

Content of the Cambridge English: First

The *Cambridge English: First* examination consists of four papers. The Reading and Use of English paper carries 40% of the marks, while the Writing, Listening and Speaking papers each carry 20% of the marks. It is not necessary to pass all four papers in order to pass the examination. If you achieve a grade A in the examination, you will be awarded a *Cambridge English: First* certificate at C1 level. If you achieve grade B or C, you will be awarded a *Cambridge English: First* certificate at B2 level. If your performance is below B2, but falls within Level B1, you will get a *Cambridge English* certificate stating that you demonstrated ability at B1 level.

As well as being told your grade, you will also be given a Statement of Results – a graphical profile of your performance, i.e. it will show whether you have done especially well or badly on some of the papers.

Paper 1 Reading and Use of English 1 hour 15 minutes

There are seven parts to this paper and they are always in the same order. The first four parts test your grammar and vocabulary. The last three parts each contain a text and a comprehension task. The texts used are from newspaper and magazine articles, fiction and reviews.

Part	Task type	Number of questions	Task format	Objective Exam folder
1	Multiple choice gap-fill, mainly testing vocabulary	8	You must choose which word from four answers completes each of the eight gaps in a text.	4 (52–53)
2	Open gap-fill, testing mainly grammar	8	You must complete a text with eight gaps.	3 (38–39)
3	Word formation	8	You need to use the right form of a given word to fill the gaps in a text containing eight gaps.	2 (26–27)
4	Key word transformations testing grammar and vocabulary	6	You must complete a sentence with a given word, so that it means the same as the first sentence.	1 (14–15)
5	Multiple choice	6	You must read a text and answer multiple-choice questions with four options: A, B, C or D.	Fiction 10 (128–129) Non-fiction 12 (152–153)
6	Gapped text	6	You must read a text with sentences removed. You need to use the missing sentences to complete the text.	9 (114–115)
7	Multiple matching	10	You must answer the questions by finding the relevant information in the text or texts.	11 (140–141)

Paper 2 Writing 1 hour 20 minutes

There are two parts to this paper. Part 1 is compulsory, you have to answer it. In Part 2 there are three questions and you must choose one. Each part carries equal marks and you are expected to write between 140–190 words for Part 1 and 140–190 for Part 2.

Part	Task type	Number of tasks	Task format	Objective Writing folder
1	Question 1 Writing an essay	1 compulsory	An essay presented through rubric and short notes.	2 (32–33); 4 (58–59); 8 (108–109)
2	Questions 2–4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an article • a letter or email • a report • a review 	One task to be selected from a choice of three	You are given a choice of topics and you have to respond to one of them in the way specified.	Informal letters and emails 1 (20–21); 10 (134–5) Letters of application 7 (96–97); Articles 5 (70–71); 12 (158–159); Reviews 6 (82–83); 9 (120–121); Reports 3 (44–45); 11 (146–147)

Paper 3 Listening about 40 minutes

There are four parts to this paper. Each part is heard twice. The texts are a variety of types with either one speaker or more than one.

Part	Task type	Number of questions	Task format	Objective Exam folder
1	Multiple choice	8	You hear short, unrelated extracts, each about 30 seconds, with either one or two speakers. You must choose an answer from A, B or C.	6 (76–77)
2	Sentence completion	10	You hear one speaker and this part lasts about three minutes. You must write a word or short phrase to complete the sentences.	5 (64–65)
3	Multiple matching	5	You hear five unrelated extracts with a common theme. Each lasts about 30 seconds. You must choose the correct answer from a list of eight.	7 (90–91)
4	Multiple choice	7	You hear an interview or a conversation of about three minutes. You must choose an answer from A, B or C.	8 (102–103)

Paper 4 Speaking about 14 minutes

There are four parts to this paper. There are usually two of you taking the examination and two examiners. This paper tests your accuracy, vocabulary, pronunciation and your ability to communicate and complete the tasks.

Part	Task type	Time	Format	Objective Speaking folder
1	The interviewer asks each candidate some questions.	2 minutes	You are asked to give information about yourself.	Speaking folder (162–163)
2	Each candidate talks to the interviewer for about 1 minute.	4 minutes	You have to talk about two pictures and then comment on the other candidate's pictures.	Speaking folder (162–163)
3	Candidates have to discuss a task together.	4 minutes	You are given some material in the form of a discussion question and five prompts, presented as a mind map, to discuss with the other candidate.	Speaking folder (162–163)
4	Candidates offer opinions relating to the task they have just completed.	4 minutes	The interviewer will join in with your discussion.	Speaking folder (162–163)