

by
University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations

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1. Acknowledgements

University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations would like to take this opportunity to thank the Ministry für Schule und Weiterbildung Nordrhein-Westfalen and all the participating schools for their support. In particular, we would like to thank very much all the teachers involved both in the preparation of their pupils for the exams and in the administering of the exams in the schools.

In addition, thanks are extended to staff at all of the participating Cambridge ESOL examination centres who worked very hard to make the project such a success.

Cambridge ESOL would also like to thank the Senior Team Leader for Germany, Davine Sutherland and the Team Leaders Shirley Herrmann and Dr. Graham Cass as well as all the seminar presenters, who lead teacher training seminars, for their commitment and hard work to ensure the success of the Certificate of Advanced English (CAE) in schools in Nordrhein-Westfalen.

2. Introduction to the Report

Following the successful introduction of PET and FCE in schools in 2005, in which some pupils scored very high in FCE, the Ministerium für Schule und Weiterbildung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen decided to widen the project in 2006 to include CAE, and offer this exam to strong students. As the other Cambridge ESOL examinations, CAE is anchored in the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), corresponding to level C1. German school curricula and educational standards are mapped below, illustrating the relationship between the curricula criteria and the CEFR standards with Cambridge ESOL exams.

Klassenstufe	GER stufe	Cambridge ESOL Prüfung
Hauptschulabschluss - (KMK Bildungsstandards)	A2	• Key English Test KET
Realschule - Klasse 10	B1	• Preliminary English Test PET
Mittlerer Bildungsabschluss – (KMK Bildungsstandards)	B1	• Preliminary English Test PET
Gymnasium – Übergang in Sekundarstufe II	B1, B2 angebahrt	• Preliminary English Test PET
Gymnasiale Oberstufe - Einheitliche Prüfungsanforderungen der KMK	B2/ C1	• B2: First Certificate in English FCE • C1: Certificate in Advanced English CAE

Cambridge ESOL agreed, as part of its support for the introductory session of CAE, to provide a report to the Ministry on the results of the first group of candidates to enter for CAE. This report compares the results of the pupils in Nordrhein-Westfalen with those of typical CAE candidates in the rest of the world, and also, for the benefit of teachers and others involved in the project, describes some of the important and interesting features of the performance of the candidates, in the examinations as a whole, and in individual skill areas.

In the March 2006 session of CAE 412 pupils from schools throughout Nordrhein-Westfalen took the exam.

Overall the project was considered by both teachers and pupils to have been extremely successful as can be seen clearly from the results: 79% of the CAE candidates passed, with 11,5% achieving Grade A and another 23% getting a Grade B, which is slightly above the global average. The success rate was high, but the exams still provided a challenge as can be seen from the fact that 21% of the candidates did not pass.

As before in Bavaria, the results therefore suggest that CAE is at the correct level for very strong students in Grades 12 and 13 while FCE is the right level for the majority of pupils.

This would also coincide with fact that the 'Einheitliche Prüfungsanforderungen in der Abiturprüfung Englisch' of the Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK) set the required level for the school leaving examination in English at a level between B2 and C1.

3. Comparison of CAE Results with Rest of World Candidates

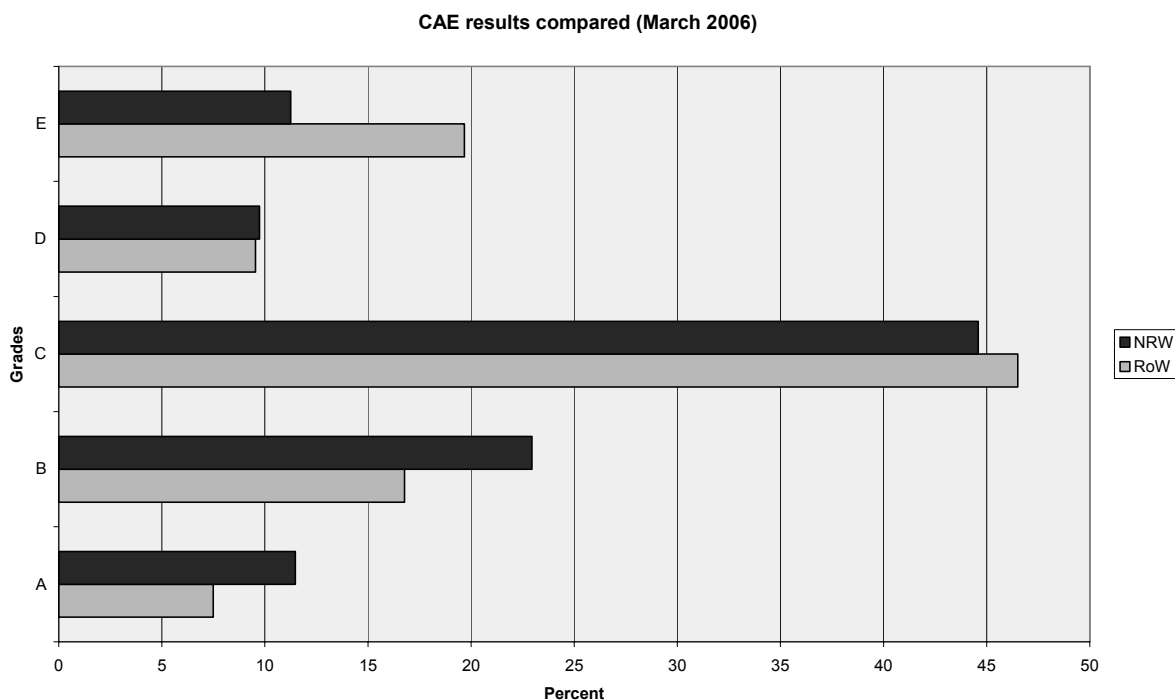
3.1 Overall Performance Comparison - CAE examinations

Overall, the Nordrhein-Westfalen CAE candidates performed strongly in relation to the candidature as a whole. A total of 79% of Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates passed the examination, compared to 70.77% in the rest of the world (RoW).

In addition, more Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates gained A and B grades in the examination. Eleven per cent of the Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates were awarded an A grade, compared to 7% in the rest of the world. Furthermore, 23% were awarded a B grade, compared to 17% in the rest of the world. The number of candidates gaining a C grade, however, was almost identical to the rest of the world - 45% of Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates, compared with 46% in the rest of the world.

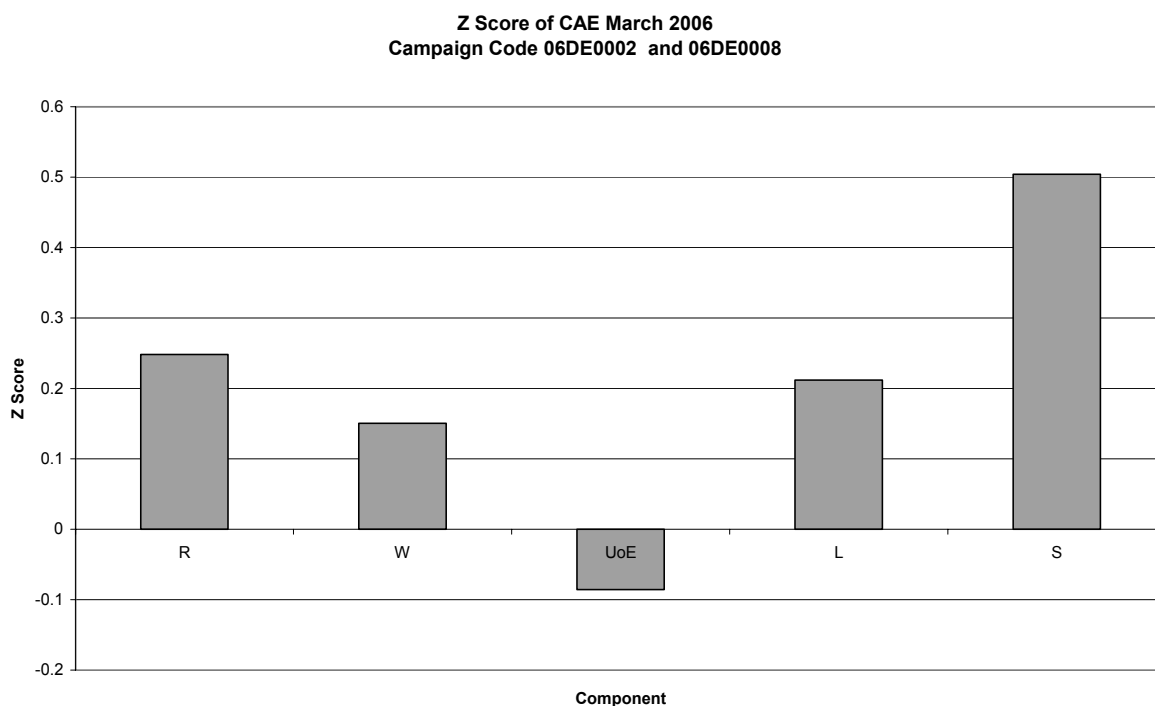
Fewer Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates failed the examination - a total of 21% of candidates compared to 29.23% in the rest of the world. The percentage of Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates and the rest of the world candidates who failed the examination with a grade D were identical - 10%.

Nevertheless, encouragingly, at the lower end of the scale, only 11% of Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates were awarded the lowest grade (E), compared to 20% in the rest of the world.



3.2 Performance Comparison by Exam Paper/Component – CAE examinations

The graph below shows the performance of the Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates as compared to the rest of the world on the different exam papers (R = Reading, W = Writing, UoE = Use of English, L = Listening, S = Speaking). The 0 line indicates the performance of the rest of the world and the bars indicate how the Nordrhein-Westfalen group performed. Bars above the 0 line show an above-average performance and below the line a below-average result.



Reading

In the Reading paper, Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates gave their second strongest performance. Their results were 0.25 standard deviations above the average performance in the rest of the world. This shows that Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates have good reading skills, are probably familiar with authentic texts, can understand a text at sentence, paragraph and whole text level, and can handle the different reading task types.

Writing

Although in the Writing paper Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates gave their second weakest performance, again they were about 0.15 standard deviations above the average performance in the rest of the world. Productive skills such as writing are often difficult to master, as it is not only the accuracy of the language used but also the content (points covered), the organisation and cohesion, range of language, style and register of language and awareness of the target reader that are taken into consideration. Careful reading of the questions is needed to enable candidates to produce a piece of writing of a suitable standard.

Use of English

In the Use of English paper Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates gave their weakest performance, almost –0.1 standard deviations below the average in the rest of the world. The paper contains some challenging task types, such as register transfer, error correction, gap fill tasks, word formation and lexical multiple choice questions. Candidates also have to transfer their answers to an answer sheet and leaving this to the end can cause candidates to misspell words.

Candidates at this level are expected to be able to use a wide range of vocabulary in different contexts and be able to manipulate structure and form accurately. These skills cannot be acquired by learning the rules of grammar or new vocabulary in a formulaic way. Extensive reading often helps students to gain these skills.

Listening

In the Listening paper, Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates gave their third strongest performance, just about 0.2 standard deviations stronger than the average in the rest of the world. This is impressive as the CAE Listening also contains a 'heard once only' productive task, as well as multiple-matching and multiple-choice task types, and requires high levels of concentration.

Speaking

In the Speaking test, Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates gave their best performance, at 0.5 standard deviations above the average for the rest of the world. This reflects the strength of the Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates in oral skills. It may also suggest that candidates are acquiring their spoken ability not only in a classroom situation but also externally, e.g. through the media.

4. CAE WRITING

Report on Candidates' Writing Performance

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Principal Examiner, PET Writing

Background information

The CAE Writing Paper consists of two parts: Part 1 is a compulsory task for all candidates and Part 2 has four questions, the last being a work-based question, from which candidates must choose one. The paper is marked by teams of trained examiners and their work is monitored by Team Leaders and the Principal Examiner. All answer papers are marked independently by two different examiners.

Examiners use two mark schemes: a general mark scheme which is common to all tasks and a task-specific mark scheme which is specific to a particular task. For each question, the examiner awards one of six marks (0-5, with a mark of 5 representing the highest achievement and a mark of 3 representing satisfactory performance). The mark is determined with relation to task achievement, range of language, accuracy of language, organisation and register. Other factors which may affect a mark are spelling, handwriting (if illegible) and length.

Overall Performance

The overall performance of candidates from Nordrhein-Westfalen in the writing component of the exam compared well with other centres. Although there were many good examples of a good level of language, there were instances of incorrect register and also incomplete tasks, which would have affected the mark of some students.

Task performance

Part 1

This question is compulsory. Candidates had to produce a letter based on given input, an email from John Carstairs, the organiser of an international camp, together with an article from a newspaper about the camp and the notes the candidate made during a meeting with John Carstairs. The task was to write a letter to the editor of the newspaper in response to the negative comments in the article, outlining its inaccuracies and requesting the editor take appropriate action to remedy the situation.

The majority of the Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates performed well in terms of task achievement, making good use of the input to cover and develop both aspects of the question. Stronger candidates were able to put forward a coherent argument using register, language and constructions appropriate to a formal letter. They were successful in creating a polite but firm tone, which would inform the editor of the inaccuracies of the article and persuade him/her to take suitable action.

Some candidates, however, did not fully achieve the effect required on the editor. This was sometimes because of a mix of register, for example starting the letter with 'Referring to the article' and ending with 'Thanks in advance', interspersed with the use of contractions such as 'I'm' and 'I've'. Other candidates struck the wrong tone altogether, using language which could have antagonised the editor and produced a negative effect e.g. 'Your article insults every person. I demand for an official apology', 'I am thoroughly disgusted with your statement about the camp', 'We will see ourselves forced to take you to court'.

A number of candidates were also not fully conversant with opening and closing formulae used in a formal letter in English. The following examples were observed: 'Dear Mr and Mrs', 'Dear Ladies and Gentlemen', 'Dear Sirs and Madams', 'Yours sincerely', 'Yours', 'Best wishes', 'To the responsible editor'.

Other common stronger features were good organisation, use of paragraphs and well-balanced arguments. Many candidates were able to give a balanced answer, incorporating and developing all the main points from the input but expressing their answers in their own words.

Part 2

Question 2

This was a fairly popular question among Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates.

The task was to write a report about an airport that the candidate had used. There were three content points: to outline the positive aspects of the airport, to describe any problems with the airport and to suggest improvements.

Stronger candidates managed to write in report format, using a title, an introduction and developing the content points in a balanced manner showing a good range of vocabulary pertinent to airports and air travel.

Weaker candidates did not fully understand that they were to write an objective report about the airport for the airport and tended to towards an anecdotal description of their personal experiences aimed at the readers of the magazine. For example, one piece started with the words, 'Hello readers'. Some candidates did not give balanced answers, dwelling too much on one or two of the points, sometimes leading to under or over paragraphing. The final point, suggestions for improvement, was sometimes missed completely or answered only indirectly.

The word 'plane' was often incorrectly spelled as 'plain'.

Question 3

This was by far the most popular question. The task was to write an article for a magazine about the candidate's experiences on the first day in a new place or situation. There were three main parts to the question: to describe the experience, to explain how it made them feel and to advise people in the same situation.

Many candidates clearly engaged with the question, describing in detail how they felt on their first day and using a good range of descriptive vocabulary to good effect to engage the reader also:

*But hey, who says that life's easy (used as an effective close to the article)
I was in the so-called honeymoon stage, when you are totally motivated.
Mounting a flight of stairs seemed a major challenge of co-ordinating our feet.
Sweaty palms, wobbly knees and that strange feeling deep inside your belly. Who does not know these symptoms?*

The most popular experiences were the first day at a new school and the first day in a new country or city.

There were a number of problems in the way some candidates approached the question. Many developed the first two content points very well but paid very little attention to the third major content point, giving advice to someone in the same situation. This was sometimes addressed but in very general terms and led to an unbalanced answer. Sometimes the final point was omitted altogether, which affected the candidate's mark substantially. Another problem was that some candidates talked about an experience over a period of time, sometimes years, e.g. moving to a different country, rather than a first day experience, which again led to an unbalanced answer.

Question 4

This was not a popular question and in the sample none of the Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates attempted this question. The task was to write a review of a book or a film which represents life in the candidate's country either now or in the past. There were two main content points: to describe what happens in the book/film and to explain why it gives a realistic picture of the country in question.

In the candidature as a whole this question did not attract a large number of answers. Stronger candidates were able to produce a well organised review using a variety of structures and descriptive language and engaged the reader's interest. Weaker candidates tended to concentrate overly on the description of the book/film, leading to an unbalanced answer. Some ignored the second content point altogether and therefore did not complete the task.

Question 5

Question 5 is the work-based question and is directed at candidates who have experience of the world of work. It should not be attempted by a candidate unless they have such experience. Very few Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates attempted this question and there was only one example in the sample.

The task asked the candidate to write a proposal to his/her line manager requesting permission to attend a business management course in the USA. There were three parts to the task: describing what the course includes, explaining how the company would benefit from the candidate's attendance on the course and persuading the line manager to give permission.

In general stronger candidates were able to relate the question to their own work environment. They organised the proposal well, developed all the main points and would have persuaded the line manager to support their request to attend the course. Weaker candidates tended to use the wrong register and tone for a proposal of this kind. Some candidates gave unbalanced answers, writing an overlong description of the course and some omitted one or more of the major content points.

Language Performance

The NRW candidates demonstrated an above-average language ability. Generally speaking, answers were well organised, using paragraphs and cohesive devices and were within the required word range. Only a few candidates failed to use paragraphs or used too many paragraphs.

Accuracy was generally good. Some candidates produced virtually flawless answers, others often made ambitious attempts to use vocabulary that were not always successful, with some influence from their first language. Word order was usually not a problem.

There were a few examples of errors which impeded communication:

*In the year 200 I've made a two-weeks stage in a little pharmacy...
I like to look back on that day because it coined to me in many ways...
You regard things differently than you used to be...*

On the other hand there were examples of excellent range of vocabulary and structure and also natural and controlled use of the language:

*On the one hand I was expected to meet new people, make new friends, and I looked forward to this change, but on the other hand I was afraid and very unhappy because I would have to leave my best friends behind...
What we must insist on is a public apology in your newspaper, including a correction of the mistakes you made, to restore out good reputation...*

Common types of errors found can be summarised as follows:

- use of another past tense instead of the past perfect
- misuse of a word: confess/admit, when/if, place/replace, until/by, layover/stopover, hurt/blessed, realise, expect, assure/ensure
- spelling: easily, advice/advise, our/hour, beeing
- correct tense with 'since'
- the sequence of tenses in reported speech
- singular and plural agreement of noun and verb forms: 'Your information have been wrong'
- the uncountable word 'training' was frequently made countable 'a training'

General suggestions for improved performance

- The rubric for each question should be read carefully. The content points should be identified. The finished answer should be checked to ensure all points have been included.
- When planning, candidates should think about the organisation as a whole. They should try and give a balanced answer, developing all content points as much as possible, and use paragraphs and linking devices to good effect.
- During preparation courses candidates should be encouraged to spend some time editing their writing, to try and identify errors they commonly make in grammar or vocabulary, especially where there is influence from German.
- Register is an important aspect of writing. Candidates should be aware of the main differences between formal and informal English and should be able to reflect this consistently in their writing, especially if they are aiming for a higher band.
- In preparation candidates should look carefully at the types of writing they might be asked to produce e.g. formal/informal letter, report, proposal, article, entry etc. and identify and practise using the key features of each of these genres.

Conclusion

Most of the Nordrhein-Westfalen candidates gave an above average performance in the Writing paper. Their writing was usually fluent and well organised and attempts were made to use a good range of language and to engage the reader with descriptive and often emotive texts. They have clearly been well prepared by their teachers.

Candidates performed well in both sections of the paper. Further work in the areas outlined above will enable them to improve further.

5. CAE SPEAKING

Report on Candidates' Speaking Performance

Kathy Gude
Chair, CAE Speaking

Background information

The CAE Speaking test is taken by pairs of candidates (or sometimes a group of three at the end of an examining session if there is an uneven number of candidates). The test consists of four parts and lasts 15 minutes (the timing is increased for a group of three). The findings of this report were informed by recordings of the candidates' performances and questionnaires completed by their examiners.

Part 1 lasts three minutes. It consists of a three-way conversation between the candidates and the interlocutor and focuses on general interactional and social language. Candidates are asked to respond to one another's questions about themselves and to the interlocutor's questions.

Part 2 consists of individual one-minute long turns with brief responses from the listening candidate. In turn, each candidate is given one of a possible 20 tasks. This part focuses on organising a larger unit of discourse by describing, comparing and contrasting, and speculating.

Part 3 lasts four minutes. Candidates are given visual and spoken prompts, which are used in a decision-making task. Candidates do one of a possible ten tasks together. Part 3 focuses on negotiating and collaborating, discussing, evaluating, speculating, expressing and justifying opinions, agreeing and/or disagreeing, decision-making and/or selecting.

Part 4 lasts about four minutes and is related to the Part 3 task. It consists of a three-way conversation between the candidates and the interlocutor, who asks questions exploring further the topics or issues of the Part 3 task. The focus is on exchanging information, expressing and justifying opinions, agreeing and/or disagreeing.

Overall performance

The overall standard of the Nordrhein-Westfalen CAE candidates in the Speaking component was high, and it was in this component that they did best compared to the rest of the world (see 3.2). Most candidates seemed confident and at ease with the language, and usually interacted well with one another, even when they were in a group of three. They used a range of vocabulary and structures, on the whole used appropriate register, and were easy to understand, despite the use of some inappropriate rising intonation at the end of phrases, clauses and sentences.

Task performance

Part 1

The aim of Part 1 is to put candidates at their ease and find out a little about them. Almost all the candidates were able to respond appropriately and without undue hesitation to questions about themselves, extending their answers when appropriate:

I plan on going to Thailand in the summer.

I have a brother who will turn 30 in April – he basically replaced my father. / My grandfather was the one who had the most influence on me, ...

I prefer the summer because the sun's always shining and it's warm ... I don't like the winter because of the bad weather.

I'm not that fond of sports.

All in all, I think, ...

I don't really like big city life, living in a small town has advantages.

Some kinds of music I wouldn't listen to.

I like music but I'm also fascinated by science.

Candidates performed best when they had a specific example related to their own experience to talk about, e.g. a hobby. They talked about a circus project, an active interest in music, going to concerts, etc.

Sometimes candidates made basic errors or used inappropriate vocabulary:

I am born...

I am living here since ten years.

I made the experience that...

Younger candidates found it more difficult to extend their answers. More classroom practice for this part of the test (without resorting to rehearsed speeches) might help students realise that they should always try to extend their answers and should avoid closure techniques, e.g. 'I just enjoy it', (no reason given). They should also try to express an opinion, even if they have never thought about an issue. A response like, 'I can't tell you because it's a wide-open question', does not allow candidate to show what they can do.

Some candidates seemed embarrassed and slightly hesitant when told to ask each other questions. They seemed rather unwilling to take responsibility for the interaction themselves or to try and reformulate the interlocutor's prompt. They often just listened to the interlocutor's prompt, started talking about themselves, then said to their partner, 'And you?'

Part 2

In Part 2, candidates are expected to speak on their own for one minute. Most candidates managed to do this. Those who made the most successful attempts began to speak immediately so that they could maximise the time they had for the task. They also remembered both parts of the task they were asked to do and addressed both parts in their long turn. For example, when talking about pictures showing people experiencing difficulties, rather than simply describing what they could see in the pictures, they remembered to talk about 'what might have caused these difficulties and how easy it might be for the people to deal with them'.

Many candidates produced appropriate vocabulary and a range of structures, and speculated on the content of the pictures:

He needs to be calmed down.

It's probably for an exhibition or something.

It would be easier for him to cope with this difficulty.

... with the basic upkeep of the house.

Some candidates showed good discourse management skills and attempted to compare and contrast the visuals:

In contrast to that ...

On the other hand ...

Whereas ...

This picture seems to contradict the one on the left.

The picture I mentioned first is much more lively.

However, in this part of the test, there were also some areas in which candidates could improve their performance.

Many candidates simply described the pictures rather than doing the task, which would have given them more opportunity to use a range of vocabulary and structures. At CAE level, a simple description of what is in the pictures is not enough.

Often, candidates did not speculate about the visuals, which robbed them of an opportunity to introduce their own views into their long turn.

Some candidates might have compared and contrasted the pictures more effectively if they had had a wider range of vocabulary. Others had a tendency to repeat themselves.

Some candidates used 'learned' link words and connectors, which stood out from the rest of their somewhat lower-register performance. The use of link words and connectors is to be encouraged but it should be an obvious accompaniment to overall language ability, not seem to be there simply because a few set phrases have been learned.

Some candidates spent so long on one picture that they had no time to talk about any others. While candidates are not required to talk about all the pictures (usually only two or three), talking about only one leads to unnecessary repetition and an overexploitation of the content of the picture, rather than a concentration on the task itself, e.g. 'You can see .. and here you can see...'

Some candidates began their long turn by saying, 'I will compare and contrast these two pictures.' This wastes valuable time. It is better to begin talking about the pictures immediately. It will be obvious which pictures are being focused on.

Part 2 (Listening candidate's response)

Only a short response is required to this question (about 20 seconds) as it is merely inviting a reaction after their partner's long turn. Candidates should not launch into a long explanation or justification of their opinion in this part of the test. For example, when asked to choose 'the most important one', this reply was rambling and almost became a second long turn, rather than the short response it should have been, e.g. 'Well, I think the one who is at the dentist and the one who is at the hairdresser...'

A brief response + an explanation is sufficient:

*Probably the one with the sailing boat because everyone has to work together so ...
The most appealing one for me is this one here...*

In the case of a group of three, candidates were invited to talk about the pictures they had all described together, and a longer time was allowed for this.

Part 3

Candidates remembered the different parts of the task, e.g. talking about what effect it might have on people if they do these activities too often, then deciding which might be the most harmful. They speculated about or evaluated the content of each picture in turn, leaving their ultimate decision to the end of the time available.

Many candidates used effective interactive strategies for agreeing with one another, good collaboration techniques, and expressed their own opinions:

*I will go along with what you said because flying...
Maybe we can talk about problems with cell phones...
But maybe we can all agree about this picture...
As Lina said
Do you have any idea how we could solve this problem?
I don't think getting married is the number one objective of people leaving school.
I know what you mean.
Well, we still have to decide about which one we think is the most useful, don't we?
Well, let's turn to the next picture. For a family activity, it might be very useful because it creates a feeling of togetherness.*

However, those who did not remain focused on the task and lost direction, or who dismissed the visuals much too quickly, e.g. 'This one's cute', and those who lacked extension strategies had problems keeping the conversation going for four minutes. Candidates could improve their

performance by not reaching their decisions or conclusions too quickly, leaving themselves with nothing to talk about for the rest of the time available.

Occasionally, candidates' intonation was rather monotonous, e.g. the overuse of fall>rise instead of rise>fall.

Some candidates just took turns saying something, simply describing a picture for about 20 seconds and giving a brief opinion beginning, 'I think ...', , then the other candidate did the same, rather than both having an interactive discussion.

Part 4

Many candidates seemed relaxed by this stage of the test and maximised their opportunities by giving full answers, and stating their opinions without pausing too long to think about what they were going to say. They answered quickly and confidently and reacted to each other's responses. They also justified their opinions and tried to broaden out the topic:

*I personally think the smoking is a great risk...
The pace of life is getting faster and faster.
People just aren't able to cope with a fast lifestyle.
... leads to psychological problems.
There definitely need to be some guidelines.
In addition to that, ...
Yes, that's the best part of music, I would say. Don't you think so?
You might be right, but on the other hand, there's always the price to consider.*

Some candidates gave examples from their own personal experience to support their opinions, e.g. when talking about the use of computers in the classroom. Other examples include: 'I never bought a magazine. I don't know what they get from it.'

To perform well in this part of the test, it is important to think quickly and find something relevant to say. Some candidates found it more difficult to do this than others but kept talking nevertheless, e.g. 'I can't really think of other things that we do...'

Others, however, did not seem to be particularly interested in the topics they talked about, or to have opinions, counter opinions or arguments. Some ran out of things to say and failed to extend their responses, which restricted the range of the language they produced. For example, when asked what they thought our lives would be like in ten years' time, they found it difficult to think of anything to say.

Assessment criteria

Grammar

Many candidates produced a good range of structures to deal with the tasks:

*TV is an annoying machine
I'm really enjoying making plans
You have to consider how to manage your finances.
Luckily I have a car .
... would never think of doing that.
... as important as having a family
You wouldn't be able to see the light if it wasn't dark.
If you want to learn English well, the best way – apart from going to the country – is to read books.*

Others, however, were much less competent and made errors in tenses, prepositions, plurals, word order, collocations, agreement and articles, e.g.

<i>The picture is showing ...</i>	<i>..doesn't have many space for his legs ...</i>
<i>I've been having a mobile phone since I was 12.</i>	<i>It's not pretty important.</i>
<i>I studied since I'm 11.</i>	<i>I look forward to go to Australia.</i>
<i>I already experienced it.</i>	<i>... looks like as if they're having fun</i>
<i>In the radio...</i>	<i>... in the nature.</i>
<i>On this picture...</i>	<i>You have to look for where to go.</i>
<i>I agree to Thomas.</i>	<i>... women which are ...</i>
<i>informations/imaginations/mens/womens</i>	<i>If it's builded..</i>
<i>I spent there many time.</i>	

Vocabulary

There were many good examples of a range of vocabulary:

<i>the most powerful expression...</i>	<i>As far as I'm concerned, ...</i>
<i>fascinated</i>	<i>The second picture depicts ...</i>
<i>chilly</i>	<i>.. his facial expression ...</i>
<i>role model</i>	<i>... impact ...</i>
<i>social skills</i>	<i>... symbol ...</i>
<i>gourmet</i>	<i>back-up...</i>
<i>They do have an impact.</i>	<i>... equipment ...</i>
<i>... maintain relations ...</i>	<i>There's much emphasis put on the sunlight.</i>
<i>You can switch off a bit from work.</i>	<i>... conductor ...</i>
<i>... to some extent ..</i>	<i>... creativity</i>
<i>... medieval times ...</i>	

There were also inappropriacies:

I make a party to my birthday.
I make photographs.
I make my homework.
I like classic music.
'possibility' (for 'chance')/ 'opportunity'
You're understandable with English.
I better like ... (for 'I prefer')
Plants and animals we haven't 'experienced' yet.
.. which can be overflowed... (for 'flooded')
The body needs some actions .. (for 'exercise')
This looks very great.
... passionated... (for passionate)
... expedition... (for exhibition)
... we had a very funny time... (for 'it was great fun/we had a good time')

Discourse Management

Many students showed good discourse management (relevance, coherence and extent):

If we don't have any rules ..the society [society] would just be chaotic. [* corrected version]*
... to be able to put forward your arguments and defend yourself...
Good friends should always be there when you need them.
Actually, I don't agree with ...
In this picture, they're having fun but in the other picture, it's just work.
In both pictures, you need to trust the people because it could be dangerous.
They shouldn't be too strict, but there certainly should be some guidelines.
... because otherwise ...

*They may have been camping all day and now they are relaxing by the fire.
I've done this recently. You have to be concentrated [* concentrate] – looking into the mirror – paying attention to the traffic. You need mental skills for driving.
I don't read magazines but there are so many of them on sale that there must be a demand for them.
A lot of people care about their outer appearance. And, moreover, when someone goes to a fitness centre, it's because usually they want to lose weight.
I just find it boring because you look at pictures and you don't understand the feelings the artist had at that moment.*

Some candidates, however, extended their responses unnecessarily at times. For example, they started telling the interlocutor all about their family history when asked, 'Where are you from?' A short answer is all that is required to this Part 1 question.

Other candidates left utterances unfinished and hesitated, resorting to repetitive 'errs' or 'ums', repeated themselves, petered out with 'yeah', used inappropriate expressions to compare and contrast the pictures in Part 2, or used closure techniques, e.g.

*It's very nice to have fun with friends because ...[end of sentence]
In the under picture ...
On the contrary of the second picture ...
This man is bored – he has a boring work.
Yeah, you can have a lot of feelings ... in ehm, their ehm ... you see maybe a historical film.
She's thinking about ... umm ... whatever.
... and ... yeah ... that's all*

Pronunciation

Some candidates had excellent pronunciation. The majority of candidates were easy to understand and produced clear, unambiguous, individual sounds and appropriate word stress and rhythm:

*My **f**avourite one is the **c**amera.
Well, **y**es, there **i**s a difference.
You have to **s**tart all over again.
Childish joy and happiness that **e**ven **a**dults sometimes feel.
Some money is **r**eally **n**ecessary.
Accidents are sometimes **l**ethal.
It's quite a **g**ood neighbourhood and not so **i**mpersonal as living in a **b**ig **t**own.*

Others had some problems with individual sounds, e.g. with the diphthong 'th', and used long vowels instead of short ones:

<i>injury</i>	'j' pronounced like a 'y'
<i>der</i>	for 'there'
<i>de</i>	for 'the'
<i>bekoss</i>	for 'because'
<i>creators</i>	for 'creatures'
<i>a curse</i>	for 'course'
<i>a ter – ass</i>	for 'terrace'

Some candidates had a hesitant, staccato delivery, or used flat, monotonous intonation and used stress inappropriately:

***a**broad
photograph**er**
hotel
product
technique
interest**ing**
mobile phone*

Interactive Communication

On the whole, candidates used appropriate interactive devices and responses, and were able to turn take:

I have the same opinion.
That's what I think, too.
That's right.
I would suggest ...
I would stress ...
I totally agree with you.
That's my problem, too.
How do you feel about that?/ So, how do you feel about it?
I've changed my mind about that.
Let's move on...
... from that point of view ...
Well, I agree with you but I would say...
I'm not sure what you mean.
Yes, as Philip said ...

Others had a tendency in Part 3 to say what they thought, then wait for their partner to say something, or finish every sentence with 'What do you think?' This results in a rather unnatural exchange of ideas and opinions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the overall standard was high. Candidates who appear on the sample tapes generally performed quite well. Candidates who seemed more mature and/or had obviously been prepared for the test gave a competent performance.

It is noticeable that to reach the required CAE standard, candidates need to use a range of grammatical structures and vocabulary accurately and appropriately. They also need to extend their utterances where appropriate and draw on their own experience to do this if possible. Younger candidates need to be very well-prepared and practice each part of the speaking test thoroughly. Candidates also need to master organising their thoughts and ideas when doing the Part 2 task, not merely describe the pictures, and use effective communicative strategies, not simply learn rehearsed set phrases, particularly in Part 3.

APPENDIX A

Cambridge Advanced English (CAE) in a European context

The Common European Framework

University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations are linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), published by the Council of Europe.

CAE is set at Level C1 (Effective Proficiency).

The CEFR provides a model of language ability in the European context to be used by all those involved in the field of language learning. The framework document includes sections on the assessment of language ability in the context of the model and so provides the theoretical background which supports a communicative approach to language test design and development. This allows those designing and administering language tests to do so under the umbrella of a shared language testing system, to share a theoretical starting point and so produce tests that have a definite location and identity within the framework. The framework is further supported by a supplementary document entitled the *Users' Guide for Examiners*. This guide uses the Framework as a point of departure to provide models of test design and development with the aim of establishing European and international standards of test production.

Cambridge ESOL, a part of Cambridge Assessment, formerly known as UCLES and a non-teaching department of the University of Cambridge, has been closely involved with the development of the framework document and in particular with the *Users' Guide for Examiners*. Many of the models described in the Guide draw very closely on the experience of those designing and producing tests on a large scale in Cambridge. The focus of the Guide is on the principles that lie behind good practice. Each test will have its own individual character in order to meet the specific needs of its users. What the Guide provides is a model of suitable processes, based on clear principles, that allows valid tests to be produced, whatever the immediate context.

The Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE)

One example of the Common European Framework being used in practice is the ALTE system of levels. ALTE is the Association of Language Testers in Europe and Cambridge ESOL is a member of the Association. ALTE was formed in 1990, and its 31 members (including the Goethe Institut) are all providers of language examinations and certificates from European countries.

The three main objectives of ALTE are as follows:

1. to establish common levels of proficiency in order to promote the trans-national recognition of certification in Europe;
2. to establish common standards for all stages of the testing process: this is for test development, marking and grading, reporting of test results, test analysis and reporting of findings;
3. to collaborate on joint projects and in the exchange of ideas and know-how.

The ALTE Code of Practice focuses on the responsibilities of both examination providers and examination users and covers four main areas:

- developing examinations
- interpreting examination results
- striving for fairness
- informing examination takers

Five levels of proficiency have been defined for the tests produced by ALTE users and these are reflected in the levels offered in the Cambridge ESOL examinations. These levels also correspond to the CEFR.

The chart below gives an overview of the Cambridge ESOL Main Suite - Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE), Certificate in Advanced English (CAE), First Certificate in English (FCE), Preliminary English Test (PET) and Key English Test (KET), and Cambridge Young Learner English Tests (YLE), and where they fit on the ALTE and European frameworks:

Cambridge	ALTE levels	European Framework Levels
CPE	Level 5	C2 Mastery
CAE	Level 4	C1 Effective Proficiency
FCE	Level 3	B2 Vantage
PET	Level 2	B1 Threshold
KET/Flyers	Level 1	A2 Waystage
Movers/Starters		A1 Breakthrough

Flyers / Movers / Starters - YLE levels

The ALTE 'Can Do' project

An important project that ALTE is involved in is the development of a series of competency-oriented 'Can Do' statements. These statements cover activities in three categories - work, social/tourist and study - and are anchored to the CEFR. The statements provide a tool for those involved in teaching and testing language students as well as a self-assessment tool for the learners themselves.

On the next page are some examples of 'Can Do' statements at ALTE Level 3 (First Certificate in English; B2 - CEFR). A Nordrhein-Westfalen pupil with a pass at FCE should typically be able to do activities described at B2 level and be working towards language competencies at C1 level. A Nordrhein-Westfalen pupil with a pass at CAE should be able to do activities described at C1 level.

'Can Do' statements at B2 ● First Certificate in English Level (FCE)

Listening/Speaking

- can keep up a conversation on a fairly wide range of topics
- can present his/her own opinions and justify opinions
- can ask questions, for example for reasons, clarification
- can give a clear presentation on a familiar topic

Reading

- can understand opinions where these are simply expressed
- can read the media for information quickly and with good understanding
- can scan text for relevant information and understand detailed instructions or advice

Writing

- can express opinions and give reasons
- can present arguments, using a limited range of expression
- can make notes that will be of some limited use for essay or revision purposes

'Can Do' statements at C1 ● Certificate in Advanced English (CAE)

Listening/Speaking

- can contribute effectively to meetings and seminars within own area of work or keep up a casual conversation with a good degree of fluency, coping with abstract expressions.

Reading

- can read quickly enough to cope with an academic course, to read the media for information or to understand non-standard correspondence.

Writing

- can prepare/draft professional correspondence, take reasonably accurate notes in meetings or write an essay which shows an ability to communicate.

