

C2 Proficiency – an overview

CEFR LEVEL C2

C2 Proficiency is the highest level exam in the Cambridge English range. It proves that a student has the language ability to:

- study demanding subjects at the highest levels, including postgraduate and PhD programmes
- negotiate and persuade effectively at senior management level in international business settings.

You can expect a student with C2 Proficiency to be able to:

- understand documents, correspondence and reports, including the finer points of complex texts
- make accurate and complete notes during the course of a lecture, seminar or tutorial
- advise on or talk about sensitive issues
- understand colloquial asides and cultural reference.

KEY FACTS

Global availability	2,800 test centres in more than 130 countries worldwide offer Cambridge English exams. To find an exam centre, visit cambridgeenglish.org/centresearch .
Exam dates	Exams can be taken throughout the year, with exam sessions for digital tests available up to 365 days a year.
Format of exam	C2 Proficiency can be taken as either a digital or paper-based exam.
Results format	Results for C2 Proficiency are given on the Cambridge English Scale. The exam reports on the scale between 162 and 230. For more information about the scale, visit cambridgeenglish.org/cambridgeenglishscale .
Results issued	5-10 working days for the digital version. 4-6 weeks from exam date for paper-based version.
Expiry of results	C2 Proficiency is an in-depth exam, rather than a 'snapshot' test, so results do not expire. Universities and colleges can choose how long to accept results.
Recognition	The exam is accepted by thousands of universities, government bodies and employers around the world. A full list can be seen at cambridgeenglish.org/recognition .

What's in the exam?

C2 Proficiency is made up of four papers to test different aspects of candidates' English skills.

Paper		Content	Shows students can ...
	Reading and use of English (1 hour 30 minutes)	7 parts/ 53 questions	understand various documents, including the finer points of complex texts. Students are also expected to show their control of grammar and use of vocabulary.
	Writing (1 hour 30 minutes)	2 parts	write on any subject with good expression and accuracy. The paper includes a compulsory essay.
	Listening (about 40 minutes)	4 parts/ 30 questions	understand a range of spoken materials, such as lectures, speeches and interviews.
	Speaking (16 minutes per pair of candidates)	3 parts	express themselves confidently and effectively in a range of situations.

The overall score is calculated by averaging the scores achieved in Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking and Use of English. The weighting of each of the four skills and Use of English is equal.



Format

Candidates can choose to take the paper-based or a digital version of the exam.

The Speaking test is face to face and taken with two examiners and at least one other candidate. The paired format means candidates experience a more authentic exercise in communication, which gives a more reliable measure of their ability to use English.



Availability

With Cambridge English Qualifications Digital, exam sessions are available up to 365 days a year, offering flexibility and fast results for candidates.

C2 Proficiency: Paper 1

READING AND USE OF ENGLISH – EXAM STRUCTURE AND TASKS

The Reading and Use of English paper uses a variety of different tasks requiring candidates to demonstrate practical reading skills.

Students successful in this part of the exam have a level of reading skill appropriate for studying demanding subjects at university level. They have demonstrated the ability not only to identify detail in a text quickly and reliably, but also to understand its structure, cohesion and coherence.

The paper also tests students' vocabulary and ability to use grammar to manipulate language with precision.

How is the paper marked?

The Reading and Use of English paper contains a series of items which are marked as either correct or incorrect.

Cambridge English uses Rasch (1960/1980) analysis to ensure that a consistent standard is applied in the grading of objectively marked components, accounting for differences in difficulty between them. This is achieved by calibrating the difficulty of all the items in a given test onto the same scale. This calibration allows us to determine the raw marks for each test paper that represent a predetermined level of ability – the standard needed to achieve a particular grade or level.

Although one paper, marks for Reading and marks for Use of English are aggregated separately in order to produce two separate scores on the Cambridge English Scale. Parts 1, 5, 6 and 7 are Reading tasks, and Parts 2, 3 and 4 are Use of English tasks.

Reading and Use of English at a glance

FORMAT	The paper contains seven parts. For Parts 1 to 4 , the test contains texts with accompanying grammar and/or vocabulary tasks, plus separate items with a grammar and/or vocabulary focus. For Parts 5 to 7 , the test contains a range of texts and accompanying reading comprehension tasks.
TIMING	1 hour 30 minutes
NO. OF PARTS	7
NO. OF QUESTIONS	53
MARKS	For Parts 1 to 3 , each correct answer receives 1 mark. For Part 4 , each correct answer receives up to 2 marks. For Parts 5 to 6 , each correct answer receives 2 marks. For Part 7 , each correct answer receives 1 mark.

Reading and Use of English tasks

1 hour 30 mins

The paper contains seven parts. The Reading section consists of Parts 5, 6 and 7 of the paper. The Use of English section consists of Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Part	Number of questions	Number of marks	Task types	Focus	Format
1	8	8	Multiple-choice cloze	The main focus is on vocabulary, e.g. idioms, collocations, fixed phrases, complementation, phrasal verbs, semantic precision.	A single text with eight gaps. Candidates must choose one word or phrase from a set of four to fill each gap.
2	8	8	Open cloze	The main focus is on awareness and control of grammar with some focus on vocabulary.	A modified cloze test consisting of a text with eight gaps. Candidates think of the word which best fits each gap.
3	8	8	Word formation	The main focus is on vocabulary, in particular the use of affixation, internal changes and compounding in word formation.	A text containing eight gaps. Each gap corresponds to a word. The stems of the missing words are given beside the text and must be changed to form the missing word.
4	6	12	Key word transformation	The focus is on grammar, vocabulary and collocation.	Six discrete items with a lead-in sentence and a gapped response to complete in 3–8 words including a given 'key' word.
5	6	12	Multiple choice	The focus is on the understanding of detail, opinion, attitude, tone, purpose, main idea, gist, meaning from context, implication and text organisation features (exemplification, reference).	A text followed by six 4-option multiple-choice questions.
6	7	14	Gapped text	The focus is on the understanding of cohesion, coherence, text structure and global meaning.	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 sentences have been removed.
7	10	10	Multiple matching	Understanding of detail, opinion, attitude and specific information.	A text, or several short texts, preceded by multiple-matching questions. Candidates must match a prompt to elements in the text.
Total	53	72			

C2 Proficiency: Paper 1 sample tasks

READING AND USE OF ENGLISH PART 1 - MULTIPLE-CHOICE CLOZE

Part 1

For questions 1 – 8, read the text below and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) best fits each gap. Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

There is an example at the beginning (0).

0 A dispute B argument C dissent D challenge

0	☒ A	☐ B	☐ C	☐ D
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Soap operas

It is surely beyond (0) that soap opera is the most consistently popular type of television programme in the world. It has succeeded in (1) the imagination of millions since it first (2) as a genre back in the 1930s. The word 'soap' alludes to the role originally played by detergent manufacturers, who promoted their products during commercial breaks. Soap operas have been (3) as mindless entertainment, with viewers only (4) to these programmes in order to escape from reality.

Soaps are often set in friendly, tightly-knit neighbourhoods, evoking nostalgic feelings in some viewers, since such communities may no longer exist in many areas. The subject matter of soaps also (5) great appeal for viewers since the stories (6) focus on domestic problems they may have experienced themselves.

There has been a significant shift in attitudes with many soaps now (7) moral and social issues. The characters and situations (8) are complex and ambiguous, providing much food for thought and no easy answers.

Answer Key

Q	Part 4
1	B
2	B
3	D
4	A
5	B
6	D
7	B
8	C

- | | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1 A commanding | B capturing | C carrying | D conquering |
| 2 A originated | B emerged | C established | D inaugurated |
| 3 A disregarded | B deplored | C disapproved | D dismissed |
| 4 A resorting | B applying | C resigning | D adopting |
| 5 A catches | B holds | C bears | D brings |
| 6 A permanently | B uniformly | C perpetually | D invariably |
| 7 A enquiring | B addressing | C commenting | D interpreting |
| 8 A symbolised | B illustrated | C depicted | D represented |



Sample test

Download a complete sample test (including audio for the Listening paper) at camengli.sh/47JFkmT



READING AND USE OF ENGLISH PART 7 - MULTIPLE MATCHING

Part 7

You are going to read an article about whether the internet is changing our lives and the way we think. For questions 44 – 53, choose from the people (A – D). The people may be chosen more than once.

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

Which person gives each of these opinions about the internet?

Reservations about the benefits of universal access to it are unfounded.

44

It excels in its ability to disseminate facts.

45

Its power to sidetrack us can be both positive and negative.

46

It assists learning by exposing people to a wider range of ideas than was previously possible.

47

Much of the material on it is not original.

48

It enables us to follow up on ideas that suddenly occur to us.

49

It is only with time and practice that we can make best use of the internet.

50

The quality of material on it is questionable.

51

It still requires people to process the written word.

52

It has reduced the need to memorise information.

53

Is the internet changing our lives?

A Sarah

The internet often tells us what we think we know, spreading misinformation and nonsense while it's at it. It can substitute surface for depth, imitation for authenticity, and its passion for recycling would surpass the most committed environmentalist. In 10 years, I've seen thinking habits change dramatically: if information is not immediately available via a Google search, people are often completely at a loss. And of course a Google search merely provides the most popular answer, not necessarily the most accurate. Nevertheless, there is no question, to my mind, that the access to raw information provided by the internet is unparalleled. We've all read that the internet sounds the death knell of reading, but people read online constantly – we just call it surfing now. What's being read is changing, often for the worse; but it is also true that the internet increasingly provides a treasure trove of rare documents and images, and as long as we have free access to it, then the internet can certainly be a force for education and wisdom.

B Geoff

Sometimes I think my ability to concentrate is being nibbled away by the internet. In those quiet days before the internet, once you made it to your desk there wasn't much to do. Now you sit down and there's a universe of possibilities – many of them obscurely relevant to the work you should be getting on with – to tempt you. To think that I can be sitting here, trying to write something about the Swedish film director Ingmar Bergman and, a moment later, on the merest whim, while I'm in Swedish mode, can be watching a clip from a Swedish documentary about the jazz musician Don Cherry – that is a miracle (albeit one with a very potent side-effect, namely that it's unlikely I'll ever have the patience to sit through an entire Bergman film again). Then there's another thing. From the age of 16, I got into the habit of compiling detailed indexes in the backs of books of poetry and drama. So if there was a quote I needed for an assignment, I would spend hours going through my books, seeking it out. Now I just google key words.

C Colin

It's curious that some of the most vociferous critics of the internet – those who predict that it will produce generations of couch potatoes – are the very sorts of people who are benefiting most from this wonderful, liberating, organic extension of the human mind. They are academics, scientists, scholars and writers, who fear that the extraordinary technology they use every day is a danger to the unsophisticated. They underestimate the capacity of the human mind to capture and capitalise on new ways of storing and transmitting information. When I was at school I learned by heart great swathes of science textbooks. What a waste of my neurons, all clogged up with knowledge and rules that I can now obtain with the click of a mouse. At its best, the internet is no threat to our minds. It is another liberating extension of them, as significant as books, the abacus or the pocket calculator.

D Ian

The evidence that the internet has a deleterious effect on the brain is zero. In fact, by looking at the way human beings gain knowledge in general, you would probably argue the opposite. The opportunity to have multiple sources of information or opinion at your fingertips, and to dip into these rather than trawl laboriously through a whole book, is highly conducive to the acquisition of knowledge. It is being argued by some that the information coming into the brain from the internet is the wrong kind of information. It's too short, it doesn't have enough depth, so there is a qualitative loss. It's an interesting point, but the only way you could argue it is to say that people are misusing the internet. It's a bit like saying to someone who's never seen a car before and has no idea what it is: "Why don't you take it for a drive and you'll find out?" If you seek information on the internet like that, there's a good chance you'll have a crash. But that's because your experience has yet to grasp what a car is.

Answer Key

Q	Part 4
44	C
45	A
46	B
47	D
48	A
49	B
50	D
51	A
52	A
53	C



Sample test

Download a complete sample test (including audio for the Listening paper) at camengli.sh/47JFkmT



C2 Proficiency: Paper 2

WRITING – EXAM STRUCTURE AND TASKS

The Writing paper requires the candidate to produce two different pieces of writing, including a compulsory academic-style essay.

Students successful in this part of the exam can write at a level appropriate to graduate or postgraduate study. They can be expected to write essays for a specific audience using the correct tone and style. They can put forward a written argument coherently, with good organisational structure, and synthesise and integrate information and opinions from different sources into a single coherent argument.

Writing at a glance

FORMAT	The paper contains two parts
TIMING	1 hour 30 minutes
NO. OF PARTS	2
NO. OF QUESTIONS	Candidates are required to complete two tasks: a compulsory one in Part 1 and one from a choice of five in Part 2.
MARKS	Each question on this paper carries equal marks.

Writing tasks

1 hour 30 mins

The writing test contains two parts. Candidates are required to complete two tasks: a compulsory one in Part 1 and one from a choice of three in Part 2.

Part	Number of questions	Number of marks	Task types	Focus	Format
1	1	20	Writing a compulsory essay 240–280 words	The task focus is discursive.	Candidates are required to write an essay summarising and evaluating the key ideas contained in two texts of approximately 100 words each.
2	1	20	Writing (choose one task from a choice of three) 280–320 words	The focus is on writing one of the following: an article, an informal letter, a formal letter, a report or a review.	Contextualised writing tasks, each specified in no more than 70 words.
Total	2	40			

C2 Proficiency: How Writing is assessed

ASSESSMENT SCALES

Tasks are marked using assessment scales that were developed with explicit reference to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The scales consist of four subscales: Content, Communicative Achievement, Organisation, and Language:

- **Content** focuses on how well the candidate has fulfilled the task, in other words if they have done what they were asked to do.
- **Communicative Achievement** focuses on how appropriate the writing is for the task and whether the candidate has used the appropriate register.
- **Organisation** focuses on the way the candidate puts together the piece of writing, in other words if it is logical and ordered.
- **Language** focuses on vocabulary and grammar. This includes the range of language as well as how accurate it is.

Responses are marked on each subscale from 0 to 5.

When being marked, the length of responses and varieties of English are taken into account:

- Guidelines on length are provided for each task; responses which are too short may not have an adequate range of language and may not provide all the information that is required, while responses which are too long may contain irrelevant content and have a negative effect on the reader. These may affect candidates' marks on the relevant subscales.
- Candidates are expected to use a particular variety of English with some degree of consistency in areas such as spelling, and not, for example, switch from using a British spelling of a word to an American spelling of the same word.

- Candidates should also aim to use a range of tenses, expressions and vocabulary, even if these contain some minor mistakes. It's important for candidates to show the full range of their language ability and to be ambitious in their use of language.
- Non-impeding errors, which do not affect communication, will not necessarily be penalised. These include spelling, grammar or punctuation errors. However, errors which interfere with or cause a breakdown in communication will be treated more severely.

The subscale **Content** is common to all levels:

	Content
5	• All content is relevant to the task. • Target reader is fully informed.
3	• Minor irrelevances and/or omissions may be present. • Target reader is on the whole informed.
1	• Irrelevances and misinterpretation of task may be present. • Target reader is minimally informed.
0	• Content is totally irrelevant. • Target reader is not informed.

The remaining three subscales (Communicative Achievement, Organisation, and Language) have descriptors specific to each CEFR level. The following assessment scale, is used for marking candidate responses:

C2	Content	Communicative Achievement	Organisation	Language
5	All content is relevant to the task. Target reader is fully informed.	Demonstrates complete command of the conventions of the communicative task. Communicates complex ideas in an effective and convincing way, holding the target reader's attention with ease, fulfilling all communicative purposes.	Text is organised impressively and coherently using a wide range of cohesive devices and organisational patterns with complete flexibility.	Uses a wide range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, with fluency, precision, sophistication and style. Use of grammar is sophisticated, fully controlled and completely natural. Any inaccuracies occur only as slips.
4	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.</i>			
3	Minor irrelevances and/or omissions may be present. Target reader is on the whole informed.	Uses the conventions of the communicative task with sufficient flexibility to communicate complex ideas in an effective way, holding the target reader's attention with ease, fulfilling all communicative purposes.	Text is a well-organised, coherent whole, using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns with flexibility.	Uses a range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, effectively and precisely. Uses a wide range of simple and complex grammatical forms with full control, flexibility and sophistication. Errors, if present, are related to less common words and structures, or occur as slips.
2	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.</i>			
1	Irrelevances and misinterpretation of task may be present. Target reader is minimally informed.	Uses the conventions of the communicative task effectively to hold the target reader's attention and communicate straightforward and complex ideas, as appropriate.	Text is well organised and coherent, using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns to generally good effect.	Uses a range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, appropriately. Uses a range of simple and complex grammatical forms with control and flexibility. Occasional errors may be present but do not impede communication.
0	Content is totally irrelevant. Target reader is not informed.	<i>Performance below Band 1.</i>		

C2 Proficiency: Paper 2 sample task

WRITING PART 1 - COMPULSORY TASK

Question 1

You **must** answer this question. Write an essay summarising and evaluating the key points from both texts in **240–280 words**. Use your own words throughout as far as possible, and include your own ideas in your answers.

Text 1:

Shifting sands: behavioural change

Nowadays, in some cultures there may often be confusion between generations about what is acceptable behaviour in certain situations. Older people sometimes complain, for example, about the real or imagined rudeness of others, such as in the use of electronic devices in public places. However, the younger generation do not regard electronic communication as intrusive, but rather as fundamental to their way of life. Only increased mutual understanding is likely to resolve potential conflict or confusion in any society. In this case, as in all others, it pays to be aware of other people's points of view.

Text 2:

Follow my leader?

Should we always aim to do what society expects of us? No, what society needs is individuality. Worrying about what other people think inhibits enthusiasm and creativity. Nothing new is ever achieved by conforming to expected social norms. This is not only true for society's innovators: everybody needs a strong sense of their own worth as an individual. This is essential for psychological well-being and the ability to function effectively in one's personal and professional life. Paying too much attention to society's conventions can be counter-productive in these and other ways.

Write your **essay**.

Part 1

Part 2 0 of 3



Sample test

The above example shows a screenshot from the C2 Proficiency Digital exam. To access a complete sample test, please scan the QR code, or go to camengli.sh/47JFkmT



C2 Proficiency Writing: Sample answers and comments

QUESTION 1 – CANDIDATE A

Behavioural Change

Our modern life often poses us a question – what is acceptable in terms of behaviour considering the fast pace at which modern society changes. Besides, the shift towards the cult of individuality has been obvious for the past years.

Nowadays, we are all aware of the fact that society is made up of different generations each of which has their own preferences and habits deeply ingrained in their consciousness. In this connection the generation gap is considered to be a perennial problem. It is a well-known fact younger generations are more technologically advanced than the previous ones, moreover the young are quicker on the uptake and more resilient to ever changing demands of our life. Despite that, I am inclined to believe that only by being tolerant to each other and accepting the right of each generation to adhere to their own set of beliefs and ideas we will be able to peacefully co-exist in society.

At last society has recognised the need for each member to be an individual. Throughout the history of humanity members of society have had to fit the mould and conform to the set of principles and beliefs accepted. For example, even 50 years ago woman's only domain was household chores. Nowadays, we are relieved to see that women are equal members of society fulfilling their potential and rising thru the ranks. Some of them even manage to achieve dizzy heights.

In conclusion, our society is moving forward by leaps and bounds, patterns of behaviour and social norms are changing as well. So, only by coming to terms with the above-mentioned we, all members of it, won't be deemed as misfits and relish our existence in the society.

Comments

Subscale	Mark	Commentary
Content	4	All content is relevant to the task, although the final key point is not addressed. Nevertheless, the target reader would be informed.
Communicative Achievement	3	Uses the conventions of the essay with sufficient flexibility to communicate complex ideas in an effective way, holding the target reader's attention with ease and fulfilling all communicative purposes as set out in the task. The register is occasionally uneven (<i>rising thru the ranks, dizzy heights</i>).
Organisation	3	The text is a well-organised, coherent whole, using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns with flexibility (<i>In this connection, the above-mentioned, moreover, For example, Throughout the history of humanity</i>) though <i>Despite that</i> does not seem to be employed correctly.
Language	2	A wide range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, is used effectively, and sometimes with style (<i>deeply ingrained in their consciousness, perennial problem, quicker on the uptake, adhere to their own set of beliefs, fit the mould, fulfilling their potential, by leaps and bounds, social norms, coming to terms</i>). Uses a range of simple and complex grammatical forms with control and flexibility. Grammatical and lexical errors are present but do not impede communication.

QUESTION 1 – CANDIDATE B

The term 'society' describes a group of people having something in common – a birdwatchers' society shares a pastime, society in a more general rather more sociological sense shares a set of values. So, by definition, a certain degree of conformity is needed: If no-one adhered to such values (or nobody shared the pastime) there would be no society. However, conforming to social norms, meant to uphold the values, requires these to be meaningful and the meaning of norms will change just like the people making up a society will change. After all, the norms are just a reflection of the people living according to them. Consequently, adherence for adherence's sake is wrong and this is where individuality comes into play. Norms have to be critically reviewed, lest they become stifling. So indeed, conformity does not bring about progress. Yet individuality has to take into account others' individuality as well, that is to say, one's own ends where that of others begins. While this limits the degree of individuality of any single person within a society, it allows society to exist as such in the face of individuality. Just as individuality – being, being treated as and seeing oneself as an individual – is vital for a person's health, so it is for society, which should be made up of healthy individuals. Older individuals might disagree with younger ones about which values bear which weight or indeed about which values they share at all. This might be due to values having changed between the time when the older ones were raised and 'imprinted' with values and the time when that was the case for younger ones. But it might also be that the actual values (norms) haven't changed that much but are rather expressed differently. Most of the time, norms drift rather than leapfrog towards new meaning. Still, the perception is a disagreement. The rise of electronic equipment in public places illustrates this. Whereas older people might consider it unacceptable, it is normal for younger ones. Yet at the heart of the matter is not the issue whether such devices are used or not but how – sensitively and with respect for others, or not. And I think that most people would agree that sometimes they do not want to be disturbed – and that is the value that is still shared. In everyday life, such disagreement can only be resolved by communicating. Communication is a two-way process and, as such, requires understanding, awareness and respect for other people's views.

Comments

Subscale	Mark	Commentary
Content	5	Target reader is fully informed. All content is relevant to the task.
Communicative Achievement	4	Uses the conventions of the essay to communicate complex ideas in an effective and convincing way, holding the target reader's attention with ease, fulfilling all communicative purposes.
Organisation	4	Text is a well-organised, coherent whole, using a wide variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns with flexibility (<i>The term 'society' describes ... , So, by definition, However, Consequently, Yet, Whereas, Yet at the heart of the matter is not ...</i>). Clear paragraphing would have enhanced coherence further.
Language	5	Uses a wide range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, with fluency, precision, sophistication and style (<i>in a ... sociological sense, individuality comes into play, critically reviewed, stifling, leapfrog towards</i>). Use of grammar is sophisticated, fully controlled and natural (<i>Just as ... so it is for, But it might also be that ...</i>). Any inaccuracies occur only as slips (<i>being, being</i>).

QUESTION 1 – CANDIDATE C

How should we behave in society? Should we follow social norms or should we use our own individual judgement to decide what is the appropriate way to conduct ourselves?

Some people find it very important to obey the rules of etiquette, to do what others consider proper. There are people – often the older generation – who get very upset when others do not follow social conventions, when they, for example, speak loudly on mobile phones in public places or lick their fingers or queue jump.

However, it should be noted that the things that irritate people will vary from one society to the next; the rules of queue behaviour, for instance, are very different in London, Moscow and Istanbul, and how it is acceptable to use a mobile phone differs considerably from one society to the next. Similarly, it is important to remember that social conventions change over time. It was once considered improper to eat on the street but now no-one pays the slightest attention to someone walking along munching a sandwich or an apple. The key to avoiding conflict, it seems, is imaginative empathy.

In general, it is counter-productive to worry too much about what the socially acceptable way to behave might be in any given situation. It can stop you thinking about what is the moral way to behave as you may become more focused on what is 'proper' rather than on what is right. You can also start suppressing your own important individuality and originality as you become unhealthily anxious about what others might be thinking.

The rules that do not – and should not – change are those regarding behaviour that has an effect on others. Dropping litter, for example, or pushing someone out of the way should always be condemned as inappropriate behaviour

Comments

Subscale	Mark	Commentary
Content	5	Target reader is fully informed. All content is relevant to the task.
Communicative Achievement	5	Demonstrates complete command of the conventions of the essay. Communicates complex ideas in an effective and convincing way, holding the target reader's attention with ease, fulfilling all communicative purposes. Effective use of opening question to engage the reader's attention.
Organisation	5	Text is organised impressively and coherently using a wide range of cohesive devices and organisational patterns with complete flexibility (<i>Some people ... , However, Similarly, The key ... , In general</i>). Paragraph divisions clearly support the internal organisation of the argument, which integrates evaluation of key points and writer's own views subtly and fluently. Opening question clearly addressed and returned to in the conclusion.
Language	5	Uses a wide range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, with fluency, precision, sophistication and style (<i>social norms, conduct ourselves, obey the rules of etiquette, imaginative empathy, unhealthily anxious, inappropriate behaviour</i>). Use of grammar is sophisticated, fully controlled and completely natural.

C2 Proficiency: Paper 3

LISTENING – EXAM STRUCTURE AND TASKS

Candidates listen to recordings of monologues or interacting speakers and answer questions testing their comprehension of what they have heard.

Students successful in this section have listening skills appropriate for participating in academic life. They will be able to follow lectures with good understanding of both the gist and specific detail of what is said, and be aware of speakers' attitudes and feelings, both explicit and implicit.

A variety of voices, styles of delivery and accents will be heard in each Listening paper to reflect the various international contexts presented in the recordings.

How is the paper marked?

The Listening paper contains a series of items which are marked as either correct or incorrect.

Cambridge English uses Rasch (1960/1980) analysis to ensure that a consistent standard is applied in the grading of objectively marked components, accounting for differences in difficulty between them. This is achieved by calibrating the difficulty of all the items in a given test onto the same scale. This calibration allows us to determine the raw marks for each test paper that represent a predetermined level of ability – the standard needed to achieve a particular grade or level.

Listening at a glance

FORMAT	The paper contains four parts. Each part contains a recorded text or texts and corresponding comprehension tasks. Each part is heard twice.
TIMING	Approximately 40 minutes
NO. OF PARTS	4
NO. OF QUESTIONS	30
ANSWER FORMAT	Candidates are advised to write their answers in the spaces provided on the question paper while listening. Five minutes will be allowed at the end of the test to copy the answers onto a separate answer sheet.
MARKS	Each correct answer receives 1 mark.

Listening tasks

approximately 40 mins (including 2 minutes to check your answers in the digital test, and 5 minutes to transfer your answers in the paper-based test)

The listening test contains four parts. Each part contains a recorded text or texts and corresponding comprehension tasks. Each part is heard twice.

Part	Number of questions	Number of marks	Task types	Focus	format
1	6	6	Three-option multiple choice	The focus is on gist, detail, function, purpose, topic, speaker, feeling, attitude, opinion, etc.	Three short unrelated texts lasting approximately 1 minute each, consisting of either monologues or exchanges between interacting speakers. There are two multiple-choice questions per text, each with three options.
2	9	9	Sentence completion	The focus is on detail and stated opinion.	A monologue lasting 3–4 minutes.
3	5	5	Four-option multiple choice	The focus is on opinion, gist, detail, inference and agreement.	A text involving interacting speakers lasting 3–4 minutes.
4	10	10	Multiple matching	The focus is on gist, attitude, main points and interpreting context.	Five short themed monologues, of approximately 35 seconds each. There are two multiple-matching tasks. Each multiple-matching task requires selection of the five correct options from a list of eight.
Total	30	30			

C2 Proficiency: Paper 3 sample task

LISTENING PART 1 - MULTIPLE CHOICE

Questions 1-6
You will hear a consultant in communication talking about business meetings.

You hear a consultant in communication talking about business meetings.

1 What is the consultant doing when he mentions mobile phones at meetings?

- ☐ criticising the overuse of technology
- ☐ explaining how they can boost a person's image
- ☐ warning against making them visible

2 What advice does he give about talking at meetings?

- ☐ Comment on all points made.
- ☐ Avoid answering questions impulsively.
- ☐ Offer strong closing contributions.

Reset

Part 1 1 2 3 4 5 6 Part 2 0 of 9 Part 3 0 of 5 Part 4 0 of 10

Answer Key

Q	Part 2
1	C
2	B
3	B
4	B
5	C
6	B



Sample test

This example shows screenshots from the C2 Proficiency Digital exam. To access a complete sample test (including audio for the Listening paper), please scan the QR code, or go to camengli.sh/47JFkmT



C2 Proficiency: Paper 4

SPEAKING – EXAM STRUCTURE AND TASKS

The candidate takes the test with two examiners and one other candidate, providing an authentic test of the candidate's ability to interact with others verbally.

Students successful in this part of the exam can take part in tutorials, seminars and collaborative group work in an academic environment at a level approaching that of a native speaker. They can be expected to give explanations of an abstract and conceptual nature coherently and be able to manage a discussion, rebut counter-arguments and negotiate.

Speaking at a glance

FORMAT	The paper contains three parts. Each part of the test focuses on a different type of interaction: between the interlocutor and each candidate, between the two candidates, and among all three.
TIMING	16 minutes
TASK TYPES	Short exchanges with the interlocutor: a 2-minute individual 'long turn', a collaborative task involving both candidates, and a follow-up discussion.
MARKS	Candidates are assessed on their performance throughout. During the test, one examiner, the interlocutor, conducts the test and gives a global assessment of each candidate's performance. The other, the assessor, focuses solely on assessing each candidate's ability.

Speaking tasks

16 minutes (pairs) / 24 minutes (groups of three)

The Speaking test contains three parts. There are always two examiners. Candidates are usually assessed in pairs, however if there is an uneven number of candidates, candidates can be assessed in groups of three. One examiner acts as both interlocutor and assessor and manages the interaction either by asking questions or setting up the tasks for candidates. The other acts as assessor and does not join in the conversation. The tasks consist of short exchanges with the examiner; a collaborative task involving both candidates; a 2-minute long turn and follow-up discussion. Candidates are assessed on their performance throughout the test.

Part	Timing	Task type and interaction	Focus
1	2 minutes	A conversation between the interlocutor and each candidate (spoken questions).	General interactional and social language.
2	4 minutes	A two-way conversation between the candidates. The candidates are given instructions with written and visual stimuli, which are used in a decision-making task.	The focus is on sustaining an interaction; exchanging ideas, expressing and justifying opinions, agreeing and/or disagreeing, suggesting, speculating, evaluating, reaching a decision through negotiation, etc.
3	10 minutes (2-minute long turn for each candidate and approximately 6 minutes following the long turns).	An individual long turn for each candidate followed by a discussion on topics related to the long turns. Each candidate in turn is given a written question to respond to. The interlocutor leads a discussion to explore further the topics of the long turns.	Organising a larger unit of discourse, expressing and justifying opinions, developing topics.

C2 Proficiency: How Speaking is assessed

EXAMINERS AND MARKING

The quality assurance of Speaking Examiners (SEs) is managed by Team Leaders (TLs). TLs ensure all examiners successfully complete examiner training and regular certification of procedure and assessment before they examine. TLs are in turn responsible to a Professional Support Leader (PSL) who is the professional representative of Cambridge English for the Speaking tests in a given country or region.

Annual examiner certification involves attendance at a face-to-face meeting to focus on and discuss assessment and procedure, followed by the marking of sample Speaking tests in an online environment. Examiners must complete standardisation of assessment for all relevant levels each year and are regularly monitored during live testing sessions.

ASSESSMENT SCALES

Throughout the test candidates are assessed on their own individual performance and not in relation to each other. They are awarded marks by two examiners: the assessor and the interlocutor. The assessor awards marks by applying performance descriptors from the analytical assessment scales for the following criteria:

- Grammatical Resource
- Lexical Resource
- Discourse Management
- Pronunciation
- Interactive Communication

The interlocutor awards a mark for global achievement using the global achievement scale.

C2	Global achievement
5	Handles communication on all topics, including unfamiliar and abstract ones, with very little hesitation. Uses accurate and appropriate linguistic resources with flexibility to express complex ideas and concepts and produce extended and coherent discourse.
4	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.</i>
3	Handles communication on a wide range of topics, including unfamiliar and abstract ones, with very little hesitation. Uses accurate and appropriate linguistic resources to express complex ideas and concepts and produce extended and coherent discourse.
2	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.</i>
1	Handles communication on a range of familiar and unfamiliar topics, with very little hesitation. Uses accurate and appropriate linguistic resources to express ideas and produce extended discourse that is generally coherent.
0	<i>Performance below Band 1.</i>

Assessment for C2 Proficiency is based on performance across all parts of the test, and is achieved by applying the relevant descriptors in the assessment scales. The assessment scales for C2 Proficiency are extracted from the overall Speaking scales.

C2 Proficiency Speaking Examiners use a more detailed version of the following assessment scales:

C2	Grammatical Resource	Lexical Resource	Discourse Management	Pronunciation	Interactive Communication
5	Maintains control of a wide range of grammatical forms and uses them with flexibility.	Uses a wide range of appropriate vocabulary with flexibility to give and exchange views on unfamiliar and abstract topics.	Produces extended stretches of language with flexibility and ease and very little hesitation. Contributions are relevant, coherent, varied and detailed. Makes full and effective use of a wide range of cohesive devices and discourse markers.	Is intelligible. Phonological features are used effectively to convey and enhance meaning.	Interacts with ease by skilfully interweaving his/her contributions into the conversation. Widens the scope of the interaction and develops it fully and effectively towards a negotiated outcome.
4	Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.				
3	Maintains control of a wide range of grammatical forms.	Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary with flexibility to give and exchange views on unfamiliar and abstract topics.	Produces extended stretches of language with ease and with very little hesitation. Contributions are relevant, coherent and varied. Uses a wide range of cohesive devices and discourse markers.	Is intelligible. Intonation is appropriate. Sentence and word stress is accurately placed. Individual sounds are articulated clearly.	Interacts with ease, linking contributions to those of other speakers. Widens the scope of the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome.
2	Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.				
1	Shows a good degree of control of a range of simple and some complex grammatical forms.	Uses a limited range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on familiar and unfamiliar topics.	Produces extended stretches of language with very little hesitation. Contributions are relevant and there is a clear organisation of ideas. Uses a range of cohesive devices and discourse markers.	Is intelligible. Intonation is generally appropriate. Sentence and word stress is generally accurately placed. Individual sounds are generally articulated clearly.	Initiates and responds appropriately, linking contributions to those of other speakers. Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome.
0	Performance below Band 1.				

C2 Proficiency: Paper 4 sample task

SPEAKING PART 1 - AN INTERVIEW

Part 1 (2 minutes / 3 minutes for groups of three)

Interlocutor	Good morning / afternoon / evening. My name is and this is my colleague And your names are ? Could I have your mark sheets, please? Thank you. First of all, we'd like to know something about you. Where are you from (Candidate A)? And you (Candidate B)? [address Candidate B] Are you working or studying at the moment? [address Candidate A] And you? Select a further question for each candidate: • What do you enjoy best about the place where you're living now? • How difficult would it be for you to move away from the area you're living in now? • What for you is the most interesting aspect of learning English? • How much time do you spend travelling every day? • Do you think it's easy for people to find a good job nowadays? • In the future, do you see yourself living in your own country or somewhere abroad?
Candidates	
Interlocutor	Thank you.



Sample test

To access a complete sample test for C2 Proficiency, please scan the QR code, or go to camengli.sh/47JFkmT



Sample performance – Speaking



Filmed Speaking tests

The examiner comments below accompany a filmed Speaking test. The candidates' names are Laura and Alejandro. You can find the video of the test in our Speaking playlist on our YouTube channel: [youtube.com/cambridgeenglishtv](https://www.youtube.com/c/cambridgeenglishtv)

GRAMMATICAL RESOURCE

Laura

Laura shows a control of a range of grammatical forms:

- I would say that we have lots of green areas where you can see lots of families or just people walking their dogs (part 1)
- It's a great opportunity to know another culture you are not keen on or familiar with and you know other things that are in the world (part 2)
- I truly think that professional sportsmen and women that are training for something special need a little bit of support from the trainers (part 3)

However, she does not maintain control across all grammar and vocabulary. There are inaccuracies and some awkward expressions:

- That kind of places that are just don't usual here; a good opportunity to go tourist there... and make more awareness about... (part 2)
- The people that don't seek for recognition is just happy with what they have; a key point on their train; not get in famous to do something bad; people seek for recognition (part 3)
- it is world wide known (part 4)

Alejandro

Alejandro maintains control of some grammar and vocabulary:

- Because when you are jaded from school or from work, I think that is very good to visit these places that have great facilities to relax (part 2)
- I think for them it's quite important because if not it would be a great breakdown for them

that could destroy their emotions (part 2)

- it represents what you don't have to do when you're in nature because throwing litter into the floor is not very good ... (part 2)

However, Alejandro often makes basic errors and has difficulty with complex forms:

- I have getting good results, and that can prove my well organisation (part 1)
- ...have developed myself a very big (part 1)
- There is a place very crowded (part 2)
- It would aware people what not to do when you're in this kind of spaces (part 2)
- That as well helps (part 3)
- It would be well if they got paid a lot more.

LEXICAL RESOURCE

Laura

Laura uses a range of appropriate vocabulary to handle abstract and unfamiliar topics:

- Outskirts ... area ... (part 1)
- once in a blue moon ... opportunity ... socialise ... representative ... (part 2)
- key point ... self-esteem ... trick question ... discover a vaccine ... earn recognition (part 3)

but with some inaccuracies and inappropriate expressions:

- extrovert ... make awareness ... forgive ... hustle and bustle places ... literacy ... ensure people (part 2)
- unnerving situation ... high voices ... infamous (part 3).

Alejandro

He shows some evidence of a range of vocabulary and expressions. To give and exchange views on both familiar and unfamiliar topics:

- Disconnect ... jaded ... facilities ... struggle ... destroy their emotions ... (part 2)
- Incredibly high ... pitch ... struggle ... Loads of ... mastering ... carry on ... (part 2)

but sometimes uses vocabulary inaccurately:

- Aware people ... Breakdown ... masterise ... it's very grateful for them to see ... shores ... niggling ... a television and that kind of things (part 2)

He sometimes resorts to approximation: 'and that kind of stuff', which can indicate a lack of range.

DISCOURSE MANAGEMENT

Laura

She produces extended stretches of language with very little hesitation, producing utterances linked by relative clauses, cohesive devices and discourse markers, although she tends to lose coherence in longer turns (e.g. in part 3).

Her contributions are relevant and, despite some repetition, are mostly coherent, although she struggles to maintain coherence in more extended turns in parts 3 and 4, in particular:

- I think that people seek for recognition in order to get famous or if they are a little bit more sociable with people and like to be like the centrist part of the central group ... (part 4)

Laura uses a range of cohesive devices, including pronouns and relative clauses:

- Sportsmen and women that are going to play in a special championship or something related to that (part 3)
- Like ... or ... and ... (part 1)
- Also ... it seems like ... well ... then ... for example ... (part 3)
- In order to ... if ... something like that ... or ... but ... however ... (part 4)

Alejandro

Throughout the test, Alejandro produces extended language with very little hesitation, although there is some repetition of words while searching for the right thing to say, especially when developing longer turns.

His contributions are relevant, with generally good organisation of some quite abstract ideas:

- ...this type of tourism can damage the animals maybe or the background of the nature and it may be dangerous for the animals to. Yeah, to see people or they can attack them (part 2)
- I think that it's always good to learn other cultures because they are different from yours and it's very valuable to know how their people interact with them and that kind of stuff (part 2)

Alejandro uses a range of cohesive devices and some discourse markers. He also makes use of pronouns and forward and backward referencing.

- As well ... this is my last year ... well, I think that ... because ... and (part 1)
- This type of tourism ... or ... you know ... obviously ... because ... where ... when ... for example ... thanks to ... so ... if (part 2)
- In terms of ... (part 4)

However, there is some awkward linking, and some phrases lack clarity:

- Well, I think that I'm very good at it because I have getting good results and that can prove my well organisation and I think that I've done it very well throughout these years. (part 1)
- ...an exotic experience to do in a life, and I think that it's very truly that represents the life in that area and ... (part 2)
- For example in football there are many players that that their wages are incredibly high and that's thanks to all the sponsors that are with them, the companies that are behind for this, for the show that they perform in, in the, in the, in the beach (part 2)
- the people that usually like getting their respect of the people recognised (part 3)
- the other people that keeps to them in their job' (part 3)

PRONUNCIATION

Laura

Laura is almost always intelligible, although it is occasionally hard to follow a word or two when she speaks fast, as she does occasionally, running words into each other, thus giving her an uneven speed of delivery, sentence stress and intonation and making longer stretches harder to follow.

Intonation is generally appropriate, but with little variation and often uneven, produced in short bursts that can be hard to follow:

- To move into the hustle and bustle of places ... and socialise with people that you don't know (part 2)
- Other things that are in the world (part 2)

Word stress is almost always accurately placed, but with little variation in sentence stress:

- Opportunity, awareness, socialise familiar representative educated (part 2)

with occasional lapses:

- Photograph (part 1) ... Extrovert ... safari (part 2) ... Unnerving (part 3)

Individual sounds are almost always articulated clearly, despite occasional lapses:

- "d" for "th": dat, dey're "b" for "v": sabbanah, bisiting, some intrusive "e": Efrica, especial; some long "ee" sounds

but these instances are rare.

Alejandro

Alejandro is intelligible and intonation and sentence stress are generally appropriate, but not used to enhance meaning.

Word stress is almost always accurate:

- Exotic ... experience ... represents ... disconnect ... damage ... dangerous ... impressive ... environment ... nowadays ... struggle ... superiors ... (part 2)
- Medical ... vaccine ... method ... respect (part 3)
- Insecure ... ability ... enterprise ... illnesses (part 4)

With a few inaccurate patterns:

- Tourism ... recognise ... techniques (part 2)
- Appreciate ... introverted (part 4)

Despite a notable, though not pronounced, Spanish accent, Alejandro's individual

sounds are almost always articulated clearly, with only occasional lapses:

- Bery/very ... haf/have ... possitive/positive ... jung/young ... very portant' (important)

Pronunciation very occasionally interferes with meaning:

- Beach'/pitch ... jure'/your ... masterise (master)

INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION

Laura

Laura does link contributions to those of her partner, though she rarely attempts to widen the interaction, tending to develop her own turns and rarely developing what Alejandro says. She does also overlap Alejandro's turns quite naturally:

- Yeah, to move into the hustle and bustle places and meet new people and socialise with persons that you don't know exactly (part 2)
- Yeah, but I would like to add that maybe the people that don't seek for recognition is just happy with what they have and they don't need something else to say "OK" ... (part 3).
- They're affecting their real environment that they forgive them (part 2)

Her responses are mostly short and coherence isn't always maintained when they're a little longer:

- Yeah, I agree with you and also it seems like to be there for me your typical ones that you go with your family ... (part 2)

Alejandro

Alejandro interacts with his partner with ease, picking up on what she says:

- I come from Madrid as well (part 1)
- Yeah, I agree with you, it's an exotic experience to do in life (part 2)

And sometimes developing it:

- Yeah, I agree with you about up to one point because and this type of tourism can damage the animals maybe or or or the background of the of the nature and it may be be dangerous for the animals to (part 2)
- Well, yes, I sent our certainly do because for example in football there are many players that that their wages are

incredibly high and that's thanks to all the sponsors that are with them (part 3)

- Yeah, I completely agree with Laura because as she pointed out you can be famous for something that good that you have done (part 3)
- He adds to and develops his partner's ideas to an extent, but doesn't really negotiate an outcome, tending just to agree with what Laura says.

GLOBAL ACHIEVEMENT

Laura

Laura handles communication on a range of topics, including unfamiliar and abstract ones, with very little hesitation. She produces extended discourse which is mainly coherent, but sometimes lacks control and accuracy, especially in longer turns.

Alejandro

Alejandro handles communication on a range of topics, including unfamiliar and abstract ones, with very little hesitation. He produces

SCORES

Laura

Grammatical Resource: 2.5

Lexical Resource: 2.5

Discourse Management: 3

Pronunciation: 2.5

Interactive Communication: 3

Global Achievement: 3

Alejandro

Grammatical Resource: 2.5

Lexical Resource: 2.5

Discourse Management: 2.5

Pronunciation: 2.5

Interactive Communication: 2.5

Global Achievement: 3

What can students with **C2 Proficiency** do?

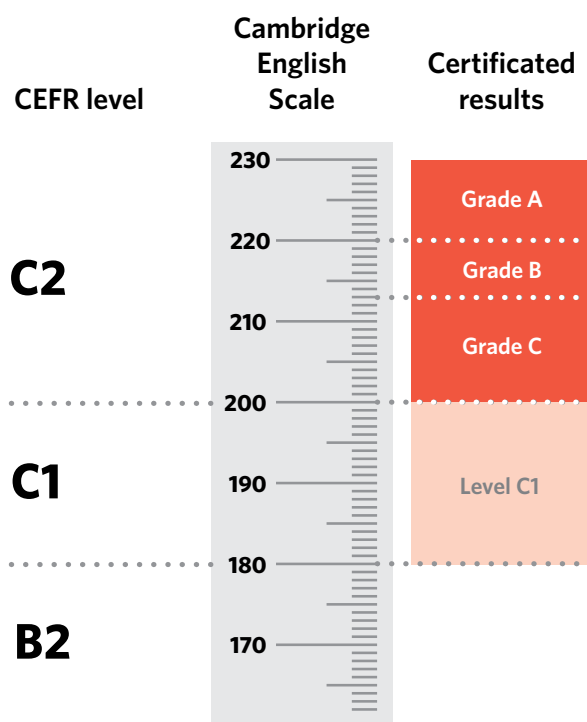
C2 Proficiency is primarily targeted at CEFR Level C2: 200+ on the Cambridge English Scale.

It also assesses language ability at the level below.

If a candidate achieves grade A, B or C in their exam, they will be awarded the Certificate of Proficiency in English at Level C2.

If a candidate's performance is below Level C2, but falls within Level C1 (180–199), they will receive a Cambridge English certificate stating that they demonstrated ability at Level C1.

Scores between 162 and 179 are also reported for C2 Proficiency, although candidates will not receive a certificate.



Can Do statements

On the following pages you can find out more about what language skills you can expect a student to have at the different levels covered by the exam.

The Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) has researched what language learners can typically do at each CEFR level. They have described each level of ability using Can Do statements, with examples taken from everyday life. Cambridge English, as one of the founding members of ALTE, uses this framework to ensure its exams reflect real-life language skills.

CEFR Level C1 (CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH SCALE 180–199)

CAN DO STATEMENTS FOR LEVEL C1 INCLUDE:



Reading

- CAN read quickly enough to cope with an academic course.
- CAN scan texts for relevant information, and grasp main topic of text.
- CAN assess the relevance of most textbooks and articles within own subject area of study.



Writing

- CAN write an essay which shows ability to communicate, giving few difficulties for the reader.
- CAN make useful notes from written sources, capturing abstract concepts and relationships between ideas.
- CAN select the most salient and relevant ideas and represent them clearly and briefly.



Listening

- CAN follow much of what is said in a lecture, presentation or demonstration.
- CAN make decisions about what to note down and what to omit as the lecture proceeds.
- CAN follow the development of a discussion during a seminar.



Speaking

- CAN ask detailed questions.
- CAN make critical remarks/express disagreement without causing offence.
- CAN follow the development of a discussion during a seminar.
- CAN reformulate questions if misunderstood.

CEFR Level C2 (CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH SCALE 200–210)

CAN DO STATEMENTS FOR LEVEL C2 INCLUDE:



Reading

- CAN read quickly enough to cope with an academic course.
- CAN understand abstract concepts and argumentation.
- CAN scan texts for relevant information, and grasp main topic of text.



Writing

- CAN make accurate and complete notes during the course of a seminar or tutorial.
- CAN paraphrase or summarise effectively.
- CAN write an essay that shows an ability to communicate with few difficulties for the reader. The essay shows a good organisational structure, which enables the message to be followed without much effort.
- IS UNLIKELY to make more than occasional errors of grammar, vocabulary or punctuation.



Listening

- CAN follow a lecture, presentation or demonstration with good understanding.
- CAN follow abstract argumentation, for example the balancing of alternatives and the drawing of a conclusion.
- CAN make appropriate inferences when links or implications are not made explicit.



Speaking

- CAN give coherent explanations of a theoretical nature.
- CAN answer unpredictable questions of a factual nature.
- CAN take an active part in most kinds of seminars or tutorials.