

What is CAE?

The Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English (CAE) is the fourth level of the Cambridge exams in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). It is an advanced exam, set at Level C1 of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework.

CAE recognises the ability to communicate with confidence in English and deal with most aspects of everyday life. Successful candidates receive a certificate awarded by University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, which is recognised by universities and employers throughout the world. All candidates receive a statement of results, showing how they performed in each of the five papers.

Who is CAE for?

CAE is for learners who are reaching a standard of English that is adequate for most purposes, including business and study. Success at this level indicates the ability to use English effectively and perform confidently in social and professional situations, and in higher education. CAE is taken by more than 60,000 people each year in more than 60 countries. It is a valuable qualification for anyone who wants to work or study abroad or to develop a career which requires language skills, including business, medicine, engineering and many other professions. It is also useful preparation for anyone who is working towards the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English.

Why choose CAE?

CAE is seen by institutions of higher education in many countries as proof of adequate language skills for courses taught and assessed in English. Almost all universities in the United Kingdom and a growing number in the USA recognise CAE, as do many employers throughout the world. Studying for CAE helps learners to improve their language skills and use them in a wide range of contexts. The examinations are based on realistic tasks, and indicate the ability to use the language in practical situations. Successful candidates are able to participate in meetings and discussions, expressing opinions clearly and are able to understand and produce texts of various types, including business letters and reports. They will also be aware of the different styles of English appropriate to different situations.

What does the exam involve?

CAE has five papers Reading | Writing | English in Use | Listening | Speaking. Each of the written papers is returned to Cambridge for marking and assessment. The Speaking Test is conducted by two locally based examiners who examine candidates face to face. All examiners are accredited by Cambridge ESOL.

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Reading (Paper 1) 1 hour 15 minutes

The Reading paper assesses candidates' ability to read and understand a number of texts taken from books, newspapers and magazines. Candidates are expected to be able to show understanding of gist, main points, detail, text structure or specific information, deduce meaning or recognise opinion and attitude.

Writing (Paper 2) 2 hours

The Writing paper assesses candidates' ability to write non-specialised text types such as letters, articles, reports and reviews for a given purpose and target reader, covering a range of topics. Responses are of about 250 words in length.

English in Use (Paper 3) 1 hour 30 minutes

In the English in Use paper, candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge and control of the language system by completing various tasks at text and sentence level, based on authentic texts. This will include gap-filling, error correction, word formation, register transfer and text completion exercises.

Listening (Paper 4) 45 minutes (approx.)

The Listening paper assesses candidates' ability to understand the meaning of spoken English and to extract detailed and specific information from the spoken text and to understand speakers' attitudes and opinions. The texts are taken from a variety of text types including interviews, discussions, lectures and conversations.

Speaking (Paper 5) 15 minutes (approx.)

The Speaking Test assesses candidates' ability to interact in conversational English in a range of contexts. It contains four parts, including an interview section, individual long turns, a collaborative task and a discussion. Candidates are provided with stimulus materials such as photographs and drawings. Candidates normally take the Speaking Test in pairs.