

Where will a Cambridge qualification take you?

Guide to the recognition and acceptance of CIE qualifications in Pakistan



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE
International Examinations





Contents

Making the right choice

Accepted worldwide

Recognition in Pakistan

Medical and engineering education in Pakistan

University recognition in Pakistan

Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology

National University of Science and Technology

King Edward Medical University

Lahore University of Management Sciences

National College of Arts

Iqra University



Making the right choice

Cambridge international qualifications are a passport to success – in education, university and work.

A Cambridge International Education is designed for international students. Content is multicultural and a wide range of subjects is available – including many country specific courses.

Choosing a course of study is one of the most important decisions a student will make. It is essential to check that qualifications are widely accepted and valued by further education institutes, universities and employers. Choosing Cambridge international qualifications opens up a world of opportunity - helping you get a place at your chosen university, or proving your achievements to your future employer.



Recognition in Pakistan

Universities in countries around the world, including Pakistan, recognise and welcome Cambridge international qualifications. The government of Pakistan recognises Cambridge qualifications and provides equivalence to the local system of education in order to ensure smooth progression for students who choose to pursue their education in Pakistan.

The government body responsible for issuing equivalence conversion is the Inter Board Committee of Chairmen (IBCC).

O Levels and IGCSE qualifications are equated to the local Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and A Levels to the Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC). To qualify for equivalence at the HSS level, IBCC has given a list of compulsory and elective subjects that must be studied at both O Level, IGCSE and A Level. You will find this at www.ibcc.edu.pk

GCE O Level, GCSE and IGCSE

GCE O Level, GCSE and IGCSE are considered equivalent to Secondary School Certificate (SSC) subject to meeting the following requirements:

Pakistan based examinations (local exam): Eight subjects including English, Urdu, Islamiyat, Pakistan Studies, Mathematics and three electives.

To qualify for Science Group it is necessary to pass Physics, Chemistry, Biology or Computer Studies or Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Students who do not qualify for the Science Group will be placed in the General or Humanities Group.

Students with a qualification in Computer Studies or ICT in place of Biology will be granted Science Group equivalence but will not be granted equivalence to HSSC (Pre-Medical Group), even if Physics, Chemistry and Biology subjects are passed at A Level.

GCE A Levels

GCE O and A Level are considered equivalent to Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) subject to meeting the specified requirements for various groups:

Pre-Medical Group: Eight O Level subjects (including English, Urdu, Islamiyat, Pakistan Studies, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Biology) and three A Levels (Physics, Chemistry and Biology) with minimum E Grade.

Pre-Engineering Group: Eight O Level subjects (including English, Urdu, Islamiyat, Pakistan Studies, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Biology or Computer Studies or ICT) and three A Level subjects (Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics) with minimum E Grade.

General Science Group: Eight O Level subjects and three A Level subjects are required to qualify for the general science group. There are five possible combinations, details are available on the IBCC website, www.ibcc.edu.pk.

Please note that students taking these combinations will not be eligible for admission into Engineering and Medical Colleges.

Humanities Group: Eight O Level subjects including English with three A Level subjects (not eligible for admission into Engineering and Medical Colleges).

Always check the IBCC web site for updates on equivalence
www.ibcc.edu.pk

Conversion of grades

IGCSE and GCE O Level

Grades	IBCC marks
A*	90
A	85
B	75
C	65
D	55
E	45
F	40
G	35

This is a worked example of equivalence:

Subject	Grade	IBCC marks
English Language	A*	90
Urdu	A	85
Islamiyat	B	75
Pakistan Studies	B	75
Physics	A	85
Chemistry	A	85
Biology	C	65
Mathematics	D	55
Total		615

$$615 \times 900 / 800 = 691$$

For Pre-Medical/Pre-Engineering Group

GCE O Level subjects	Grade	IBCC marks
English Language	A*	90
Urdu	A	85
Islamiyat	B	75
Pakistan Studies	B	75
Physics	A*	90
Chemistry	B	75
Biology	A	85
Mathematics	B	75
Total		650

GCE A Level subjects	Grade	IBCC marks
Physics	A	85
Chemistry	A*	90
Biology or Mathematics	B	75
Total		250

$$900 \times 1100 / 1100 = 900$$

Medical and engineering education in Pakistan

Admissions to medical and engineering universities nationwide are broadly regulated by Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) and Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC). A brief overview of their requirements is provided on the following pages.



Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC)

Entry requirements overview

PMDC sets the basic requirements for entry into medical colleges. These are as follows:

At least 60% marks in HSSC or equivalent in the case of O and A Levels. Evidence of this is through the IBCC equivalence certificate

At least 40% weighting should be given to the results of admission tests.

Provincial bodies and private medical colleges then set the criteria for their own test and exams, using the above guidelines. For details, please visit www.pmdc.org.pk

Message from the Registrar of PMDC

“We find Cambridge qualified students do really well in medicine; they have all the desired skills and knowledge to take up higher education in medicine and we would like to encourage Cambridge qualified students to join Pakistani medical colleges.”

Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC)

PEC sets the basic requirements for engineering education in the country. Students must pass O and A Level examinations in qualifying subjects; in addition, they must pass an entrance test conducted by the respective institution or university. For details, please visit www.pec.org.pk

University recognition in Pakistan

Many different universities in Pakistan recognise Cambridge international qualifications. Examples of recognition from some well known Pakistani institutions are on the following pages. However, it is absolutely essential to check information on admission criteria with the admissions office of the university to which an application is made.

Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology

Skills required

The knowledge, skills and competencies needed to succeed in various BS (Engineering) programs offered at GIK Institute are as follows:

- Adequate knowledge of high school level Mathematics and Physics
- Well developed communications skills in English language
- Self-motivation and self-discipline
- Analytical skills
- Ability to adapt to independent living
- Ability to sustain motivation and commitment over an entire 16 week semester

Entry requirements

Admission and allocation to different faculties is based on performance in the admission test and the different preferences of individual applicants. However, to be eligible for admission, applicants must have three A Levels (Physics, Mathematics and Chemistry with Grade D or higher in Mathematics and Physics) and seven O Levels. Those having studied Computing in lieu of Chemistry at A Level can apply only for Computer Systems

Engineering and Computer Software Engineering.

Students awaiting their examination results can apply but confirmation of admission will be subject to fulfilling eligibility criteria. For details visit www.giki.edu.pk

Message from the Rector, GIKI

“It is gratifying to note that many students opt for careers in engineering after qualifying in the Cambridge Examination system. The engineering profession offers many opportunities but, at the same time there are challenges. In future, the world would need more refined, sophisticated, and efficient technologies to cope with the peculiar needs of a new age which, in turn, would require engineers and scientists of quality. Good communication skills are equally important.

Most students who come through the Cambridge system cope well with the rigors of university education: the Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology welcomes them.”

National University of Science and Technology

Entry requirements

Engineering:

A Levels in Pre-Engineering subjects according to IBCC requirements. Specifically, A Levels in Physics, Maths and Computer Science or Computer Studies for BE Software Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electronics Engineering, Telecom Engineering, Avionics Engineering and Information & Communication System Engineering only.

Medicine:

A Levels in Pre-Medical subjects according to IBCC requirements. In order to encourage candidates from O and A Level schools, NUST has reserved a few seats in Engineering, IT, Medicine, Management, Social Sciences and Applied Biosciences for admission through SAT tests. Pakistani candidates of both A Level and FSc streams can exercise this option and compete for the reserved

seats. A minimum score of 550 is required in each subject to apply for a medical program.

Message from the Rector of NUST

“The only university in Pakistan to be ranked amongst the top 350 universities of the world, NUST is truly the dynamic face of higher education in Pakistan. A significant percentage of students at NUST belong to the O and A Levels stream, and I must acknowledge that, even within the competitive climate at NUST, they are performing outstandingly well. To encourage candidates of O and A Levels stream, NUST accepts international SAT, GMAT, GRE and MCAT scores; and these candidates can apply on the basis of O Level equivalence certificates.”

For further details please visit www.nust.edu.pk





King Edward Medical University

Entry requirements

Students need to take equivalence from IBCC; if they have sixty per cent marks or more, they are eligible to sit for the entry test which is written and administered by the University of Health Sciences (UHS). The weighting of entry test results and marks is determined by UHS. After combining the results of the two components a merit list is formed for all Punjab medical colleges and students are allocated to colleges according to their ratings.

Skills required for becoming a good doctor

In addition to being academically strong and having a clear grasp of medical concepts, doctors need to have good communication skills and a very high level of contextual and cultural sensitivity. They must remember that patients come from various backgrounds and their situation is always unique. In many cases they may be undergoing significant suffering. In dealing with such people, a doctor's expertise, ethics, values and communication skills all play a part in the dynamics of a hospital or clinic.

Message from the Vice Chancellor, King Edward Medical University

'We receive more than 250 students every year at this historical and most prestigious medical university of Pakistan. Students who join the university after doing their A Levels generally do very well, they are very confident with good productive ideas. The government of Punjab has launched a separate entry test for A Level students and I feel very confident that this will increase the number of students getting admission to local medical colleges.'

For details please visit
www.kemu.edu.pk



Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS)

Feedback on Cambridge students. Staff at LUMS tell us the following:

“Cambridge qualified students usually perform well at LUMS especially in terms of spontaneity required and academics in areas such as reading, writing and analytical skills. Applicants prior to getting admitted should be skilled in terms of communication both verbal and written, presentation and analysis. Students admitted from the Cambridge stream usually tend to have an expertise and proficiency in these areas.”

Entry requirements

The minimum eligibility criteria are as follows:

A minimum of six O Level subjects.

A minimum of three A Level subjects with at least two passes at Grade B and one at Grade C. Students who do not have their A Levels results at the time of applying, are made an admission offer conditional on them meeting these minimum eligibility criteria.

The admission merit list takes into account the subject grades or scores received in O Levels and A Levels, and the scores on the LUMS admission test. The weighting assigned to school examination results and the admission tests varies from school to school. Students seeking admission to LUMS are usually required to work on their academic scores along with preparation for the LUMS admission test, which is based on the SAT format.

For further details please visit:
www.lums.edu.pk

National College of Arts (NCA)

Feedback on Cambridge students. Staff at NCA say:

“CIE students have very good communication skills and are confident young people. Students who do an A Level in Media Studies are very well prepared for undergraduate courses in film, television and media studies.”

Entry requirements

Students need to have taken a minimum of three A Levels and eight O Levels in subjects which satisfy IBCC requirements. Except for Architecture, where Mathematics is a pre-requisite, they could have studied any subject combination. After making sure that they meet the entry threshold criterion, they will have to sit for an entrance test. Offers are based on their performance in the entrance exam.

Message from the Principal, NCA

“NCA is an equal opportunity institution and we are looking for students from varied educational and ethnic backgrounds. Students coming to NCA should be creative, independent thinkers, should have an inquiring mind and must be prepared for a lot of hard work.”

For further details please visit www.nca.edu.pk



Iqra University

Feedback on Cambridge students. Staff at Iqra University tell us:

“Generally we have found Cambridge qualified students perform impressively. They are normally more inquisitive, expressive, and creative than their contemporaries.”

Entry requirements

Three A Levels are required provided that the student has completed all the requirements of O Level or equivalent. All O and A Level students are required to submit an equivalence certificate within one month after admission

Message from the Dean, Iqra University

“Owing to our desire to be one of the leading centres of higher education in Pakistan, our determination to provide state of the art learning environment to our students, our able and motivated faculty, and our emphasis on quality, excellence, and professionalism, we have been able to attract encouraging numbers of Cambridge qualified students. We have always had a mutually favourable experience with the Cambridge qualified students. They not only came up to our expectations but also proved inspirational models for their peers.

It is in view of this complimentary value that we at Iqra University, Islamabad Campus, have decided that the Cambridge qualified students who meet our admission criteria will be afforded special opportunities in terms of fees and other opportunities.”



Learn more!

When choosing any post-16 qualification, students should contact university admissions offices to check that the qualifications are recognized and accepted.

For more information about the entry requirements of universities outside Pakistan, including the UK, the USA, New Zealand and Canada, please check the CIE recognition database at www.cie.org.uk/recognition

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