

# Cambridge IGCSE in the UK

The world's most popular international qualification for 14 – 16 year olds

Cambridge  
**IGCSE**



**Cambridge Secondary 2**



UNIVERSITY *of* CAMBRIDGE  
International Examinations

Excellence in education

## About us

University of Cambridge International Examinations is the world's largest provider of education programmes and qualifications for 5–19 year olds. Over 1.5 million students, in 160 countries, enter our examinations every year. We are part of Cambridge Assessment, a not-for-profit department of the University of Cambridge.



## Welcome to Cambridge IGCSE

Cambridge IGCSE is the world's most popular international qualification for 14–16 year olds.

A school's curriculum is the heart of the learning experience a school offers its students. It is at the heart of the mission and vision of the school.

That's why the best place to make decisions about the curriculum is within the school itself.

Cambridge IGCSE gives schools the 'building blocks' they need to make the right decisions in curriculum design, planning and delivery.

Cambridge IGCSE, regularly updated and extended, offers schools a wide range of well-resourced and supported courses.

Schools around the world have helped develop Cambridge IGCSE, so it represents the best in international education for 14–16 year olds. It develops in line with changing needs – just like your school's curriculum.

Cambridge IGCSE gives schools an internationally recognised curriculum they can design themselves. It puts the choice about the future where it should be – in the hands of the schools and students.



Education for success in tomorrow's world



Building a student-centred curriculum



Teacher training and support



Access, challenge, flexibility



International outlook, local relevance



Progression and recognition



### **Why Cambridge IGCSE?**

Over 500 schools in the UK take Cambridge IGCSE, why?

### **Cambridge IGCSE is linear**

Students take all the exams at the end of the two-year course, which gives more time for teaching and learning. Cambridge IGCSE is designed to be taught holistically to allow longer-term development of ideas for students.

### **Better preparation for further study**

Schools tell us that Cambridge IGCSE prepares learners extremely well for A Level and Cambridge Pre-U, developing a solid foundation of knowledge and skills.

### **International context**

Learners are assessed alongside their peers in 135 countries, including USA, New Zealand, India, China, Spain and Switzerland.

### **Accreditation and funding**

Accredited Cambridge IGCSEs are included in the UK Government's school performance tables. Cambridge IGCSEs in Biology, Chemistry, English, French, Geography, German, Greek, History, Hindi, Mathematics, Physics and Spanish count towards the English Baccalaureate (EBacc).



## Building a student-centred curriculum

Cambridge IGCSE helps schools build a curriculum to develop the knowledge and understanding that universities and employers look for. It also develops the skills and dispositions which bring students success in further study and in work.

Schools can **build a curriculum around the core subjects** of mathematics, science and English. Each core subject has a range of alternative syllabuses to suit each student – giving students different routes through a core curriculum.

For example, in science, a school can offer:

- IGCSE Biology, Chemistry and Physics, an excellent preparation for further study
- IGCSE Combined Science or IGCSE Coordinated Science.

**Extending the curriculum** is easy – a range of over 70 subjects offers real breadth and richness to the curriculum.

For example, a school can offer:

- Any of over 30 language syllabuses
- Heritage Studies, such as India Studies
- Established curriculum components such as History or Geography – Geography now has a interactive computer simulation as an optional assessment.

**Cross-curricular** perspectives are an integral part of the curriculum. Making connections between subjects, skills and other dimensions creates coherence for learners, and increases motivation and engagement for teachers and students alike.

For example, IGCSE Global Perspectives complements existing subject-based syllabuses, encourages creativity and critical thinking, and promotes a joined-up view of the world.

A photograph of four students in a classroom. Three students are looking at a book held by one of them. They are all wearing dark blue school uniforms. The background shows a window with blue frames and a bookshelf with colorful books.

## Education for success in tomorrow's world

Schools know students are learning for life.

Beyond helping students get good grades. Beyond giving students passports for immediate progression. Schools need a school curriculum to give students skills that will bring lifelong success in tomorrow's world.

What characteristics do we seek to instil in students?

- Ability to study, work and communicate in English
- Subject knowledge and understanding
- Flexibility and responsiveness to change
- Intellectual enquiry
- Ability to apply understanding in unfamiliar situations
- Research and critical thinking
- Communication and influencing skills
- Cultural awareness
- Personal and social responsibility

## Cambridge IGCSE subjects

Schools can offer any combination of subjects from any discipline and each subject is certificated separately. Cambridge IGCSEs offer a very wide range of subjects to choose from and a variety of alternative routes for learners. Cambridge IGCSEs are highly suitable for a personalised approach, and they ensure that schools are in control.

Education is continually changing. We keep ahead by updating the entire Cambridge IGCSE suite regularly. Schools tell us they want a balance: between thoroughly revising syllabuses so they adapt to changes in the world, and adjusting them year-on-year so they remain relevant to students and stable for teachers.

### Cambridge Mathematics

An essential subject for all students, Cambridge IGCSE mathematics syllabuses encourage the development of mathematical knowledge as a key life skill, and as a basis for more advanced study.

Mathematics  
Additional Mathematics  
International Mathematics

### Cambridge Science

Students learn how science is studied and practised, and become aware that the results of scientific research can have both good and bad effects on individuals, communities and the environment.

Biology  
Chemistry  
Physics  
  
Coordinated Science  
Combined Science  
  
Agriculture  
Environmental Management  
Physical Science

### Cambridge English

Cambridge IGCSE English syllabuses are available for students whose first language is English and for those with good English skills, but who are not native speakers. The syllabuses develop the ability to communicate clearly, accurately and effectively in both speech and writing, for study and employment.

First Language English  
English as a Second Language  
Literature in English

## Cambridge Modern Languages

Cambridge offers a very wide range of language syllabuses for native and non-native speakers. Students are encouraged to enjoy and appreciate the variety of language, and to understand and respond appropriately to what they read and hear.

### First Language Second Language

Afrikaans	Afrikaans
Arabic	Arabic
Chinese Mandarin	Chinese Mandarin
Dutch	Dutch
Czech	English
Dutch	French
English	German
French	Greek
German	Hindi
Japanese	Indonesian
Korean	Italian
Portuguese	Japanese
Russian	Malay
Spanish	Portuguese
Thai	Spanish
Turkish	

## Cambridge Humanities and Social Sciences

The study of Cambridge IGCSE humanities and social sciences subjects enables students to gain a deeper insight into the different communities and cultures that exist around the world.

Bangladesh Studies  
Development Studies  
Economics  
Geography  
Global Perspectives  
History  
India Studies (available 2010)  
Latin  
Pakistan Studies  
Religious Studies  
Sociology  
Spanish Literature

## Cambridge Business, Technical and Vocational

These Cambridge IGCSE subjects introduce students to the theory and concepts that underpin the subjects. The syllabuses provide both a foundation for further study at A Level, and an ideal preparation for the world of work.

Accounting  
Art and Design  
Business Studies  
Child Development  
Computer Studies  
Design and Technology  
Development Studies  
Drama  
Enterprise (in consultation)  
Food and Nutrition  
Information and Communication Technology  
Technology  
Information Technology  
Music  
Physical Education  
Travel and Tourism



## Cambridge IGCSE at work in different schools, in different contexts

How do Cambridge schools use the flexibility of Cambridge IGCSE to build a curriculum to suit their needs? Here are just some of the different models:

- Create a curriculum framework offering students the widest possible range of choices. They can build their learning around their emerging interests.
- Develop a widely-based common curriculum of academic subjects, with a limited choice. Students experience a broad education to age 16 and keep options open until a later stage.
- Balance these two approaches: a core of subjects including the first language, mathematics, science and a social science or humanities subject, and a limited range of option choices for students.
- Specialise in science, humanities or commerce subjects and offer the full range of syllabuses in these streams.
- Build a curriculum around traditional subjects, and offer students the chance to integrate learning through the inclusion of cross-curricular dimensions or skills.
- Extend the academic curriculum by offering students the opportunity of studying more applied subjects, or vocationally-oriented study.
- Balance international and local studies through a languages programme as well as social studies and humanities.
- Choose Cambridge IGCSE examinations to assess students who are in bilingual education programmes.
- Offer Cambridge IGCSEs alongside the national curriculum to enhance the students' portfolios of qualifications.



## Access, challenge, flexibility

Many schools want to individualise learning, and maximise student engagement and motivation. They want to engage students across the ability range. They want to put students at the centre, and give them real choice – to choose their own pathways and learn in a style that suits them.

We make sure the full range of students can achieve at Cambridge IGCSE:

- Learning requirements and assessment are clear, to help students engage
- Grades are benchmarked to international standards

- Bright students have the chance to excel
- Students of all abilities are assessed positively
- Tiered structure for different ability levels
- The structure of each subject is simple, with easy-to-use options to put your school in control of how you deliver the course.

We use an eight-point grade scale: A\*, A, B, C, D, E, F, G. Grade A\* is for the highest level of achievement. Grade G is for minimum satisfactory performance.

### Why have formal assessment at this stage?

We see many benefits to formal assessment at the end of the 14–16 stage:

- Passport for progression
- Record of attainment
- Meets matriculation requirement in some countries
- Stimulates and focuses students during a crucial period of education
- Prepares students for high-stakes pre-university programmes and assessment
- International benchmark
- Gives students the basis on which to specialise at 16–18



## Flexibility

How does Cambridge IGCSE provide flexibility and choice for students?

- The widest range of subjects of any international provider
- Schools can offer courses in any combination they choose
- Each subject offers easy-to-use content and assessment options
- Alternative routes through many subjects

## Assessment options

Cambridge IGCSE examination sessions occur twice a year, in May/June and October/November\*. Results are issued in August and January respectively.

Cambridge IGCSE uses a wide-range of assessment techniques to complement formal written examinations – orals, practicals and projects are all used in various contexts where appropriate.

Schools have the option of assessing students using only external examinations or, in most subjects, combining examinations with coursework. Coursework is set and marked by the teacher and externally moderated by us. Teachers who have received training from us, or who possess suitable experience of marking coursework may carry out this assessment.

\*Some subjects are only available in one session.

## Accreditation and funding in the UK

Eighteen of the most popular Cambridge IGCSE subjects are accredited and funded for state-maintained schools in England. They are:

- Art and Design
- Biology
- Business Studies
- Chemistry
- English Language
- English Literature
- English as a Second Language
- French
- Geography
- German
- Greek
- Hindi
- History
- ICT
- Mathematics
- Music
- Physics
- Spanish

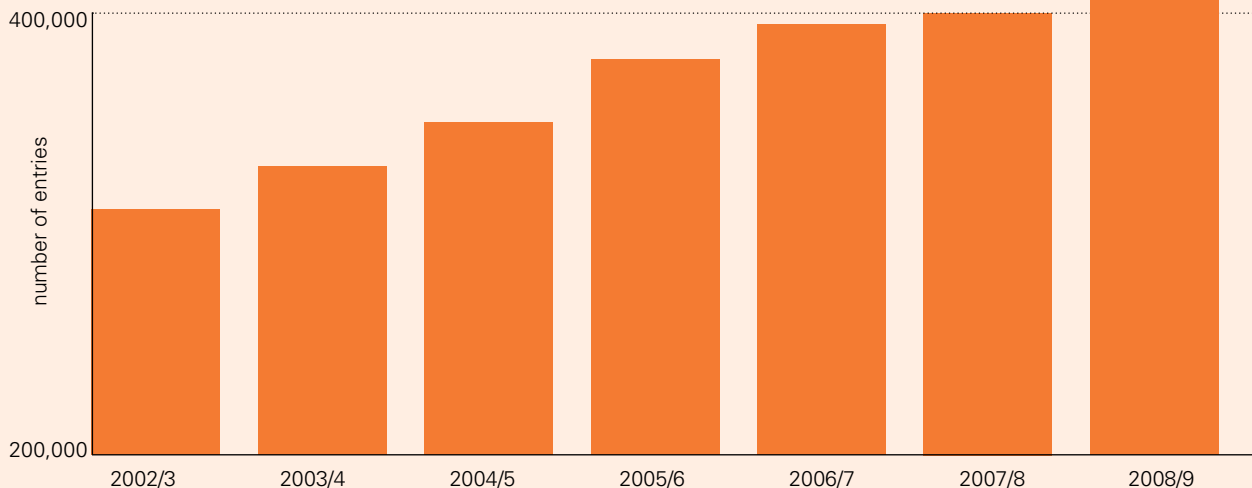
Cambridge IGCSE Enterprise, Global Perspectives, International Mathematics and Mandarin Chinese have also been submitted for accreditation and funding.

## International outlook, local relevance

Schools often use Cambridge IGCSE to provide both international and local contexts for teaching and learning. Cambridge IGCSE is designed to help schools create the balance they want between an international outlook

and local relevance. Cambridge IGCSE programmes run in over 135 countries. The syllabuses use international examples and avoid terminology only used in one country. Non-native speakers of English are always treated fairly.

**Growth in Cambridge IGCSE examination entries 2002 to 2009**





## Progression and recognition

### Progression

Schools which offer their 16–18 year olds international qualifications, such as Cambridge A Level or the IB Diploma, tell us that Cambridge IGCSE gives unrivalled preparation.

Schools working in a national context, or with university entrance exams, find that Cambridge IGCSE gives students the valuable thinking skills and subject knowledge that equips them really well for study in higher education.

### Recognition

Cambridge IGCSE gives students one of the key qualifications needed to meet the entry requirements for many universities worldwide. It is also recognised by employers as a reliable record of students' attainment.

Five passes at grade C or higher indicate a student's readiness to begin freshman level courses in US universities or colleges but many will also require AS or A Levels. Cambridge IGCSE is internationally recognised as equivalent to the GCSE in the United Kingdom and is regularly used in choosing between applicants for higher education in the UK.

Also, Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language (at grade C or above) is recognised by almost all UK universities – and many in the USA, Canada and Australia – as evidence of adequate competence in the English language for university entrance purposes.

For more information on institutions that accept Cambridge IGCSE, use our recognition search at [www.cie.org.uk/recognition](http://www.cie.org.uk/recognition).



## Developing the Cambridge Teacher

We offer world class support services, helping Cambridge teachers deliver engaging, effective courses. We also help teachers develop as professionals.

### Teacher Resources

#### Textbooks and Resources

A wide range of textbooks is available for Cambridge IGCSE. Find complete resource lists on our website at [www.cie.org.uk/igcse](http://www.cie.org.uk/igcse)

#### Teacher Support website

All the materials you need to teach our syllabuses, including past question papers, mark schemes, examiner reports and lesson plans and schemes of work. Access is free for schools that offer Cambridge IGCSE. Visit <http://teachers.cie.org.uk>

#### Training

We offer regular training workshops for Cambridge IGCSE syllabuses. Online training is also available, increasing access for teachers who have limited time or are a long way from training events. Find out more at [www.cie.org.uk/events](http://www.cie.org.uk/events)

#### Expert advice

Schools can send us queries about any aspect of Cambridge IGCSE, by joining a discussion group on the Cambridge Teacher Support website. Our subject experts can guide you further – email us at [international@cie.org.uk](mailto:international@cie.org.uk)

#### Easy to administer

We offer fast, simple, reliable and friendly administration. Schools receive comprehensive help from our Customer Services team and local representatives. We aim to respond to all queries within two working days at the most.

## Learn more!

Learn more about how Cambridge  
IGCSE can work in your school.

Email [international@cie.org.uk](mailto:international@cie.org.uk)  
Telephone 01223 553554

For more information visit

[www.cie.org.uk/igcse](http://www.cie.org.uk/igcse)

[www.cie.org.uk/recognition](http://www.cie.org.uk/recognition)

[www.cie.org.uk/events](http://www.cie.org.uk/events)

<http://teachers.cie.org.uk>





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