

The portfolio of evidence: a guide for students and parents

The Covid-19 pandemic continues to affect teaching, learning and assessment, and the lives of teachers, students, and their families. Where directives from national or local authorities make it impossible for exams to go ahead, from June 2022, we will award grades to students in Cambridge IGCSE, O Level and Cambridge International AS & A Level using a portfolio of evidence. The school will submit each portfolio of evidence to Cambridge International, and Cambridge examiners will then mark the work.

What is the portfolio of evidence?

Where exams cannot take place, schools will collect and submit a portfolio of evidence for each student in each subject. Each portfolio will contain three substantial pieces of evidence. If you are taking Cambridge International A Level and did not sit the AS Level at the end of your first year of study, six substantial pieces of evidence are required.

By 'substantial', we mean a piece of work that has taken you at least one hour of concentrated work to complete. This is similar to the amount of work we use to determine an exam grade.

These three pieces of evidence can be completed at any time during your course, and can include:

- complete past papers from the syllabus
- completed coursework
- work made up of questions from past papers
- papers used as mock exams
- extended project work set by the school
- tasks set by the school such as essays, assignments, problems, or practical tasks

Cambridge examiners will mark the work. We will use our examiners' marks to give you a final grade for each syllabus.

Will I know which pieces of work are in my portfolio of evidence?

Yes.

Any work you complete during your course may be included in your portfolio of evidence. Once your teacher has selected the three pieces of evidence that will be used, they will tell you which work they have chosen, and you will have the opportunity to give them feedback on their choices. Your teacher cannot simply select your best work. The evidence they choose must cover as broad a range of the syllabus content and skills as possible. Your teacher must also be sure that the evidence is your own unaided work.

Cambridge examiners will mark the work using the Cambridge marking criteria and marking standard. Your teacher may have marked your work before submitting it to us; however, Cambridge examiners may give it a different mark that will be in line with the Cambridge marking standards.

How will the portfolio of evidence be marked?

Every student will submit a different portfolio of evidence, and the tasks in their portfolio may be different to those of other students in other schools. The school will submit these tasks to Cambridge International for marking.

To help Cambridge examiners mark all the different types of work that they will see, they will use examples of student work, called ‘exemplar materials’, which show the performance level expected at regular points throughout the mark range.

They will compare your work with the exemplar materials that most closely match that type of task in your portfolio (e.g., an exam paper, some coursework for that syllabus, etc). The examiner will make a judgement about which of these exemplars most closely matches your work in terms of the quality of the work. Then, they will judge whether the standard of your work is of the same standard as the exemplar work, or a slightly higher standard, or a slightly lower standard. They will then give a mark to the piece of evidence in line with these judgements.

Our examiners will give a mark to each of the three pieces of evidence. We will add these marks together to create a final mark for the portfolio. All three pieces of evidence will count equally in their contribution to the final mark.

We will use our examiners’ marks to calculate a final grade for each student for each syllabus they are taking.

What can we do if we are concerned about the grade awarded using the portfolio of evidence?

All our usual enquiry about results services are available and you should work with the Exams Officer at your school if you would like to request one of these.

In addition, we have added a new service – ‘review of a selection of evidence: service 10’. This is a review of the choice of the pieces of evidence included in your portfolio. As part of this enquiry, we will check that the evidence chosen for your portfolio meets our criteria for selection. This enquiry is available for all portfolio of evidence components. If you would like to request this enquiry, you should speak to your Exams Officer.

We have published more information about enquiries about results in our [‘Guidance on enquiries about results and appeals for the portfolio of evidence route – June 2022 series’](#) factsheet.

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