



CAMBRIDGE
English

Security, integrity and fraud protection



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B2 First, C1 Advanced and C2 Proficiency are designed for use by further and higher education institutions for a variety of purposes, including for admissions. Exam quality, integrity and security are critical to educational institutions when processing admissions from international students.

Our robust and comprehensive approach covers all areas – from exam development, delivery and results processing, through to post-exam review and evaluation.

All the development and production processes of the exam, as well as the post-exam marking and administration, are managed and controlled centrally in Cambridge. This means you can trust the results as a valid and accurate reflection of a candidate's ability.

Our systems and processes for designing, developing and delivering our exams and services are certified to ISO 9001:2015, an international standard for implementing and maintaining a quality management system. For more on our rigorous approach to quality management, you can download the publication *Principles of Good Practice* from cambridgeenglish.org/english-research-group/quality-and-accountability.

1. Security of exam materials

All our security measures are designed to ensure that candidates cannot receive prior knowledge of the content of exam materials.



Exam production

Tasks and items are selected from a secure electronic item bank. The item bank is refreshed regularly with new material.

Exam questions for the item bank are commissioned from our teams of expert item writers. The item writers have extensive experience in the field of English language teaching and are experienced in the production of exams. All of them work in accordance with strict guidelines governing the type of content that is suitable for a global audience of test takers and conforms to the required quality standards.

Once the initial questions have been written the vetting and editing takes place – questions are reviewed for suitability for inclusion in exams and amendments are made.

The questions are then trialled (for Speaking and Writing questions) or pretested (for Reading, Use of English and Listening questions) with real candidates. We perform statistical analysis of the candidates' results and look at expert feedback to make sure that our exams are accurate and fair, with each individual question pitched at the right level. It is also a way of making sure that exam content is appropriate and that people from different countries and cultures do not widely differ in the way they perform in an exam, or that neither male nor female candidates are disadvantaged.

After pretesting and trialling, the materials that are found to be satisfactory are put into our item bank. This is a secure database of questions which are stored along with detailed information about their content and level of difficulty. This means that when we construct the exams, we can be sure that each version is created to the same standard.

If questions do not meet our assessment criteria, they are either sent back to the beginning of the cycle for further editing (before being pretested or trialled again) or they are rejected and not used.

Secure storage and despatch of materials

All confidential exam materials are printed and stored within our own high-security premises and despatched securely to authorised exam centres by courier.

Secure storage of exam materials by the centre

Centres must adhere to strict requirements for the storage and transport of materials.

Security of materials on exam day

There are strict guidelines for the handling of materials on exam day to prevent unauthorised access.

Specific security measures for digital tests

Our test delivery system delivers heavily encrypted assessments via the internet directly to exam centres, with materials only decrypted at the start of the exam. Test content is randomised for increased security, so candidates taking tests in the same room have different versions of the exam.

2. Security in exam administration

The following procedures are designed to ensure absolute security during each exam session. Candidates can only take our exams with an authorised exam centre.

Candidate ID checks

Our authorised exam centres check each candidate's photographic ID on the day of the exam. If a supervisor or invigilator is not satisfied with the identity of the candidate, they will refuse them entry.

Test day photographs

Photographs of candidates are taken on the day of their exam and these can be viewed by

recognising organisations through our online Results Verification Service. We use a leading biometric supplier, Aware, which also provides services for more than 80 government agencies.

Standardised testing procedures

We provide step-by-step instructions and scripts for supervisors and invigilators to ensure that exam administration is standardised, secure and fair throughout all our centres.

Invigilation

Supervisors and invigilators undergo character checks and receive full training in all areas of exam procedure, including how to detect attempts to cheat.

3. Security of our exam centres

All our authorised exam centres follow a detailed code of practice which ensures the highest standards of security throughout the testing process, from registration to the recording of results. Prior to approval centres are inspected to make sure they can provide suitable facilities, and they are regularly inspected.

Centres follow strict procedures in administering our exams in a fair, secure and unbiased manner. As part of our commitment to security, we carry out:

- pre-approval checks and an inspection
- routine inspections and checks, including unannounced inspections
- monitoring of anomalies in performance.



4. Security in marking and issuing of results

Our post-test processes are designed to ensure absolute security in marking and rigorous checks of results before they are released.

Centralised marking

No marking is done by the exam centre. Speaking is marked locally by fully trained and certificated Speaking Examiners at the test venue. For paper-based exams, candidates' scripts are packed and returned immediately to Cambridge. Candidates' responses in digital exams are encrypted and returned directly to Cambridge.

Preventing conflicts of interest between examiners and candidates

There are systems in place to ensure that the integrity of results is not endangered through any conflict of interest between markers or examiners and candidates. Writing scripts are anonymised and allocated to examiners at random to avoid conflicts of interest.

Monitoring anomalies in performance

We carry out automatic statistical analysis after every exam session prior to release of results to identify unusual patterns of scores or responses for individual candidates, or groups of candidates.

5. Security of results

We provide a free and secure online Results Verification Service that allows organisations to verify a candidate's results:

cambridgeenglish.org/verifiers.

Organisations can view detailed candidate results information and a test day photo. Results can be accessed using the candidate's reference number and date of birth. The reference number is found on the Statement of Results or certificate.

Find out more at
cambridge.org/english

We believe that English can unlock a lifetime of experiences and, together with teachers and our partners, we help people to learn and confidently prove their skills to the world.

Where *your* world grows