

## **CAE (Certificate in Advanced English)**

### ***General Information***

The CAE is an examination at an advanced level which was introduced in 1991 and is suitable for people who require English for professional or study purposes. There is an emphasis on real-world tasks. It is also recognised by the majority of British universities as fulfilling English Language entrance requirements. Test dates are in June and December.

### ***Description of the Test***

The CAE has five components: reading, writing, English in use, listening and speaking.

#### ***Reading:***

Candidates are assessed as to their ability to read and understand texts taken from magazines, newspapers, leaflets, etc. They should demonstrate a variety of reading skills including skimming, scanning, deduction of meaning from context and selection of relevant information to complete the given task.

There are four texts and forty to fifty questions. The three main task types are: multiple matching, multiple choice and gap filling (at paragraph level).

#### ***Writing:***

Candidates are expected to complete non-specialist writing tasks in response to the stimuli provided (input text and task descriptions). The input texts are taken from articles, leaflets, notices, formal and informal letters, etc. Both audience and purpose are made clear in the task descriptions.

The first part is compulsory and candidates must complete one or more tasks in response to a reading input which is usually made up of several short texts. The second part involves choosing one of four tasks from a range of writing activities (letters, articles, instructions, messages, etc.). Responses should be about 250 words in length.

#### ***English in Use:***

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the ability to apply their knowledge of the language system by completing tasks based on authentic passages. They must complete six tasks with a total of approximately seventy items. The tasks are of the following types: gap filling, proof-reading exercises, text completion, text expansion (of notes etc.).

#### ***Listening:***

Candidates are expected to understand each text as a whole, gain detailed understanding and appreciate gist and the attitude of the speaker. They must also be able to identify and interpret the context. Texts take the form of announcements, speeches, radio broadcasts, etc.

There are four sections lasting approximately 45 minutes in all, with a total of thirty to forty questions. The first two sections consist of two short monologues, the third of a longer dialogue/interview and the fourth of conversational extracts. The tasks candidates are asked to perform include the following: information transfer, various types of matching, note completion and multiple choice. Sections A, C and D are repeated; Section B is played once only.

### *Speaking:*

The Speaking Test is conducted by two examiners with a pair of candidates. They must be able to demonstrate a range of speaking skills: interactional, social, transactional, negotiation and collaboration. The test lasts for fifteen minutes.

The candidates first introduce themselves and respond to questions about their interests, careers, etc. Each candidate is then given a set of visual stimuli which serve to encourage a 'long turn' from each candidate. The final two parts are linked. The candidates first complete a collaborative task. This is followed by further discussion between the candidates and both examiners on points which have arisen from the collaborative task.

### ***Scoring***

Each component is equally weighted and carries 20% of the total marks. There are 3 pass grades (A, B and C). Candidates who achieve a great D, E or U are judged not to have reached the required standards of the CAE.

### ***Test Fee and Registration***

There are two kinds of authorised Cambridge ESOL centre:

#### *Open Centers*

Open centres are authorised to run examinations for all candidates, including those who are not taking a preparation course at the institution that runs the centre. Many open centres also run preparation courses for the Cambridge ESOL exams.

#### *Internal Centers*

Internal Centres are authorised to run examinations only for students who are enrolled as students at the institution that runs the centre. They are not able to accept entries from candidates who are not their students.

Some centres are 'open' for some exams and 'internal' for others. If they are unable to accept your entry, for this or any other reason, they will inform you of this.

Contact the center nearest you for local prices.

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## ***How to Prepare***

The best way to prepare for the exam is to find out information about the exam such as:

- Ask the test center if they have any preparation materials, like books or CDs you can borrow.
- Find out what the the sections on the exam are?
- What is the style of the exam: essay, multiple choice, short answer, true/false, etc?
- How long is the exam?
- Take a preparation course before the exam
- Take practice exams
- Look for information on their website:
  - ① About the Paper
    - Sample tasks from past papers
    - Activities to understand the tasks
    - Tips for teachers and students
    - DOs and DON'Ts
  - ① Classroom Activities
    - Ready-made activities to use with your class
    - Skills development
    - Exam practice with tasks from real past papers
  - ① Other Information
    - Links to other Cambridge ESOL resources
    - Handbooks, past papers, videos and CDs
- Further Resources
  - ① For an overview of CAE, exam dates and information about recognition by higher education institutions and corporations, see the Cambridge ESOL website. <http://www.cambridgeesol.org/exams/cae.htm>
  - ① Over the last two years, Cambridge ESOL has carried out a thorough review of the FCE and CAE examinations, to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of users. Bulletins detailing this review process and providing a summary of the test specifications to be introduced from December 2008 are available to download at: <http://www.cambridgeesol.org/exams/fce.htm>  
<http://www.cambridgeesol.org/exams/cae.htm>

## ***More Information***

Visit the official website at: <http://www.cambridgeesol.org/index.htm>