

Oxford House College, London - CPE: Certificate of Proficiency in English

What is CPE?

The Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE) is the highest level of the Cambridge exams in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). It is a very advanced level exam, set at Level C2 of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework for modern languages.

Successful candidates receive a certificate awarded by University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations. The certificate is recognised by universities and employers throughout the world. All candidates receive a statement of results, showing how they performed in each of the five papers.

CPE is provided by University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations - a department of the University of Cambridge in England.

Who is CPE for?

CPE is for learners who have achieved a high level of language skills and are able to function effectively in almost any English-speaking context. Successful candidates at this level are approaching a standard of English similar to that of an educated native speaker. The exam also requires an appropriate level of educational and personal maturity.

Every year over 45,000 people take the CPE exam in more than 80 countries, and success at this level represents a significant personal achievement.

Why choose CPE?

CPE is an invaluable qualification for anyone who wants to work or study abroad, or to develop a career which requires language skills, including business, medicine, engineering and many other professions. CPE certificates are recognised by institutions of higher education in many countries - including almost all universities in the United Kingdom and a rapidly growing number in the USA. Employers throughout the world also recognise CPE.

Studying for CPE helps learners to improve their language skills and to learn to use them in a wide range of contexts. Because many aspects of the exams are based on realistic tasks, gaining the CPE certificate demonstrates that learners have progressed beyond a good knowledge of vocabulary and grammar to actually using the language.

What does the exam involve?

CPE has five papers Reading | Writing | English in Use | Listening | Speaking. Each of the written papers is returned to Cambridge for marking and assessment. The Speaking Test is conducted by two locally based examiners who examine candidates face to face. All examiners are accredited by Cambridge ESOL.

Reading (Paper 1) 1 hour 30 minutes

The Reading paper assesses candidates' ability to read and understand texts taken from a wide range of sources, including fiction and non-fiction books, journals, newspapers and magazines. Candidates are expected to understand the meaning of written English at word, phrase, sentence, paragraph and whole text level. It includes understanding of text content, organisation and structure, and the development of ideas, opinions and attitudes.

Writing (Paper 2) 2 hours

The Writing paper assesses candidates' ability to write non-specialised texts types such as letters, articles, reports and reviews for a given purpose and target reader, covering a wide range of topics. The paper also includes questions on set texts. Responses are of 300-350 words in length.

Use of English (Paper 3) 1 hour 30 minutes

In the Use of English paper, candidates are expected to demonstrate their knowledge and control of the language system by completing various tasks at word, sentence and text level. These include gap-filling and word formation exercises, comprehension questions and a summary writing task..

Listening (Paper 4) 40 minutes (approx.)

The Listening paper assesses the ability to listen to and understand texts taken from a variety of text types including interviews, discussions, lectures and conversations. It tests the ability to understand the meaning of spoken English, to extract information from a spoken text and to understand speakers' attitudes and opinions.

Speaking (Paper 5) 19 minutes

The Speaking Test assesses candidates' ability to interact in conversational English in a range of contexts. The paper contains three parts, which take the form of an interview section, a collaborative task and individual long-turns with follow-up discussion. Candidates are provided with picture and written stimulus. Candidates normally take the Speaking Test in pairs.

If you have any questions about studying the Cambridge CPE course at Oxford House College, please contact us:

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