



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE  
ESOL Examinations

Experts in Language Assessment

# Certificate of Proficiency in English

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**Examination Report** 0300 Syllabus

June 2008

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**Syllabus 0300**

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## **WEBSITE REFERENCE**

This report can be accessed through the Cambridge ESOL website at:

[www.cambridgeesol.org](http://www.cambridgeesol.org)

## INTRODUCTION

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

The overall pass rate for Syllabus 0301 was **70.78%**.

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

<b>0300</b>	
<b>GRADE</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
A	8.21
B	16.14
C	46.43
D	10.63
E	18.59

### • **Grading**

Grading took place during July 2008 (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). The minimum successful performance which a candidate typically requires in order to achieve a grade C corresponds to about 60% of the total marks. Every candidate is provided with a Statement of Results, which includes a graphical display of the candidate's performance in each component. These are shown against the scale Exceptional – Good – Borderline – Weak and indicate the candidate's relative performance in each paper.

### • **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 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* (produced annually, for information on dates, etc.)
- *CPE Handbook* (for detailed information on the examination and sample materials)
- *Examination Report* (produced twice a year)
- *Past Paper Pack* (available approximately 10 weeks after each 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](http://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 TYPES AND FORMAT	TASK FOCUS	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS
1	<p>Four-option multiple-choice lexical cloze</p> <p>Three texts each containing six gaps. Each gap corresponds to a word or phrase and candidates must select the correct answer from the four options given.</p>	<p>Idioms, collocations, fixed phrases, complementation, phrasal verbs, semantic precision</p>	18
2	<p>Four-option multiple choice</p> <p>Four texts on one theme from a range of sources.</p> <p>Two four-option multiple-choice questions on each text.</p>	<p>Detail, opinion, attitude, tone, purpose, main idea, implication, text organisation features (exemplification, comparison, reference)</p>	8
3	<p>Gapped text</p> <p>One 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.</p>	<p>Cohesion, coherence, text structure, global meaning</p>	7
4	<p>Four-option multiple choice</p> <p>One text with seven four-option multiple-choice questions.</p>	As Part 2	7

- **Marking**

Candidates record their answers on a separate sheet, which is scanned by computer. Questions in Parts 2, 3 and 4 carry two marks each. Questions in Part 1 carry one mark each. The total score is adjusted to give a mark out of 40.

## • 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 mainly contemporary sources, written for different purposes, and presented in different formats.

On this version of the Reading paper, candidates generally coped well with the tasks. All four parts fell within the acceptable level of difficulty for CPE. Candidates found the gapped text in Part 3 the most challenging, but coped well with Part 4.

### Part 1, Questions 1-18

In Part 1, candidates not only have to choose the answer that correctly fits the gap in a sentence, but may also have to take into account the broader context of the previous or following sentences, or even of the whole text. The three texts will come from a variety of sources, and candidates should be aware that this may affect the register and the type of lexis tested.

The first text, **Motivational speakers**, is about public speaking and management. Candidates coped very well with Question 5, which tests semantic precision, and with Question 6, which focuses on a phrasal verb. Candidates often need to consider not only the meaning of the target vocabulary in isolation, but its grammatical use. For Question 2, some candidates were tempted by C. However, 'directing', while having the correct meaning, requires an object. In this sentence the answer is D, which does not require an object and can be followed by the preposition 'to'. Question 4 also requires careful reading of the surrounding text. Some candidates chose C, but while 'working an audience' could be regarded as a 'performance', the speaker would not get the fee *in* the performance, but *for* the performance. The correct answer is B.

The second text, **A move towards print design in the world of fashion**, is an extract from a magazine, with a style typical of this genre. Candidates coped well with Questions 10 and 11, which both test semantic precision. For Question 8, some candidates again failed to recognise that the following pronoun, 'to', ruled out both A and D as possible answers. The correct answer is C. Some candidates were unfamiliar with the idiom tested in Question 9. Many of these candidates chose C, but the correct answer is D.

**TV preview** is a preview from a newspaper of a television programme. Candidates found this the most challenging of the three texts, perhaps because it is relatively informal in style. They coped well with the linker tested in Question 17, but the informal phrasal verb tested in Question 13 appeared unfamiliar to many candidates. The correct answer is C. Candidates also appeared unfamiliar with the phrasal verb tested in Question 15, with some candidates choosing C. However, the verb 'notices' cannot be followed by 'upon', and does not collocate with the following noun 'secret'. The correct answer is A.

### Part 2, Questions 19-26

Questions on the four short texts in Part 2 may focus on understanding of the whole text, text organisation, or a specific part of the text. The theme of this set of extracts is places.

The first extract, **York**, is about one individual's involvement in the development of an old city. The questions on this extract focus on understanding the writer's opinion, and on understanding detail, and candidates coped well with both of them.

However, **The Merrick**, an account of the decision of a group of walkers to try to climb a mountain in Scotland, proved more challenging. Question 21 requires understanding of implication. Weaker candidates were tempted by B, but the text only tells us that the guide does not exaggerate, not that it is too cautious. The correct answer is A. Question 22, which tests

understanding of the writer's purpose, was very challenging. D was a tempting option but was incorrect – the extract does not describe a series of linked events, but focuses on the moment that they made the decision to climb the mountain, with a reference to one earlier event which should have dissuaded them from this decision. Weaker candidates chose A, but the text is not a justification. The writer does not suggest they took the right decision – rather the opposite. The correct answer, C, is supported by the reference to 'dangerous consequences' in the first paragraph, and by 'With hindsight, it was foolhardy...' in the third paragraph, as well as by the last sentence of the extract. This question supports the need to read all sections of the text carefully when recognition of the writer's purpose is required.

The third extract, **Ocean View**, is an unsympathetic newspaper account of an urban development. Candidates generally coped well with the questions, which both test implication.

The last extract, **Ragstone Hall**, is a piece of fiction. Weaker candidates chose A for Question 25, but while the text tells us that Laura does not share Ryan's feelings for the house, we are also told that Ryan 'did not resent' this, and later the writer says that it is very unusual for him not to discuss a decision with Laura. The correct answer is therefore D. Question 26, which tests understanding of detail, was very well done.

### Part 3, Questions 27-33

At CPE level, the gapped-text task tests understanding of how texts are structured and the ability to predict text development. Consequently, it may be necessary to consider large sections of the text, or even the overall organisation, in order to reconstitute a particular part of the text. The newspaper article used in this part of the Reading Paper, **N!xau – the bushman who became an international celebrity**, is a newspaper obituary describing the life and career of an African bushman who became a film star.

Although the description of N!xau's life is organised on chronological lines, the text structure is complex, with three separate chronological accounts. The first paragraph gives information about N!xau's death, and a summary of why he is well-known. The next three paragraphs develop the account of his life chronologically, from the time he was discovered, up to the time of his retirement. The text then returns to the time of his discovery by the film producer, and the remaining paragraphs of the text describe this and the following events in more detail, ending the text again at the time of his death. Candidates therefore needed to look very carefully at the linking of ideas between one paragraph and another.

Candidates coped well with Question 27. Question 28, however, was the most challenging in this part of the reading paper. The correct answer is D, where 'this glamorous life' refers back to 'being paraded around the world' in the previous paragraph. Some candidates chose A, but this relates to the film, while the preceding paragraph is about what happened after the film had been made. Other candidates chose G. However this paragraph, which discusses N!xau's life before he became a film star, does not link to the previous paragraph. If the paragraph was introducing the topic of N!xau's previous life it could not stand on its own; the topic of traditional Namibian life needs establishing first. This is in fact done in the paragraph below Question 28, making G the correct answer to Question 29. Option C is incorrect here as there is nothing to support 'For this reason'. Some candidates also chose C for Question 30, but this is impossible because the following paragraph refers to a positive rather than a negative response to the film. The correct answer is A.

Question 31 was done well but some candidates were tempted by D for Question 32. This is incorrect because the previous paragraph does not support the reference to 'this glamorous life' in D. The correct answer is B; here 'this particular story' refers to N!xau letting the wind carry away his \$300 payment. Some candidates chose B for Question 33, but the reference to N!xau employing a chauffeur contradicts the reference in B to N!xau not emphasising how much money he had made. The correct answer is F.

## Part 4 Questions 34-40

This part tests candidates' detailed understanding of a long text, including attitudes and opinions. **Saturday at the Lamb family's house** is an extract from a novel, and describes a rather shy young man's life at home with his parents. In general, candidates showed good understanding of this text.

For Question 34, weaker candidates chose B or C. C is ruled out by the reference to Gavin feeling 'mild guilt' at the end of the first paragraph. B is incorrect because the 'Court of Law' referred to in the text exists only in Gavin's own imagination. The correct answer is therefore D – the questioning comes from Gavin himself. Candidates coped well with Questions 35 to 38 but found Question 39 very challenging. Weaker candidates were tempted by B, but 'make fun of them' is too strong – Mr Lamb and Gavin have to seem to believe the horoscopes even if they 'tease her very gently' about them. C also attracted some candidates, but while the horoscopes are a regular feature of Mrs Lamb's day, there is nothing in the text to support a link to her cooking. The correct answer is A. For Question 40, some candidates chose D. However, Gavin thinks that both rash impulses and embarrassment are possibilities for the party. The correct answer is C.

### • 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, studying related word-groups and collocates if appropriate, and considering 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, and to broadening awareness of the uses of frequent vocabulary items as well as to studying words used in more specialised contexts. 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 lexico-grammar 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 and grammatical features of discourse for both short and longer texts. Studying how multiple-choice questions work, and how to eliminate distractors, might be a useful task when preparing for Parts 2 and 4, and students should also be aware of the different reading skills that may be tested by such questions. 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 **N!xau – the bushman who became an international celebrity** could read: 'The article describes the life of an African bushman who gained international success as a film star and travelled the world before returning to his original way of life in the Kalahari desert.'

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

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>DO</b>    | read the sources, titles and subtitles of the texts where given; they are there to help you.   |
| <b>DO</b>    | read each text carefully before you answer the questions to get the overall sense of it. This includes Part 3, the gapped-text task.   |
| <b>DO</b>    | 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.  |
| <b>DO</b>    | 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.  |
| <b>DO</b>    | read the questions carefully in Part 2 and Part 4, and check each option against the text before rejecting it.   |
| <b>DO</b>    | keep an overall idea of the development of the text in Part 3. You'll 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. |
| <b>DON'T</b> | assume in Part 2 or Part 4 that, if the same word appears in the text as well as in an option, this means you have located the answer.   |
| <b>DON'T</b> | try to answer any questions without referring carefully to the text.   |
| <b>DON'T</b> | spend too much time on any one part of the paper.  |
| <b>DON'T</b> | forget to record your answers on the separate answer sheet.  |

## PAPER 2 – WRITING

PART	TASK TYPES AND FORMAT	TASK FOCUS	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS
1	<p>Question 1</p> <p>Writing one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an article</li> <li>• an essay</li> <li>• a letter</li> <li>• a proposal</li> </ul> <p>A contextualised writing task giving candidates guidance to the context through instructions and a text or texts which may be supported by visual prompts. The textual input is approximately 100 words.</p>	Discursive – presenting and developing arguments, expressing and supporting opinions, evaluating ideas, etc.	1 compulsory task 300-350 words
2	<p>Questions 2-4</p> <p>Writing one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an article</li> <li>• a letter</li> <li>• a proposal</li> <li>• a review</li> <li>• a report</li> </ul> <p>Question 5</p> <p>Writing one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an article</li> <li>• an essay</li> <li>• a letter</li> <li>• a review</li> <li>• a report</li> </ul> <p>Contextualised writing tasks, each specified in no more than 70 words.</p>	Describing, persuading, narrating, evaluating, making recommendations, giving information, summarising, etc.	4 questions from which candidates choose one.  Question 5 includes a task on each of three set texts.  300-350 words

### • 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 bottom, mid 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 a letter, intended for the Letters Page of a magazine, in response to readers' comments on the role of advertising in today's world. Candidates were expected to deal with the three main points expressed in the comments: that too many advertisements encourage people to buy unnecessary items, that advertisements provide consumers with choices and that advertisements are fun and interesting to look at.

The topic raised issues with which all candidates were able to engage. Strong candidates addressed all the points systematically and illustrated their arguments appropriately. Some mentioned the fact that different media rely on advertising revenue for their financial income, and those candidates who had worked in some areas of business were able to draw on this experience. Strong candidates succeeded in elaborating on the points within the genre of a letter, using a wide range of structures to convey their ideas. Weaker candidates lacked the vocabulary and control of a range of structures to deal with the content points. They tended to restate or lift the points with little development of ideas, or else wrote repetitively without clearly organising their material. Some candidates, hostile to the concept of advertising, failed to focus on the question and wrote about the need for regulation of advertising by the state, or wrote about the undesirable environmental impact of advertisements.

Some candidates omitted one of the content points, very often the third point, and consequently were given a task penalty.

### **Part 2**

The most popular question in Part 2 was Question 2, the article, which was chosen by 71.80% of the candidates; the least popular, excluding the set text questions, was Question 4, the report, which was chosen by 9.16% of the candidates. The review, Question 3, was chosen by 13.85%; of the candidates who answered one of the set text questions, Question 5c on *Girl with a Pearl Earring* by Tracy Chevalier was marginally the most popular.

### **Question 2**

This question required candidates to write an article entitled *School days are the best days of your life* for readers of a student magazine.

Candidates were asked to describe the positive aspects of students' time at school and explain how life changes once we enter the world of work. Candidates were clearly able to identify with the topic and wrote mostly about primary and secondary education offering friendships, and a safe environment provided by teachers and parents. Strong candidates with a degree of maturity were able to contrast the world of work with school, and outline the greater responsibilities that come with adulthood. However, less experienced candidates used their imagination to write convincingly and to develop the second content point. Weaker candidates failed to address both strands in the question and made little or no reference to the world of work, and others wrote an article with a didactic tone urging students to enjoy their life while they were still at school.

### Question 3

Despite the fact that this question attracted fewer candidates than Question 2, some candidates produced very good responses; indeed candidates who chose this question achieved the second highest average mark on the paper. Candidates were asked to write a review of a film which had increased their understanding of a country, its people or its way of life for an international newspaper. Their review had to describe the film briefly and explain what they had learned from it.

Strong candidates demonstrated a good grasp of the key aspects of their chosen film and produced detailed responses to show how the film's cultural features, its people and its way of life had enhanced their understanding of the country. Weaker candidates wrote lengthy explanations of a film without much reference to anything else.

### Question 4

This question asked candidates to write a report for their English language tutor evaluating the ways that newspapers do or do not satisfy their interests, with specific reference to at least one newspaper that they read.

The question offered scope for strong candidates to use a wide range of expressions to write interesting and well-thought out reports based on a newspaper which they knew in detail. These candidates were able to separate their newspaper into sections and write both constructively and critically on the different parts of the newspaper. Some weaker candidates approached the topic in the form of a questionnaire, and in some instances made no mention of a newspaper at all. Others invented a newspaper and produced formulaic language associated with reports but omitted to incorporate the headings and sub-headings of a report format.

Candidates who wrote about a magazine were penalised.

### Questions 5a, 5b and 5c

In Question 5a, on *Goodnight Mr Tom*, some candidates produced very good essays in which they traced the development of William Beech's character and used incidents in the book to highlight the stages in his transformation. Many candidates had an extremely good grasp of the details of the book and were able to use this knowledge effectively. They wrote confidently using a wide range of vocabulary and structure, organising their ideas skilfully and supporting their views with relevant reference to the text. Weaker responses revealed that candidates lacked familiarity with the text and could not address the question at the appropriate level. Candidates who chose this question achieved the highest average mark on the paper.

In Question 5b, on *The Cryptographer*, candidates were asked to write a review of a book in which trust is a central theme. As this theme is so germane to the novel, those candidates who tackled this question had no difficulty in dealing with the issue of trust in the development of the story, and assessing its importance for at least two of the characters.

Question 5c, on *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, gave candidates the opportunity to write a letter to a magazine about family relationships in fiction. Candidates were asked to describe the different relationships Griet had with her mother and father, how these changed while she was living with the Vermeers and to assess how far these changes were due to her need to protect her parents' feelings. Candidates who chose this question revealed a good knowledge of the text, although the second strand to the question was generally less well-developed than the first by some weaker candidates.

It was encouraging to see that the majority of candidates who chose to answer a set text question demonstrated that they had read the text; there were fewer candidates in this administration who attempted to answer a set text question without having read the book.

For the set text questions, candidates need to have not only a good knowledge of the text; they must also be able to clearly refer to examples from the text in order to illustrate the aspects focused on in the question.

- **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION**

Candidates need to read the question very carefully in order to perform the task set effectively. Examiners continue to comment on the numbers of candidates who ignore the task they have been set.

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.

### **Part 1**

It is important that candidates spend some time reading all the input 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 letter, candidates had to address all three points in the context of advertising in today's world. It is important for candidates to remember that, in Part 1, they should avoid 'lifting' the input word for word.

### **Part 2**

The questions in Part 2 are shorter in terms of input, but just as much care is required in reading them. It is apparent that many candidates do not read the question carefully enough and consequently do not appreciate that there are at least two parts or strands to these questions, and usually it is the second or third strand, 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.

For candidates who choose to tackle questions on the set texts, it is just as important as for the other questions to identify the requirements of the task, which includes considering the target reader specified. Students can prepare for these questions by discussing 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**

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

## PAPER 3 – USE OF ENGLISH

PART	TASK TYPES AND FORMAT	TASK FOCUS	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS
1	<p>Open cloze</p> <p>A text containing fifteen gaps. Each gap corresponds to a word. Candidates must write the missing word.</p>	Grammatical/lexico-grammatical	15
2	<p>Word formation</p> <p>A text containing ten gaps. Each gap corresponds to a word. The stems of the missing words are given beside the text and must be transformed to provide the missing word.</p>	Lexical e.g. affixation, compounding	10
3	<p>Gapped sentences</p> <p>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.</p>	Lexical e.g. collocation, phrasal verbs, word combinations, polysemy	6
4	<p>'Key' word transformations</p> <p>Discrete questions with a lead-in sentence and a gapped response to complete, using a given word.</p>	Lexical/lexico-grammatical	8
5	<p>Comprehension questions and summary writing task</p> <p>Two texts with two questions on each text. The summary task requires selection of relevant information from both texts.</p>	<p>Question focus: awareness of use of language, recognising and understanding the force of lexical items, rhetorical and stylistic devices and referencing</p> <p>Summary: tests information selection, linking, sentence construction</p>	4 questions on the texts and 1 summary writing task.

- **Marking**

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. The total score is adjusted to give a mark out of 40.

Candidates write their answers on two separate answer sheets, one for Parts 1-3 and one for Parts 4 and 5. Marking of Parts 1-3 is carried out by a team of carefully selected and trained markers. For the duration of the marking period, at least one experienced examiner is present to advise and monitor the markers. All answer sheets pass through a double-marking process. Parts 4 and 5 are marked by experienced examiners, who have been trained and have undergone standardisation before they commence marking. 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, Questions 1-15: The Giving of Books**

#### **Open Cloze**

In general, candidates coped extremely well with this task. Questions 7, 10 and 15 proved the most challenging, but these were balanced by Questions 1, 11 and 13 which candidates found far more accessible.

The most common wrong answer given for Question 10, 'abandoned', showed that candidates had understood the writer's argument but were not familiar with the collocation which required 'left', in order to correctly complete the expression '... to our own devices'. In Question 7, strong candidates knew that the required word to fill the gap was 'end' in the context of 'at the other ... of the book-giving spectrum', whereas weaker candidates who had understood the sense incorrectly wrote 'side' or 'extreme'.

Incorrect answers given to Question 15, such as 'one', 'most' and 'others', highlight the importance of preparing candidates for this part of the paper: namely, very careful reading of the passage is essential, particularly at sentence level, in order to follow both the writer's argument and to ensure the correct grammatical structure when selecting a word to fill the gap. The correct answer, 'we', in the second part of this final sentence maintains the writer's usage of the first person singular in the first part of the sentence ('our innermost thoughts') as well as throughout the entire passage.

### **Part 2, Questions 16-25: Greenhouses**

#### **Word Formation**

Many candidates dealt very well with this section of the paper. Questions 18 and 19 proved to be the most challenging; however, Questions 17, 21 and 22 were readily accessible. In Question 18, weaker candidates confused the spelling of 'delicacies', the correct answer, with 'delicatessen'. In Question 19, many candidates did not distinguish the difference in meaning between 'historic' and 'historical' in forming the correct word from the root 'history'. In the context of 'greenhouses', the correct word is 'historic' in the sense of the greenhouses which have made history. Spelling was a problem for weaker candidates in Questions 21 and 22, with some candidates writing 'restauration' instead of 'restoration', and 'colourfull' instead of 'colourful' respectively. In addition, a common wrong answer to Question 25 was 'brilliancy' as opposed to the correct noun 'brilliance'.

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**

Generally speaking, candidates performed very well on this part of the paper, and many avoided the temptation to find a word that would fill only one of the gaps and settle on this for the answer, thus ignoring the purpose of the task. Question 26 proved the most accessible and Question 31 was the most challenging. In Question 28, weaker candidates who clearly recognised that an adjective was required frequently wrote 'regular', which did not fit all three sentences; the correct answer was 'casual'.

## **Part 4, Questions 32-39**

### **'Key' Word Transformations**

The majority of candidates scored well on this part of the paper. The most demanding question proved to be Question 38 while candidates coped best with Questions 32 and 33.

In Question 37, a majority of candidates managed the first part of the transformation, 'no mention', but weaker candidates struggled to complete the second part of the sentence using the preposition 'of' followed by a correct time reference, such as 'previous' or 'preceding' (but not 'last' or 'yesterday'). In Question 38, many candidates found the first part of the transformation demanding and omitted the initial 'all', as well as not dealing accurately with the prepositional phrase 'to you' or 'with you'. In the second part of the sentence, weak candidates omitted the conditional 'I'd/I would prefer' and incorrectly wrote 'I prefer'. In Question 39, many candidates had problems with both parts of the transformation. In the first part, only strong candidates produced the appropriate structure 'left with no alternative'; weaker candidates used 'given' or 'faced'. In the second part, strong candidates knew the structure 'other than' needed to be followed by 'to', which was frequently omitted by weaker candidates. Acceptable alternative responses allowed for 'other' in the first part of the sentence, and the second part of the sentence with either 'but to' or 'than to'.

## **Part 5, Questions 40-44**

### **Comprehension Questions and Summary Writing Task**

Candidates coped very well with this part of the paper based on two texts about disappearing languages. Of the short answer questions, Question 40 was the most challenging; Questions 43 and 44 were the least challenging.

The answers to Question 40 revealed careless interpretation of the question, which required candidates to read to the end of the sentence containing the reference 'well-meant', in order to understand the implication in the context of the topic of the text. The writer's argument hinges on the point that despite good intentions, government policies were not successful; candidates were expected to include references to both the positive and negative aspects. In Question 41, strong candidates were able to explain the force of 'regrettable' and 'catastrophic' in the context of languages disappearing; weak candidates relied on lifting from the text. In Question 42, candidates were required to pick out the phrase '(the) homogenisation of language'. Candidates who produced longer responses were penalised. The Principal Examiner makes the point that it is not uncommon for candidates to ignore the instruction to answer with a phrase, and to actually write whole sentences, as happened with Question 42.

The two texts generated five possible content points for the summary, Question 44. The maximum mark awarded for content was 4.

Strong candidates identified the relevant points, with the majority identifying three. The points most frequently omitted were 'what we might learn from a minority language is eminently

practical' in the first text, and allusions to world heritage rather than personal heritage in the second text.

Although strong candidates wrote highly competent summaries, overall the quality of writing varied considerably. Strong candidates, who had clearly understood the task, produced well-written answers which were concise, coherent, suitably linked, competently organised and appropriately reworded with few grammar and spelling mistakes. The summaries written by weaker candidates revealed inadequate language skills with basic errors in verb forms, particles and linking devices.

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.

Common issues still arise in the writing of summaries:

- irrelevant answers that do not focus on the question asked or ramble around the topic dealing with only one or two points at considerable length, and in extreme cases, no definite points
- failure to use self-expression, relying instead on extensive lifting of whole phrases from the texts
- over-length answers with no attempt at concise writing
- weak linking in which little attempt is made to bring together the ideas from both texts, and where the writer relies on inappropriate or pedestrian linking devices
- unexplained points in which the candidate has selected a relevant point but failed to make clear what the point really means or why it is significant
- inappropriate presentation in which the summary resembles a series of separate sentences in the form of notes, numbered points or even mini-paragraphs, rather than a single coherent paragraph incorporating effective and appropriate linking devices
- in this session there were a number of candidates whose expression was significantly below standard and in a minority of cases bordered on the unintelligible and incoherent.

#### • **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION**

Thorough reading is essential throughout the paper: texts, instructions, discrete questions, short answer questions and the instruction for the summary all repay close reading; 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 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. Care must be taken not to overlook adjectives and adverbs, for example. 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 not be 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. Students also need practice in identifying exactly what they are being asked to do and to understand that a question which asks them to pick out a **phrase** is not answered by writing a complete sentence.

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**

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| <b>DO</b>    | allow yourself time to read the instructions, texts and questions very carefully.   |
| <b>DO</b>    | 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.   |
| <b>DO</b>    | remember that the missing words in Part 1 are likely to have a grammatical focus and not a purely lexical one.  |
| <b>DO</b>    | 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.   |
| <b>DO</b>    | make sure that the same word fits all three sentences in Part 3.  |
| <b>DO</b>    | make sure your reformulated sentence has the same meaning as the original sentence in Part 4.   |
| <b>DO</b>    | read the short answer questions and the summary instruction very carefully in Part 5.   |
| <b>DO</b>    | make sure you understand the difference between a sentence and a phrase.  |
| <b>DO</b>    | select relevant information for the summary from both texts in Part 5.  |
| <b>DO</b>    | 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. Correct spelling and clear handwriting are essential. |
| <b>DON'T</b> | alter the word given in Part 4.   |
| <b>DON'T</b> | write more than eight words, including the given word, in Part 4.   |
| <b>DON'T</b> | 'lift' from the original texts if asked to explain things in your own words.  |
| <b>DON'T</b> | quote more words than necessary from the text in short answer questions in Part 5.  |
| <b>DON'T</b> | write too few or too many words when you answer the summary question.   |

## PAPER 4 – LISTENING

PART	TASK TYPES AND FORMAT	TASK FOCUS	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS
1	<p>Three-option multiple choice</p> <p>Four short extracts from monologues or texts involving interacting speakers with two questions on each extract.</p>	Gist, detail, function, purpose, topic, speaker, addressee, feeling, attitude, opinion, etc.	8
2	<p>Sentence completion</p> <p>Candidates complete gaps in sentences with information from a monologue or prompted monologue.</p>	Specific information, stated opinion	9
3	<p>Four-option multiple choice</p> <p>A text involving interacting speakers (e.g. interview) with multiple-choice questions.</p>	Opinion, gist, detail, inference	5
4	<p>Three-way matching</p> <p>Candidates match statements on a text to either of two speakers or to both when they express agreement.</p>	Stated and non-stated opinion, agreement and disagreement	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. The total score is adjusted to give a mark out of 40.

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 what the presenter suggests about the problem she describes. Candidates understood that when the speaker said 'The villains of the piece seem to be, in descending order of significance: pesticides, acid rain, ozone depletion and habitat loss', it meant that option C, 'Various factors contribute to a greater or lesser degree', was the correct answer.

Candidates found Question 4 quite challenging. Question 4 asked candidates to complete the sentence 'The expert says that most people who become successful sweet-pea growers...'. In order to answer correctly, candidates had to understand that the speaker's phrase 'quite a bit of good-humoured rivalry', meant option B, 'show a competitive streak', was the correct option. Weaker candidates chose option C. The reason for this may be that candidates misunderstood 'They're all amateurs of course, and what little spare time they have they spend on their sweet peas. And I think they get a fair return for the hours they put in.' These sentences say that they have a busy life and in the little free time they have, they grow sweet peas, but they do not 'devote their working lives to it'.

### **Part 2, Questions 9-17**

Candidates did very well on this part of the test. They performed best on Question 13, but less well on Question 15. The answer to Question 15 was '(illegal) (gold) miners/mining'. Weaker candidates had problems with spelling.

### **Part 3, Questions 18-22**

Candidates found this part of the test quite challenging, especially Question 21. The correct answer to Question 21, 'What is Eric's attitude to pop groups in general?', is D, 'They are not particularly important.' The answer is heard when the speaker says, 'But in the end it's just a pop group, innit? One person leaving, it had happened before.' Weaker candidates chose option A, which demonstrates that some candidates did not read the question carefully. Eric suggests that his band tried to stay together too long but he does not say this about pop groups in general. Candidates who chose A should have waited to hear the correct information.

### **Part 4, Questions 23-28**

Candidates did very well on this part of the test, especially on Questions 23 and 26. However, candidates found Question 24 more challenging. The answer to Question 24 is B, because Simon says 'So we kept strictly to our tiny budget. It was do-able...', and Daisy then agrees by saying 'it can be done on a shoestring.'

## ● 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, 'paper' or 'raincoats'.

In preparing for this part of the test, candidates should be encouraged to read the question very carefully and, when they have completed 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**

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

## PAPER 5 – SPEAKING

PART	TASK TYPES AND FORMAT	TASK FOCUS	TIMING
1	<p>Conversation between the interlocutor and each candidate</p> <p>The interlocutor encourages the candidates to give information about themselves and to express personal opinions.</p>	General interaction and social language	3 minutes
2	<p>Two-way conversation between the candidates</p> <p>The candidates are given visual and spoken prompts, which are used in a decision-making task.</p>	Speculating, evaluating, comparing, giving opinions, decision-making, etc.	4 minutes
3	<p>Long turn from each candidate followed by a discussion on topics related to the long turns</p> <p>Each candidate in turn is given a written question to respond to. Candidates engage in a discussion to explore further the topics of the long turns.</p>	Organising a larger unit of discourse, expressing and justifying opinions, developing topics	<p>2-minute long turn for each candidate</p> <p>8 minutes following the long turns</p>

- **Marking**

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

Assessment is based on performance in the whole test, and is not related to performance in particular parts of the test. There are two examiners (an assessor and an interlocutor), and each one makes an independent assessment of each candidate's performance. The assessor awards marks for each of five criteria: Grammatical Resource, Lexical Resource, Discourse Management, Pronunciation and Interactive Communication. The interlocutor awards each candidate one Global mark. Raw marks are later weighted to a mark out of 40.

- **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.

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 City poster – Alternative transport**

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 'how unusual you think this form of transport is'. This generated a variety of responses. Candidates commented that bicycles were not unusual but maybe the trailer at the back was more so. Some candidates suggested it was not a good method of transporting children as it was impossible for parents to keep an eye on them.

The Phase two main task set up a discussion on the positive and negative merits of using this visual for a poster to promote the use of alternative transport in a city. Candidates talked about the positive issues: using a non-polluting method of transport, taking the kids with you, being independent, etc. The negative issues that were discussed focused more on the lack of suitability of the visual for the poster. Comments from candidates included: 'it's not good to show the countryside on a city poster', 'the trailer would be dangerous in the city' and 'the children would get pollution in their faces'.

When reaching a decision, most candidates decided that this was not a suitable visual for the poster. Stronger candidates made this decision having discussed both the pros and cons. Other candidates came to a decision without a measured discussion and spent more time thinking of possible different images. Candidates who rejected this visual came up with alternatives which included: bicycles in special lanes in the city, people on rollerblades, etc. Again, stronger candidates did not simply list alternatives but discussed why they thought a particular image might be more appropriate for the poster.

## **Part 3 Work**

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. This task was suitable for groups of three.

In answering the question on Card A, candidates seemed to find the prompts easy to incorporate into their talks – candidates had strong opinions on the importance of 'personal satisfaction', many saying that without it, a job was not worth doing. Other candidates talked about earning enough money from a job to provide the pleasurable things in life; others said that 'if you earn good money, you should stick to the job even if it's not enjoyable'. Candidates had plenty to say and used all three prompts with ease.

The question on Card B was also well answered and all three prompts seemed easy to use. Interestingly, male and female candidates often brought different ideas to this subject, with the latter talking a lot about the difficulties of having a full-time job and bringing up a family. Candidates also mentioned that the kind of job you were doing was important.

The vast majority of candidates at this level are young and a long way from retirement age, but the question on Card C produced many thoughtful answers and was again well done. The prompts provided a lot of support and candidates had no problem talking for two minutes.

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 work. 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 under-prepared 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 touch on 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. The kind of language students will need for this part is the language of speculation ('I would imagine...'; 'It could 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. While a certain amount of description is inevitable, 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, 'I think we should take into account the fact the picture shows a positive image with regard to transport and maybe that's something to consider for the poster.'

Students also 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 discussion followed by decision.

### 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 talking 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**

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

## FEEDBACK FORM

### CPE Examination Report – June 2008

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.