



school of english

FCE (First Certificate in English)

FCE is an intermediate level Cambridge ESOL exam, at level B2 of the Council of Europe's **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages**. Choose FCE if your knowledge of English is adequate for many practical everyday purposes, including business and study.

To be successful, you will have a wide grasp of vocabulary, and be able to construct an argument and use appropriate communication styles for a variety of situations. You also need to show an awareness of register and of the conventions of politeness and degrees of formality as they are expressed through language.

Why take FCE?

FCE is ideal if you want to work or study abroad or to develop a career which requires language skills (e.g. business, medicine, engineering). FCE 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.

FCE is also useful preparation if you are working towards higher level exams, such as **CAE** (Certificate in Advanced English) and **CPE** (Certificate of Proficiency in English).

On passing the exam you will receive a certificate awarded by University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, which is **recognised by universities and employers** throughout the world.

You will also receive a statement of results, showing how you performed in each of the five papers.

What does the exam involve?

FCE has five papers:

Reading

Writing

Use of English

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 you face to face. All examiners are accredited by Cambridge ESOL.

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FCE: Specification from December 2008

| Paper | Timing/Length | Task Types and Format | Test Focus |
|----------------|--|---|--|
| Reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 hour • 30 questions • length of texts: about 550-700 words per text • about 2,000 words overall | Part 1 - multiple choice Part 2 - gapped text task - sentences removed Part 3 - multiple matching | Part 1 - detail, opinion, gist, attitude, deducing meaning, text organisation features (exemplification, comparison, reference), tone, purpose, main idea Part 2 - text structure, cohesion and coherence Part 3 - specific information, detail, opinion and attitude |
| Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 hour 20 minutes • 2 parts | Part 1 - compulsory letter or email (120-150 words) Part 2 - Q2-4 choice of one task from the following: article, letter, report, essay, review, story Q.5 task based on set texts- task types from: article, essay, report, review, letter; two set books to be used, with a question on each text (120-180 words) | Part 1 - focus on expressing opinions, justifying, persuading, comparing, recommending, suggesting, advising, apologising, describing and explaining Part 2 - varying focuses according to task, including: expressing opinions, justifying, comparing, recommending, advising, describing and explaining |
| Use of English | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45 minutes • 42 questions | Part 1 - multiple choice cloze Part 2 - open cloze Part 3 - word formation Part 4 - key word transformations | Part 1 - lexical/lexico-grammatical Part 2 - grammatical/lexico-grammatical Part 3 - lexical/lexico-grammatical Part 4 - lexical and grammatical |

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|-----------|--|--|--|
| Listening | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 minutes • 30 questions | <p>Part 1 - multiple choice - eight short unrelated extracts; monologues or exchanges between interacting speakers; one question per text</p> <p>Part 2 - sentence completion - a monologue or text with interacting speakers</p> <p>Part 3 - multiple matching - five short related monologues. One task, requiring selection from list of six options.</p> <p>Part 4 - multiple choice - a monologue or text involving interacting speakers.</p> <p>All texts will be heard twice.</p> | <p>Part 1 - general gist, detail, function, purpose, attitude, opinion, relationship, topic, place, situation, genre, agreement</p> <p>Part 2 - detail, specific information, stated opinion</p> <p>Part 3 - as for Part 1</p> <p>Part 4 - opinion, attitude, gist, main idea, specific information</p> |
| Speaking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 minutes • 4 parts | <p>Part 1 - conversation between the interlocutor and each candidate (spoken questions)</p> <p>Part 2 - individual one-minute 'long turn' for each candidate with a brief response from the second candidate (each candidate is given two photographs with a question)</p> <p>Part 3 - two-way conversation between the candidates (visual and written stimuli, with spoken instructions)</p> <p>Part 4 - discussion on topics related to Part 3 (spoken questions)</p> | <p>Part 1 - general interactional and social language</p> <p>Part 2 - organising a larger unit of discourse; comparing, describing, expressing opinions</p> <p>Part 3 - sustaining an interaction; exchanging ideas, expressing and justifying opinions, agreeing and/or disagreeing, suggesting, speculating, evaluating, reaching a decision through negotiation, etc.</p> <p>Part 4 - expressing and justifying opinions, agreeing and/or disagreeing</p> |

Total Time: 3 hours 59 minutes