



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE
ESOL Examinations

Experts in Language Assessment

Certificate of Proficiency in English

Examination Report 0301 Syllabus

December 2008

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Certificate of Proficiency in English

Examination Report

Syllabus 0301

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INTRODUCTION

This report is intended to provide a general view of how candidates performed on each paper in the December 2008 session, and to offer guidance on the preparation of candidates.

The overall pass rate for Syllabus 0301 was **48.32%**.

The following table gives details of the percentage of candidates at each grade.

0301	
GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	3.16
B	3.86
C	41.30
D	8.95
E	42.73

- **Grading**

Grading took place during January 2009 (approximately six weeks after the examination).

The five CPE papers total 200 marks, after weighting. Papers 1-5 are each weighted to 40 marks. A candidate's overall CPE grade is based on the total score gained by the candidate across all five papers. It is important to note that candidates do not 'pass' or 'fail' in a particular paper or component, but rather in the examination as a whole.

The overall grades (A, B, C, D and E) are set using the following information:

- statistics on the candidature
- statistics on the overall candidate performance
- statistics on individual questions, for those parts of the examination for which this is appropriate (Papers 1, 3 and 4)
- the advice of the Principal Examiners based on the performance of candidates, and on the recommendation of examiners where this is relevant (Papers 2 and 5; Paper 3, Part 5)
- comparison with statistics from previous years' examination performance and candidature.

Results are reported as three passing grades (A, B and C) and two failing grades (D and E). Every candidate is provided with a Statement of Results, which includes a graphical display of the candidate's performance in each component, are shown against the scale Exceptional – Good – Borderline – Weak.

In addition, the Statement of Results includes a standardised score out of 100 (which is converted from the aggregate mark of 200). This score allows candidates to see exactly how they performed. It has set values for each grade, allowing comparison across sessions of the examination:

Grade A = 80-100 marks

Grade B = 75-79 marks

Grade C = 60-74 marks

Grade D = 55-59 marks

Grade E = 54 marks or below.

This means that the score a candidate needs to achieve a passing grade will always be 60.

- **Special Consideration**

Special Consideration can be given to candidates affected by adverse circumstances immediately before or during an examination. Examples of acceptable reasons for giving Special Consideration include illness and bereavement. All applications for Special Consideration must be made through the local Centre as soon as possible after the examination affected.

- **Irregular Conduct**

The cases of candidates who are suspected of copying, collusion or breaking the examination regulations in some other way will be considered by the Cambridge ESOL Malpractice Committee. Results may be withheld because further investigation is needed or because of infringement of the regulations.

- **Notification of Results**

Candidates' Statements of Results are issued through their local Centre approximately two months after the examination has been taken. Certificates are issued to candidates gaining a passing grade (A, B or C) about six weeks after the issue of Statements of Results. Requests for a check on results may be made through the local Centre, within one month of the issue of Statements of Results.

Cambridge ESOL produces the following documents which may be of use to teachers or institutions preparing candidates for CPE:

- *Regulations* (available online, for information on dates, etc.)
- *CPE Handbook* (for detailed information on the examination and sample materials)
- *Examination Report* (produced in conjunction with the release of certain Past Papers)
- *Past Paper Pack* (made available periodically, approximately 10 weeks after the relevant examination session, including Question Papers 1-4, answer keys, CD and tapescript for Paper 4, and Paper 2 mark schemes and sample scripts).

Users of this Examination Report may find it useful to refer simultaneously to the relevant Past Paper Pack. This, together with further copies of this report, is available from the Centre through which candidates entered, or can be purchased using the order form online at www.cambridgeesol.org

If you do not have access to the internet, you can obtain an order form from:

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Feedback on this report is very welcome and should be sent to the Reports Co-ordinator, Cambridge ESOL, at the above address. Please use the feedback form at the end of this report.

PAPER 1 – READING

Part	Task Type and Focus	Format	Number of Questions
1	<p>Multiple-choice lexical cloze</p> <p><i>Focus:</i> Idioms, collocations, fixed phrases, complementation, phrasal verbs, semantic precision</p>	Three unrelated texts from a range of sources, each with six gaps. Candidates must choose one word or phrase from a set of four to fill each gap.	18
2	<p>Multiple choice</p> <p><i>Focus:</i> Detail, opinion, attitude, tone, purpose, main idea, implication, text organisation features (exemplification, comparison, reference)</p>	Four texts on one theme from a range of sources, each followed by two four-option multiple-choice questions.	8
3	<p>Gapped text</p> <p><i>Focus:</i> Cohesion, coherence, text structure, global meaning</p>	A text from which paragraphs have been removed and placed in jumbled order after the text. Candidates must decide from where in the text the paragraphs have been removed.	7
4	<p>Multiple choice</p> <p><i>Focus:</i> As Part 2</p>	A text followed by four-option multiple-choice questions.	7

- **Marking**

Candidates record their answers on a separate sheet, which is scanned by computer. Questions in Part 1 carry one mark each. Questions in Parts 2, 3 and 4 carry two marks each.

- **Candidate Performance**

The CPE Reading paper aims to test comprehension at word, phrase, sentence, paragraph and whole text level. Each part of the paper is text-based; the texts are drawn from a range of contemporary sources, written for different purposes, and presented in different formats.

On this version of the Reading paper, candidates found Part 4 the most challenging, but all parts fell within the acceptable level of difficulty for CPE.

Part 1, Questions 1-18

In this part, candidates not only have to choose the answer that correctly fits the gap in a sentence, but they may also have to take into account the broader context of the previous and following sentences, or even of the whole text.

Sax supremo: Courtney Pine is a text written in a fairly informal journalistic style. Texts like this often make use of idioms, fixed phrases and strong collocations. Questions 2 and 5 both test idioms. Question 2 challenged some candidates who did not know or recognise the idiom and went for the more literal answer, D, instead of the correct answer, which was C. More candidates seemed to be familiar with the idiom 'to enjoy the fruits of...', which is tested in Question 5. Questions 1 and 6 both focus on semantic precision. Candidates coped well with Question 1 but weaker candidates were tempted by B and D in Question 6. B is incorrect because our recognition of someone's status would not normally be challenged (although the status itself may be). However, it is possible to challenge someone's perceptions, which could be accurate or inaccurate. The correct answer, which requires careful reading of the sentence as a whole, is therefore A.

Jamie is a descriptive text about a man working in a shipyard. This text is rich in collocations and fixed phrases. Question 7 focuses on the phrase '(my) first point of contact'; stronger candidates were able to identify the key, but weaker candidates were tempted by B or D. More candidates appeared to be familiar with the phrase 'one step ahead', tested in Question 12. Questions 8, 9 and 11 all test collocations. Question 11 was done well, but candidates had more trouble with Question 8. C tempted weaker candidates, but the correct answer is A. Candidates performed very well on Question 10, which focuses on a phrasal verb.

Candidates found the third text, **Complete knowledge in science**, the most challenging of the three. This text was rather more abstract and academic in style and content. Question 13 again focuses on an idiom, 'a pie in the sky', referring to something which does not actually exist. Some candidates were tempted by A, which has a similar meaning but is not used in this idiom. Candidates coped very well with the fixed phrase in Question 16 and with Questions 15 and 17, which focus on semantic precision. Some had more problems with the linker in Question 14, where C tempted many candidates. However, the relationship between the idea of complete knowledge in pseudo-science is not contrasted with the existence of the idea in myths and legends – instead the writer is saying that the idea was equally present in both places. The correct answer is therefore A.

Part 2, Questions 19-26

Questions on the four short texts in Part 2 may focus on understanding of the whole text, a specific part of the text, or text organisation. The extracts are taken from a range of different sources. These extracts are all concerned with photography.

In the first extract, **Black-and-white Photography**, candidates coped very well with both questions. Question 21 on the second text, **Portraiture**, tests understanding of the writer's purpose. Some candidates were tempted by A, but the description of the portrait painted by Manet is included to support the writer's opinion that a painting can show 'the spirit that lives within', while a photograph is limited to 'time slices of people'. The correct answer is therefore B. Question 22 focuses on implication. The correct answer for this question is D. The first sentence of the second paragraph tells the reader that the early photographers tried to emulate painters, and the rest of the paragraph establishes that this was not successful: their subjects 'tried to symbolise' something, they were 'hoping to appear' in a certain way, but in the end they were 'not a little ridiculous'.

Question 23 in **Press Photography** tests understanding of implication. Most candidates picked up on the reference to the condescending attitude of reporters to photographers mentioned at the end of the first paragraph, which supports B, the correct answer. Some weaker candidates chose A, but although we are told that some writers 'go out of their way' to help their photographers, we are not told that others are actually reluctant to cooperate. Candidates coped well with Question 24, identifying the link between teamwork and the fact that professionals getting to 'know each other's methods' will result in a 'smooth operation'.

The questions on **Technology in Photography** were the most challenging for many candidates. Question 25 focuses on attitude. This question requires careful reading of the whole of the first paragraph. Some candidates chose D, probably tempted by the references to the 'mass market' in the last sentence of the first paragraph. However, the paragraph as a whole sets up an opposition between the extreme positions of 'admiration and disdain' that photographers have for their equipment. Both these attitudes are explored in the following two sentences, with the fact that cameras can function as 'adult toys' being given as an explanation for photographers' disdain of technology. The reference to mass media is not introduced as a contrast, but as an aside. The correct answer is B, supported by the reference to 'a relationship that oscillates between admiration and disdain'. For Question 26, some candidates chose C. However, the text does not refer to how photographers actually develop their talent. The correct answer, A, is supported by the reference in the text to photographers defending their artistic integrity, their 'special inner vision'.

Part 3, Questions 27-33

At CPE level, the gapped-text task tests understanding of text structure and the ability to predict text development. This text, **Freddy's flight**, is an extract from a novel and describes a young woman's solo flight across part of the USA. In the extract, Freddy's thoughts about her love for flying, her past experiences and her hopes for the future are interspersed with the description of the actual flight she is making, and careful reading is needed to relate these to one another.

The extract begins with a description of the route that Freddy is following to San Luis, and mentions several places that are referred to again later in the extract. Candidates coped well with Question 27, recognising that 'this department' in the second paragraph of the base text refers to 'navigation' in C. For Question 30, weaker candidates were tempted by H, perhaps because of the apparent match between words in this option and the following base text. However, candidates who read more carefully realised that the emphasis on racing at the end of H is not followed up in the next paragraph. The correct answer, A, develops the theme of Freddy's need for money and how she might get it. The idea of *why* she wants a plane of her own is then introduced in H, which is the key to Question 31, and the topic of racing is further developed in the text below 31. For Questions 28, 32 and 33 some candidates were attracted by the distractor, B. However, the idea of a 'final... leap into the sky' does not fit 28 or 32, which both describe earlier stages on the journey. B was a more tempting distractor for 33, but links neither to the preceding nor to the following text. The correct answer, E, is supported by the opening paragraph, where we are told that Freddy is going to San Luis airport and then back. The references to insurance and fuel costs in E also link to 'all this made it such an expensive passion' in the last paragraph.

Part 4, Questions 34-40

This part tests candidates' detailed understanding of a long text, including attitudes and opinions. The text **Writing fiction** is a newspaper article. Candidates generally found this the most challenging part of the paper. They coped well with Question 34, which focuses on the writer's opinion, but less well with Question 35, which tests implication. This part of the text gives a description of two kinds of imagination. Stronger candidates understood that while the primary imagination is to do with perception and noticing, the secondary imagination goes beyond this to 'translate and illuminate everything that has been observed' so that it seems 'entirely new'. The correct answer is therefore C.

Question 36 is testing the main idea of the third paragraph, which addresses and develops the idea given in the opening sentence that there is really nothing new that writers can say. The correct answer is therefore B. Question 37 challenged many candidates. Careful reading is needed to find support for a statement made by the writer about one of her own strengths. This is cued by the phrase 'The only capacity I would claim...'. Here the writer describes her ability to select 'the apt phrase' and her ability to reflect 'the rhythms of dialogue' and 'not to overwrite'.

These are all strengths related to her command of language, and the correct answer is therefore C. For Question 38, some candidates were attracted by C, but the writer says that Trollope is not concerned with ‘the grand passions’ but with the more universal ‘little daily lacerations upon the spirit’. This supports the idea that Trollope describes sufferings experienced by everyone, and so the correct answer is A.

Question 39 asks candidates to identify the purpose of a metaphor; here the handrail is something that can be used as support in a difficult or confusing situation (‘while we blunder about in the dark’). The reference is to uncertainty rather than failure, and the answer is therefore D, not B. The final question tests understanding of the structure of the text as a whole. The answer, D, is supported by references to the audience and the reader throughout the text. The writer says a novelist needs to describe experiences in a way that will excite the reader (paragraph two), and make the reader recognise their own experiences (paragraph three) and buy books and write to the author (paragraph four). Later parts of the text describe the need for the novelist to describe universal experiences, and write ‘for people about people’.

● RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION

When preparing for the CPE Reading paper, students should be encouraged to read as widely as possible, covering a range of sources and styles. The CPE Handbook includes a list of possible sources, together with test focuses for each part. Teachers and students should note, however, that no single CPE Reading paper will necessarily cover all the options listed in the Handbook.

Vocabulary development work should always try to place new items of lexis in context and include study of related word-groups and collocates if appropriate, as well as consideration of the way that linking words operate to clarify meaning at text level. Attention should be paid to informal and colloquial language as well as to more literary styles. Regular use of an up-to-date advanced monolingual English dictionary is essential, not only to clarify the meaning of new words but also to extend knowledge of collocations, fixed phrases, and features of lexicogrammar such as dependent prepositions.

Students should be encouraged to summarise the main points of longer texts, concentrating on overall understanding and progression of ideas within an argument or narrative, as well as practising intensive reading skills focusing on detail. Attention should be drawn to the lexical features of discourse for both short and longer texts, such as the use of superordinates and synonyms, as well as to grammatical features of discourse. Studying how multiple-choice questions work, and how to eliminate distractors, can be a useful task when preparing for Parts 2 and 4. For Part 3, students can work on their predictive skills by reading the base text and predicting the content areas of the gaps, as well as studying textual coherence and cohesion in detail. It may also be useful to ask students to prepare a short summary of a completed Part 3 text in one sentence. For example, a summary of **Freddy’s flight** could read: ‘The extract describes how a young woman flies on her own from Dry Springs to San Luis, thinking as she flies about how she can find the money to buy her own plane, and the sort of flying she would like to do.’

- **DOs and DON'Ts for CPE PAPER 1 – READING**

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| DO | read the sources, titles and subtitles of the texts where given; they are there to help you. |
| DO | read each text carefully before you answer the questions to get the overall sense of it. This includes Part 3, the gapped-text task. |
| DO | remember that, in Part 1, the missing word(s) may be forming part of an idiom, fixed phrase or collocation, so always check the words around the gap carefully. |
| DO | remember that, in Part 1, the missing word(s) must fit the context of the passage, so always check that the completed sentence makes sense in the passage as a whole. |
| DO | read the questions carefully in Part 2 and Part 4, and check each option against the text before rejecting it. |
| DO | keep an overall idea of the development of the text in Part 3. You will need to check that the extracts chosen to fill the gaps in the base text follow the progression of the argument or narrative as a whole. |
| DON'T | assume in Parts 2, 3 or 4 that, if the same word appears in the text as well as in an option, this means you have located the answer. |
| DON'T | try to answer any questions without referring carefully to the text. |
| DON'T | spend too much time on any one part of the paper. |
| DON'T | forget to record your answers on the separate answer sheet. |

PAPER 2 – WRITING

Part	Task Type and Focus	Format	Number of Tasks and Length
1	<p>Question 1</p> <p>Writing one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an article • an essay • a letter • a proposal <p><i>Focus: discursive</i></p>	<p>Candidates are required to respond to input material of approximately 100 words. This may include extracts from newspapers, magazines, books, letters or advertisements, or could be based on quotations made by speakers during a discussion. The input text may be supported by visual material.</p>	<p>One compulsory task</p> <p>300–350 words</p>
2	<p>Either:</p> <p>QUESTIONS 2–4</p> <p>Writing one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an article • a letter • a proposal • a report • a review <p>Or:</p> <p>QUESTION 5</p> <p>Writing one of the following, based on reading one from a prescribed list of two books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an article • an essay • a letter • a report • a review <p>Focus: describing, persuading, narrating, evaluating, making recommendations, giving information, summarising, etc.</p>	<p>Contextualised writing tasks, each specified in no more than 70 words.</p>	<p>Five tasks from which candidates choose one.</p> <p>300–350 words</p>

- **Marking**

All scripts are marked by experienced examiners, who must attend a training and standardisation session before they commence any marking. Examiners award marks according to a General Mark Scheme, which has detailed Performance Bands from 0–5, where Band 3 describes a ‘satisfactory’ level. Within the bands, examiners place the script more exactly at the bottom, middle or top of the band range, e.g. 3.1, 3.2, 3.3. These scores are converted to provide a mark out of 20 for each piece of writing.

Examiners also use a Task-specific Mark Scheme for each question which covers content, range, register, format, organisation and cohesion, and effect on the target reader. Examples of the mark schemes are included in the CPE Past Paper Pack which is available for order from the Cambridge ESOL website. Candidates are penalised for dealing inadequately with the requirements of the Task-specific Mark Scheme.

Examiners work in small teams and are monitored and advised by Team Leaders, who in turn are monitored by the Principal Examiner.

- **Candidate Performance**

Part 1, Question 1

This compulsory question required candidates to write an article in response to views expressed in their local college English language magazine on attitudes to reading. Candidates were asked to address three specific points raised by people's views – reading increases understanding of the world and its different cultures, there is no point in reading unless one has to, and reading provides relaxation and pleasure – as well as giving their own opinions.

The topic proved accessible to all the candidates and the majority wrote articles that were suitably interesting and informative and addressed all three points. Strong candidates avoided copying from the input and developed the topic individually in their own words. Weaker candidates limited their response to reading books, rather than reading in general, or failed to develop the points altogether.

Strong candidates were able to agree and disagree with the views stated in the input, and those candidates who developed the idea of different cultures, in addition to just an understanding of the world, demonstrated their ability to express complex ideas. These candidates used a wide range of language and structures to convey their ideas; they showed a clear awareness of the expectations of the target reader by writing in an appropriate register at the required length and drew their arguments to an effective conclusion.

Weaker candidates revealed a lack of planning in their writing and struggled to express their ideas accurately, so that the content points were obscured or else marred by careless grammatical errors.

Overall, this was an engaging topic which enabled strong candidates to demonstrate a range of vocabulary and structures effectively.

Part 2

The most popular question in Part 2 was Question 4, the letter, which was answered by 72.47% of the candidates. The least popular by a short margin, excluding the set text questions, was Question 2, the review, answered by 13.09% of the candidates. Question 3, the proposal, was answered by 13.34% of the candidates. The set text question, Question 5a on *Goodnight Mr Tom* by Michelle Magorian, was the most popular of the set text questions.

Question 2

This question gave candidates the opportunity to write a review for a film magazine. Candidates were asked to identify a film made a number of years ago, to explain its appeal to a new audience and to say whether any aspects of the film now seem old-fashioned or out-of-date.

Strong candidates chose a suitable film and addressed the different strands in the question. Many candidates chose a film that dealt with a particular theme, such as love or friendship, and were able to explain how the theme still has relevance for a new audience. These candidates clearly organised their answers and used a range of vocabulary related to the topic of films. For example, in explaining how a film might seem old-fashioned to today's audience, they supported their answer with knowledgeable detail about soundtracks and special effects in their evaluation.

In some cases weaker candidates relied on narrating the plot of their chosen film, or wrote an imbalanced response about a current issue such as global warming, with little attention to a review format or a description of the film itself. Their answers were poorly organised, and a small number of candidates wrote in general terms about old films without identifying and informing the reader about one film in particular.

Answers to Question 2 achieved the highest average mark on the paper.

Question 3

This question required candidates to write a proposal for the director of the hotel for which they worked and which was part of an international hotel chain. With a view to holding a food festival for visitors to the region, the director had asked for a proposal recommending which aspects of the region's food should be included, in conjunction with suggestions for festival events enabling visitors to appreciate the region's food.

Strong candidates were able to identify and describe regional food in order to justify its inclusion in the food festival. Their proposals were clearly organised with appropriate headings; they demonstrated an accurate range of language for suggestion and recommendation, and supplied a variety of imaginative ideas for events so that the reader would be well informed about typical regional food.

Weaker candidates did not consider the needs of the target reader, the hotel director, and wrote with little reference to the context, omitting to justify their suggestions; in some cases these candidates did not differentiate between festival and event, or described an existing typical festival, such as Easter.

Question 4

This question, the most popular in Part 2, gave candidates the opportunity to write a letter to the travel section of an international magazine on their favourite city, either in their own country or abroad. In addition to describing their chosen city, they were asked to explain what made it special and why they thought others should visit it.

Strong candidates made early reference in their letter to the reason for writing; they produced interesting and informative answers in letter format, and gave explicit, personal opinions on why people should visit the city. Such responses, which included detailed explanations, were often persuasive and encouraging and provided effective conclusions.

Some weaker candidates wrote descriptions of a visit or a holiday in a city, rather than of the city itself. There were some problematic choices, for example islands, which clearly did not inform the reader about a specific city, and some candidates often relied on inappropriate formulaic language, e.g. 'I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience'.

Questions 5a, 5b and 5c

Question 5a on *Goodnight Mr Tom* required candidates to write an article for a literary magazine on the parts played by Annie Hartridge and Geoffery Sanderton in the novel, explaining how they helped William to come to terms with the events in his life.

Strong candidates demonstrated a detailed understanding of the story and were able to select relevant information, without relying on simply narrating events. They used a range of accurate language to describe the required characters, to explain their influence on William and the changes that took place in William as the story evolved. Weaker candidates tended to narrate the story, including irrelevant references to Mr Tom and found it hard to express some of the complex ideas related to the changes in William's character.

In Question 5b, on *The Cryptographer*, candidates were asked to write an essay for their tutor describing how John Law's wealth affected his life and that of his family in both positive and negative ways and commenting on whether, in the candidate's opinion, money had brought them happiness. Some candidates who demonstrated a good knowledge of the book did not make sufficiently close reference to the second strand of the question. They wrote generally on whether money brings happiness and overlooked the need to focus on John Law and his family.

In Question 5c, on *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, candidates were asked to write a report for their English drama group on whether the novel would make a good play. In the report they were asked to describe some significant objects and places which would help the group to design an effective set, to refer to Maria Thins' house and other important places, to clothes and jewellery and to explain the significance of all these to the story.

The question gave strong candidates plenty of scope to write detailed reports with close reference to the novel. Their answers were clearly organised and their evaluation and explanations well contextualised, so the reader could understand whether the story would make a good play.

There are still candidates who attempt a set text question who have clearly not read the appropriate text and whose answers are totally irrelevant. For the set text questions, candidates need to have not only a good knowledge of the text; they must also be able to refer clearly to examples from the text in order to illustrate the aspects focused on in the question. It is not sufficient to write a narrative at the expense of the other strands in the question; strong candidates address all the strands with relevant reference to examples from the text to support their answers.

• RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION

Candidates need to read the question very carefully in order to perform the task set effectively. Students need practice in identifying what the task is and what needs to be addressed. The question identifies the context, the writer's role and the target reader, which helps the candidate to choose the appropriate register. It is also very important that students learn to distinguish between the various task types required by the questions. Even though a candidate may display an excellent command of the language, an answer will only achieve a high mark if all the above factors are taken into account.

Candidates should get into the habit of planning their answers thoroughly before they begin to

write. This will encourage an organised and coherent approach and prevent irrelevant digression. Practice in writing to time will help prepare students to answer the question under examination conditions, produce the appropriate number of words required in the time set and avoid the possibility of running out of time.

The Task-specific and General Mark Schemes, which are published in the CPE Past Paper Pack, describe the requirements of each task and give information about the linguistic aspects that are expected at this level – the range of vocabulary, collocation and expression, variety of structure, and cohesion.

The Principal Examiner reported that a small number of answers to Question 3 appeared to be reworked answers to a previous question on festivals. Familiarity with sample answers from other administrations can be valuable in providing guidance on different writing genres, but any attempt to reproduce such material can only detract from the candidate's performance.

Part 1

It is important that candidates spend some time reading the input very carefully and identify the main points which need to be included. Careful reading of the question will establish important details; for example, in this Question 1, the article, there were three main points to develop. It is important for candidates to remember that, in Part 1, the object is not merely to restate the content points, but to expand them and integrate them into a piece of discursive writing of the appropriate text type.

Part 2

The questions in Part 2 are shorter, but just as much care is required in reading them. It is apparent that some candidates do not read the question carefully enough but seize on a familiar topic and start the task before they have identified exactly what is required. It is always the case that there are at least two parts or strands to these questions, and usually it is the second or third part, often omitted or treated rather cursorily, which gives the question its CPE dimension. It is only candidates who produce a balanced answer dealing adequately with all parts of the question who can expect to gain a mark in the higher bands. On this paper, for example, in some answers to Questions 2, 3 and 4, parts of the question were overlooked or less well developed. As a result, the respective tasks were not fully realised and some candidates were penalised.

For candidates who choose to tackle questions on the set texts, it is just as important as for the other questions to take note of the task type and target reader specified. Students can prepare for these questions by considering themes which run through the book, and then by identifying events or characters which exemplify these ideas.

Candidates who have not prepared a set text should always choose one of the other Part 2 questions: 2, 3 or 4.

- **DOs and DON'Ts for CPE PAPER 2 – WRITING**

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| DO | read the questions very carefully. |
| DO | decide exactly what information you are being asked to consider or give. |
| DO | identify the target reader, your role as writer and your purpose in writing. |
| DO | check what task type you're being asked to write. |
| DO | organise your ideas and make a plan before you begin to write. |
| DO | remember in Part 1 to use the content points as the basis for developing your own ideas. |
| DO | make sure in Part 2 that you deal with all parts of the question. |
| DO | try to write in an appropriate style that will make a positive impression on the reader. |
| DO | leave time to check through your work. |
| DON'T | include irrelevant discussions or points. |
| DON'T | forget that spelling and punctuation (and layout in a report and proposal) are important. |
| DON'T | ignore the need for legible handwriting and clear presentation. |
| DON'T | choose a set text question (5a, 5b, 5c) if you haven't read and prepared the text. |

PAPER 3 – USE OF ENGLISH

Part	Task Type and Focus	Format	Number of Questions
1	Open cloze <i>Focus: Grammar and vocabulary</i>	A modified cloze test containing 15 gaps.	15
2	Word formation <i>Focus: Vocabulary</i>	A text containing 10 gaps. Each gap corresponds to a word. The stems of the missing words are given beside the text and must be changed to form the missing word.	10
3	Gapped sentences <i>Focus: Vocabulary</i>	Questions are made up of three discrete sentences. Each sentence contains one gap. The gapped word is common to the three sentences. Candidates must write one word which is appropriate in all three sentences.	6
4	Key word transformations <i>Focus: Grammar and vocabulary</i>	8 discrete items with a lead-in sentence and a gapped response to complete in 3–8 words including a given ‘key’ word.	8
5	Comprehension questions and summary writing task <i>Focus: Awareness of the use of language (recognising and understanding the force of lexical items, rhetorical and stylistic devices and referencing).</i> The focus of the summary is on information selection, linking and sentence construction.	Two texts with two questions on each text. The summary task requires selection of relevant information from both texts.	4 and 1 summary writing task

- **Marking**

Candidates write their answers on two separate answer sheets, one for Parts 1-3 and one for Parts 4 and 5. Questions 1-25 carry one mark each. Questions 26-31 carry two marks. Questions 32-39 are marked on a scale 0-1-2. Questions 40-43 are weighted to two marks each, and Question 44 carries 14 marks.

- **Candidate Performance**

Part 1, Questions 1-15: Pioneers of TV Situation Comedy

Open Cloze

Candidates coped extremely well with this task. Questions 6, 8 and 14 proved the most challenging, though these were balanced by Questions 5, 10 and 11, which candidates found far more accessible.

Question 6 relied on knowing the phrasal verb required in the context of adjusting a TV in order to watch a programme; a variety of incorrect prepositions and adverbs were offered by weaker candidates who did not recognise that 'to tune' had to be followed by 'in'. Question 8 required candidates to appreciate the fact that the paragraph referred to the habitual working methods of the scriptwriters responsible for the comedy series. The correct answer to complete the structure 'Each week they begin' was 'would', but there were many incorrect answers such as 'always', 'all', 'do', 'might' and 'could', which suggested that candidates had focused on a discrete sentence and not the meaning of the whole text. In Question 14, strong candidates understood the initial concessive structure which needed 'However' to complete it correctly; weaker candidates, who appeared to understand what was required, supplied answers such as 'Despite' or 'Although', which did not fit the rest of sentence grammatically.

Part 2, Questions 16-25: The Early Cultivation of the Potato

Word Formation

Candidates coped very well with Part 2, although two questions, namely 16 and 20, proved more challenging than the others.

Question 16, the most challenging, required the word 'reliant'. Many candidates overlooked the sense of the adjectival suffix in the context of the Aymara people being able to rely on the potato as part of their diet, and wrote 'reliable' instead. In Question 20, strong candidates correctly produced 'encouraging', but a large number of weaker candidates who recognised the verb form required, omitted the prefix and simply wrote 'couraging'. In Question 19, strong candidates recognised the correct suffix needed to form the noun 'likelihood' from the root word 'likely', but many weaker candidates wrote 'likeliness'. Question 17 was handled well by most candidates who recognised both the negative prefix and appropriate suffix required to form 'unacceptable'.

It was reported that a number of weak candidates appeared to produce prefixes and suffixes at random, or commonly misspelled words, e.g. writing 'preference' or 'preferance' instead of 'preference' in Question 21. Overall, however, candidates were successful in recognising the correct form of words required for this part of the test.

Part 3, Questions 26-31

Gapped Sentences

Candidates coped extremely well with this part of the paper. Strong candidates avoided the temptation to settle for a word which appeared to work in one or two of the sentences without carefully checking whether it was equally appropriate in the third. For example, in Question 29, weak candidates settled for 'circle' or 'round' which fitted the first two sentences but not the third; the correct word was 'ring'. The most demanding questions were 30 and 31; the most accessible were Questions 26 and 27.

Part 4, Questions 32-39

Key Word Transformations

Candidates coped particularly well with this part of the paper and appeared to have little difficulty in identifying the target structures. Questions 38 and 39 proved the most challenging and Questions 32, 33 and 35 the most accessible. In Question 38, only strong candidates correctly transformed 'should avoid making hasty...' into the phrasal verb 'to rush into...'. It was disappointing to note that poor spelling, for example 'accussed' and 'braking' in Question 32, and 'attension' in Question 33, affected otherwise correct transformations.

It is important to remember that the sentence produced after transformation must reflect the meaning of the original one.

Part 5, Questions 40-44: Comets

Comprehension Questions and Summary Writing Task

In the short answer questions, Questions 40 and 43 were generally very well done; Question 41 proved the most challenging.

In Question 41, a paraphrase of 'a safe haven from these interstellar travellers' was required. Candidates needed to deal with all the components of this phrase; for example, 'somewhere to escape from comets' would earn full marks. Similarly, in Question 42, based on the second text, candidates were asked to respond to the question 'How has science been able to 'rehabilitate' comets?' Clarity of expression in a short answer is essential; answers such as 'thanks to science, comets move in paths called orbits' do not make it clear that the candidate has grasped the force of the word 'rehabilitate', in that science has been able to explain that comets follow predictable paths.

The two texts generated five possible content points for the summary, Question 44; the maximum mark awarded for content was 4. Some strong candidates identified all five points and, according to the Principal Examiner, most candidates identified two or three points. Weaker candidates found it difficult to follow the arguments put forward by each writer and as a result dealt less effectively with the summary question.

Failure to identify the summary points has a direct impact on the band score awarded for summary skills; omission of content points will restrict the overall band that can be awarded. Similarly, exceeding the indicated word limit will restrict the overall band score. Each band, however, allows for a range within that band, for example 4.1 or 4.2 (within Band 4), depending on how well the candidate demonstrates appropriate summary skills.

Strong candidates produced well-written answers which were concise, well expressed and relevant, making good use of linking and self-expression to show clear understanding of the task and writing very well-constructed summaries. Only a small number of candidates demonstrated inadequate language skills below the required standard with basic errors in verb forms, particles and linking devices. A similarly small number of candidates produced rambling answers around a single point or wrote irrelevantly, sometimes in the first person, with no reference to the content points contained in the texts.

There are common issues arising in the writing of summaries:

- irrelevant answers which do not focus on the question asked or which deal with only a single point at considerable length

- failure to express points in the candidate's own words at the appropriate level, relying instead on extensive lifting from the texts
- weak, inappropriate or pedestrian linking of relevant points
- unacceptable presentation in which each point is written as a mini-paragraph and the appearance of the summary is one of note format
- inadequate overall organisation which reflects no real attempt to bring together the significance of the relevant ideas from both texts.

• RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION

Thorough reading is essential throughout the paper: texts, instructions, discrete questions, short answer questions and the instructions for the summary all repay close reading, and students should become accustomed to reading carefully before beginning any task.

In Part 1, candidates who do not first read the text in order to establish the general argument presented may concentrate on finding a word which will fill the gap, and ignore the possibility that it may not fit the overall context. It is important, therefore, to pay close attention to the writer's argument at both sentence and whole-text level. Gaining familiarity with fixed phrases, collocations and grammatical patterns will also help prepare students to cope with Part 1.

Similar close attention to the whole text and to the surrounding sentences is necessary in Part 2. This will enable candidates to determine whether the word required is, for example, an adjective or an adverb; whether, if it is a noun, it needs to be singular or plural; and whether the sense of the argument requires the word to have a negative prefix. Candidates must be prepared not only to add prefixes and suffixes, but also, as appropriate, to make internal changes to the spelling of the given word.

The important thing for candidates to remember about Part 3, the gapped sentences task, is that the word they supply **must** fit in all three sentences, as illustrated in the example given on the question paper. Preparation for this part of the paper should concentrate on collocations, phrasal verbs and words which can have different meanings depending on the context in which they are used.

In preparation for Part 4, students should get used to reformulating and manipulating sentence structures. It is important to remember that the reformulated sentence must be as similar as possible in meaning to the original sentence; for example, adjectives and adverbs must not be overlooked. Between three and eight words are to be used and by using more than eight words, candidates will be penalised. Additionally, the prompt word must be included and not altered in any way.

The short answer questions in Part 5 rarely need to be answered with complete sentences, but it is important to answer them fully as in Question 41.

The summary task tests candidates' ability to select and organise relevant information, and for this students should be trained to read the summary instruction very carefully. The Mark Scheme for the summary makes it clear that, to achieve a high mark, a summary must be wholly relevant, well organised, rely on the candidate's own words as far as possible and be concisely written within the word limit stated. These are all skills students will need to develop and practise, and they will need to become accustomed to selecting particular information from both texts, remembering that they will not be asked to summarise the whole of a writer's argument, but to concentrate on specific points within it.

• **DOs and DON'Ts for CPE PAPER 3 – USE OF ENGLISH**

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| DO | allow yourself time to read the instructions, texts and questions very carefully. |
| DO | read over each whole text in Parts 1, 2 and 5 to make sure you understand what the texts are saying before you try to answer the questions. |
| DO | remember that the missing words in Part 1 are likely to have a grammatical focus and not a purely lexical one. |
| DO | make sure you think about all the changes a word may require in Part 2: prefix, suffix, internal change, singular or plural forms for a noun, adverb, adjective, participle, etc. |
| DO | make sure that the same word fits all three sentences in Part 3. |
| DO | make sure your reformulated sentence has the same meaning as the original sentence in Part 4. |
| DO | read the short answer questions and the summary instruction very carefully in Part 5. |
| DO | make sure you write only the correct number of words required if a question states what is required in selecting a phrase from the text. |
| DO | select relevant information for the summary from both texts in Part 5 and rely on self-expression as opposed to copying. |
| DO | make sure you transfer your answers accurately from the question paper to your answer sheet, that you use CAPITAL letters where appropriate and that your letters are clearly formed and unambiguous. |
| DON'T | alter the word given in Part 4. |
| DON'T | write more than eight words, including the given word, in Part 4. |
| DON'T | quote more words than necessary from the text in short answer questions in Part 5. |
| DON'T | write too few or too many words when you answer the summary question. |

PAPER 4 – LISTENING

Part	Task Type and Focus	Format	Number of Questions
1	Three-option multiple choice <i>Focus:</i> Gist, detail, function, purpose, topic, speaker, addressee, feeling, attitude, opinion, etc.	Four short unrelated texts lasting approximately 1 minute each, consisting of either monologues or exchanges between interacting speakers. There are two multiple-choice questions per text, each with three options.	8
2	Sentence completion <i>Focus:</i> Specific information, stated opinion	A monologue or prompted monologue lasting 3 to 4 minutes.	9
3	Four-option multiple choice <i>Focus:</i> Opinion, gist, detail, inference	A text involving interacting speakers lasting 3 to 4 minutes.	5
4	Three-way multiple matching <i>Focus:</i> Candidates match statements on a text to either of two speakers or to both when they express agreement. Stated and non-stated opinion, agreement and disagreement.	A text with interacting speakers lasting 2 to 3 minutes, in which opinions are exchanged and agreement or disagreement expressed.	6

- **Marking**

Candidates write their answers on a separate answer sheet, which is marked according to a detailed mark scheme and then scanned by computer. Each question carries one mark.

For security reasons, more than one version of the Paper 4 Listening test is made available at each session. As with all other CPE papers, rigorous checks are built into the question paper production process to ensure that all versions of the test are of comparable content and difficulty. In addition, for Paper 4, the marks are adjusted to ensure that there is no advantage or disadvantage to candidates taking one particular version.

- **Candidate Performance**

Test A

Part 1, Questions 1-8

Candidates did well on this part, especially on Question 1. This question asked candidates to complete the sentence, 'Seamus thinks the phrase the presenter uses does not reflect a laser's ...'. The correct answer was C 'precision'. This answer is found in the text when the speaker says '...dirt can be removed rapidly but with a very controlled light touch'.

Candidates found Question 6 quite challenging. This question asked candidates to complete the sentence, 'For the man, the old way of making posters ...', and the correct answer was C, 'was a poor use of potential talents'. Candidates had to understand the speaker's sentence, 'By liberating them from the humdrum, the software has actually given them more scope to embrace creativity', to get the answer. Weaker candidates chose option B, 'put insufficient pressure on students'. The reason for this may be that when weaker candidates heard the woman say 'there's a creeping pressure', they assumed incorrectly that B was the answer just because of the word 'pressure'. However, the question was about the man.

Part 2, Questions 9-17

Candidates found this part of the test quite challenging. They performed well on Question 9, but less well on Questions 11, 14 and 17. The answer to Question 11 was 'river mouth'. Weaker candidates did not read the sentence on the question paper carefully and pay attention to the words before the gap 'around a' and they put 'shallow water' as the answer. For Question 14 the answer was 'defensive' and weaker candidates often misspelled the word 'difenssive' or 'defeansive'. For Question 17 the answer was 'warning' and weaker candidates did not read the question carefully – 'The presence of gulls serves as an advance for lapwings' – and they put 'early warning'. This meant that they repeated the idea of 'advance' in the sentence and consequently got the answer wrong.

Part 3, Questions 18-22

Candidates did well on this part of the test, especially Question 20. However, Question 22 was more challenging. The answer to the question 'What does Marcus feel about rules in science?' is C, 'Too much emphasis is placed on them'. The answer is found at the beginning of Marcus's last turn in the text in a long sentence with several clauses. Weaker candidates chose option D, 'Some are too complicated to be useful'. Marcus does use the word 'complicated' but D is not the correct answer.

Part 4, Questions 23-28

Candidates did very well on this part of the test, especially on Question 26. However, candidates found Question 24 more challenging. The answer to Question 24, 'A traveller's survival should not depend on the helpfulness of local people', is B. Lucy says 'It seems crazy for travellers to rely on other people looking after them', and Justin agrees when he says 'they were pulled out of the river by a couple of fishermen ... You feel they ought to be capable of getting **themselves** out of trouble!'

● RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION

Part 1

Candidates should be encouraged to read the information contained in the introductory sentence for each extract carefully as this will help contextualise what they are about to hear. Tasks where students predict what they are going to listen to are invaluable preparation for Part 1. Moreover, in the examination, candidates should read each question carefully before listening. The questions may focus, for example, on gist, detail, function, feeling, attitude, opinion or purpose. Candidates have to be ready for each of the four texts in Part 1.

Candidates should listen to the whole text attentively, read the question very carefully and then choose an answer. Tasks where students summarise the content of texts can be good preparation. Activities where students work on paraphrase can also be a great help. Teachers should give students plenty of practice in dealing with a range of text types and focuses so that candidates are prepared for the varying character, vocabulary and pace of texts within Part 1.

Part 2

In Part 2, candidates are required to listen to an informative text and produce written answers by completing nine independent sentences. Texts may be either monologues or prompted monologues, typically a talk, lecture or broadcast. A contextualising rubric sets the scene in terms of speaker, topic and context. Candidates should be reminded that questions are chronological and follow the order of information presented in the text.

Answers are short, generally in the form of single words or noun groups, must be spelled correctly (both US and British English spellings are accepted) and must fit into the grammatical structure of the sentence. For example, singular/plural forms must be respected and the correct part of speech, e.g. noun or adjective, must be used. Candidates are not asked to make grammatical transformations from text to task in sentence-completion tasks.

Candidates are not expected to rephrase what they hear and should therefore focus on writing down the key information as it is heard in the text. Pronunciation tasks, including listening to words which contain silent letters, or tasks which focus on the endings of words, can help students prepare for listening and writing down accurately what they have heard.

The keys tend to be concrete items of information, for example, 'flight' or 'farmland'.

In preparing for this part of the test, candidates should be encouraged to read the question very carefully and, when they have filled the gap, check that the sentence makes sense and that the grammar and spelling are correct. It is important that candidates' handwriting is legible.

Part 3

Part 3 consists of one text with interacting speakers. Texts typically take the form of broadcast interviews and discussions in which opinions and attitudes are expressed, both explicitly and implicitly. A series of five four-option multiple-choice questions focuses on detailed understanding of the text. Questions follow the order of the text, although the final question may test global understanding of the text as a whole.

In preparing candidates for this part, activities which encourage students to listen to a whole 'paragraph' or 'chunk' of text before they decide on the answer are very useful. This type of practice may help candidates avoid the problem of choosing an answer based on a small piece of text. In addition, candidates should read the question and options very carefully so that their

answer is a correct interpretation of what they hear. Classroom preparation could take the form of a discussion about why the wrong options are wrong.

Part 4

Part 4 consists of one text with interacting speakers. In order to facilitate identification, there is always one male speaker and one female speaker. The texts typically take the form of informal discussions in which opinions about a topic are exchanged and agreement or disagreement is expressed. A series of six statements summarises the main points raised in the text and forms the basis of a three-way matching task. Candidates are asked to match each statement to the speaker who expresses that view, or to indicate where the speakers are in agreement.

In preparing candidates for this part, activities which focus on identifying agreement and disagreement are particularly useful. Students should also have practice in recognising paraphrase because the question is a paraphrase of the speaker's opinion and, where speakers agree, the second speaker often restates the opinion but uses different words. Classroom discussions where students have to express their opinions and agree and disagree with others are very useful preparation for this part.

• **DOs and DON'Ts for CPE PAPER 4 – LISTENING**

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| DO | listen to and read the rubric. Make sure you understand what you are listening for and what you have to do. |
| DO | think about the topic, the speaker(s) and the context as you read the questions. This will help you when you listen. |
| DO | use the time allowed before hearing each recording to read through all the questions carefully and think about the type of answer that's required. |
| DO | concentrate on understanding what speakers say, and listen for both stated and implied attitudes or opinions. |
| DO | check that your idea of what the correct answer is when you first hear the recording is confirmed when you hear it for the second time. |
| DO | answer all the questions – even if you're not sure, you've probably understood more than you think. |
| DO | write the actual word you hear on the recording in Part 2. |
| DO | check the spelling of your answers in Part 2. |
| DO | make sure you copy your answers accurately onto the answer sheet. |
| DO | listen carefully for paraphrases of the questions in Part 4. |
| DON'T | keep thinking about questions from one part of the Listening test when the next part starts. |
| DON'T | choose an answer too soon. |
| DON'T | duplicate what is in the question in Part 2. |

PAPER 5 – SPEAKING

Part	Task Type and Format	Focus	Timing
1	Conversation between the interlocutor and each candidate (spoken questions).	General interactional and social language.	3 minutes
2	A two-way conversation between the candidates. The candidates are given instructions with written and visual stimuli, which are used in a decision-making task.	Sustaining an interaction; exchanging ideas, expressing and justifying opinions, agreeing and/or disagreeing, suggesting, speculating, evaluating, reaching a decision through negotiation, etc.	4 minutes
3	An individual 'long turn' from each candidate followed by a discussion on topics related to the long turns. Each candidate in turn is given a written question to respond to. The interlocutor leads a discussion to explore further the topics of the long turns.	Organising a larger unit of discourse, expressing and justifying opinions, developing topics.	12 minutes (2-minute long turn for each candidate and approximately 8 minutes following the long turns)

- **Marking**

The CPE Speaking test is conducted by trained examiners, who attend annual co-ordination sessions to ensure that standards are maintained.

The assessor awards marks to each candidate for performance throughout the test according to five analytical criteria: Grammatical Resource, Lexical Resource, Discourse Management, Pronunciation and Interactive Communication. The interlocutor provides a mark for global achievement for each candidate, which assesses the candidate's overall effectiveness in tackling the tasks. These scores are converted to a mark out of 40. Combining the analytical marks of the assessor and a global achievement mark from the interlocutor gives a balanced view of a candidate's performance.

- **Candidate Performance**

Part 1

This is a 3-minute part (4 minutes for groups of three); the interaction takes place between examiner and candidate. It gives each candidate the opportunity to 'warm up' by answering questions on familiar topics such as their work, study, current lives, hopes for the future, etc. There is not usually time for candidates to react to or comment on their partner's contribution.

The questions ranged from the factual to the more speculative and candidates had to be ready to answer promptly as there was not much time for reflection. There did not seem to be any questions that caused problems and candidates did well on this part.

Part 2 School debate – The good life

Part 2 is based on visual material and lasts 4 minutes (6 minutes for groups of three). It is a collaborative task for which the candidates share responsibility. It has two phases: a one-minute interaction which should produce some speculative language, and a three-minute discussion followed by a decision.

This task had a single visual. In Phase one, examiners asked candidates to speculate on what the visual might have been used to advertise. Candidates produced suggestions including yoga classes, a brand of water and a holiday destination. It was a very generative question and, as long as candidates did not describe the visual but answered the question, it was well done.

The Phase two main task set up a 3-minute discussion on what makes 'the good life' and whether this visual would be a good one to advertise a school debate on the subject. Candidates discussed the image that this visual put across, mentioning peace, relaxation, lack of stress, lack of material things. Many said it was a strong, simple image. Weaker candidates focused simply on the visual itself whereas stronger candidates broadened the discussion to include, as asked, what makes 'the good life' – in other words, they used the visual as a springboard for their discussion.

When reaching a decision, candidates were divided as to whether this would be a good visual for the poster. Some suggested that the visual appealed to the imagination and therefore would be a good poster as it would allow people to bring their own ideas to the debate. Some candidates felt that students would not relate to it, it was felt to be 'a grown-up view' of the good life and suggested something 'more aggressive' to appeal to young people. Candidates had more to say when the discussion took into account the reason for the visual (to advertise a school debate).

Part 3 Boundaries

This part lasts approximately 12 minutes (18 minutes for a group of three) and consists of a 2-minute long turn for each candidate, followed by a general discussion. The topic of 'Boundaries' was generally dealt with well.

In answering the question on Card A, candidates seemed to find the prompts easy to incorporate into their talks. All three prompts were used equally – no prompt seemed to be more or less favoured than any other. Candidates felt that taking responsibility, building your own life and acting independently was a sign of becoming an adult. Candidates who were able to talk generally about the topic and to introduce examples or illustrations did well. There was certainly a lot to say.

The question on Card B was also well answered and all three prompts seemed easy to use. Broadly speaking, candidates brought out the dilemma of technological advances in the three prompt areas, e.g. 'We're in danger of going too far in medical research, but we need to take risks in order to develop new ideas.' Some candidates moved away from the prompts and talked about other developments in space and computer technology, for example. Candidates produced strong 2-minute talks when they touched on whether the advances could 'be regarded as going too far'.

The 'long turn' questions were well answered, particularly when candidates were able to illustrate their ideas with personal experience, opinion or example. The questions at the end of this part enabled candidates to converse in a more informal way and to expand their ideas on the topic of boundaries. Interaction between candidates in response to examiners' questions produced some interesting ideas and a good opportunity to demonstrate their range of language.

• RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION

All candidates need to know the format, timings and aims of each part of the test. If candidates know what to expect, they will give themselves the best chance in the exam. Candidates who are underprepared will, generally speaking, not perform as well as they could do. They need to be aware of their responsibility to take part in the interaction as fully as possible, as examiners can only make an assessment on what they hear. It is useful if students can practise in the classroom in pairs and in threes.

Part 1

Students should practise answering questions about themselves, their lives, their interests and hopes for the future, etc. In order to avoid spending too much time thinking about what to say (time is limited in Part 1), they need to have some ready answers to the common questions. A one- or two-sentence answer is usually sufficient. Where a question asks for an opinion, it is a good idea for students to practise stating their opinion and backing it up with a reason, explanation, comment, etc.

Part 2

For the Phase one question, students can prepare by speculating about pictures in their course books. For example, they could consider why they think the photo was taken, who might have taken it, what sounds they might hear in that situation, what might happen in the next ten minutes, how the photos might be used. The kind of language students will need for this part is the language of speculation ('I would imagine...'; 'It could be/have been...'; 'It's probably...'; 'I guess...'; 'Don't you think...', etc.). It is important that students do not simply describe the pictures. Students could work in groups of three, with one monitoring the other two to check how much language of speculation they use and/or how much time they spend simply describing what they see in the pictures.

For Phase two, the most important thing that students need to practise is talking about the *issues* that come out of the pictures. It is inevitable that a certain amount of description will occur but the ability to talk about what aspect of the topic the photo is illustrating is the most important thing. When it comes to the decision-making part of the task, students need practice in referring back to what was said in the discussion in order to choose, reject, suggest, etc. This means, for example, students being able to say, 'Bearing in mind what we said about ...' or 'I think we should take into account what we said about ...'. Students also need practice in relating their decision to the context of the discussion (in this case whether the picture is suitable in a school context).

Students need to understand what it is they are being asked to do. One way of doing this is for teachers to read out the instructions for a task and to ask students to summarise what they have heard. They also need to make use of the title that is printed on the visual sheet to help them keep their responses relevant. Working in pairs or small groups will give them the opportunity to express their opinions, elicit information or opinion from others, react to what others in the groups have said, etc. Students need to be aware that interaction is key in this part; long speeches are not appropriate. Useful practice can be carried out with task-based classroom activities that allow for equal discussion followed by decision-making.

Part 3

The topics that are used for the two-minute talks are those that appear in most CPE coursebooks. Classroom discussion on these topics will be useful in giving students the ideas and confidence to speak in the exam.

Students have different approaches to giving their two-minute talk. The following are suggestions for practice:

– structure the talk: how to begin, how to make a point and back it up with an illustration or example, maybe from their own personal experience, and how to conclude, rather than just stop. A formal presentation is not expected but a talk that progresses coherently and logically is what students should aim for.

– fill two minutes: Get students to work in pairs. The listener can time the speaker and also be prepared to make a comment on the talk after the speaker has finished. One way to ensure that the two minutes are filled is for students to practise using the prompts and talk about each one for, say, 45 seconds.

– talk about the main question on the card: It might be helpful for students to underline the main word(s) in the question in order to keep themselves to the point. The three prompts below the question are there for support and do not *need* to be used. Useful practice would be for students to speak for two minutes without any prompts; this will help them to realise that it is the question itself that is the most important thing.

- **DOs and DON'Ts for CPE PAPER 5 – SPEAKING**

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|--------------|--|
| DO | familiarise yourself with the different parts of the test, and the timings. |
| DO | respond promptly to the examiner's questions in Part 1. |
| DO | work with your partner in Part 2 in the general discussion after the long turns, i.e. follow-up, expand, question, agree, disagree, comment. |
| DO | remember to use the title on the Part 2 visuals page to keep yourself on track. |
| DO | talk about the issues and aspects behind the visuals. |
| DO | listen to what your partner is saying during his/her 2-minute turn so you can comment afterwards. |
| DO | stay focused on the main question on the card in Part 3. |
| DO | be prepared to speak for two minutes in Part 3. |
| DO | use (but not overuse) your personal experience to back up some of your points in Part 3. |
| DON'T | leave your partner sitting in silence for too long in Part 2 and in the general discussion after the long turns. |
| DON'T | rush to make a decision in Part 2 without having first discussed all the options. |
| DON'T | speak during your partner's 2-minute long turn. |
| DON'T | answer your partner's long turn question when invited by the examiner to comment. Your remarks should be comments, additions, etc. |
| DON'T | always be the first to answer the examiner's questions. Allow/invite your partner to contribute. |

FEEDBACK FORM

CPE Examination Report – December 2008 (0301)

We are interested in hearing your views on how useful this report has been.

We would be most grateful if you could briefly answer the following questions and return a photocopy of this page to the following address:

University of Cambridge
ESOL Examinations
Reports Co-ordinator
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

Fax: +44 (0)1223 460278

1. Please describe your situation (e.g. EFL/ESOL teacher, Director of Studies, Examinations Officer, Centre Exams Manager):

2. Have you prepared candidates for CPE? YES/NO

3. Do you plan to prepare candidates for CPE in the future? YES/NO

4. How have you used this report (e.g. to provide feedback to other teachers, for examination practice, etc.)?

5. Which parts of this report did you find most useful?

6. Which parts are not so useful?

7. What extra information would you like to see included in this report?

8. (Optional) Your name
- Centre/School

Thank you.