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Exam information

The Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English (CAE) is an examination at level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). There are four papers, each testing a different skill in English. There are five grades: A, B and C are pass grades; D and E are fail grades.

Reading and Use of English (1 hour 30 minutes)

The Reading and Use of English test is divided into eight parts. Parts 1–4 test use of English and parts 5–8 test reading comprehension. You shouldn't spend too long on the use of English section as this represents 36 marks and the reading section carries 42 marks. There is one mark given for each correct answer in Parts 1–3 and in Part 8, up to two marks for each correct answer in Part 4 and two marks for each correct answer in Parts 5–7.

Part 1 Multiple-choice cloze	Focus	Vocabulary/Lexico-grammatical
	Task	You read a text with eight gaps and choose the best word for each gap from a choice of four options (A, B, C or D).
Part 2 Open cloze	Focus	Grammar/Lexico-grammatical
	Task	You read a text with eight gaps and think of an appropriate word to fit in each gap.
Part 3 Word formation	Focus	Vocabulary
	Task	You read a text with eight gaps. You are given the stems of the missing words in capitals at the end of the lines with the gaps. You have to change the form of each word to fit the context.
Part 4 Key word transformations	Focus	Grammar and vocabulary
	Task	There are six sentences. You are given a sentence and a 'key word'. You have to complete a second gapped sentence using the key word. The second sentence has a different grammatical structure but must have a similar meaning to the original.
Part 5 Multiple choice	Focus	Detail, opinion, attitude, main idea, text organisation, purpose
	Task	There are six four-option multiple-choice questions. You read a long text and choose the correct option (A, B, C or D) based on the information in the text.
Part 6 Cross-text multiple matching	Focus	Attitude, opinion, comparing and contrasting points of view across texts
	Task	You read four short texts on a related topic. You have to decide which text expresses a similar/different opinion to the text mentioned in each question.
Part 7 Gapped text	Focus	Text structure, cohesion and coherence
	Task	You read a long text from which six paragraphs have been removed and put before the text. You have to decide where in the text each paragraph (A–G) should go. There is one paragraph you do not need to use.
Part 8 Multiple matching	Focus	Specific information, detail, attitude, opinion
	Task	You read ten questions or statements about four to six short texts, or a text which has been divided into sections. You have to decide which section or text contains the information relating to each question or statement.

Writing (1 hour 30 minutes)

The Writing test is divided into two parts. You have to complete one task from each part. Each part carries equal marks, so you should not spend longer on one than another.

Part 1	Focus	Content, communicative achievement, organisation, language
	Task	Part 1 is compulsory and there is no choice of questions. You have to write an essay of 220–260 words on a given topic using the notes provided.
Part 2	Focus	Content, communicative achievement, organisation, language
	Task	Part 2 has three tasks to choose from: an email/letter, a report/proposal or a review. You have to write 220–260 words using the prompts provided.

Listening (approximately 40 minutes)

There are four parts in the Listening test, with a total of thirty questions. You write your answers on the question paper and then you have five minutes at the end of the exam to transfer them to an answer sheet. In each part, you will hear the text(s) twice. The texts may be monologues or exchanges between interacting speakers. There will be a variety of accents.

Part 1 Multiple choice	<i>Focus</i>	Attitude, agreement, opinion, gist, detail
	<i>Task</i>	You hear three short conversations. You have to answer six multiple-choice questions – two questions for each conversation – by choosing the correct option (A, B or C).
Part 2 Sentence completion	<i>Focus</i>	Specific information, opinion
	<i>Task</i>	You hear a monologue. You complete eight sentences using words from the listening text.
Part 3 Multiple choice	<i>Focus</i>	Attitude, opinion
	<i>Task</i>	You hear a conversation. You answer six multiple-choice questions by choosing the correct option (A, B, C or D).
Part 4 Multiple matching	<i>Focus</i>	Gist, attitude, main point
	<i>Task</i>	You hear five short monologues on a related topic. You have to match six statements (A–F) in Task 1 and Task 2 to each speaker. There is one statement in each task you do not need to use.

Speaking (approximately 15 minutes)

You take the Speaking test with one or two other candidates. There are two examiners. One is the 'interlocutor' who speaks to you and the other is the 'assessor' who just listens.

Part 1 Interview	<i>Focus</i>	General interaction and social language skills
	<i>Task</i>	The interlocutor asks each of you questions about yourself.
Part 2 Individual long turn	<i>Focus</i>	Comparing, contrasting, speculating
	<i>Task</i>	The interlocutor gives you three pictures and asks you to answer the questions on the task card by discussing two of the pictures. You have to speak for one minute. Then you answer a question briefly about the other candidate's pictures.
Part 3 Collaborative task	<i>Focus</i>	Expressing and justifying opinions, negotiating a decision, suggesting, agreeing/disagreeing, etc.
	<i>Task</i>	You are given a task to discuss with another candidate, based on the prompts on the task card. Then you discuss a second question on the same topic for a minute and make a decision together.
Part 4 Follow-up discussion	<i>Focus</i>	Expressing and justifying opinions, agreeing/disagreeing, etc.
	<i>Task</i>	The interlocutor asks you questions related to the topic in Part 3. You discuss them with the other candidate.

For more information see the [Writing reference](#) (page 185), the [Exam focus](#) (page 197) and the [General marking guidelines](#) (page 206).