marks are awarded. (This is also the same for Paper 4.)

What if the answer is right, but the candidate has misspelt it?

In Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 all spellings must be correct. In Part 5 some minor misspellings are allowed, as long as the message is communicated.

How many changes to the stem word are required in Part 2?

There can be any number of changes.

In the gapped sentences (Part 3), is there more than one possible answer for each sentence?

Yes. In each individual gapped sentence there must be more than one word which can fit the gap. However, there is only one word which fits the gap in all three sentences.

Can the key word be a different part of speech within the three sentences in Part 3?

No. The key must be the same part of speech in each gap.

How are the key word transformations (Part 4) marked?

Each transformation is divided into two parts, each worth one mark, so a candidate may score 0, 1 or 2 marks depending on the accuracy of the response.

Are contractions (e.g. didn't, won't, etc.) counted as one word?

No. To count the number of words, the full form should be taken into account, i.e. didn't = did not = 2 words.

PAPER 4 LISTENING

Is there any background noise on the tape during the texts?

No. Sound effects may occasionally be used to 'set the scene', but are not used while there is speech.

Does spelling have to be correct?

Yes. However, words are not used in the answers if they are considered to be unnecessarily demanding as far as spelling is concerned.

How do you guarantee that the different versions are all equal in difficulty?

For security purposes, there are three versions of the Listening test in use at each session. As with the other papers, the material for the Listening tests is pretested in advance, in order to check that it is suitable in terms of content as well as levels of difficulty. The tests are put together so as to be equal in level statistically. After the examination has been taken, before grading takes place, the Listening test results are analysed and the average marks gained by candidates in each test are compared.

PAPER 5 SPEAKING

How many parts of the test are there?

There are three parts: an interview section, a collaborative task and individual long turn with follow-up discussion.

Can candidates take the test on their own?

No. Candidates are examined in pairs. At centres with an uneven number of candidates, the last single candidate should be examined with the last pair in a group of three.

Are candidates from the same school paired together?

In some centres candidates from the same school are paired together. However, where candidates from a number of different schools are entered at the same centre, some candidates may find that they are paired with a candidate from another school. Candidates should check with the centre through which they are entering for the local procedure.

Does knowing your partner make it easier or harder to do well?

There is no evidence to suggest that candidates perform better in a Cambridge ESOL Speaking test when examined with someone they know or vice versa. Some candidates feel relaxed and confident when paired with someone they know, others may feel inhibited. In both cases, the examiners are trained to provide equal opportunities for all candidates to perform to the best of their ability.

What about the mismatching of candidates, e.g. a shy person with an extrovert?

Examiners are trained to deal with this kind of situation and ensure no-one is disadvantaged. Everyone has the chance to show what they can do. However, candidates must remember that while it is important not to dominate a weaker candidate, it is vital that they make the best use of the time available to show off their language skills.

Can candidates talk about the set texts?

It is no longer possible to talk about the set texts in the Speaking test.

Does it matter if a candidate uses slang or speaks with a regional UK or other accent?

Slang is acceptable provided that it is used appropriately. Different varieties of standard English accents, e.g. UK, North American, Australian, etc. are also acceptable.

ENTRIES AND RESULTS**What is the date of the CPE examination?**

The CPE examination can be taken twice a year, in June and in December. The dates are published in the Examination Regulations, and published on the Cambridge ESOL website. Check with your Local Secretary or British Council Office. The addresses are listed on the website.

Where can candidates enrol?

The Cambridge ESOL Local Secretary or British Council Office can give you information about centres where the

examination is taken. You enrol through local centres, and not through the Cambridge ESOL office in Cambridge. Fees are payable to the local centre, and these will vary slightly from place to place.

How do I get my results?

Results are issued to centres approximately six weeks after the examination has been taken. Certificates are issued about a month after that.