

Syllabus Outline

Cambridge Pre-U  
**COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

Cambridge  
**Pre-U**

For examination in 2010



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE  
International Examinations

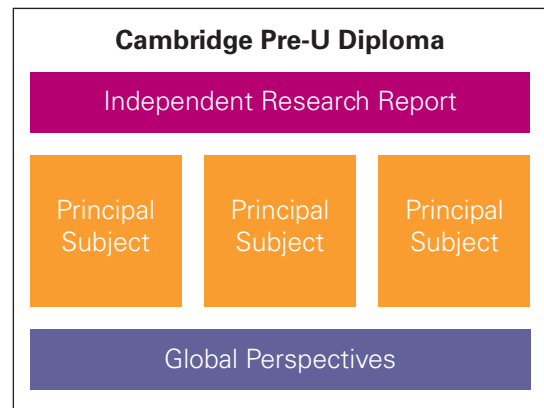
## Cambridge Pre-U Overview

Cambridge Pre-U equips students with the skills they need to make a success of their studies at university:

- a solid and coherent grounding in specialist subjects at an appropriate level;
- the ability to undertake independent and self-directed learning;
- the ability to think laterally, critically and creatively.

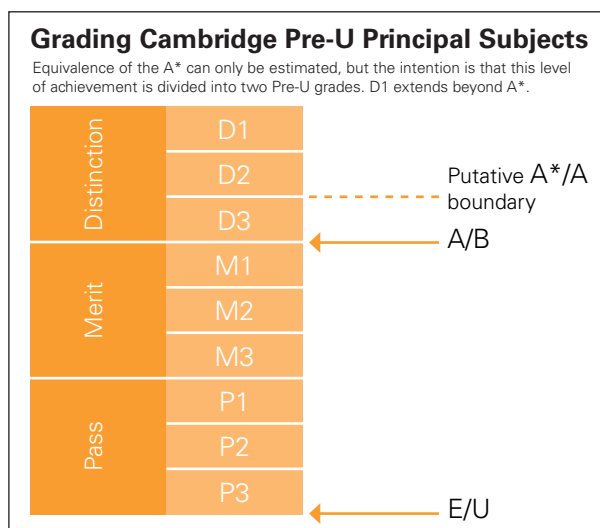
Cambridge Pre-U Certificate in Comparative Government and Politics is a stand-alone qualification, certificated separately.

Students can combine it with other individual Principal Subjects and core components (Global Perspectives, Independent Research Report) to gain the Cambridge Pre-U Diploma.



## Common characteristics of Cambridge Pre-U syllabuses

- **Stretch:** built into syllabus content (challenging concepts), assessment (open-ended questions) and grading outcomes (finer differentiation at the top end).
- **Innovation:** new approaches to subjects, new topics, new methods of delivery and new forms of assessment.
- **Progression in learning:** building on prior knowledge gained at 14-16, where appropriate.
- **Linearity:** assessment at the end of the course makes for greater coherence in teaching and learning, by freeing up time currently used in module examinations and retakes, and by giving teachers the freedom to structure their courses in the most appropriate way for their students.



Cambridge Pre-U offers a joined-up approach to assessment, making possible a coherent approach to teaching and learning.

## Reporting of Achievement

Achievement is reported on a scale of nine grades: D1 (Distinction 1), D2, D3, M1 (Merit 1), M2, M3, P1 (Pass 1), P2, P3. The grade D1 reports achievement above the new A\* grade. The intention is to differentiate more finely and extend reporting at the top end, while keeping the grading scale accessible to the full range of ability currently achieving passes at A Level.

# Cambridge Pre-U Comparative Government and Politics

## Assessment Objectives

<b>AO1</b>	<p><b>Knowledge with critical understanding effectively communicated</b></p> <p>Candidates will be expected to demonstrate relevant knowledge and critical understanding of political concepts, theories, debates, processes and institutions, and the ability to relate these to relevant structures, institutions, organisations and practices, using appropriate political vocabulary.</p>
<b>AO2</b>	<p><b>Analysing and evaluating information</b> <b>Interpreting, comparing and evaluating texts</b></p> <p>Candidates will be expected to investigate political questions, presenting critical explanations and analyses and developing well-substantiated judgements. Where appropriate, candidates will be expected to interpret, compare and evaluate political texts critically.</p>

## Scheme of Assessment

The Cambridge Pre-U Certificate in Comparative Government and Politics is assessed through four compulsory components at the end of the two-year course. A single grade is awarded.

Component	Name	Duration	Weighting(%)	Type of Assessment
<b>Paper 1</b>	Concepts and Institutions (UK and USA)	1h 30m	25	Written paper externally set and marked. Two sections (UK and USA), each containing three short and three long questions.
	Candidates write two short essays on specific concepts and institutions, and one longer essay discussing them. Choose from section A and/or B.			
<b>Paper 2</b>	Parties and Ideas (UK and USA)	1h 30m	25	Written paper externally set and marked. Two sections (UK and USA), each containing three short and three long questions.
	Candidates write two short essays of specific parties and ideas, and one longer essay discussing them. Choose from section A and/or B.			
<b>Paper 3</b>	Ideologies and Philosophies	2h	25	Written paper externally set and marked. Choice of two from five options.
	Each option sets one short essay based on an extract, followed by an essay on a related theme. Candidates answer both the questions from any two options.			
<b>Paper 4</b>	Contemporary International Debates: contexts and comparisons	1h 40m	25	Written paper externally set and marked. Two essay questions from a choice of five.

## Curriculum content

Cambridge Pre-U Comparative Government and Politics should invoke in students an enthusiasm for politics and encourage reflection on the nature, history and philosophy of political thought and practice. Students will learn to communicate both orally and in writing, articulate informed opinions about government and politics, particularly controversial ones, and participate in debate about such issues.

### **Paper 1: Concepts and Institutions.**

This paper aims to develop an advanced understanding of recent and contemporary governance in context.

Candidates may answer on the UK or the USA or both.

#### **Section A: UK Concepts and Institutions**

Core Concepts: Sovereignty, Consent, Constitution, Democracy, Government.

#### **Section B: US Concepts and Institutions**

Core Concepts: The Separation of Powers, Federalism, Consent, Constitution, Democracy, Government.

### **Paper 2: Parties and Ideas.**

This paper aims to develop an advanced understanding of recent and contemporary party politics in context.

Candidates may answer on the UK or the USA or both.

#### **Section A: Parties and Ideas in the UK**

Core Concepts: Democracy and Representation, Liberalism, Conservatism, Socialism/Social Democracy/'the Third Way', Nationalism.

#### **Section B: Parties and Ideas in the US**

Core Concepts: Democracy and Representation, Liberalism, Conservatism, 'Americanism: pluralism and the small state'.

### **Paper 3: Ideologies and Philosophies**

This paper explores political ideas and extends work undertaken in papers 1 and 2. Teaching and study require critical creative engagement with a range of texts exploring political thinking about theories of power and legitimacy, political systems, the role of the state, the purposes and responsibilities of government, the rights and responsibilities of the individual.

Options: Liberalism and the Individual, Conservatism and the Nation, Socialism and the Common Good, Democracy and its critics, Current ideological debates.

### **Paper 4: Contemporary International Debates: contexts and comparisons**

This thematic paper studies some of the pressing issues in contemporary international politics, in a comparative context drawn from various countries/regions of the world.

1. Governance: issues in how states govern themselves.  
Concepts: constitutions, legitimacy, separation of powers, citizens, civil liberties/human rights/minority rights, failed states.
2. Independence and Inter-dependence: issues in how states interact  
Concepts: sovereignty, nations, separatism, subsidiarity, intranationalism, internationalism, supranationalism, peacekeeping/peace-building/peace enforcement, interventionism, 'rogue states', 'war on terror', regime change, state building, neo-colonialism, geopolitics.
3. Global issues that affect states and individuals  
Concepts: civil liberties/human rights; political socialisation; sustainable development and sustainable societies, global commons, north-south divide.

## Support and Resources

CIE offers a programme of Cambridge Pre-U INSET training for teachers accompanied by support materials on a dedicated Cambridge Pre-U website.

Full syllabus details are at [www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu](http://www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu)

Specimen assessment materials are available from: [international@cie.org.uk](mailto:international@cie.org.uk)



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