

University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations

First Certificate in English

Information for Candidates

FCE



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE
ESOL Examinations

English for Speakers of Other Languages

Information for Candidates – FCE

Why take First Certificate in English (FCE)?

If your knowledge of English is already good enough for many everyday situations, then FCE is the right exam for you. It is ideal if you want to work or study abroad or to develop a career which requires English (e.g. business, medicine, engineering).

FCE is an intermediate-level Cambridge ESOL exam, at Level B2 of the Council of Europe's **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages** (CEFR). This means that if you pass FCE, your level of English is good enough to be of practical use in many types of job, in particular tourism, where you will meet English speakers. Successful FCE candidates can deal with everyday letters and telephone conversations, and can understand some non-academic training courses and simple textbooks and articles.

Why take a Cambridge ESOL exam?

Develop good communication skills

- The Cambridge ESOL examinations cover all four language skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing. They include a range of different types of question which test how well you can use English, so that you develop the full range of skills you need to communicate well in a variety of situations.

Quality you can trust

- Cambridge ESOL does a lot of research and we test all our questions on candidates before we put them into a real examination. This makes sure that they are not too hard and not too easy so that you get the fairest, most accurate result and that the exams are most suitable for the range of uses for which you need English.

Worldwide recognition

- Universities and employers all over the world recognise Cambridge ESOL examinations, so a Cambridge ESOL exam is a valuable qualification to have.

University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations (Cambridge ESOL) offers the world's leading range of qualifications for learners and teachers of English. Around 1.75 million people in over 135 countries take Cambridge ESOL exams each year.

What does FCE involve?

This booklet is a brief introduction to FCE. We show examples from each part of the exam, but in some cases we do not show the full text or all the questions. If you would like to see a full sample paper for FCE, you can download one from our website at:

www.CambridgeESOL.org/support/downloads/fce_downloads.htm

	<i>Content</i>	<i>Time allowed</i>	<i>Marks (% of total)</i>
Paper 1: Reading	4 parts/35 questions	1 hour 15 minutes	20%
Paper 2: Writing	2 parts: Part 1 – one compulsory question Part 2 – one of a choice of four	1 hour 30 minutes	20%
Paper 3: Use of English	5 parts/65 questions	1 hour 15 minutes	20%
Paper 4: Listening	4 parts/30 questions	40 mins (approx)	20%
Paper 5: Speaking	4 parts	14 minutes per pair of candidates (2:2 format*)	20%

* 2 examiners, 2 candidates (2:3 format is used for the last group in a session where necessary)

Paper 1: Reading

Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

Part 1

In Part 1 you have a list of headings or summary sentences and a text to read. You have to match one heading or summary sentence to each paragraph of the text, but there is one extra sentence which you will not need to use.

In the example below, you have to read a magazine article about an orchestra. We have done the first paragraph for you (0). Try to decide which of the headings (A–H) best match the next three paragraphs (1–3). In the real exam paper the text is longer, so in the example below, there are five headings which you don't need to use.

- A** Not as silly as it sounds
- B** Not the original intention
- C** Responding to a demand
- D** A great discovery for many
- E** Leading to new ambitions
- F** Modest origins
- G** Great dedication
- H** Nobody is excluded
- I** The orchestra you can join straight away

Absolute Beginners

You don't need to be able to read a note of music to play in this orchestra – all it takes is a little effort and a lot of enthusiasm.

0 **I**

The East London Late Starters Orchestra (ELLSO) is not the most professional orchestra in Britain, but it is seriously fun. What is more, all are welcome to join in. After each of its concerts, anyone from the audience can choose an instrument and have a go. Then the whole orchestra launch into another piece of music and the new recruits are free to play along.

1

The orchestra, now in its sixteenth year, grew out of a small scheme run by one of the local councils in east London to give children in the area the opportunity to make music. 'I shall never forget the day my daughter Kate came home from school with a cello,' ELLSO's founder Chris Surety told me. 'They'd had a couple of teachers come in and play instruments. Then they said, "Who wants one?" Everyone put up their hands, and they were each given one to take home. Music-making was seen as central to the children's education, and as a parent, I found it joyful to see it happening.'

2

Since that time, dozens, if not hundreds, of adults have felt the same thrill at handling these beautiful instruments, a lot of them for the first time in their lives. And for most, it comes as a revelation that they too can learn to play. It's never too late, and there is nothing, apart from their own inhibitions, to prevent them.

3

The idea of starting the ELLSO came about when the council invited parents to drop in for a one-hour sample lesson. 'This was not with a view to getting something going among adults,' says Chris. 'It was just to give us a better understanding of what the children were doing. But we went there, and for me that was it. I had a preliminary lesson on the cello, and I thought, "I could learn to play these instruments!"'

...

Part 2

In this part of the Reading paper you have to read a text carefully and answer some questions. The questions are multiple choice, each with four options (A, B, C or D) and they follow the same order as the information in the text.

In the example below we show you an extract from a novel and some of the questions from a typical exam paper. Read the text and try to answer the questions (8–12). In the exam, the text is longer and in this example there are three more questions like the ones below.

There was a small breeze when Christine came out for her lunch as she usually did, even when it was raining, instead of going up to the store canteen. You could never get a table to yourself there, and whoever sat with you always wanted to complain about the shop, the customers, the management or the canteen food. Everyone at Goldwyn's seemed to have a complaint of some kind, although it was one of the best London stores to work for, and many of the staff had been there for years – some of them were long past retiring age. This was because the management let them stay on even when they were really past it, like poor old Martha, who was always trying to sell people dresses that were much too old for them.

Christine herself had been in the book department for more than four years. She had started as a junior, knocking over piles of books and breaking the till once a week in her efforts to serve customers quickly. Now she was Head Salesperson and moved calmly around the department between the bright new paperbacks, knowing that book customers liked to take their time, unlike the people who stampeded through the other parts of the shop with never a moment to spare.

She knew every book in the place, and all about the new ones before they came out. She was said to be Mr Parker's right-hand person – and heaven knows he needed one – and was sometimes asked into his office to meet a favoured publisher's representative.

The book department, partly due to Mr Parker's weak administration and partly because it was thought to be sophisticated, was the only department in Goldwyn's where you did not have to wear black. This led to some confusion as to who was an assistant and who was a customer, not untypical of bookshops, and accounted for the distressed look of people who picked up a book they wanted but were afraid of having their elbows grasped by the store detective before they could find someone to take their money.

• • •

8 Christine preferred not to have lunch at work because she wanted to avoid

- A her colleagues.
- B the canteen food.
- C the management.
- D the customers.

9 'Stampeded' (line 14) describes a way of

- A choosing.
- B buying.
- C talking.
- D moving.

10 Christine was particularly valuable to Mr Parker because

- A publishers' representatives liked her.
- B she knew which books would sell.
- C she had good relations with customers.
- D she had knowledge which he lacked.

11 'This' (line 21) refers to

- A the book department.
- B a confusing situation.
- C the assistants' free choice of clothes.
- D Mr Parker's attitude to customers.

12 Why did customers in the book department sometimes look uncomfortable?

- A It was unlike other bookshops.
- B The assistants watched them closely.
- C They didn't know who to pay.
- D There were no prices on the books.

Part 3

In Part 3, you have to read a text from which six or seven sentences or paragraphs have been removed. After the text you will find some sentences or paragraphs and you have to choose one of them to fit each space. There is one option which does not fit any of the spaces.

In the example below, there is part of a newspaper article about a chef who works in the film and TV industries. There is an example at the beginning which we have done for you (0). Read the article and see if you can find the right sentence (A–G) for the remaining three gaps (16–18). In the exam, the text is longer and in this example there are three more spaces for which you have to choose the right sentence, so there are four sentences below which you don't need to use.

Cooking for the camera

Colin Capon works as a 'props chef'. He is responsible for preparing all the food that appears on a set during the making of a TV drama series or a film. His job came about purely by chance. The BBC phoned to ask if he knew anyone who could provide food for a film being shot on location in the east of England. Phone calls to friends and colleagues proved fruitless. 'That's when my wife, Auriel, suggested I should have a go,' says Colin. '0 H I spent many hours in the local library not only learning all I could about the type of food that was eaten then, but the etiquette of meals as well.'

Colin has since worked on many films and TV series. 'Some films require a great deal of research,' says Colin. 'It's important that the food is as authentic as possible. A hundred years ago you would never get a bowl of perfect fruit, for instance. 16 ,

His latest project, a drama set in the 12th century, was more difficult, as history rarely records what was eaten then. 'I had to think around it and consider how people lived. 17 In addition, they ate lots of grains, vegetables and birds such as cranes, swans (we used a stuffed one on set once) and peacocks. These would be served with head and legs intact.

'As well as being historically correct, the food must also be able to withstand hot studio lights. 18 I certainly wouldn't be popular with the director if I poisoned the leading lady! The food which is going to be eaten can stay on set for only a few hours, after which it must be replaced by fresh. If it's there merely for visual effect, it can stay until it starts to smell, though actors get fed up with looking at the same food for three days.'

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>A With a wedding cake or something like that, if it is cut before the director is satisfied I have to go and make it look untouched.</p> <p>B Supermarkets stock most things all year round, but not always in the correct form.</p> <p>C I never really paid much attention to history lessons at school and now this is one of the aspects of the work that I enjoy the most.</p> <p>D Without the use of chemicals they probably looked a bit marked and oddly shaped.</p> | <p>E Few of them would have had an oven, so most meat would be cooked over a fire.</p> <p>F The work is obviously good fun, otherwise I wouldn't do it, but it's perhaps not as glamorous as people imagine.</p> <p>G And, if it is actually going to be eaten, hygiene must be considered.</p> <p>H The film was set a hundred years ago and my job was to prepare the food for a dinner-party scene.</p> |
|--|--|

Part 4

In Part 4, you have to read a series of prompts followed either by a long text divided into paragraphs or by a series of short texts. You have to scan the text(s) and decide which of the prompts matches which paragraph/text. Unlike Parts 1 and 3 of the Reading paper, there may be two or more 'matches' for each prompt.

In the example below, you have to read a magazine article about public speaking. For each of the questions (22–28), you have to choose one of the sections of the article (A–F). For some prompts, there are two answers and you can give these in any order. There is an example at the beginning (0) which we have done for you. In the exam, there are seven more questions like the ones below for this example.

Which section(s) of the article mention(s)

not using lengthy written notes?

0 B

an action that may cause listeners to lose concentration?

22

the need to ensure that a talk is at the right level?

23

the fact that audiences tend to be supportive towards a speaker?

24

25

a technique used by well-known entertainers?

26

unconscious movements that speakers may make?

27

the need to avoid being dependent on written notes?

28

Speak easy

Most of us have to speak in front of a crowd of people at some point in our lives. Here are a few guidelines that will help you address your audience with confidence.

A We have all sat through somebody mumbling a series of disconnected thoughts and wondered when it was going to end. It is important to remember how you felt for the person doing the talk. Most probably, you sympathised with them and were relieved for them when they had got through it. This is important because your audience will also want the best for you. Visualise yourself delivering a witty, clever and informative presentation with the audience hanging on every word.

B 'Nobody plans to fail, they simply fail to plan.' Nowhere is this truer than in the arena of public speaking. The classic format for any talk has a beginning, a middle and an end. Think about how long you want the talk to last and plan the content of the talk to fit the right amount of time. Also, think about your audience: make sure your approach to the subject of your talk is neither too complex nor too simple for them. If you are going to use prompts, small cards are quite good as they can be discreet and relatively unnoticeable compared to large sheets of paper.

C Wherever possible, make sure you know the venue of your talk and check that people can see you and any slides or diagrams you might be using to support your points. When talking to a large group, try to keep very close to the front row as this creates a feeling of togetherness. Some of the best comedians use this closeness to encourage a feeling of secrecy, telling you things as a stage whisper in order to build this intimacy.

D It is important that you stand comfortably with both feet rooted to the floor but slightly apart. Without realising it, there will be a tendency to 'retreat' from the audience or you may sway from side to side. Therefore, think of ways to counteract this when rehearsing (e.g. imagine you are wearing heavy lead shoes on your feet which are keeping your heels down). Try not to lean on tables or get your arms too close to your body as you will restrict your lungs and impair your ability to project your voice. Although it may help you feel more relaxed, try not to walk about when delivering your speech as this will be distracting for your audience.

E As with any skill, practice is vital. The more you practise, the more confident you will be. Try not to simply read out what you have prepared, and picture yourself talking confidently and knowledgeably about your subject. After you have been presenting to the mirror for a while, you will begin to see which gestures and facial movements work and which ones look wrong. Remember that nobody wants you to do badly and try to feel positive that you are going to deliver an interesting and informative talk.

F Despite the fact that we all feel shy or nervous about talking to a large group, the reality in a lot of cases is that, once we get talking and feeling confident, we all have the ability to 'perform'. But remember to talk in a controlled manner, as we all have a tendency to rush once we are in front of a big crowd. Also, if you are going to be using a microphone, then practise with it first. If not, make sure that your voice can fill the room for the time you are speaking or reduce the time that you are going to talk. Breathing exercises and voice projection techniques will all help.

Paper 2: Writing

Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Part 1 – Compulsory task

For this part of the Writing paper, you have to write either a formal or an informal letter based on some input material of up to 250 words. The input material will be text(s) with notes. When you write the letter, remember to start with 'Dear ...', but you don't have to include your postal address. You have to write 120–180 words.

In the example below, you have to write a letter to your English-speaking friend, Jan. You have decided to do the same summer job that you did last year and you want to persuade Jan to join you. Read the advertisement for the job and your notes. Remember when you write that you should use all your notes.

HELP NEEDED THIS SUMMER

Every summer we run an International Camp for 8 to 12-year-old children.

You will help with:

- outdoor activities
- entertainment
- sports competitions
- children's games

Free accommodation

Free food

Only 5 hours' work a day!

Beautiful place ...

Not wonderful, but ...

Explain why the work was fun last year!

Tents!

Enough free time for us to ...

Part 2

In Part 2, you can choose one of the five options. These may be a composition, an article, a report, a letter of application, an informal letter or a short story. The last question in Part 2 is a choice of two options based on the list of set books. You should write 120–180 words.

In the example below, you can choose to write a report, a letter of application or a composition (Questions 2–4). If you prefer to write about one of the set books you have read, you should look at Question 5 which gives you a choice (a or b) between writing an article or a composition.

- 2 The school where you learn English has decided to buy some videos in English. You have been asked to write a report for the Principal, suggesting what kinds of videos the school should buy. In your report, you should also explain why students at the school will enjoy these videos.

Write your **report**.

- 3 You have seen this advertisement in *The Traveller* magazine and have decided to apply.

THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME

WE ARE LOOKING FOR EIGHT PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES TO SPEND THREE MONTHS ON A SAILING TRIP AROUND THE WORLD, FREE OF CHARGE. NO SAILING EXPERIENCE IS NEEDED. TRAINING WILL BE GIVEN.

WRITE AND TELL US WHY YOU ARE THE PERSON WE ARE LOOKING FOR AND EXPLAIN HOW YOU WOULD BENEFIT FROM THIS EXPERIENCE.

APPLY TO OCEAN WORLD NOW!

Write your **letter of application**. Do not write any postal addresses.

- 4 You have had a class discussion on food and eating habits. Your teacher has now asked you to write a composition giving your opinion on the following statement.

Young people are eating a less healthy diet nowadays than their grandparents did.

Write your **composition**.

- 5 Answer **one** of the following two questions based on your reading of **one** of these set books. Write the letter **(a)** or **(b)** as well as the number **5** in the question box, and the **title** of the book next to the box. Your answer **must** be about one of the books below.

Best Detective Stories of Agatha Christie – Longman Fiction

A Tale of Two Cities – Charles Dickens

Animal Farm – George Orwell

Wuthering Heights – Emily Brontë

More Tales from Shakespeare – Charles and Mary Lamb

Either (a) Your college magazine is looking for articles on the qualities of good stories. Write an **article**, briefly describing the beginning of the book or one of the short stories you have read, and explaining why this beginning made you want to read the rest of the story.

Or (b) In your opinion, which character changes most in the book or one of the short stories you have read? Write a **composition**, explaining your views.

Paper 3: Use of English

Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

Part 1

In Part 1 you have a text to read in which there are 15 numbered gaps (plus one gap as an example). Each gap represents a missing word or phrase. For each gap, there are four possible answers (A, B, C or D) and you have to choose which word or phrase fills the gap correctly. Sometimes you have to choose between words with a similar meaning. You can sometimes find the word you need because it is always followed by a particular preposition.

Below you have the first paragraph of a text about mammoths and mastodons. The correct answer for the example (0) is 'distant'. For each of the numbered gaps (1–7) you have four choices (A, B, C or D). In the exam, the text is longer and in this example there are eight more questions like the ones below.

TWO CREATURES OF THE PAST – MAMMOTHS AND MASTODONS

The elephant has some (0) relatives called mammoths, which lived in the Stone Age. More than 15,000 years ago people painted pictures of them on cave walls. Then, astonishingly, in 1799, a man walking along the banks of the River Lena in Siberia (1) a startling discovery. Peering into a wall of ice, he could (2) see the shape of a massive, hairy mammoth, apparently (3) at him. He immediately ran (4) in terror, but several days later he (5) the courage to return and cut the mammoth's tusks – its two enormous teeth – out of the ice to sell them. Mammoth tusks are the biggest teeth of any known creature, some (6) a length of five metres. These tusks were (7) to good use, protecting the mammoths' young from other animals, and brushing away snow.

...

- | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--------------|---|-------------|---|---------------|---|---------------|
| 1 | A | made | B | took | C | did | D | had |
| 2 | A | rather | B | quite | C | well | D | just |
| 3 | A | watching out | B | looking out | C | looking after | D | watching over |
| 4 | A | across | B | out | C | away | D | past |
| 5 | A | grew | B | felt | C | experienced | D | found |
| 6 | A | reaching | B | increasing | C | expanding | D | completing |
| 7 | A | held | B | put | C | set | D | kept |

Part 2

Part 2 also consists of a text with 15 numbered gaps and you have to think of a single word which will fill each gap correctly.

The example below shows the first paragraph from a text about underwater diving. We have given you the correct answer for the first gap (0). Read the rest of the text and try to find the right answers for questions 16–20. In the exam, the text is longer and in this example there are ten more gaps like the ones below.

DEVELOPMENTS IN UNDERWATER DIVING

People have been diving without mechanical aids (0) *since* ancient times. In those days, divers mainly went underwater to search (16) pearls or sponges. Various ways of supplying divers with air, and so permitting them to stay underwater for long periods of time, have been tried for well (17) two thousand years. Alexander the Great (18) said to have gone underwater in an early (19) of diving machine, and Aristotle talked about apparatus (20) permitted divers to breathe underwater.

• • •

Part 3

In Part 3, you have to rewrite a sentence so that the meaning is the same, but it is written in different words. There are ten sentences for you to rewrite in this way. Each sentence is followed by a 'key word' and a second sentence with a gap in the middle. You have to use the 'key word' to complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first one.

Below we give you four typical questions from Part 3. In the exam there are six more questions like these.

- 31 My daughter regrets spending all her savings on that car.

she

My daughter wishes all her savings on that car.

- 32 They are extending this motorway by 100 kilometres.

being

This motorway 100 kilometres.

- 33 It was a mistake for the company to install the new computer system.

should

The company the new computer system.

- 34 We mended the roof to prevent the birds from making nests in it.

so

We mended the roof not make nests in it.

Part 4

In Part 4 you have to read a text in which some of the lines are correct and some of the lines have an extra word which should not be there. If the line is correct, you should put a tick [✓] on your Answer Sheet. If the line has a word which should not be there, you write the extra word.

Below is part of a typical text called 'Where I grew up'. The first two lines are examples. Line 0 is correct and the extra word in line 00 is 'been'. Have a look at lines 41–45 and see if you can find the correct lines or the extra words. In the exam the text is longer, and in this example there are ten more lines like the ones below.

WHERE I GREW UP

- 0 When I was young, I lived in a place called Coromandel in
00 New Zealand. I was been taken there by my parents when I was a few
41 weeks old, and lived there until I was fourteen years. I still think
42 of that period as the happiest time of my life. My life was much
43 uncomplicated then and Coromandel was a magical place. It
44 had been a busy gold-mining town, but that was long before
45 my family have arrived. By then it had become a very run-down
46 place.
...

Part 5

Part 5 consists of a text in which there are ten gaps. There is also one line at the beginning with a gap we have filled in for you to show you what you have to do. At the end of the line, separated from the text, is a word in capital letters. Use this word to make a new word which fills the gap to complete the sentence correctly.

The example below is part of a text about bread. For the first gap, we give you the answer: LOVE becomes 'lover'. Read the text and try to find the correct words for the other gaps (56–61). In the exam, the text is longer and in this example there are four more gaps like the ones below.

BREAD

I'm a great (0) *lover* of bread. Whenever I smell freshly baked bread, it reminds me of my early (56) when I used to visit the little bakery that my grandfather owned.

LOVE

CHILD

And, of course, there are (57) good medical reasons why we should not forget the (58) of eating plenty of bread.

VARY

IMPORTANT

Bread contains nearly all the protein needed for children's (59) and for adults to stay fit and well. We can get a (60) of our daily protein (61) from just six slices of bread.

GROW

THREE

REQUIRE

...

Paper 4: Listening

Time: 40 mins (approx). You hear all the recordings twice in the exam.

If you have access to the internet, you can find the recordings for tasks below on the Cambridge ESOL website at:

www.CambridgeESOL.org/support/downloads/fce_downloads.htm

Part 1

In Part 1, you hear eight short recordings of people talking in different situations. For each recording, you have a question with three possible answers. You have to choose the right answer (A, B or C).

Below we show you two typical questions from this part of the paper. In the exam, there are six more questions and recordings like these.

- 1** You hear an announcement on the radio.

What kind of programme is being advertised?

- A** a quiz show
B a documentary
C a drama series

	1
--	----------

- 2** You hear part of a talk on the radio.

What is the woman talking about?

- A** a local celebration
B a history expert
C a guided walk

	2
--	----------

Part 2

In this part of the paper, you have to listen for specific words or phrases in one longer recording. You have to either complete sentences or notes which have gaps in them.

In the example below you listen to part of a recorded guided tour which is given to people visiting a wildlife park. You have to listen for the missing words and write them in the gaps (9–13). In this example, there are five more sentences with gaps to fill. You need one to three words (or a number) for each gap.

Burton Safari Park is one of the

--

9 wildlife parks in Europe.

If you have a problem, stay in your car and call for help using the

--

10 and horn.

As the animals have specially planned

--

11, visitors shouldn't feed them.

The name 'white rhino' comes from the shape of the animal's

--

12

Some of the rhinos have lived at Burton for as long as

--

13 years.

Part 3

In Part 3, you hear five short recordings of different speakers. The recordings are all connected in some way – either by the topic the speakers are talking about (e.g. travel), or the function of their speech (e.g. apologising). You then have to match a statement or opinion to each speaker.

In the example below, you listen to five careers advisers talking to young people who are preparing for their first job interview. You then have a list of pieces of advice (A–F) and you have to decide which speaker gives which advice. There is one extra piece of advice which you do not need to use as none of the careers advisors gives it.

A Think of why you want to work for that company.

Speaker 1 19

B Avoid concentrating on your free-time interests.

Speaker 2 20

C Find out all you can about the company.

Speaker 3 21

D Make a list of all your strengths.

Speaker 4 22

E Give full answers to all the questions.

Speaker 5 23

F Think about how to improve your weak points.

Part 4

In Part 4 of the test, you have to listen for opinions, attitudes and main ideas from a longer text. There are different questions for this part – you may have to choose from two alternative answers (Yes/No or True/False) or three possible answers (A, B or C), or match statements to speakers or the things they talk about.

In the example below, you listen to a recording of an interview with Colin Browne, a representative of the Youth Hostel Association (YHA). For each question (24–26) you have to choose the correct answer (A, B or C). In this example, there are four more questions like the ones below.

24 According to Colin, the quality of YHA accommodation

A is better than most people say it is.

B should generally be improved.

C has risen over the years.

24

25 Colin says that the YHA decides what changes to make by

A asking for the views of customers.

B looking at other organisations.

C trying out different ideas.

25

26 Colin says that in the early years of the YHA,

A parents generally had lower incomes.

B the typical visitors were interested in the countryside.

C it was more common for young people to travel without parents.

26

Paper 5: Speaking

Time: 14 minutes per pair of candidates

Part 1 – Interview

In this first part of the Speaking test, the examiner will ask you questions about topics such as family life, daily routines, free-time activities, etc. and you will be expected to provide information about yourself and give your opinions.

Part 2 – Long turn

In this part of the test you have to speak for 1 minute without interruption. The examiner will give you two colour photographs and you have to compare and contrast them as well as talking about your reaction to them. Your partner will get a different set of photographs and has to do the same thing. When each of you has finished speaking, the other will be invited to comment on what they have heard (for about 20 seconds).

Have a look at the two photographs below which show people enjoying special moments in their lives. Try to think of things you could say to compare and contrast them. In this example, the examiner also asked the following question: 'Which of the people do you think will remember the moment the longest?'



Part 3 – Collaborative Task

This part tests your ability to take part in a discussion. You have to work with the other candidate to carry out a task based on some pictures which the examiner will give you. You have to talk for about 3 minutes.

In the example below, the film club at your school has asked you to choose two films which would be interesting for the students to watch and discuss. Each of the seven pictures represents a type of film. You have to discuss with the other candidate how interesting each type of film would be and then make a choice of two for the film club.



Part 4 – Discussion

In this part of the test you have to take part in a discussion with the other candidate based on the topic of the task you did in Part 3. The examiner will ask you both questions.

A typical question after the film club task in Part 3 would be ‘What sort of films do you never watch? ...Why?’ or ‘Would you prefer to be in a film or behind the camera?’ This part of the test lasts 4 minutes so you will need to practise giving full answers and initiating and keeping a discussion going with another student to perform well.

Preparing for FCE

If you would like more practice material to help you prepare for the FCE exam, there are past paper packs available to buy which include an audio CD of the Listening test. You can find more information, prices and details of how to order on our website at: www.CambridgeESOL.org/support/pastpapers.htm

Next steps

We wish you every success in taking FCE and we hope that you will take other Cambridge ESOL exams in future. The Certificate in Advanced English (CAE) is the next level of the Cambridge exams. You can find more information about CAE on our website at: www.CambridgeESOL.org/exams/cae.htm

What people have said about FCE

I've taken the PET in secondary school and the FCE exam when I started high school, and I think that each level has given me more tools to improve my skills. ... Cambridge has really given me a head start in my future career.

Paola Marisela González, Mexico

This exam is really useful for me. My English improved a lot. Since that time daily life is much easier for me as I am living in a foreign country where the daily language is English, not my mother tongue.

Gisela Raab, Germany

I am working in an international environment which requires me to continuously improve my English. ... After the exam I got the motivation to study more English and then decided to enrol in an MBA conducted in English.

Phan Hoang Hoa, Vietnam

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www.CambridgeESOL.org/FCE

University of Cambridge
ESOL Examinations
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU
United Kingdom

Tel. +44 1223 553355
Fax. +44 1223 460278
email ESOL@CambridgeESOL.org

