

## What is FCE?

The Cambridge First Certificate in English (FCE) is the third level of the Cambridge exams in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). It is an upper intermediate level exam, set at Level B2 of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework for modern languages, and recognises the ability to deal confidently with a range of written and spoken communications.

Successful candidates receive a certificate awarded by University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, and recognised by universities and employers in many countries. All candidates receive a statement of results, showing how they performed in each of the five papers.

## Who is FCE for?

FCE is designed for learners whose command of English is adequate for many practical everyday purposes, including business and study. Successful candidates will have a wide grasp of vocabulary, and should be able to construct an argument and use appropriate communication styles for a variety of situations.

FCE is taken by more than 270,000 people each year in more than 100 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 higher level examinations, such as the Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English and the Certificate of Proficiency in English.

## Why choose FCE?

FCE is recognised by many universities and other educational institutions as proof of intermediate level English skills, and these institutions accept it as meeting part of their entrance requirements.

Because the examinations are based on realistic tasks, an FCE certificate is an important asset for anyone who wants to work or study abroad, or in international business. Employers throughout the world recognise FCE. It indicates sufficient proficiency in English to be of practical use in clerical, secretarial and managerial jobs in many industries, in particular tourism, where contact with English speakers is required. Successful candidates have the ability to deal with routine letters and telephone enquiries, and to cope with some non-academic training courses and simple textbooks and articles.

Studying for FCE will also help learners to improve their language skills and to use them in a wide range of contexts.

## What does the examination involve?

FCE 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.

### Reading (Paper 1) 1 hour 15 minutes

The Reading paper assesses candidates' ability to read and understand texts taken from fiction and non-fiction books, journals, newspapers and magazines. Candidates are expected to be able to show understanding of gist, detail and text structure, and deduce meaning.

### Writing (Paper 2) 1 hour 30 minutes

The Writing paper assesses candidates' ability to write non-specialised text types such as letters, articles, reports, compositions and reviews of 120-180 words covering a range of topics and target readers and also set texts.

### Use of English (Paper 3) 1 hour 15 minutes

In the Use of English paper, candidates are expected to demonstrate their knowledge and control of the language system by completing various tasks at text and sentence level. These include filling gaps, transforming words and phrases, and identifying errors in texts.

### Listening (Paper 4) 40 minutes (approx.)

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

### Speaking (Paper 5) 14 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 of about one minute, a collaborative task and a discussion. Candidates are provided with stimulus material such as photographs and drawings. Candidates normally take the Speaking Test in pairs.

If you have any questions about studying the Cambridge CAE course at Oxford House College, please contact us:

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