



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE
ESOL Examinations

Experts in Language Assessment

First Certificate in English

Examination Report 0102 Syllabus

June 2007

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First Certificate in English

Examination Report

Syllabus 0102

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WEBSITE REFERENCE

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

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INTRODUCTION

This report is intended to provide a general view of how candidates performed on each paper in the June 2007 session, and to offer guidance on the preparation of candidates.

The overall pass rate for Syllabus 0102 was **75.06%**.

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

	0102
GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	8.04
B	24.23
C	42.79
D	9.16
E	15.78

• **Grading**

Grading took place during July 2007 (approximately six weeks after the examination).

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

The overall grades (A, B, C, D and E) are set according to 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)
- 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 in preparing candidates for FCE:

- *Regulations* (produced annually, for information on dates, etc.)
- *FCE 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 for Papers 1-4, sample Speaking test materials, 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 on-line 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	Number of Questions	Task Format
1	Multiple matching <i>Main focus:</i> main points	7	A text preceded by a list of headings. Candidates must match the headings to elements in the text.
2	Multiple choice <i>Main focus:</i> detail, opinion, gist, deducing meaning	7	A text followed by four-option multiple-choice questions.
3	Gapped text <i>Main focus:</i> text structure	7	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.
4	Multiple matching, Multiple choice <i>Main focus:</i> specific information, detail	14	A text preceded by a list of questions. Candidates must match the questions to elements in the text.

- **Marking**

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

- **Candidate Performance**

In general, candidates coped reasonably well with the four task formats of the paper. Statistical evidence showed that the questions in all four parts provided a reliable assessment of candidates' relative ability levels.

Part 1, Questions 1-6: Prehistoric Cave Art Saved

This headings task, focusing on the understanding of the main points in the text, proved to be the most challenging task on the paper. Candidates performed best on Question 7. In Question 7, nearly all the stronger candidates and a good proportion of the weaker candidates successfully matched heading B, 'Preparations for development', with the information that 'the Uttar Pradesh state tourism department is already planning to build a road into the jungle' for tourists. Some of the weaker candidates, however, chose option D, 'A co-operative approach'. It is difficult to see why they made this choice, because, although two different organisations are mentioned in the paragraph, it is not suggested that they are working together.

The most challenging question in this task proved to be Question 1. Here, candidates were required to match heading E, 'A reason for concern', with the description of the villagers' horror that the beautiful paintings in the local cave were being chipped and cut into by

labourers looking for silica to sell in local markets. Most of the stronger candidates chose the correct option, E. However, many of the weaker candidates did not. Instead, a significant number chose option C. They may have misunderstood the meaning of the word ‘thrilling’ in the option and taken it to mean ‘shocking’ rather than ‘exciting’, since the sight of the labourers destroying the cave paintings could hardly be interpreted as exciting.

Part 2, Questions 8-14: Julia Margaret Cameron, 1815 – 1879

This four-option multiple-choice task focused mainly on detailed comprehension but also included a lexical question, Question 9. Candidates coped particularly well with this task and they performed best on Question 13. Nearly all of the stronger candidates realised that Julia Margaret Cameron appeared in the first *Dictionary of National Biography* because she was connected with someone involved in the publication – ‘the editor... was married to her favourite niece.’ Some of the weaker candidates, however, chose options A and C. The text says that Cameron’s work was not held in high regard by the photography world so she was not ‘universally acknowledged’, as option A states. She had died several years before the publication – option C – but this fact is not given as a reason for her inclusion in the dictionary. Candidates need to make sure that any information in the text that seems to be the same as an option also answers the question itself; in this case, ‘why’ Cameron appeared in the dictionary. Candidates should be encouraged to get into the habit of going back and reading the question again after choosing an option to check whether they have made the right choice.

The most challenging question in the task proved to be Question 8 – ‘How did Julia Margaret Cameron differ from certain other photographers of her time?’ The correct answer was C. Most of the stronger candidates were able to spot ‘Cameron was neither of **these**’ and refer back to ‘painters or scientists obsessed with the details of their new discipline’, i.e. science. Hence the answer is: ‘She was uninterested in the scientific side of her art.’ A significant number of the weaker candidates chose options A or B instead. They may have been tempted by A because of ‘the highest auction price paid for a single 19th century British photograph’. However, if they had read more carefully they would have seen the date of the auction, 2001, when Cameron had been dead for over a century. Option B is not correct because the text states that Cameron ‘didn’t take what she considered to be her first successful portrait until she was 48’, so she clearly did not have a high opinion of her own work from the beginning.

Part 3, Questions 15-21: The oldest landscape on the planet

This gapped-paragraph task, focusing on text structure, proved to be the most demanding task on the paper. The weaker candidates coped least well with Question 21. The correct option was B and the stronger candidates linked the idea of ‘The temptation was to continue walking’ to the beginning of the next paragraph which states, ‘But that was not an option because it was getting hotter all the time.’ A significant number of the weaker candidates chose option D, possibly because it contains the word ‘top’ which appears in the previous paragraph. Unfortunately, option D cannot fit because the writer is clearly still up on the dune at the start of the final paragraph rather than ‘down here’ as option D states. This emphasises the need to encourage candidates to check the sense of the paragraph as a whole and see how it fits in with the development of the text, rather than just relying on matching identical or similar words.

Candidates coped better with Questions 15 and 16. For Question 15, they successfully linked the pronoun ‘it’ in the first line of the following paragraph back to ‘One sand dune’ in F. For Question 16, they could use the clues of the different stages of the sunrise to assist them. Before the gap ‘It was icy cold, still dark’. In option H, ‘it began to grow light’ and in the following paragraph ‘the sun appeared above the horizon’. It is helpful to encourage

candidates to trace the development of actions and the chronological movement of time through a text in this way.

Part 4, Questions 22-35: It's all in the museum

Candidates coped quite well with this multiple-matching task, which focused on candidates' ability to retrieve specific information from four short texts about different museum managers. Question 30 proved to be the most demanding in this task. Here candidates were required to match the person who 'admits they lack experience in one area' with Alice Denby who says, 'It's the first show I have done'. The majority of stronger candidates made this connection. However, the weaker candidates were split between all four options. It is hard to understand why they chose the other options as none of those managers mentions a lack of experience in any area. They mention aspects of their work that they find difficult but not unfamiliar.

By contrast, candidates performed particularly well on Question 25. Most candidates successfully matched a person who 'admits that an exhibition failed to attract a particular group of people' with Ken Quincey, who refers to an Iron Age exhibition which few 'school groups' attended. A few of the weaker candidates chose option C. This may have been because the word 'attract' appears in the option and 'attracting' is in text C, too. However, there is no reference to a particular group of people, only to the public in general. This proves once again that matching individual words is a risky strategy, which should be discouraged.

• RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION

Teachers and students should note that no single FCE 1 paper includes all possible tasks or question types. The FCE Handbook lists all the task types which may appear on the paper.

In addition to specific examination practice, students should be advised to read as widely as they can, with a range of reading purposes reflecting those sampled in the paper (retrieving relevant information, getting the 'gist', understanding detail, etc.). Many of the texts for the Reading paper are drawn from magazines and newspapers, although extracts from novels and short stories are also used, and students will benefit from being familiar with these different types of text.

Specific work on the identification, location and presentation of main ideas would benefit candidates in Parts 1 and 3.

Focusing on the sequence of tenses in continuous text and the use of pronouns for referencing would also be beneficial, particularly in Part 3.

• **DOs and DON'Ts for FCE PAPER 1 – READING**

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| DO | make sure that you choose the correct option(s), when you find similar information in different sections of the text in Parts 1 and 4. |
| DO | read and re-read your answers in Parts 1 and 3, and be prepared to change your mind. If you find that none of the choices you have left fits, you may need to think again about the choices you have already made. Always be prepared to go back and check. |
| DO | read through the main text in Part 3, so you have a good idea of what it is about before you look at the extracts and choose any answers. |
| DO | think about the text before and after each gap in Part 3 and try to guess what is missing. |
| DO | pay careful attention to references to places, people and things (pronouns) in the extracts in Part 3. They must refer correctly to the nouns in the text before and after the gap. |
| DO | fill what you think are the easy gaps first in Parts 1 and 3, and leave the problem areas until last. |
| DO | read through Part 3 after making your choices to check that everything makes sense. Check that linking words, tenses and time references all fit with the choices you have made. |
| DO | prepare for the FCE Reading paper by reading as widely as you can in English, both fiction and non-fiction. |
| DO | remember in your personal reading as well as in the exam, you will not need to know the exact meaning of every word. Use clues like the title or any pictures to help you understand what a text is about, and then try to read for the main idea. Getting into this habit will help you to read quickly and effectively. |
| DON'T | choose an answer just because you see the same word in the text and in the question option ('word-spotting'). In all parts of the paper, seeing the same (or similar) word in both text and question is no guarantee that you have found the correct answer. |
| DON'T | forget that, in Part 3, introductory adverbs or phrases in the extracts must be connected with the ideas which go before the gap, e.g. 'However' must be preceded by a contrasting idea; 'Another mistake we made...' must be preceded by a previous mistake, etc. |
| DON'T | forget that, if a Part 2 multiple-choice question is an incomplete sentence, the whole sentence must match the text, not just the phrase presented as A, B, C or D. The information in these options may be true in itself, but may not work with the sentence beginning you are given. |
| DON'T | choose your answers too quickly in Part 3. Only start to look at the extracts when you have a good idea of what the main text is about. |

PAPER 2 – WRITING

Part	Task Type and Focus	Number of Tasks and Length	Task Format
1	Question 1 Writing a transactional letter (formal/informal)	1 compulsory task 120-180 words	Candidates are required to deal with input material of up to 250 words, which may include graphic and pictorial material. Texts may include advertisements, letters, postcards, diaries, short articles, etc.
2	Questions 2-4 Writing one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an article • a non-transactional informal letter • a report • a discursive composition • a descriptive/narrative short story 	4 tasks from which the candidates choose 1 120-180 words	A situationally-based writing task specified in no more than 70 words.
	Question 5 Writing a composition, article, report or an informal letter on a prescribed background reading text	Question 5 has two options	

• Marking

All scripts are marked by experienced examiners, who must attend a training and standardisation day 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. This describes satisfactory Band 3 performance and covers content, organisation, range, register and format, and effect on target reader. Examples of the mark schemes are included in the FCE Past Paper Pack.

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

For this compulsory task, candidates were asked to write a letter to the organiser of a competition, Mrs Porter, responding to her letter informing them that they had been chosen to be in a team on a sailing adventure trip. They were expected to be enthusiastic about the news, to give details of any experience they had of working in teams and to explain what cooking skills they had. Candidates were then expected to agree to take photographs each day and to choose one of two activities to do on the trip.

This question proved to be very accessible with the majority of candidates developing the content points well and showing that they had understood the scenario. Most answers were well organised with clear paragraphs, too. Candidates wrote in a semi-formal style, which was appropriate, as the letter was not a business-related one requiring a very formal tone but one involving the discussion of a leisure-time activity. It was clear that candidates had been well trained in using letter format and they were able to open and close their letters appropriately – ‘Dear Mrs Porter...’, ‘Yours sincerely...’. Stronger candidates planned their answers carefully so that they could link some of the content points as, for example, in confessing ‘no skills in the kitchen’ (point 3) but assuring Mrs Porter of their ‘skills in photography’ (point 4). This linking made answers sound very natural.

There were some instances of misinterpretation due, perhaps, to careless reading and insufficient planning time. A small number wrote as if they were offering the place on the trip and some declined to take photographs instead of accepting. These answers were penalised. Students should be trained to read the task carefully and plan effectively, ensuring that all five points are dealt with using the correct language function (e.g. give details, say which and why, explain).

The general range of language used was good although there was widespread incorrect use of certain vocabulary such as ‘cooker’ instead of ‘cook’, ‘chief’ instead of ‘chef’, and ‘plate’ instead of ‘dish’. There was frequent confusion between ‘exciting’ and ‘excited’ and ‘interesting’ and ‘interested’.

The first point was generally well done, with candidates responding very enthusiastically to the idea of going on the sailing trip and many referring to ‘a dream come true’. Candidates had little difficulty in changing the informal word in the point (‘Great!’) into a more formal word in their reply, using ‘delighted to hear’ and other similar expressions.

With the second point, candidates were expected to expand their answer by giving details of any team experience they had. They did this very well and brought in details of team sports of all kinds, e.g. mountain climbing and safari trips, as well as some instances of sailing. Some admitted to no experience of working in teams but assured Mrs Porter of their flexibility and willingness to learn. Unfortunately, some candidates interpreted this point incorrectly and asked Mrs Porter to give details of the team experience required. Candidates must read the task carefully and ensure that they always write from the correct perspective.

The third point generated a wide range of expression, often quite informal, as many candidates expressed how keen they were to be involved with cooking on the trip (e.g. ‘you name it and I’ll cook it for you!’). Most offered pizza and pasta though some attempted to describe more complex dishes. Not everyone could cook and many had to admit to no cooking skills at all though even those sometimes offered simple dishes such as ‘some nice scrambled eggs for breakfast’. There were some minor errors in collocation (e.g. ‘baked meat’) but, generally, the point was handled very effectively.

The majority of candidates had no difficulty with the fourth point as they explained their 'passion' for photography and skills learnt from fathers who were professional photographers. Many offered to bring digital cameras along and some explained how important photographs were – 'a good way of keeping memories alive'. At the same time, unfortunately, a significant minority of candidates missed this point out of their answers and had to be penalised. Even some very good candidates simply missed this point. Careful reading and familiarity with the format of the question and its five content points is essential if this is to be avoided.

The final point elicited a range of reasons for the choice of activity, with local wildlife popular with animal lovers and diving popular because of the opportunity to see wonderful fish and take photographs underwater. Careless reading, again, may explain why 'diving' was sometimes interpreted as 'driving' and 'local wildlife' as 'local life'.

Overall, performance on the first question was very successful, with the vast majority of answers being satisfactory both in terms of range and accuracy and a significant number of answers containing language at a very good level.

Part 2

Question 2, the composition, was chosen by 51% of candidates, Question 3, the article, was selected by 13% and Question 4, the story, was answered by 34% of candidates. A small number of candidates (below 2%) responded to Questions 5a and 5b, the set text questions, with 5b being slightly more popular than 5a.

Question 2

The composition question was popular and was done well by many candidates. The topic of children and mobile phones worked extremely well as candidates were able to draw out various issues and answers were well-developed and allowed candidates to show good range. Some answers stressed the importance of children having mobile phones to be contactable by their anxious parents, 'parents worry less when their child goes out with a mobile phone', but, surprisingly perhaps, most candidates presented the negative aspects of the issue. There was widespread concern about the use of mobile phones at school where they disturbed lessons and distracted other students, and similar concern about health issues and concerns for children's safety as they were 'more likely to be mugged if they have a mobile'. Some candidates struggled with the topic as they took an abstract view of the importance of communication. The composition topics are always best treated in a more concrete way with candidates using examples to illustrate their answers.

Question 3

Most of the candidates who chose this question answered it in a satisfactory way, although some tended to be rather repetitive and were not always successful in explaining how the film chosen had made them laugh. Those who named a specific film such as 'Mr Bean' fared better as they were able to refer to the plot and characters and this helped them to explain why it was funny. Those who wrote more general answers about an evening out to see a film found it difficult to avoid repeating expressions about laughing and then relied heavily on narrative about the evening out.

A strong example, in this case a film, is always important when discussing ideas in an article as it helps the candidate to choose concrete language and ensures a good focus on the task.

Question 4

The story question was done extremely well and there were many answers showing imagination and excellent story-writing skills in terms of development and describing surprises and suspense. Helen's new neighbour was usually a good-looking man and Helen fell in love instantly with his 'striking eyes' and 'broad shoulders'. The neighbour was often Helen's first love or sometimes her ex-boyfriend, but also a film star, rugby player or famous musician. The element of surprise was handled well. Sometimes the neighbour was simply so good-looking that 'love was in the air' but sometimes he was old and ugly and difficult but then turned out to be quite different – 'She expected an ogre but she got Prince Charming'. One less attractive character left Helen a rose the day he cleared her house of all her possessions – 'Thank you, my dear, for the wonderful new television I persuaded you to buy!'

Most candidates handled narrative tenses well and were able to include some skilful use of direct speech, which added to the drama of the stories. Some less successful answers had very mixed tenses, confusing for the reader. Students need training in writing stories in consistent tenses, particularly ways of using the past tense and past perfect tense correctly in narratives. There were also errors in singular and plural agreements.

Questions 5a and 5b

There were few answers to the set book questions, but among those who chose Question 5b there were some good answers relating to *1984*. Some candidates who chose to write about *Three Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* wrote about Sherlock Holmes as a good detective, with no reference to any of the stories and no indication, therefore, that they had read any of the stories. These answers were penalised.

Candidates should be reminded that Questions 5a and 5b can only be answered with reference to the set texts. Answers relating to a book not on the set book list, or those in which the candidate has invented a storyline, are heavily penalised.

● RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION

As previously stated in these reports, candidates must read each question carefully and carry out what is required, including all the necessary points and keeping to the task set. Information about the target reader and the reason for writing is given in each question to help the candidate, and this should be pointed out during classroom preparation. Working with past papers in pairs or groups, where students spend time identifying the reader, the text type, and the important content points, is also useful in planning what to write.

It is often very helpful for students to work on a second draft of a homework answer. In this way, the teacher, or fellow students, can make useful suggestions regarding organisation, language, and content omissions. The second draft can then be compared to the first, an activity which is not only instructive regarding weaknesses, but also builds confidence. Students should be encouraged to experiment with a wider range of language in the second draft, for example, replacing any repeated words with near synonyms. Classroom brainstorming of relevant adjectives and verbs with similar meanings can be useful preparation immediately prior to a homework assignment.

Part 1

In this task students need to consider the bigger picture of why they are writing and be sensitive to the type of scenario described. They need to have a clear idea of the situation and the target reader; this will enable them to write in an appropriately formal or informal

way. It is important that students are instructed in the importance of maintaining a consistent tone and register throughout their letter.

Students should be encouraged to make a plan before they start writing, and to think carefully how to organise their ideas and what they can say on each point. It is good to help students to understand how a content point can be expanded, perhaps by use of obviously contrasting sample answers, where one is only minimally expanded and the other includes good development. Candidates who expand on points generally score higher marks.

Students should also be encouraged to make sensible use of paragraphing and use a variety of linkers. In class, students could be given a text without paragraphs and asked to suggest paragraphs for it or add appropriate linkers to it.

Part 2

Students may be unfamiliar with composition as a type of writing, and may need to be shown examples written in a suitable style. Work can be done in class on how to organise and present an opinion, and on the kind of linkers which are appropriate to introducing ideas and drawing conclusions in this context. It is also useful to consider how to put ideas into paragraphs, and to discuss which formal phrases are appropriate for bringing the composition to a conclusion.

Training for writing an article should include awareness of the sort of tone and structures appropriate to the task, including rhetorical questions and lively anecdotes and examples. A wide range of colourful vocabulary is also helpful, as are occasional idioms and expressions. The difference in style and tone between an article and a composition should also be taught, and candidates should be clear that an article should not be written in letter or report format. Awareness of genres is important at FCE level.

Students need to be taught how to link a story coherently to a given prompt sentence. They should also be instructed to take note of who is referred to in the sentence so that they can continue from the prompt sentence appropriately, whether in the first or third person, and use the same name, if one appears in the question. Students may also need to revise past tenses, especially the irregular forms and perfect tenses, and the use of adverbs.

There are many ways to incorporate a set text into classroom work, and parts of it can be assigned for homework. Students will benefit from reading on their own, both in terms of new vocabulary and the reinforcement of structure already learnt. Looking at past papers in class will allow students to practise questions regularly in relation to different parts of the book.

• **DOs and DON'Ts for FCE PAPER 2 – WRITING**

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| DO | read the whole question thoroughly and underline important parts. |
| DO | write clearly, so that the examiner can read your answer. |
| DO | make a plan for each answer, including ALL the points. |
| DO | write in paragraphs, whenever appropriate. |
| DO | use a range of vocabulary, even if you are unsure of the correct spelling. |
| DO | check tense endings, plural forms and word order in sentences. |
| DO | check irregular past tenses and question formation. |
| DO | use language that is appropriately formal or informal for the task. |
| DO | expand the points in Part 1 if you can, using relevant ideas and information. |
| DO | choose a Part 2 question that you feel confident you can write about. |
| DON'T | misspell key words which appear on the question paper. |
| DON'T | 'lift' too much language from the question paper. |
| DON'T | mix formal and informal language. |
| DON'T | answer Question 5 if you have not read one of the books. |

PAPER 3 – USE OF ENGLISH

Part	Task Type and Focus	Number of Questions	Task Format
1	Multiple-choice cloze <i>Focus: vocabulary</i>	15	A modified cloze text containing 15 gaps and followed by 15 four-option multiple-choice questions.
2	Open cloze <i>Focus: grammar and vocabulary</i>	15	A modified cloze text containing 15 gaps.
3	'Key' word transformations <i>Focus: grammar and vocabulary</i>	10	Discrete questions with a lead-in sentence and a gapped response to complete using a given word.
4	Error correction <i>Focus: grammar</i>	15	A text containing errors. Some lines of the text are correct, other lines contain an extra and unnecessary word which must be identified.
5	Word formation <i>Focus: vocabulary</i>	10	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 transformed to provide the missing word.

- **Marking**

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

Questions 1-30 and 41-65 carry one mark each. Questions 31-40 are marked on a scale 0-1-2. The total score is adjusted to give a mark out of 40.

- **Candidate Performance**

Part 1, Questions 1-15: Unclaimed baggage

Multiple-choice Cloze

Candidates performed best in this part of the paper. In particular, the great majority of candidates answered Questions 6, 10, 11 and 14 correctly. It was pleasing to see that 'fixed' language in phrases such as 'make your way to', 'the other side of the world', 'for some reason', and also in collocations such as 'make a claim', were familiar to most candidates. Candidates also coped well with two questions that tested phrasal verbs, one testing the whole phrasal verb (Question 10) and one the main verb only (Question 7). Other questions tested meaning in context. In Question 15, for example, all four verbs can be used with the

noun, but only one fits the sense of the text. Questions 4 and 8 were particularly challenging for candidates. With Question 4, the difficulty may have arisen from the fact that a lexicogrammatical element is involved – only option A takes the following preposition ‘for’. Question 8 was more predictably difficult, with candidates spread over all four options.

Part 2, Questions 16-30: Creative writing – a teacher’s opinion

Open Cloze

This part of the paper proved to be the most challenging for candidates, in particular Questions 16, 18, 20 and 23. With Question 16, a substantial number of candidates wrongly put ‘from’ as the answer; superficially, this looks fine until one realises that the sense is the wrong way round – it is the idea which leads to the piece of writing. Candidates should be careful to look at the context of the sentences surrounding each gap. The same was true of Question 18; ‘much’ was a common wrong answer, but, in fact, the opposite idea is correct. Question 20 proved challenging; weaker candidates tended to put ‘after’, which would need the following verb to be ‘dreaming’ rather than ‘dreamed’. With Question 23, many candidates failed to spot the need for a ‘concession’ clause, coming up with words such as ‘some’, ‘the’ and ‘many’. Candidates can expect to find occasional questions of this type, and ‘although’, etc., has typically proved challenging in recent versions. Other common wrong answers included ‘as’ in Question 22, ‘least’ in Question 24 and ‘mind/life’ in Question 30.

Part 3, Questions 31-40

‘Key’ Word Transformations

Overall, this part of the paper proved very challenging, with only a small minority of candidates answering Questions 31, 38 and 40 correctly. With Question 31, wrong answers tended to fall into two categories. Some candidates used the wrong preposition, putting ‘of’, while others attempted another grammatical pattern, with ‘to go’. For Question 38, some candidates got the wrong sense, putting ‘no improvement’. With Question 40, the ‘prefer/rather’ distinction continues to be a problem for candidates, as noted in previous exam reports. ‘Rather prefer’ and ‘rather you didn’t’ were common wrong answers. As concerns the remaining questions, for Question 33, some candidates confused the sense and put ‘are less high’; for Question 34, some candidates were unsure of the part of speech required, writing ‘are you fancy’, and others wrongly assumed that this verb took a following infinitive; for Question 35, weaker candidates failed to produce the ‘no matter what’ structure, coming up with ‘it doesn’t matter’ instead; and in Question 39, some candidates lost marks needlessly for changing the given word to ‘ran’ – this goes against the instruction in bold print in the rubric.

Part 4, Questions 41-55: The House by the river

Error Correction

Candidates performed very consistently on this part of the paper. They found Questions 41, 42 and 45 very straightforward, but had the most problems with Questions 43, 47, 52 and 53. In Question 47, one can see why candidates might be tempted to interpret the line as correct. However, the word ‘there’ is wrong, as the text has moved on and is now talking about the journey. Grammatically, it is also in the wrong position in the sentence. With Question 52, again many candidates thought the line correct, but reading the surrounding text it is clear that a story is being told, with a sequence of past events. Thus the word ‘have’ is wrong. Candidates should be careful to concentrate and read closely; otherwise it is easy for the eye

to miss something. An example is line 49, where, if you are reading too fast, it is easy for the eye to read 'begin looking' and therefore to assume, wrongly, that the line is correct.

Part 5, Questions 56-65: Arctic waters

Word Formation

Candidate performance was remarkably consistent in this task. Candidates coped best with Question 61 and least well with Questions 56, 60 and 64, all of which were answered correctly only by a relatively small minority. Question 56 proved challenging, as two changes are needed to the base word. With Question 60, although most new words in this task are formed by adding suffixes, it is possible for candidates to encounter words such as this which require an 'internal' change. Questions, which require candidates to come up with a prefix, like Question 64, have tended to be challenging in recent versions. The prefix is often negative, so candidates are required to spot this arising from the sense of the text. It is therefore important for them to keep in mind the argument as it flows through the text. Pleasingly, very few candidates produced words which were the wrong part of speech, as has often been noted in previous exam reports, which suggests that candidates were thinking hard about the surrounding context. Instead, the most common wrong answers tended to be misspellings: 'knowledge', 'strenght', 'extinsion', 'valueable'. Candidates can expect to find questions that test such changes in spelling ('value' → 'valuable'), and should take care in this respect when adding suffixes. Another type of wrong answer was choosing the wrong noun or adjective, such as 'knowing' in Question 58 and 'impressionable' in Question 63.

• RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION

In all the text-based parts of the paper, candidates should concentrate on the sense of the text surrounding the gaps, and follow the argument as it develops through the text.

In Part 3, candidates should be discouraged from adding any comments or alternate answers, even if these are put in brackets. Candidates who do so run the risk of producing more than six words in their response, and losing marks unnecessarily.

In Part 3, candidates must read the prompt word carefully before using it in their answer. The word must not be changed in any way. The word must be written out in full in its correct place in the answer. Candidates should not leave a blank or a series of dots, as this causes problems for markers.

In Part 4, candidates should read the text very carefully. As when checking one's written work in real life, concentration is needed. It is easy for the eye to miss certain extra words, so it is useful to 'read the text aloud in one's head' and to keep checking that it makes sense. Also if candidates read too quickly, their eyes may 'trick' them into thinking a word is present, so they wrongly assume the line is correct.

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

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| DO | make sure in all parts that you put your answer by the correct number on your answer sheet. |
| DO | give yourself time to check your work. |
| DO | read all the options before deciding on your answer in Part 1. |
| DO | write the prompt word in your answer for Part 3. |
| DO | make sure that the sentence you complete in Part 3 is as close in meaning to the first sentence as possible. |
| DON'T | use more than one word in your answers for Parts 2, 4 and 5. |
| DON'T | change more than you need to in Part 3. |
| DON'T | forget to concentrate hard when you are doing Part 4, as it's easy for your eye to miss certain words. |
| DON'T | leave the word which is in capitals in Part 5 unchanged. |
| DON'T | forget to look carefully at the text in part 5 in order to decide on the grammatical form of the missing words. |

PAPER 4 – LISTENING

Part	Task Type and Focus	Number of Questions	Task Format
1	Multiple choice <i>Focus:</i> Understanding gist, main points, detail, function, location, roles and relationships, mood, attitude, intention, feeling or opinion	8	A series of short unrelated extracts, of approximately 30 seconds each, from monologues or exchanges between interacting speakers. The multiple-choice questions have three options.
2	Sentence completion, note completion or blank filling <i>Focus:</i> Understanding gist, main points, detail or specific information, or deducing meaning	10	A monologue or text involving interacting speakers and lasting approximately 3 minutes.
3	Multiple matching <i>Focus:</i> As for Part 1	5	A series of short related extracts, of approximately 30 seconds each, from monologues or exchanges between interacting speakers. The multiple-matching questions require selection of the correct option from a list of 6.
4	Selection from 2 or 3 possible answers <i>Focus:</i> As for Part 2	7	A monologue or text involving interacting speakers and lasting approximately 3 minutes. The questions require candidates to select between 2 or 3 possible answers, e.g. true/false; yes/no; three-option multiple-choice; which speaker said what, etc.

- **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 FCE 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.

All texts and tasks were representative of what can be expected in versions of the paper prior to the modifications which come into force in December 2008. Until then, in Part 4, three-way matching tasks and two-option tasks, as outlined in the FCE Handbook, may appear in future versions.

- **Candidate Performance**

Candidates performed well on all versions of the paper. In each version, no one part was significantly more difficult overall than another. This report is based on results from candidates who took version A of the Listening test.

Part 1, Questions 1-8

The eight short listening texts in Part 1 provide a range of text types and voices as well as a range of focuses across the eight questions. These questions are intended to be a gentle lead-in to the test and most candidates tackled them well.

Candidates coped best with Questions 1, 5 and 6, but Questions 7 and 8 proved more challenging. However, there was a significant difference in performance in some of the questions between strong and weak candidates. In Question 4, for example, many weaker candidates were distracted by option B, 'the social life on board', in answer to the question: 'What would the man enjoy about cruising holidays?' This is probably because the speaker mentions 'lots of other people', and weak candidates attracted by this reference overlooked the fact that the speaker qualified his remark by saying he 'could not stand being' with so many people 'for long'. Strong candidates, however, understood the man's opening comments about a cruise that had always appealed to him, 'just looking at that marvellous coastline and cliffs as you pass', and chose the correct option A, 'the view from the ship'.

In Question 8, candidates had to listen to a woman talking about a new detective novel and identify what she says about it. Many weaker candidates as well as strong candidates opted for C, 'It is surprisingly hard to read'. They were perhaps distracted by the word 'surprise' in the comment '...adds to the fun with yet another surprise'. Those candidates who understood the statement, 'You'll need to accept the unreality of it all, but it's worth it', chose the correct option B, 'It should not be taken too seriously'.

Question 7 also proved a challenging question for weaker candidates, who were attracted to options B and C, 'an art gallery owner' and 'a supplier of artists' materials' respectively. Those opting for B had probably reacted to hearing '...it's sometimes not the price that counts', and those who chose C responded to '...I'll tape it for you – to make sure the colours don't rub against the glass...'. Strong candidates who opted correctly for option A, 'an artist', had listened carefully to the complete text in which the man concludes by saying, 'I'm happy it's going to you... it's knowing someone appreciates what you're trying to say in your work'.

A similar pattern in the response between weak and strong candidates was reflected in Question 2 in which candidates heard a food expert talking on the radio. Weaker candidates possibly picked up the woman's comment '...if I ever have children' and opted for option C, 'She strongly supports cookery lessons at school' by making an incorrect connection between 'school' and 'children'. However, the question focus, 'In what way does she say she is unusual?', required candidates to understand her comment, '...I'm an exception in a country where many people think that those who like to cook in order to relieve stress and tension are really rather strange and eccentric'. Stronger candidates chose the correct option B, 'She uses cooking as a way of relaxing'.

Part 2, Questions 9-18

This was a sentence-completion task based on an interview with a long-distance runner. Overall, candidates coped extremely well with the topic in this part of the test, though, once again, there was a range of performances. Results suggest that candidates found this the least challenging part of the test.

Of the ten questions, Questions 9, 11, 12 and 18 stand out as being tackled very well by the majority of candidates.

Questions 10, 14 and 15 proved the most challenging in this part of the test, though, again, it was clearly the weaker candidates who had the most problems.

In Question 10, the common wrong answer, 'strength', suggests that candidates had not read the prompt carefully enough, or did not listen to the speaker's response to the interviewer's question, 'Would you say you're a fast runner?' The woman's response is quite emphatic: 'Not at all! I'm always among the last to finish any run – my strength is definitely not speed!' Strong candidates were able to process the woman's lack of speed and correctly interpret the 'weakness' in the context of the question prompt.

Similarly, in Question 14, the common wrong answer, 'farmer', suggests that candidates once again had not read the prompt carefully enough, or did not listen to what the speaker went on to say after establishing that 'being a farmer ... wasn't an option', as she continued, 'I tried being a journalist ... but I didn't make a very good one...', so the correct answer was 'journalist'. It was notable that the correct answers to this question were marred by poor handwriting and the combination of 'o', 'u' and 'r' was often difficult to decipher.

In the context of this part of the test, it is relevant to draw attention to handwriting. Poor handwriting in Part 2 may result in the loss of marks. For example, a poor sequence of letters, as in 'journalist' (Question 14), has already been referred to. The answers to Questions 12, 13, 15, 16 and 18 all drew comments from the Co-ordinating Examiner. Vowels such as 'a' and 'o' in 'Canada', 'cow', 'boat' and 'potatoes' were carelessly formed, as were the consonants 'w' and 'n'. In Question 18, the final 'f' in 'golf' was often written as an undefined stick or squiggle. Candidates who write neatly or who print their answers in capitals fare best in this part of the test.

Part 3, Questions 19-23

This was a multiple-matching task based on five short texts in which five different people talked about paintings they had bought at an art fair. Results suggest that candidates found this the most challenging part of the test.

Questions 22 and 23 were tackled well by most candidates, but the contrast between the performances of strong and weak candidates in this part of the test was once again clearly evident. Weaker candidates were consistently attracted to a wide range of wrong options, whilst strong candidates rarely were.

Questions 19 and 21 proved to be the most challenging. In Question 19, weaker candidates chose a range of options, but most notably D. The range of answers suggests that weaker candidates had not listened to the complete text before choosing their option. Option D, 'I wanted a painting that would look exciting in my room', was possibly attractive as a result of having heard the speaker say, 'Suddenly, I spotted this really incredible Japanese painting and just had to have it'. However, the speaker went on to say '...I could barely afford it... . Luckily, I'd saved up some cash for a new computer which I used for this instead'. This final comment cued the correct option E, 'The painting I bought was just within my budget', which strong candidates who had listened until the end of the extract correctly chose.

The disparity between strong and weak candidates was also reflected in Question 21; weaker candidates were attracted to options E and F, possibly because they had already selected D (the correct option) as the key to Question 19, even after a second listening. In talking about the painting which he bought, the speaker says, '...I wanted something bolder,

more daring, to match the new colour scheme' which quite clearly is reflected in option D, 'I wanted a painting that would look exciting in my room', and not in either of the options E or F.

The contrast in performance between strong and weak candidates suggests that weaker candidates are tempted to match words they hear with the same or similar words printed, or choose an answer without listening to the complete extract. It is essential that candidates make effective use of the second hearing in all the tasks, but especially so in this task. If they make the wrong choice in the first question, they also lose the potential use of that option in another question. In extreme cases, more than one incorrect choice can produce a domino effect and result in several wrong answers.

Part 4, Questions 24-30

This was a True/False task based on a radio interview with a fourteen-year-old violinist who had recently won a music competition. Candidates coped well with this part of the test.

Questions 24 and 29 were answered best and Questions 25 and 26 proved the most demanding. In Question 25, the violinist is asked whether she thought she had a chance of winning the competition. She replies, '...people thought I was young and inexperienced – all except my teacher ... but I was really, really surprised when they announced I had won'. Weaker candidates overlooked the fact that that remark was her individual reaction, not the reaction of 'everyone', so the answer is False. In Question 26, the girl mentions that her sister 'doesn't play an instrument and though she teases me, she makes up for it by giving me a hand with my homework', so the answer to this question is True.

This part of the test includes more questions which focus on understanding the expression of feelings and opinions rather than facts, and candidates need to be prepared to listen for a speaker's attitude or point of view.

• RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION

The Listening test is based on recorded material taken from various authentic contexts and is designed to test a range of listening skills. The test lasts about 40 minutes and contains 30 questions. There are four parts to the test, and a range of text and task types is represented. All instructions, rubrics, repeats and pauses are included on the recording, as is the copying time at the end.

Candidates record their answers in one of two ways: in Parts 1, 3 and 4, candidates must choose the appropriate answer from those provided and mark or write the appropriate letter (A, B, C, etc.) on their answer sheet. No part of the wording of the chosen option should be copied onto the answer sheet. In Part 2, candidates must write a word, a number or a short phrase in response to a written prompt, and only the candidate's answer should be copied onto the answer sheet.

Part 1

This part of the paper is designed to enable candidates to settle into the Listening test in a relatively gentle way. Unlike the other parts of the paper, they both hear and read the questions. Students should be encouraged to use the information contained in the questions and options to help them focus on what they are about to hear and what they are listening for. Some texts may target points of detail in the question, others call for elements of gist understanding. Attitudes, opinions or feelings may also be tested, or the focus may be on the topic, function, speaker or the main point of what is heard.

Candidates should listen carefully when the text is repeated, particularly when an option seems to be obviously correct and is supported by an individual word or phrase used in the text. Careful listening to the surrounding text may reveal shades of meaning not appreciated at first. Additionally, teachers should give students plenty of practice in dealing with the range of text types and focuses, so that candidates are prepared for the varying character and pace of both monologues and dialogues in Part 1.

Part 2

In Part 2, candidates are required to produce written answers in response to various types of prompt. The task consists of 10 gaps in either a set of notes or a set of sentences. Texts may be either monologues or dialogues and a contextualising rubric sets the scene in terms of speaker(s), topic and context. Students should be reminded that questions are chronological, following the order of the information in the text. Adequate time is given for candidates to read the task before they hear the recording, and they should use this time to think about the type of information which is missing.

In preparing for this part of the test, students should be encouraged to practise writing the short answers which are required in a productive task. The Co-ordinating Examiner continues to point out the necessity for legible handwriting, especially when writing the following letters: vowels such as 'a', 'o' and 'u', which can be easily confused, the consonants 'n' and 'w' and those which have tails such as 'f'. Every effort is made to achieve fair marking but completely illegible handwriting cannot be rewarded. It is also important that great care is taken to ensure that an answer fits and makes sense with what comes before and, if relevant, **after** the gap, and does not repeat information already included in the question stem.

Most answers will be a single word, a number or a very short phrase, and students should be warned that writing unnecessarily wordy answers will almost certainly not result in a mark. Occasionally, an answer requires two separate words, divided by 'and' in the box on the question paper. In this case, candidates may write their answers in either order. It is very unlikely that any answer will need more than four words and more often than not, questions can be answered using fewer. Where keys focus on numerical information, they may be written in number form and need not be written out in words. 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. They are not asked to reformulate language in note form in note-completion tasks, or to make grammatical transformations from text to task in sentence-completion tasks. Some minor spelling mistakes are accepted if the meaning of the word is not changed, but the main words and phrases tested are limited to those which candidates can reasonably be expected to spell correctly at this level.

Whatever the task type, sentence completion or note completion, the keys usually focus on concrete items of information such as 'boat' and 'golf' in Test A, for example. Both British and American spellings are accepted.

Part 3

In Part 3, the focus is on gist listening skills. Candidates listen to five short texts on a topic which is indicated in the contextualising rubric, and the task is multiple matching. Students should be encouraged to think carefully about the context and should use the preparation time to read the options; this will help them to know what it is they are listening for. In Test A, for example, the task focused on the way in which each speaker talked about a painting they had bought at an art fair. Students should be encouraged to listen for the meaning of the

whole text, and to focus on identifying each speaker's opinion, which is expressed in the options listed.

Students should be advised to make good use of the repetition of the texts, even if they have answered every question on the first listening. They may find that they need to change more than one answer if they discover a mistake, because one incorrect answer may have a knock-on effect on the other questions.

Part 4

Students should be prepared to encounter any of the following task types: 3-option multiple choice, 3-way matching and 2-option tasks (TRUE/FALSE, YES/NO), as any of them could appear in any version. They should know that with all the task types, adequate time is given for them to read the questions before they hear the recording. In the multiple-choice task, candidates are given one minute to read through the questions.

As in Part 2, the questions follow the order of the text. Each question focuses on one part of the text, and will generally test understanding of that whole section rather than isolated words and phrases. The questions may test points of detail, gist meaning and the understanding of opinions, feelings and attitudes. Students should be reminded that all three options in multiple-choice questions will include ideas and information from the text, but only one (the key) will combine with the question prompt to reflect the exact meaning expressed in the text.

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

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| DO | listen to and read the instructions. Make sure you understand what you are listening for and what you have to do. |
| DO | use the time allowed before hearing each recording to read through all the questions carefully, so you are prepared for what you hear. |
| DO | use the information on the question paper to help you follow the listening text. |
| DO | look carefully at what is printed before and after the gap in Part 2 and think about the kind of information that you are listening for. |
| DO | write only the missing information on the answer sheet. |
| DO | write your answers as clearly as possible in Part 2; using capital letters can make writing clearer. |
| 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 | remember that any wrong answer you discover in Part 3 when hearing the recording for a second time may affect your other answers. |
| DO | concentrate on understanding in as much depth as possible what speakers say, especially in Parts 1, 3 and 4; don't be distracted by individual words and phrases. |
| DO | answer all the questions – even if you are not sure; you have probably understood more than you think. |
| DO | make sure that you copy your answers accurately onto the answer sheet. |
| DON'T | rephrase what you hear in Part 2; do write down the figure(s) or word(s) that you hear spoken. |
| DON'T | complicate an answer in Part 2 by writing extra, irrelevant information. |
| DON'T | spend too much time on a question you are having difficulty with, as you may miss the next question. |

PAPER 5 – SPEAKING

Part	Task Type and Focus	Length	Task Format
1	Short exchanges between each candidate and the Interlocutor <i>Focus:</i> Giving personal information; socialising	3 minutes	The Interlocutor encourages the candidates to give information about themselves.
2	Long turn from each candidate, with a brief response from the other candidate <i>Focus:</i> Exchanging personal and factual information; expressing attitudes and opinions; employing discourse functions related to managing a long turn	4 minutes	The candidates are in turn given visual prompts (two colour photographs) which they each talk about for approximately 1 minute. They are also asked to comment briefly on each other's photographs.
3	Candidates talk with one another <i>Focus:</i> Exchanging information, expressing attitudes and opinions	3 minutes	The candidates are given visual prompts (photographs, line drawings, diagrams, etc.) which generate discussion through engagement in tasks such as planning, problem solving, decision making, prioritising, speculating, etc.
4	Candidates talk with one another and the Interlocutor <i>Focus:</i> Exchanging and justifying opinions	4 minutes	The Interlocutor encourages a discussion of matters related to the theme of Part 3.

- **Marking**

The Speaking tests are 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 the four Analytical Criteria (Grammar and Vocabulary, Discourse Management, Pronunciation and Interactive Communication). The Interlocutor awards marks according to the Global Achievement Scale, which assesses the candidates' overall effectiveness in tackling the tasks. These scores are converted by computer to provide a mark out of 40.

- **Candidate Performance**

Candidate performance in this administration was consistent with that of December 2006 and historical norms. Feedback from Oral Examiners has been very positive and students, as

always, were well prepared for this paper. Candidates who performed less well were those who did not listen carefully to the instructions, did not respond fully to questions asked, or who dominated the interaction. To perform well, a candidate should answer the task set and therefore should not be afraid to ask for repetition of instructions before embarking on the task. Students should be made aware that asking for the instructions to be repeated will not affect their marks in any way, whereas redirection by the examiner once the task has begun may affect their performance.

Part 1

This part of the test focuses on areas which deal directly with the candidates' personal experience (e.g. work and education, leisure activities, travel and holidays, etc.). It gives the examiners their first impression of the candidates, and it is therefore important that the candidates speak naturally and with appropriate detail. One-word responses are inadequate and will affect the score for Interactive Communication. Students should also be advised not to prepare long responses to questions they feel they may be asked as this often means that they do not answer appropriately. This tactic does not lead to effective interactive communication, and is noticed by examiners. Candidates who have not met prior to the test should not feel concerned, as feedback from examiners indicates that this does not affect performance in this or any other part of the test.

Part 2

The tendency in this part of the test is for weaker candidates to focus on the visuals without listening carefully to the task set by the examiner. Simply describing the two sets of visuals often results in the candidate producing a limited range of grammar and vocabulary, and is unlikely to provide enough to talk about for a full minute. Candidates will always be asked to compare, contrast 'and say... (something specific about the visuals)...'. They should listen very carefully for the 'and say...', so that they complete the task and are able to continue for the full minute, using a range of language appropriate to this level. Candidates should not feel concerned if the examiner interrupts as this simply means that they have talked for the allotted time. It is important for candidates to start talking as soon as they can in order to make full use of their long turn.

• Comments on Released Test Materials

Spending time together

As can be seen in the sample paper, the visuals show families spending time together in different situations. The first is a photograph of a family inside their home. The parents are watching while the children play a board game together. The second is of a father spending time with his three children, who are exploring nature by the side of a river. Candidates were asked to compare and contrast the visuals and say what the people are enjoying about spending time together in the different situations. A strong candidate will have used the pictures to answer the task along the following lines:

'In the first picture, I can see some children playing a game together. Their mother and father are watching them. I think the children are having a good time because they like the game and they are happy to play it together. The parents are enjoying themselves because the children are quiet and are playing nicely together and not arguing, so the parents are able to take a rest. The mother is drinking a coffee and the father is enjoying reading the newspaper. In the second picture a father is enjoying spending time with his children. The two boys are showing him something they've found and the older child is looking at

something in the river. I think they're happy to be outside in the sun and they are enjoying learning about nature together. I think I'd like to go to this river because it looks very peaceful; there aren't many people there and I enjoy spending time outside.'

Here, the candidate describes each photograph and then moves on to spend the majority of the long turn focusing on why the people are enjoying spending time together in the different ways, in order to keep going for the full minute.

Problems

Candidates were given visual prompts of people experiencing problems in different situations. In the first visual, a woman is getting help from a mechanic because her car has broken down, and in the second, a woman is at her desk with a lot of paperwork and a small child beside her is playing with a toy and demanding her attention. Again, candidates were not only expected to describe the two photographs, but to say what problems they thought the different people were having. Candidates who performed well produced answers along the following lines:

'In the first picture, I can see two people looking at the engine of a car. I think that one of the people has broken down in her car and the man is helping her with the problem. The man who is helping her has come in his truck and I think he knows what to do to solve the problem. This is a bad problem if you're driving alone. In the second picture, I can see a woman and her son. I think they're at home. The woman is working at her desk and she's looking at her papers, but she has a lot of work to do. She looks tired and worried. The little boy wants his mother to play with him, but she isn't looking at him because she's working. He seems to be a bit sad. I think this is a big problem because the mother can't do her work and look after her little boy at the same time. The little boy is bored and he wants someone to play with, so he's not going to leave his mother to finish her work. I think that the first problem is probably the worst, though, because it can be frightening to break down in your car if you don't have any help and you're on your own. And maybe the mother could do her work later when the boy has gone to bed.'

Candidates who performed well responded with their own ideas as to what they thought the different problems were. At this level, candidates are not expected to move beyond giving simple reasons from their personal experience to deal with the task. It should be noted that tasks are not designed to test specific items of vocabulary; candidates should not simply tell the examiner that they do not know certain words, for example, the word 'bonnet' for the car in this task, but should employ tactics such as paraphrasing in order to complete the task, as in this example. Responses that were restricted to a description merely of what candidates could see in each visual were inadequate. Candidates who did this tended to have problems completing their long turn or ran into difficulties with lexis.

Part 3

The aim of this part of the test is for candidates to discuss the task outlined by the examiner as fully as possible, and to work towards a negotiated outcome in the time available. In this part of the test, candidates are always invited to do two things. They are required to respond to and give their views on a range of visual prompts, and then to come to a negotiated decision. The interlocutor asks them to:

'First talk to each other about... . Then decide... .'

Candidates, presented with the visual stimulus, occasionally fail to hear the first part of the instructions, which is in fact the bulk of the task. Candidates who performed less well were therefore those who made their decisions very early on in the interaction, without first

considering and discussing as fully as possible the range of suggestions presented to them, and, as a result, ran out of things to say. Candidates should listen carefully for the words, 'First talk to each other about...' and internalise the task set. As already mentioned, students should be made aware that they will not lose marks if they need to ask the examiner to repeat the instructions.

To perform well in this part of the test, candidates should be able to take a full and active part in the interaction, making use of the range of visual prompts available, expressing their own views clearly, listening to their partner and developing their partner's comments. However, candidates should be aware of the importance of inviting their partner to respond, ensuring that both candidates take an equal part in the development of the interaction.

Candidates are expected to work towards a negotiated outcome but should not be concerned if they do not make a final decision or if they do not agree. Disagreeing in a friendly way can be an effective part of interactive communication. However, strong disagreement can undermine their partner's confidence and an overbearing candidate may lose marks. Candidates should make full use of the time available, starting promptly and finishing only when the examiner interjects. They should not feel concerned if they are asked to stop as this will simply mean that they have talked for the allotted time.

Modern technology

Candidates generally found plenty to say about this task. Candidates were given seven visual prompts which were examples of modern technology often used by people these days: a television, a hand-held games console, a washing machine, a computer, a mobile phone, a camcorder and a cashpoint machine. Candidates were asked to talk about how these things have improved people's lives, and then to decide which two things have improved people's lives most. Candidates generally performed very well and spoke fully. Candidates were able to discuss the relative merits of the different ideas and had as much to say about the ways in which the different ideas had had a negative effect on our lives. As in other tasks, some candidates were tempted to start with the second part of the task, e.g. 'I think the television is the most important thing because...'. Candidates who did this often performed less well because they came to their final decision without having fully explored the alternatives.

Candidates should not have felt concerned if they were unable to make use of the full range of visual prompts, but they should have managed to discuss several pictures before making their decision. Candidates should discuss the different ideas offered as fully as possible in the available time and come to a negotiated decision towards the end of their three minutes, rather than making a decision at the outset, which may lead to them running out of things to say. In this case, candidates should have discussed each picture together, saying how the different things could improve people's lives, agreeing and disagreeing with each other and following up on each other's ideas. For example, with the picture of the television, candidates could have commented on the fact that televisions improve our lives by entertaining us and giving us information about all sorts of things but that in some ways televisions could have disadvantages, discouraging people from communicating with each other and encouraging children, for example, to stay indoors when it would be healthier for them to play active games in the fresh air. Then, having discussed how each of the alternatives has, or has not, improved people's lives, candidates should have attempted to come to a negotiated decision as to which two things they thought had improved people's lives most and why. Candidates were not penalised if they ran out of time and failed to come to a final decision.

When doing this task, candidates tended to avoid speaking about the camcorder, perhaps because they were not sure of the word. They should be reassured that 'a camera which takes pictures of people when they're moving' would have been an acceptable paraphrase

which would have allowed them to discuss how this is good for remembering the past, how entertaining it is to watch pictures of how we used to be, and so on.

Similarly, some candidates felt the need to know the exact word for a children's hand-held games console and sometimes admitted to examiners or to each other that they did not know the word for these games machines. A useful technique would have been to point to the visual and say:

'I don't think that games like these improve children's lives because...'

As has been mentioned in Part 2, examiners are not looking for or testing specific lexical items. Candidates will, however, be expected to have developed strategies such as paraphrasing, for dealing with unknown words.

Part 4

In this part of the test, candidates are given a further opportunity to demonstrate their language ability by engaging in a three-way discussion with their partner and the examiner. It also provides an opportunity for examiners to redress any imbalances in turn-taking that may have occurred in other parts of the test. It is therefore vital that candidates offer more than a minimal response and take the opportunity to initiate discussion, as well as answering the examiner's questions. Strong candidates were able to develop and illustrate the topic by giving their opinions and talking about the reasons behind them, thus demonstrating a range of vocabulary.

Comments on Released Test Materials

Candidates generally performed well and spoke fully on the task 'Modern Technology'. They were able to discuss their favourite piece of technology, whether they thought technology was useful in schools and why some people find it difficult to use the latest technology. Candidates found the question about whether or not it is a good thing that we are able to travel faster and further than ever before, more difficult and they tended to have less to say. They also found difficult the question about the possibility of speaking more easily and cheaply to people all over the world, and how this affects our lives. Some candidates had less to say in response to these questions, possibly because they had not considered questions like these before.

Candidates should be reminded that there is no right or wrong answer and that they are being marked on the language they use, not on how well they justify their opinions. Candidates sometimes feel that the questions sound as if they merit a more sophisticated response than they feel able to give and are therefore reluctant to respond. They should be reassured that their contribution will be appropriate if it provides an appropriate response to the question asked. Candidates will find, however, that there are certain questions that they are less familiar with, and these questions are likely to result in shorter answers. This is natural in any interaction and will not be penalised. Candidates should therefore try not to be affected by an unfamiliar question but should give a short, confident response and give fuller responses to other questions asked.

● RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION

Candidates are expected to take a full and active part in the test. It is important, therefore, that students seek as many opportunities to practise their spoken English as possible, inside and outside the classroom. 'Exam training' can help with nervousness, and candidates

certainly benefit from being familiar with the different parts of the test, but this is no substitute for a genuine interest in the language. Candidates who put themselves in a position where they need to use English on a regular basis are likely to perform well.

Part 1

For this part of the test, students will benefit from finding opportunities to practise talking about themselves (their likes and dislikes, personal/educational history, present circumstances, plans and hopes for the future, etc.).

Part 2

Candidates can improve their performance in this part of the test by choosing pairs of thematically-linked visuals, practising comparing and contrasting them, and going on to talk about the theme in a more general way. Candidates should time themselves to check that they are able to keep going for a full minute. Without practice, candidates may find it difficult to speak for a full minute during the test. Candidates should attempt visuals with which they may be less familiar, and try to talk for a minute on a question related to the visuals. For example, in the task entitled 'Problems', candidates were not just asked to describe photographs but were asked to talk about what they thought the problems were in the different situations. This task looks quite challenging as it seems to demand a degree of speculation. However, candidates should not be put off by tasks like this one as they only involve speculation on the basis of what is evident in the picture or on the basis of candidates' personal experience. Candidates are not expected to move beyond this simple degree of speculation at this level.

Part 3

The best preparation for this part of the test is for students to practise taking part in discussions in small groups, so that all students have the opportunity to take the floor. Candidates with a quieter disposition should be encouraged to develop strategies to ensure they are able to take their turn. Stronger candidates should be encouraged to invite opinions from others. Suitable thematic areas for discussion can be found in FCE coursebooks and should relate to the candidate's own experience, rather than more abstract concepts (see the FCE Handbook for a list of topic areas). It is a good idea to give students practice in interpreting the pictures that they see in coursebooks or magazines, as they will have to do this in Part 3 of the test. Candidates should be reassured that it does not matter if their partner interprets a picture in a different way, but that this forms part of the interaction and negotiation, and that they will have completed the task successfully if they answer the question set by discussing with their partner the visuals given, using language at the level. They should not feel concerned about different interpretations of the visual materials.

Part 4

As in Part 3, candidates will benefit from being given as many opportunities as possible to give their opinions on a range of issues, and to expand on their views while inviting opinions from others and responding to them. As with the more challenging questions in the task 'Modern Technology', candidates need to learn to respond confidently, even if answers are short, and should be discouraged from making responses such as 'I don't know', 'I'm not sure' or 'I haven't thought about that'.

• **DOs and DON'Ts FOR PAPER 5 – SPEAKING**

DO	familiarise yourself with the focus, function and procedures of all parts of the test.
DO	take every opportunity to practise your English in groups and pairs both inside and outside the classroom before the test.
DO	listen carefully to instructions given and questions asked throughout the test and focus your answers appropriately.
DO	ask for repetition of instructions if you are unclear about what you should do.
DO	speak clearly so that both the assessor and the interlocutor can hear you.
DO	make sure that you talk about the additional 'and say...' task in Part 2, when comparing and contrasting the visuals.
DO	respond to your partner's contributions and invite your partner to contribute in Parts 3 and 4.
DO	make use of opportunities to speak in all parts of the test and give extended contributions where you can.
DON'T	prepare long responses in advance. You are unlikely to answer questions appropriately.
DON'T	try to give your views during your partner's long turn.
DON'T	try to dominate your partner or to interrupt him or her in an abrupt way.
DON'T	make frequent pauses and hesitations during the interaction or during your own turn.
DON'T	worry if you disagree with your partner in Parts 3 and 4. As long as you are polite and not overbearing, this is all part of interactive communication.
DON'T	worry about being interrupted by the examiner. For administrative reasons, it is important that tests do not overrun.

FEEDBACK FORM

FCE Examination Report June 2007 – 0102

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:

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ESOL Examinations
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CB1 2EU

Fax: +44 1223 460278

1. Please describe your situation: (e.g. EFL/ESOL teacher, Director of Studies, Examinations Officer, Local Secretary, etc.)

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

3. Do you plan to prepare candidates for FCE 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.