

Update for schools

Cambridge Pre-U is an exciting post-16 qualification preparing learners for university

Spotlight on science for Cambridge Pre-U students

As the countdown to the Cambridge Science Festival begins we're pleased to report that the number of schools choosing Cambridge Pre-U science courses is growing fast.

We are anticipating a 40 per cent increase in examination entries across Cambridge Pre-U Chemistry, Physics and Biology in 2012. This builds on the introduction of these courses in schools which took place in 2008.

Our science courses are developed in Cambridge, a key science hub in the UK, with input from science professors at the University of Cambridge who are leaders in their field.

Dr Peter Wothers, Chemistry Professor at the University of Cambridge, helped to design the Cambridge Pre-U Chemistry syllabus.

He said: "Cambridge Pre-U Chemistry was designed specifically with progression to chemistry at university in mind. It equips students with transferable skills and key knowledge suitable for future study and employment in chemistry and related fields."

Dr Edward How, Head of Chemistry at Charterhouse, said: "Teaching Cambridge Pre-U Chemistry has been a real breath of fresh air – as a department we have really enjoyed looking at new approaches to teaching topics we have all taught for years."

Exciting new developments for Cambridge Pre-U Biology

We are investing in developing the syllabus of many subjects including Cambridge Pre-U Biology. We listened to feedback from teachers and integrated key changes into the syllabus, which were introduced in September 2011. These include:

- refocusing the content and approach to give schools confidence that their teachers have time to cover all the course material in two years
- combining four underlying themes into the course for studying biology, which teachers can use to unify their teaching
- creating a motivating and engaging mosaic of different learning and teaching experiences.

'Identifying young scientists of the future' through new chemistry competition

We worked in partnership with the University of Cambridge to bring a new and exciting chemistry competition to students in the UK and around the world.

The Cambridge Chemistry Challenge is designed to push boundaries and stretch students' science knowledge. The competition attracted over 3000 students in 250 schools in the UK.

Cambridge Pre-U Chemistry students from Winchester College

were among the top 30 students. The competition has been endorsed by the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC). Jim Iley, RSC's Director of Science and Education, said: "It is great to see University of Cambridge International Examinations bring a competition of this kind to students. It makes chemistry fun for students and helps us to identify our young scientists of the future."

The competition began in January 2012. Find out more at www.c3i6.org



From left to right: MP Julian Huppert, Dr Peter Wothers, Alexander Moore, Winchester College

University success for Cambridge Pre-U students

With the help of UCAS and universities we have collated information on Cambridge Pre-U students' next steps in education.

The top 10 universities that made the most offers to Cambridge Pre-U students in 2011 are listed here in order of the number of offers made.

Ann Puntis, Chief Executive, University of Cambridge International Examinations, said: "Schools that opted for Cambridge Pre-U in the previous examination series are now seeing the benefits of that decision. I'm delighted that so many of these students have been successful in gaining their university places. Cambridge Pre-U provides students with excellent preparation for university – this is clearly demonstrated in these results."

University	Number of offers made to Cambridge Pre-U students
University of Bristol	132
Durham University	115
The University of Nottingham	105
The University of Manchester	103
University of Leeds	103
Oxford University	96
University College London (University of London)	91
The University of Warwick	88
University of Exeter	81
The University of York	77

Data source: UCAS 2011

Why we enjoy teaching Cambridge Pre-U

We asked teachers at Westminster School to share their experiences of teaching Cambridge Pre-U subjects.

"We felt that Cambridge Pre-U suited us extremely well – we believed it fitted better with our young people's intellectual and creative development."

Dr Stephen Spurr,
Head teacher

"We're able to cover a lot more of our own interests, find out what our students' interests are and to some extent develop a course around that. This makes the course enjoyable from a teaching and learning perspective because both teacher and student end up with greater independence."

Richard Pyatt,
Head of English

"Cambridge Pre-U opens up more hours in the classroom. We don't have to focus on exams at the end of the first year and therefore students can follow their own academic interests. They can challenge, they can question – they can embark upon the sort of work that will carry them through at university level."

Rodney Harris,
Director of Studies

Link to video: www.cie.org.uk/westminster_school_video



How did Cambridge Pre-U prepare me for university?

We asked students who achieved top marks in the Cambridge Pre-U examinations in 2011 how they felt their courses had prepared them for university and informed their decisions about the future.



"I really enjoyed the breadth and stretch of Cambridge Pre-U Economics. I also felt I could express myself better in exams and it definitely reinforced my decision to study economics at university."

Sam Miller from Watford Boys' Grammar School is now studying economics at the University of Cambridge.

"I feel that I came to university with a smoother transition than some other chemists, who were thrown a little by the difficulty of some problems. I would definitely say that Chemistry Pre-U gave me the advantage at the beginning of the course, which allowed me to explore a wider range of interests in the first few weeks."

Anthony Kane from Charterhouse is now studying chemistry at Durham.

"I loved the fact that Cambridge Pre-U Music was so varied and allowed me to study some great classical masterpieces like Stravinsky's Rite of Spring. My experience of the course definitely influenced my decision to study music [at university] because of the variety of topics covered."

Daisy Gibbs from St Swithun's, Winchester, is now studying music at The Queen's College, Oxford – she wants to do a PhD and become a university lecturer in music.



"I enjoyed Cambridge Pre-U Physics because of the broad curriculum. It gave me the opportunity to pursue my own interests in the topics. This meant I was able to make a much better judgement about my course at university."

Alexander Tomkinson from Rugby School is now studying physics at Imperial College London.



"I enjoyed Cambridge Pre-U Global Perspectives and Research (GPR) because it gave me the opportunity to choose the topics that really interested me and study them in real depth. I did my research project on Shakespeare and discussed whether his value comes from his writing or references he makes to contemporary culture. It meant I could read from a lot of academics about a subject I'm really passionate about. I found it interesting, challenging and incredibly valuable for my university study."

Jacqueline Agate from Central Sussex College is now studying English Literature at Leeds University.

Link to video of Jacqueline:
www.cie.org.uk/jacqueline_agate

Cambridge Pre-U students come together to share Global Perspectives and Research experience

We invited Cambridge Pre-U students to share their experiences of studying Global Perspectives and Research (GPR) at an event at the University of Cambridge in November 2011.

The 'Bridge the Gap' event was designed to give students from different schools a chance to work alongside each other and develop their pre-university study skills.

The event broadened students' understanding of the course and life at university, giving them a chance to work with their peers and hear from university lecturers about the skills they value. The focus was on learning from each other, with Cambridge Pre-U students in their second year of GPR giving guidance to first-year students.

Lucy Greenhead, a Cambridge Pre-U student at Central Sussex College, said: "It was a really good opportunity to meet other people doing the same course and to find out how it would help with university applications and study."

GPR develops students' ability to think critically about issues where there is always more than one point of view. This event brought students from UK schools together, but we know that GPR students are collaborating with other schools worldwide on projects, with encouragement from their teachers.



Quicker and more efficient service to answer your enquiries

We understand the importance of responding quickly and efficiently to queries arising from students' examination results.

We are therefore delighted to report that we have improved our results enquiry service to make it work better for schools. Since implementing this change over the past examination series we have responded to enquiries with increased speed and efficiency.

Michael Bowerman, Group Manager of Operations at University of Cambridge International Examinations, said: "Using best practice we have improved our priority service turnaround time by reducing the average from five days to three days. This will be of great benefit to our teachers and students."

GPR exchange brings UK and US students together

Students from Walthamstow Hall in the UK and Eastchester High in the US came together for a GPR exchange project.

The schools collaborated on a project about child poverty which will form part of an international video conference for schools in Italy, India and China to be held in January. They communicated regularly via Skype to share their work and ideas.

This programme of work establishes the link between these schools as a permanent feature in their GPR courses.

Students from Eastchester High School will be visiting Walthamstow Hall in February 2012, and in the following year students from Walthamstow Hall will visit their counterparts in the US.

Anne Needham, GPR coordinator, Walthamstow Hall, examiner and USA GPR consultant, said: "GPR really lends itself to the forging of international relationships and collaborative work. What better way to gain global perspectives, liven up the classroom and take students out of their often closeted world?"

Hannah Pether, a GPR student from Walthamstow Hall involved in the project, said: "It's great to have first-hand experience of American views. We've had some excellent political debates and are really excited about their visit."



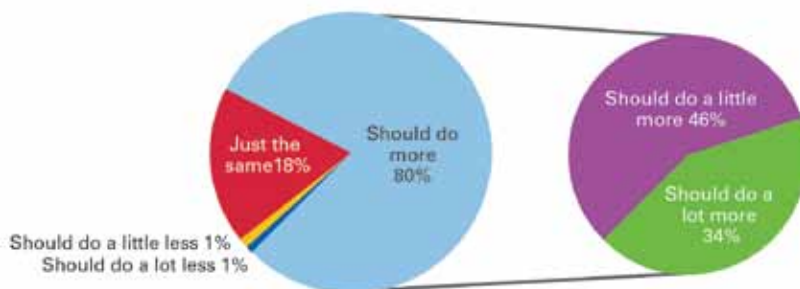
93 per cent of employers view Cambridge global outlook as essential

The need for global skills is emphasised in two reports recently published by Think Global, the Development Education Association

The first report, 'The Global Skills Gap,' summarises the results of market research company ICM's poll of 500 UK business leaders. Seventy-five per cent of businesses say that unless young people are better supported to think more globally, the UK risks falling behind emerging economies such as China, India and Brazil. Ninety-three per cent of businesses believe it is important for schools to help young people to think more globally.

The second report, 'Cultivating a global outlook for the global economy', reveals that learning about global issues at school equips young people with the skills they need for the best graduate careers. All teachers surveyed in the report agree that helping young people to think critically and creatively about global issues improves their academic attainment. The report proposes that all exams across all subjects focus on global learning that young people and our economy require. Cambridge Pre-U GPR is highlighted as one of the key qualifications having the 'facets of global learning at its core'.

Do you think schools should be doing more or less than they currently do to help young people think more globally?



Source: Think Global and the British Council 2011

New subjects accredited by Ofqual

Cambridge Pre-U Further Mathematics (short course)

Cambridge Pre-U Global Perspectives (short course)

Cambridge Pre-U Drama and Theatre

Get in touch with one of our experts if you want to know more.

Email: international@cie.org.uk or telephone +44 (0)1223 553554

Interim assessment continues in 2012

Due to the demand from schools we will run our interim assessment materials and moderation service in 2012. If your school is interested in this service please contact us at international@cie.org.uk. Please type 'interim assessment' in the subject of your email.

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Schools appreciate flexibility of Cambridge Pre-U Short Courses

Teachers are telling us they like the flexibility of Short Courses, which allow students to broaden their learning beyond their main subject specialisms and develop skills that are transferable across other subject areas.

Tim Whitehead, Head of French at Shrewsbury School, explains the benefits of the Cambridge Pre-U French Short Course for teachers and students: "Every pupil at Shrewsbury takes this Short Course in the first year

of sixth form – it has proved extremely popular with our students. The course gives them the opportunity to experience a real oral exam in the year before their final exams, which is invaluable. Students are able to choose their own topic for the oral exam. It is often said by pupils to be the best thing they have done. Teachers at Shrewsbury feel this course has breathed new life into their preparation and delivery of modern foreign languages."

The following Cambridge Pre-U subjects are available as a Short Course:

French
Further Mathematics
German
Global Perspectives
Italian
Mandarin Chinese
Mathematics (Statistics with Pure Mathematics)
Russian
Spanish

Downe House – Trailblazers of Cambridge Pre-U tell their story

Two years ago Downe House switched to Cambridge Pre-U in all subjects. We put questions to the school's head teacher, Mrs Emma McKendrick, and former student, Sophie Meadows, about their experiences as the first trailblazers of Cambridge Pre-U.



Questions to Mrs Emma McKendrick

Q. Why did you choose to switch to Cambridge Pre-U in all subjects?

A. We decided to take this significant step because we believed that Cambridge Pre-U had the potential to meet the needs of our students and prepare them extremely well, not just to gain entry to university, but to really succeed when they are there, as well as in the world of work beyond.

Q. How has your school been involved in the development of Cambridge Pre-U?

A. Teachers at Downe House have been involved from the start in designing the syllabuses and continue to play a part in developing the system. We feel very much a part of the Cambridge Pre-U community.



Questions to Sophie Meadows

Q. How did it feel to be one of the first set of students in the country to take Cambridge Pre-U?

A. We were initially worried about the potential stretch of Cambridge Pre-U and the fact that it was unfamiliar. However, we were reassured by our teachers, who told us to be proud of our role as trailblazers.

Q. Did your concerns last long?

A. No! Enthusiasm for the course from our teachers caught on. Our History teacher, Mr Hobbs, was hopping with excitement in our first Cambridge Pre-U History lesson! As lessons continued throughout the term, we realised we weren't out of our depth – it was all within our reach.

Q. Did Cambridge Pre-U change how you feel about your subjects?

A. Yes – most definitely. The emphasis which the course places on independent research largely increased people's focus, passion and conviction for their subjects. The Cambridge Pre-U format enhances skills such as independent thinking and critical analysis. This makes it easier to gain a thorough understanding and enjoyment of a subject or topic, rather than simply fulfilling syllabus requirements.

Q. What was the key benefit of being a Cambridge Pre-U student?

A. Additional teaching time because fewer lessons were spent revising. This allowed more time to come to terms with the skills required for Cambridge Pre-U and most importantly allowed time to develop the skills needed for university.



DOWNE HOUSE

Founded 1907

Cambridge Pre-U INSET calendar

Subject	Location	Date
Biology	London	6 March 2012
Chemistry	London	6 March 2012
Economics	London	6 March 2012
Art and Design	London	6 March 2012
Global Perspectives	London	7 March 2012
Geography	London	7 March 2012
Global Perspectives	London	7 March 2012
Physics	London	7 March 2012
Philosophy	London	7 March 2012
Literature in English	London	7 March 2012

Book a place on a free Cambridge Pre-U workshop – for teachers new to Cambridge Pre-U or considering teaching for the first time. Attendance is free of charge, and lunch is provided.

These sessions cover:

- unique features of the Cambridge Pre-U syllabus in this subject
- resources to support teaching and example materials
- building a support network with other teachers.

Find out more and book a place at www.cie.org.uk/events

Are you attending these events? If so we'll see you there

Date	Event
January 2012	ASE (Association for Science Education) Conference
January 2012	BETT (the Education Technology Show)
January 2012	SSAT (Specialist Schools and Academies Trust) Arts Annual Conference
February 2012	UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) Annual Conference for Teachers and Advisers
February 2012	ISMLA (Independent Schools' Modern Languages Association) Annual Conference
March 2012	ALL (Association for Language Learning) Annual Conference
March 2012	The Education Show
March 2012	SSAT (Specialist Schools and Academies Trust) Chatham House, Student Conference on China
March 2012	SSAT (Specialist Schools and Academies Trust) Business and Enterprise Conference
April 2012	Mathematical Association Annual Conference
April 2012	Geographical Association Annual Conference
April 2012	UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) Admissions Officers Conference
May 2012	Historical Association Annual Conference
May 2012	Higher Education and Schools Partnerships Conference
May 2012	MMA (Music Masters Association) Annual Conference
June 2012	Conference for HMC (Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference) Deputy Heads
June 2012	EBEA (Economics and Business Education Association) Annual Conference
June 2012	Sunday Times Festival of Education
June 2012	Sixth Form Colleges Forum Summer Conference
June 2012	NATE (The National Association for the Teaching of English) Conference
July 2012	ATP (Association for the Teaching of Psychology) Conference
July 2012	SSAT (Specialist Schools and Academies Trust) Maths and Computing Conference
July 2012	SSAT (Specialist Schools and Academies Trust) Science Conference

Cambridge languages seminar – coming soon!

We are planning a free one-day seminar on modern foreign languages for students and teachers, looking at bridging the gap between the study of languages at school and university.

Representatives from top universities and past Cambridge Pre-U students will discuss language learning at university and the best way to prepare.

If you're interested, email us at cieeventsteam@cie.org.uk and we'll keep you posted. Please type 'languages seminar' in the subject line of your email.

Cambridge science seminar – book now!

We are inviting teachers and students to a free one-day seminar on Cambridge Pre-U Chemistry, Biology and Physics in June, led by university and HE staff.

The seminar will focus on making the jump between sixth form and university study, followed by practical workshops where students will be able to take part in science experiments. They will receive feedback from a university tutor.

The seminar is planned for **Tuesday 26 June** in Cambridge. If your school is teaching Cambridge Pre-U Chemistry, Biology or Physics, or considering teaching it, and you would like to attend this seminar, please contact our Events team at cieeventsteam@cie.org.uk.

Facts and figures

166 schools registered to teach Cambridge Pre-U in July 2011 (up from 101 in 2010)

48% state schools

52% independent schools

90 schools took Cambridge Pre-U examinations in 2011 (up from 60 in 2010)

Entries up **34%** on last year

50% more schools entered candidates this year

Most popular subjects are:

1. Literature in English
2. French
3. History
4. Mathematics
5. Global Perspectives and Independent Research



Learn more! Contact us via our website at www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu, email at international@cie.org.uk or call us on +44 (0)1223 553554. Find our stand at conferences, or attend one of our free INSET days.

