Abstract. In this paper we investigate aspects of rigidity and flexibility for conformal iterated function systems. For the case in which the systems are not essentially affine we show that two such systems are conformally equivalent if and only if in each of their Lyapunov spectra there exists at least one level set such that the corresponding Gibbs measures coincide. We then proceed by comparing this result with the essentially affine situation. We show that essentially affine systems are far less rigid than nonessentially affine systems, and subsequently we then investigate the extent of their flexibility.