

Update



Funding Cambridge Pre-U in the state sector

QCA accreditation and the registration of the Cambridge Pre-U Diploma on Section 96 of the approved qualifications database is an important stage in opening up state schools' access to Cambridge Pre-U as a route for students heading to university.

helpful and our discussions on funding are progressing well. The Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subjects will be funded on a par with current A Level subjects as will Global Perspectives and the Independent Research Report (GPR).'

Staff at the Learning and Skills Council have been very helpful and our discussions on funding are progressing well.

CIE's aim has always been to ensure that the Cambridge Pre-U Diploma is as accessible to UK schools in the maintained sector as it is in the independent sector.

Peter Monteath, CIE UK Schools Manager, said: 'Staff at the Learning and Skills Council have been very

CIE has received a growing number of enquiries from schools and also Local Authorities about funding for Cambridge Pre-U. We regularly update the CIE website at www.cie.org.uk and providers with queries should contact their LSC Local Partnership Team in the first instance.

In this issue

In the last Cambridge Pre-U newsletter, we turned the spotlight on the first five Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subjects to be accredited by QCA. The process continues with 21 of the 26 Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subjects now accredited. Read more

about Cambridge Pre-U Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Biology, Modern Foreign Languages and GPR on pages 2 – 3.

On page 4 there is an update on university recognition and the Cambridge Pre-U trial examinations.

Learn more!

Cambridge Pre-U Learn more! seminars are for schools that are considering the adoption of Cambridge Pre-U.

The following sessions will be held:

Birmingham	September 23
London	September 24

To reserve a place, contact CIE on 01223 553554 or email international@cie.org.uk.

Subject-specific INSET seminars and workshops are also available. Contact CIE for more details.



Global Perspectives and the Independent Research Report (GPR)

The GPR component of the Cambridge Pre-U Diploma has now received QCA accreditation. To earn the full Cambridge Pre-U Diploma, students take three Principal Subjects together with the GPR core. However, demand from schools looking for a curriculum enrichment programme has been such that GPR is now available as a separate qualification for students who are otherwise taking A Levels.

Delegates to the recent 'GPR: Getting Started' seminar in May were very enthusiastic about the course. Many took the opportunity to discuss how they were planning to offer the qualification within their schools.

A key ingredient of the success of GPR is that teachers and students are engaged and enthused by the themes within the seminar-based Global Perspectives course. Students explore

key global issues such as genetic engineering, migration, alternatives to oil, artificial intelligence or emerging superpowers, in an open, critical and disciplined way.

Andrew Hutchings, Director of Studies at Downe House, said: 'The Global Perspectives topics are relevant and current. The course brings together elements of Critical Thinking and General Studies and extends them.'

Global Perspectives enables students develop the ability to follow and deconstruct arguments, separate fact from fiction, and evaluate the truth of claims via a distinctive, structured, **critical path**, which is a feature of the course. The Independent Research Report gives students the chance to dig deeper into a topic that fascinates them and can

include opportunities to step outside traditional subject boundaries. This component of the course will be the first opportunity many students have to develop the independent study skills they will require at university.

Several delegates commented on the fact that GPR provides an excellent opportunity to learn how to produce a piece of extended writing — something that students may miss out on — particularly if they choose to specialise in science subjects.

Delegates also found the question and answer session with Jo Lally, Examiner for Global Perspectives, and Steve Adams, Resource Developer for Global Perspectives, very useful.

Download the GPR syllabus from www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu

Mathematics welcomed by universities

Throughout Cambridge Pre-U Mathematics and Further Mathematics, students are expected to develop two parallel strands of mathematics: Pure Mathematics and Applications of Mathematics.

The topics covered fall into three broad headings, Pure Mathematics, Probability, and Mechanics, and the content is similar to that covered in A Level modules. However, the linear nature of Cambridge Pre-U Mathematics and Further Mathematics allows for the exploration of interrelationships between different topic areas,

something that is not possible at A Level to such an extent.

Cambridge Pre-U Mathematics and Further Mathematics ask students to cover all the material in the course rather than choosing their own route through the topics, which could lead them to miss certain key areas. This move has been welcomed by universities that are looking to establish exactly what a student has covered at upper secondary level.

Another approach that has found favour with universities is the creation of a level playing field for all students through the exclusion

of graphical calculators. This allows students to demonstrate a broad range of skills and understanding, unaided.

In delivering the courses, some schools have chosen to enter some students for the Cambridge Pre-U Mathematics examinations at the end of Year 12, and Cambridge Pre-U Further Mathematics at the end of Year 13. The qualifications are ideally suitable for teaching in this way.

Download the Mathematics and Further Mathematics syllabuses from www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu

Story of life makes biology distinctive

Cambridge Pre-U Biology is distinctive because CIE expects candidates to put biological topics in an evolutionary context. In other words, they get the opportunity to follow the story of life.

The curriculum content is divided into six sections, emphasising the evolutionary paradigm that underlies the design of the syllabus. These are: origin and fundamentals of life; evolution of the eukaryotic cell; energy; mechanisms of evolution; organisms in the environment, and biotechnology.

Cambridge Pre-U Biology places considerable emphasis on understanding and use of scientific ideas and principles in a variety of situations, including those which are new to students. Programmes of study based on this syllabus should feature a variety of teacher-centred and pupil-centred learning experiences designed to enhance the development of skill and comprehension. This approach focuses teachers and learners on the development of transferable life-long skills relevant to today's increasingly technological environment.

Cambridge Pre-U Biology also prepares students for an assessment that tests expertise, understanding and insight, often in unfamiliar contexts.

Download the Cambridge Pre-U Biology syllabuses from www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu

Bringing students and teachers back to languages



Cambridge Pre-U Modern Languages syllabuses help students to develop linguistic skills and cultural awareness in a way that specifically prepares them for university study. The syllabuses are designed to deliver a course which is much more engaging, in terms of subject matter, range and relevance, and which attracts students and teachers back to languages.

Geran Jones of Westminster School helped develop the Cambridge Pre-U Modern Languages syllabuses. He said: 'There is a freshness in the Modern Languages courses when compared to A Level. Students are required to deepen their knowledge of the target country's contemporary culture and compile their own set of authentic materials to study. They start to take responsibility for their own learning, and to develop the independent study skills which are required at university.'

Students compile their own portfolio of authentic material in the target language from newspapers,

magazines, the internet, film and radio. They study a range of full texts from modern and classic authors and will be asked to speak on a relevant topic and to be aware of current affairs.

Critical analysis of classic texts and films will be examined in English. Students need the full range of expression when discussing texts, as their linguistic abilities may not equal their interpretive skills. This approach also better prepares students for university style teaching, where critical analysis is often taught and examined in English rather than the target language.

A specific section on grammar and syntax gives students the tools to develop deep and precise understanding of language at an advanced level.

Download the Cambridge Pre-U Modern Foreign Languages syllabuses from www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu

Cambridge Pre-U suitable for all students who pass A Level

Reports published by CIE on Cambridge Pre-U trial examinations demonstrate that current A Level students have the potential to give distinction-level answers, despite the fact that they had not finished their two-year A Level courses nor received Cambridge Pre-U specific teaching.

Cambridge Pre-U questions are designed to give students a chance to get credit for what they know and can do.

More than 1,000 students from 30 schools sat the trial exam papers. They answered specimen questions selected by their teachers from topics the students had already studied. The reports also show that students who would currently get a low pass grade at A Level could expect a pass at Cambridge Pre-U.

CIE Director, International Curriculum Development, Kevin Stannard, was pleased with the trial results. He said: 'The trials demonstrate that Cambridge Pre-U is

widely suitable for all students who currently achieve a pass at A Level – they won't be disenfranchised by Cambridge Pre-U.'

Cambridge Pre-U questions are designed to give students a chance to get credit for what they know and can do. This applies equally to students at

the top end of the ability range where an extra grade is available, as they won't be restricted by a 'glass ceiling' effect that fails to recognise originality of thought.

The Cambridge Pre-U trial reports contain details on each paper, with examples of what would typically be a Pass, Merit or Distinction response.

The reports are available to those who join the Cambridge Pre-U online community at www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu.



Widespread university recognition for Cambridge Pre-U

More than two thirds of the Sunday Times Top 30 universities have formally recognised Cambridge Pre-U, the most recent being Oxford University. Admissions tutors show high levels of awareness of Cambridge Pre-U and have told us that they welcome a qualification aimed specifically at preparing students for the type of work they will encounter at university. Other recent additions to the list of universities that formally recognise Cambridge Pre-U are the Universities of East Anglia, Edge Hill, Kent, Leicester, Liverpool John Moores,

York, and Anglia Ruskin.

A statement issued in 2007 by the Russell Group of universities (Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Imperial College London, King's College London, Leeds, Liverpool, London School of Economics, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford, Queens's Belfast, Sheffield, Southampton, University College London, Warwick) provided great reassurance for parents and schools at a key stage in the development of Cambridge Pre-U, and things have moved on considerably since then.

Wendy Piatt, Director-General of the Russell Group, said: 'We believe that Cambridge Pre-U promises to be an acceptable preparation for university courses. We welcome the academic rigour of the new qualification's linear approach and the retention of subject specialism...'

More than 50 UK universities have now given formal written acceptance of Cambridge Pre-U, provided other entry requirements, such as English Language assessment, have been met. The updated list is on the CIE website at www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu