



CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Syllabus

Cambridge IGCSE™ (9–1)

First Language English 0990

Use this syllabus for exams in 2027, 2028 and 2029.

Exams are available in the June and November series.



Version I

For the purposes of screen readers, any mention in this document of Cambridge IGCSE refers to Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education.

Why choose Cambridge?

We work with schools worldwide to build an education that shapes knowledge, understanding and skills. Together, we give learners the confidence they need to thrive and make a positive impact in a changing world.

As part of the University of Cambridge, we offer a globally trusted and flexible framework for education from age 3 to 19, informed by research, experience, and listening to educators.

With recognised qualifications, high-quality resources, comprehensive support and valuable insights, we help schools prepare every student for the opportunities and challenges ahead.

Qualifications that are recognised and valued worldwide

From the world's top-ranked universities to local higher education institutions, Cambridge qualifications open doors to a world of opportunities.

Setting a global standard

With over 160 years of experience in delivering fair, valid and reliable assessments to students worldwide, we offer a global, recognised performance standard for international education.

Your path, your way

Schools can adapt our curriculum, high-quality teaching and learning resources and flexible assessments to their local context. Our aligned offer helps Cambridge schools support every learner to reach their potential and thrive.

Learning with lasting impact

Cambridge learners build subject knowledge and conceptual understanding, and develop a broad range of skills, learning habits and attributes to help make them ready for the world.

Improving learning outcomes through data-led insight and action

Our trusted baseline and diagnostic assessments, together with our insights and evaluation service, help schools turn data into knowledge and actionable insights, to inform teaching decisions and improve learner outcomes.

Bringing together a community of experts

We bring together the collective knowledge of experts and our diverse community of educators worldwide, supporting them to learn from one another and share ideas and information.

Tackling the climate crisis together

We believe that education is key to tackling the climate crisis. Together with Cambridge schools, we can empower young people with the skills and knowledge to take action on climate change, helping them be ready for the world.

School feedback: 'We think the Cambridge curriculum is superb preparation for university.'

Feedback from: Christoph Guttentag, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, Duke University, USA

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Important: Changes to this syllabus

For information about changes to this syllabus for 2027, 2028 and 2029, go to page 39.



1 Why choose this syllabus?

Key benefits

Cambridge IGCSE is the world's most popular international qualification for 14 to 16 year olds, although it can be taken by students at any age. Taught by over 5000 schools in 150 countries, it is tried, tested and trusted.

Students can choose from 70 subjects in any combination, including 30 languages.

Our programmes promote a thorough knowledge and understanding of a subject and help to develop the skills learners need for their next steps in education or employment.

Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) First Language English

encourages reading and understanding of a wide range of texts and text types, developing learners' awareness of the ways in which English may be used to take account of audience, purpose and form.

Learners develop their ability to speak and write effectively, demonstrating both fluency and control, as well as to read and respond meaningfully to both written and spoken forms of the language.

The syllabus is designed to allow flexibility to suit the differing needs and interests of learners.

Our approach in Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) First Language English encourages learners to be:

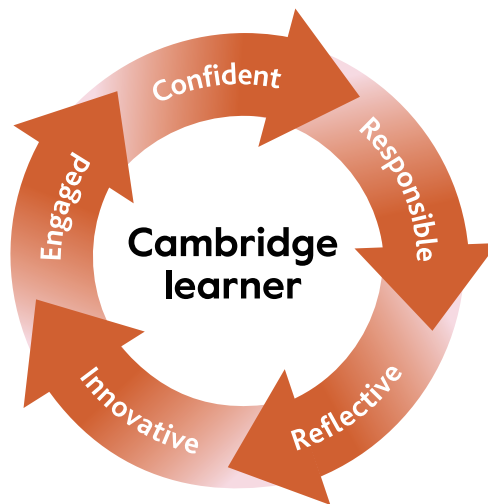
confident, in communicating ideas, opinions and interpretations accurately and persuasively

responsible, in considering the ways in which the choices made by writers and speakers might influence and affect others

reflective, in identifying and understanding the ways in which they might adapt, develop and refine their spoken and written responses

innovative, in crafting and experimenting with their own style of written and spoken language

engaged, in exploring a wide variety of written and spoken texts; listening and reading critically, both independently and with others.



School feedback: 'The strength of Cambridge IGCSE qualifications is internationally recognised and has provided an international pathway for our students to continue their studies around the world.'

Feedback from: Gary Tan, Head of Schools and CEO, Raffles Group of Schools, Indonesia

Qualifications that are recognised and valued worldwide

Cambridge qualifications prepare and equip learners with the skills they need to thrive at university and beyond. The world's best higher education institutions recognise our qualifications and value the critical thinking skills, independent research abilities and deep subject knowledge that Cambridge learners bring.

We continually work with universities and colleges in every part of the world to ensure that they understand and accept our qualifications. Cambridge IGCSE provides a springboard to the Cambridge Advanced stage, as well as other post-16 routes. The combination of knowledge and skills in Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) First Language English gives learners a solid foundation for further study. Candidates who achieve grades A* to C are well prepared to follow a wide range of courses including Cambridge International AS & A Level English Language.

Many universities require a combination of Cambridge International AS & A Levels and Cambridge IGCSEs or equivalent to meet their entry requirements.

UK ENIC, the national agency in the UK for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills, has carried out an independent benchmarking study of Cambridge IGCSE and found it to be comparable to the standard of the GCSE in the UK. This means students can be confident that their Cambridge IGCSE qualifications are accepted as equivalent to UK GCSEs by leading universities worldwide.

Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition

School feedback: ‘Cambridge IGCSE is one of the most sought-after and recognised qualifications in the world. It is very popular in Egypt because it provides the perfect preparation for success at advanced level programmes.’

Feedback from: Managing Director of British School of Egypt BSE

Supporting teachers

We believe education works best when teaching and learning are closely aligned to the curriculum, resources and assessment. Our high-quality teaching support helps to maximise teaching time and enables teachers to engage learners of all backgrounds and abilities.

We aim to provide the following support for each Cambridge qualification:

- Syllabus
- Specimen question papers and mark schemes
- Specimen paper answers
- Schemes of Work
- Example candidate responses
- Past papers and mark schemes
- Principal examiner reports for teachers

These resources are available on the School Support Hub at www.cambridgeinternational.org/support, our secure online site for Cambridge teachers. Your exams officer can provide you with a login.

Additional teaching & learning resources are also available for many syllabuses and vary according to the nature of the subject and the structure of the assessment of each syllabus. These can include ready-built lesson materials, digital resources and multimedia for the classroom and homework, guidance on assessment and much more. Beyond the resources available on the Schools Support Hub, a wide range of endorsed textbooks and associated teaching and learning support are available from Cambridge at www.cambridge.org/education and from other publishers. Resources vary according to the nature of the subject and the structure of the assessment of each syllabus.

You can also contact our global Cambridge community or talk to a senior examiner on our discussion forums.

Sign up for email notifications about changes to syllabuses, including new and revised products and services, at www.cambridgeinternational.org/syllabusupdates

Professional development

Find the next step on your professional development journey.

- **Introduction courses** – An introduction to Cambridge programmes and qualifications. For teachers who are new to Cambridge programmes or new to a specific syllabus.
- **Focus on Teaching courses** – These are for teachers who want to explore a specific area of teaching and learning within a syllabus or programme.
- **Focus on Assessment courses** – These are for teachers who want to understand the assessment of a syllabus in greater depth.
- **Marking workshops** – These workshops help you become more familiar with what examiners are looking for, and provide an opportunity to raise questions and share your experiences of the syllabus.
- **Enrichment Professional Development** – Transform your approach to teaching with our Enrichment workshops. Each workshop focuses on a specific area of teaching and learning practice.
- **Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications (PDQs)** – Practice-based programmes that transform professional learning for practicing teachers. Available at Certificate and Diploma level.

For more information visit www.cambridgeinternational.org/support-for-teachers

Supporting exams officers

We provide comprehensive support and guidance for all Cambridge exams officers. Find out more at: www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide



2 Syllabus overview

Aims

The aims describe the purposes of a course based on this syllabus.

The aims are to enable students to:

- read a wide range of texts, fluently and with good understanding, enjoying, exploring and appreciating a variety of language
- read critically, and to use knowledge gained from reading to inform and improve their own writing
- write accurately and effectively, using English language appropriate to audience, purpose and form
- work with information and with ideas in language by developing skills of evaluation, analysis, use and inference
- listen to, understand and use spoken English effectively, developing a range of spoken language strategies
- acquire and apply a wide vocabulary, alongside a knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology and linguistic conventions.

Content overview

Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) First Language English develops candidates' language skills, supporting and encouraging them to become appreciative and critical readers, writers, speakers and listeners.

It offers candidates the opportunity to respond with understanding to a rich variety of reading texts during the course. Candidates use these texts to inform and inspire their own writing, and write in a range of text types for different purposes and audiences.

Candidates develop both their speaking and their listening skills, delivering a presentation and engaging in conversations.

We are an education organisation and politically neutral. The contents of this syllabus, examination papers and associated materials do not endorse any political view. We endeavour to treat all aspects of the exam process neutrally.



Assessment overview

All candidates take two components. Paper 1, and one of Paper 2 or Component 3. Candidates will be eligible for grades 9 to 1. Component 4 is optional and assesses speaking and listening skills. This component is separately endorsed and marks will not contribute to a candidate's overall grade.

All candidates take:

Paper 1	2 hours
Reading	50%
80 marks	
Structured and extended writing questions	
Questions will be based on three reading texts	
Externally assessed	

All candidates take either:

Paper 2	2 hours
Directed Writing and Composition	50%
80 marks	
Extended writing question and a composition task	
Externally assessed	

or:

Component 3	
Coursework Portfolio	50%
80 marks	
Three extended writing assignments	
Internally assessed and externally moderated	

Centres may also choose to enter candidates for the Speaking and Listening Test. Marks for this optional component do not contribute to the overall grade candidates receive for the written components. Instead, where candidates perform to an appropriate standard, certificates record achievement of grades 1 (high) to 5 (low).

Candidates can also take:

Component 4	Approx. 10–12 minutes
Speaking and Listening Test	
40 marks	Separately endorsed
Individual Talk and Conversation	
Internally assessed and externally moderated	

Information on availability is in the **Before you start** section.

Check the timetable at www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables for the test date window for Component 4.

Check the samples database at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples for submission information, forms and deadlines for Components 3 and 4.

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) are:

AO1 Reading

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- R1 demonstrate understanding of explicit meanings
- R2 demonstrate understanding of implicit meanings and attitudes
- R3 analyse, evaluate and develop facts, ideas and opinions, using appropriate support from the text
- R4 demonstrate understanding of how writers achieve effects and influence readers
- R5 select and use information for specific purposes.

AO2 Writing

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- W1 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined
- W2 organise and structure facts, ideas and opinions for deliberate effect
- W3 use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures appropriate to context
- W4 use language appropriate to purpose and to engage the audience
- W5 make accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

AO3 Speaking and Listening

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- SL1 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined
- SL2 present facts, ideas and opinions for deliberate effect
- SL3 communicate clearly, purposefully and fluently appropriate to context
- SL4 use register appropriate to context
- SL5 listen and respond appropriately in conversation.

Weighting for assessment objectives

The approximate weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives (AOs) are summarised below.

Assessment objectives as a percentage of the qualification

Assessment objective	Weighting in IGCSE %
AO1 Reading	50
AO2 Writing	50
AO3 Speaking and Listening	Separately endorsed
Total	100

Assessment objectives as a percentage of each component

Assessment objective	Weighting in components %		
	Paper 1	Paper 2 and Component 3	Component 4
AO1 Reading	80	20	0
AO2 Writing	20	80	0
AO3 Speaking and Listening	0	0	100
Total	100	100	100

3 Subject content

This syllabus gives you the flexibility to design a course that will interest, challenge and engage your learners. Where appropriate you are responsible for selecting resources, examples and subject contexts to support your learners' study. These should be appropriate for the learners' age, cultural background and learning context, as well as comply with your school policies and local legal requirements.

The skills covered in this syllabus are outlined below.

Reading

- Demonstrate understanding of written texts, and of the words and phrases within them.
- Summarise and use material for a specific context.
- Develop, analyse and evaluate facts, ideas and opinions.
- Demonstrate understanding of how writers achieve their effects and influence readers.
- Select appropriate information for specific purposes.
- Recognise and respond to linguistic devices, figurative language and imagery.

In developing reading skills, learners engage with a range of genres and text types from the twentieth and/or twenty-first centuries, including literature, fiction and non-fiction, and other forms of writing, such as discursive essays, reviews and articles. Study includes writers' use of language and style and the ways in which writers achieve effects. Learners also study how writers influence readers through the use of facts, ideas, perspectives, opinions and/or bias.

Writing

- Express what is thought, felt and imagined.
- Organise and convey facts, ideas and opinions effectively.
- Demonstrate a varied vocabulary appropriate to the context.
- Demonstrate an effective use of sentence structures.
- Demonstrate an understanding of audience, purpose and form.
- Demonstrate accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.

As developing writers themselves, learners are introduced to a range of writing skills, including the ability to create and compose texts in a variety of styles suitable for different audiences and purposes, e.g. descriptive, narrative, discursive, argumentative and persuasive. Study includes the following text types: letter, report, article, journal, speech, interview and summary.

Speaking and Listening

- Describe and reflect on experience.
- Discuss what is thought, felt and imagined.
- Select and organise facts, ideas and opinions.
- Understand and convey complex ideas.
- Communicate fluently with clarity, focus and purpose for a range of contexts.
- Actively engage in a variety of discussions and conversations.

Learners explore a range of speaking and listening skills, including the ability to participate in conversations and to respond spontaneously to questions and prompts. Study includes presentation skills and spoken language devices such as effective use of tone / emphasis / register / structure / word choice / analytical and evaluative response.

Faculty feedback: ‘Understanding how and why our climate is changing and providing the knowledge and skills to explore the challenges plays a key role in every student’s education.’

Feedback from: Dr Amy Munro-Faure, Head of Education and Student Engagement of Cambridge Zero

4 Details of the assessment

Paper 1 – Reading

Written paper, 2 hours, 80 marks

Candidates answer four compulsory questions on three texts which may be on a similar topic. Candidates write all their answers in the space provided on the question paper.

The texts have a combined total of approximately 1400 words in length. Candidates should spend approximately 15 minutes reading the texts.

The texts will be printed on the question paper insert.

Dictionaries may **not** be used.

Question 1 Comprehension (20 marks)

Comprehension task: this question requires candidates to respond to Text A.

Candidates respond to a series of sub-questions. These include short answers testing understanding of both explicit and implicit meanings.

This question tests the following reading assessment objectives (20 marks):

R1 demonstrate understanding of explicit meanings

R2 demonstrate understanding of implicit meanings and attitudes

R3 analyse, evaluate and develop facts, ideas and opinions, using appropriate support from the text

R4 demonstrate understanding of how writers achieve effects and influence readers

R5 select and use information for specific purposes.

Question 2 Summary task (20 marks)

Summary task: this question requires candidates to respond to Text B.

This question has two parts, 2(a) and 2(b).

In Question 2(a) candidates answer a selective summary task in their own words. Candidates write their summary as continuous writing of no more than 120 words.

This question tests the following reading assessment objectives (10 marks):

R1 demonstrate understanding of explicit meanings

R2 demonstrate understanding of implicit meanings and attitudes

R5 select and use information for specific purposes.

This question also tests the following writing assessment objectives (5 marks):

W1 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined

W2 organise and structure facts, ideas and opinions for deliberate effect

W3 use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures appropriate to context.

In Question 2(b) candidates respond to a short answer question testing understanding of attitudes and opinions.

This question tests the following reading assessment objectives (5 marks):

R2 demonstrate understanding of implicit meanings and attitudes

R3 analyse, evaluate and develop facts, ideas and opinions, using appropriate support from the text.

Question 3 Short-answer questions and language task (20 marks)

Short-answer questions: this question requires candidates to respond to Text C.

Candidates respond to a series of sub-questions which require answers of different lengths.

This question tests the following reading assessment objectives (10 marks):

R1 demonstrate understanding of explicit meanings

R2 demonstrate understanding of implicit meanings and attitudes

R4 demonstrate understanding of how writers achieve effects and influence readers.

Language task: this question requires candidates to respond to Text C.

Candidates write about 200–250 words.

This question tests the following reading assessment objectives (10 marks):

R1 demonstrate understanding of explicit meanings

R2 demonstrate understanding of implicit meanings and attitudes

R4 demonstrate understanding of how writers achieve effects and influence readers.

Question 4 Extended response to reading (20 marks)

Extended response to reading: this question requires candidates to respond to Text C.

Candidates write about 250–300 words, responding in one of the following text types: letter, report, journal, speech, interview and article.

This question tests the following reading assessment objectives (10 marks):

R1 demonstrate understanding of explicit meanings

R2 demonstrate understanding of implicit meanings and attitudes

R3 analyse, evaluate and develop facts, ideas and opinions, using appropriate support from the text

R5 select and use information for specific purposes.

This question also tests the following writing assessment objectives (10 marks):

W1 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined

W2 organise and structure facts, ideas and opinions for deliberate effect

W3 use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures appropriate to context

W4 use language appropriate to purpose and to engage the audience.

Paper 2 – Directed Writing and Composition

Written paper, 2 hours, 80 marks

Candidates answer two questions, one from each section.

The texts will be printed on the question paper insert.

Dictionaries may **not** be used.

Section A Directed Writing (40 marks)

Candidates answer one question which has two parts, 1(a) and 1(b). This is based on one or two texts totalling 550–650 words in length.

Question 1(a) is a structured question that allows candidates to analyse, evaluate and demonstrate their understanding of the text(s).

This question tests the following reading assessment objectives (5 marks):

R3 analyse, evaluate and develop facts, ideas and opinions, using appropriate support from the text

R4 demonstrate understanding of how writers achieve effects and influence readers.

In Question 1(b) candidates use, develop and evaluate the information in the text(s) to create a discursive / argumentative / persuasive speech, letter, article or report.

Candidates write about 250–350 words.

This question tests the following reading assessment objectives (10 marks):

R1 demonstrate understanding of explicit meanings

R2 demonstrate understanding of implicit meanings and attitudes

R3 analyse, evaluate and develop facts, ideas and opinions, using appropriate support from the text

R5 select and use information for specific purposes.

This question also tests the following writing assessment objectives (25 marks):

W1 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined

W2 organise and structure facts, ideas and opinions for deliberate effect

W3 use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures appropriate to context

W4 use language appropriate to purpose and to engage the audience

W5 make accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Section B Composition (40 marks)

Candidates answer one question from a choice of four titles: two descriptive and two narrative.

Candidates use the title to develop and write a composition.

Candidates write about 350–450 words.

This question tests the following writing assessment objectives (40 marks):

- W1 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined
- W2 organise and structure facts, ideas and opinions for deliberate effect
- W3 use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures appropriate to context
- W4 use language appropriate to purpose and to engage the audience
- W5 make accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Component 3 – Coursework Portfolio

Written assignments, 80 marks

This information should be read in conjunction with the relevant sections of the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment.

The forms required for the conduct and assessment of the portfolio may be downloaded from www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples

Candidates submit a portfolio of three assignments, each of about 500–800 words. The assignments may be completed in any order, and are:

Assignment 1 (30 marks): writing to discuss, argue and/or persuade in response to a text or texts

Assignment 2 (25 marks): writing to describe

Assignment 3 (25 marks): writing to narrate.

The Coursework Portfolio tests the following writing assessment objectives (65 marks):

W1 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined

W2 organise and structure facts, ideas and opinions for deliberate effect

W3 use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures appropriate to context

W4 use language appropriate to purpose and to engage the audience

W5 make accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

For Assignment 1 only, the following reading assessment objectives are tested (15 marks):

R1 demonstrate understanding of explicit meanings

R2 demonstrate understanding of implicit meanings and attitudes

R3 analyse, evaluate and develop facts, ideas and opinions, using appropriate support from the text

R4 demonstrate understanding of how writers achieve effects and influence readers

R5 select and use information for specific purposes.

Work may be handwritten or word-processed.

Dictionaries may be used.

Candidates **must** include the first draft of one of the three assignments submitted. The first draft will not contribute to the final internally assessed mark or to the externally moderated mark for the portfolio.

The Coursework Portfolio **must** also include the text(s) used for Assignment 1.

Internal moderation

If more than one teacher in your centre is marking internal assessments, you must make arrangements to moderate or standardise your teachers' marking so that all candidates are assessed to a common standard. (If only one teacher is marking internal assessments, no internal moderation is necessary.) You can find further information on the process of internal moderation on the samples database at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples**

You should record the internally moderated marks for all candidates on the Coursework Assessment Summary Form and submit these marks to Cambridge International according to the instructions set out in the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment.

External moderation

Cambridge International will externally moderate all internally assessed components.

- You must submit the marks of all candidates to Cambridge International.
- You must also submit the marked work of a sample of candidates to Cambridge International.

The sample you submit to Cambridge International should ideally include examples of the marking of each teacher. The samples database at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples** explains how the sample will be selected.

The samples database at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples** also provides details of how to submit the marks and work.

External moderators will produce a short report for each centre with feedback on your marking and administration of the assessment.

Additional information for Component 3 Coursework Portfolio

Please read this information in conjunction with the relevant sections of the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment.

Assignments: general issues

- Assignments should arise from the programme of study undertaken by the teaching group.
- The best assignments are usually those that come from a shared learning experience but are finally chosen by individual candidates; negotiation of assignments with the teacher is recommended.
- All tasks set should be sufficiently challenging to stretch candidates to their full potential. For example, a class might study types of short story and their structures and conventions before individual candidates choose their own titles and write their own short stories for Assignment 3.
- Questions from past examination papers should not be used for coursework.
- Candidates are not expected to work under timed conditions.
- Assignments 1–3 may be completed in any sequence during the course. It is generally better that candidates complete more than three assignments during the course from which a suitable choice can eventually be made for the final portfolio.
- The assignments must clearly demonstrate different writing intentions and styles to the reader.
- Centres must complete and submit a coversheet to authenticate work.

Assignment 1 (30 marks)

Assignment 1 is a piece of directed writing in response to one or two texts chosen by the teacher (or by the candidate, with the teacher's approval).

- This assignment is assessed for both writing and reading skills.
- Centres are advised to select text(s) of approximately two sides of A4 in total. Text(s) may consist of facts, opinions and/or arguments which can be selected, analysed and evaluated by the candidate and can be integrated into their own views.
- Note that literature texts are not usually suitable for this assignment.
- Text(s) may be of local, national or global interest – or all three – and should be suitable for the ability range of the candidates. They may be drawn from a variety of sources, e.g. newspapers, magazine articles, travel writing, text-based websites and media.
- Note that text(s) that are mainly informative or that provide content which has no development/discussion should not be set.
- Candidates should be able to give an overview of the argument as a whole and illustrate their understanding by commenting on specific ideas presented by the author of the text. This should include an explanation of any ideas of interest and an argument for or against them, as well as examining them for inconsistencies and substituting complementary or opposing views (e.g. recognise and comment on bias).
- The assignment may be written in one of the following forms: discursive / argumentative / persuasive speech, letter, article or report.
- A copy of all texts used for Assignment 1 must be included with the sample of portfolios sent to the external moderator.

Assignment 1

Discuss/argue and/or

persuade in response to text(s)

Two examples:

- **You are a local resident and feel very strongly about the ideas suggested in your local newspaper. Write a response to the editor in which you argue for or against the proposed ideas.**

In your discussion you will need to evaluate the ideas and opinions presented in the text and centre your arguments around what is said.

Text: a letter or article from a local newspaper arguing in favour of or against a controversial local issue. For example: plans to make changes to the local transport system, proposals to build a community building on public land or a plan to address the behaviour of young people in the area.

Note to teachers: responses could be in any appropriate form, e.g. a letter or an article.

- **You have read the transcript of a speech by a well-known person about an important topical issue. Write a response to that person in which you try to persuade them to change their minds about what they have said. In your discussion you will need to evaluate the ideas and opinions presented in the speech and centre your arguments around what they have said.**

Text: a speech about a current topical, local or global issue. For example: a teacher's speech about space travel, a celebrity's speech about an environmental issue, or a doctor's speech about medicine.

Note to teachers: responses could be in any appropriate form, e.g. a speech or a letter.

Assignment 2 (25 marks)

Assignment 2 is a piece of prose descriptive writing which is assessed for writing skills only.

- The candidate should develop ideas and images which create a convincing, well-defined picture, with varieties of focus.

Assignment 2

Writing to describe

Two examples:

- **You are in a busy place waiting for a friend who is late. Describe your surroundings and your thoughts and feelings as you wait.**

Note to teachers: a busy place can be any place which provides a definite sense of place/atmosphere and will contain a range of sights, sounds and/or characters for candidates to describe, e.g. cafes, train or bus stations, airport arrival or departure areas, sports stadiums, beaches and markets.

- **Describe an important gathering or celebration.**

Note to teachers: candidates should be encouraged to choose a celebration or gathering of which they have personal experience. Appropriate occasions could be any event which provides a definite sense of place/atmosphere and will contain a range of sights, sounds and/or characters for candidates to describe, e.g. weddings, significant anniversaries or birthdays.

Assignment 3 (25 marks)

Assignment 3 is a piece of narrative writing which is assessed for writing skills only.

- Candidates may write in any form.
- The candidate should ensure the plot is well defined and developed with features of fiction writing, such as description, characterisation and convincing details.

Assignment 3

Writing to narrate

Two examples:

- **Write a narrative piece in which the following words appear ‘and then they finally realised that it didn’t really matter anymore’.**

Note to teachers: the words may appear in any part of the narrative writing. Candidates may write in a range of appropriate narrative forms, e.g. the opening or closing chapter of a novel or a short story.

- **Write a fictional or autobiographical account of an important or life-changing event.**

Note to teachers: candidates may write in a range of appropriate narrative forms and perspectives, e.g. a short story or several diary entries.

Marking of work should be positive, rewarding achievement where possible, but clearly differentiating across the whole range of marks, where appropriate.

The marker should look at the work and then make a judgement about which level statement is the best fit. In practice, work does not always match one level statement precisely so a judgement may need to be made between two or more level statements.

Once a best-fit level statement has been identified, use the following guidance to decide on a specific mark:

- If the candidate’s work **convincingly** meets the level statement, award the highest mark.
- If the candidate’s work **adequately** meets the level statement, award the most appropriate mark in the middle of the range (where middle marks are available).
- If the candidate’s work **just** meets the level statement, award the lowest mark.

Table A: Level descriptions for writing in Assignment 1 (15 marks)

Level	Marks	Description
6	13–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly effective style capable of conveying subtle meaning. (W1) Carefully structured for benefit of the reader. (W2) Purposefully selected vocabulary, precisely used. (W3) Highly effective use of language for audience and purpose. (W4) Spelling, punctuation and grammar always accurate. (W5)
5	10–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective style. (W1) Secure overall structure, organised to help the reader. (W2) Well-chosen vocabulary, used with some precision. (W3) Effective use of language for audience and purpose. (W4) Spelling, punctuation and grammar mostly accurate, with occasional minor errors. (W5)
4	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes effective style. (W1) Ideas generally well sequenced. (W2) Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary. (W3) Mostly effective use of language for audience and purpose. (W4) Spelling, punctuation and grammar generally accurate though with some errors. (W5)
3	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent style, expression sometimes awkward but meaning clear. (W1) Relies on the sequence of the original text. (W2) Vocabulary is simple, limited in range or reliant on the original text. (W3) Some awareness of audience and purpose. (W4) Frequent errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar, sometimes affecting communication. (W5)
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited style. (W1) Limited evidence of sequencing. (W2) Limited vocabulary or words/phrases copied from the original text. (W3) Limited awareness of audience and purpose. (W4) Persistent errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar, occasionally impeding communication. (W5)
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expression unclear. (W1) Very limited sequencing of ideas. (W2) Very limited vocabulary or copying from the original text. (W3) Very limited awareness of audience and purpose. (W4) Persistent errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar impede communication. (W5)
0	0	No creditable content.

Table B: Level descriptions for reading in Assignment 1 (15 marks)

Level	Marks	Description
6	13–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide range of ideas and opinions is applied, both explicit and implicit. (R1, R2) Fully evaluates, analyses and develops ideas, attitudes and opinions, showing understanding of how writers influence readers. (R3, R4) Integrates ideas from the text(s) to give a convincing response. (R5)
5	10–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good range of ideas is evident, both explicit and implicit. (R1, R2) Some evaluation, analysis and development of ideas, attitudes and opinions showing some understanding of how writers influence readers. (R3, R4) Some ideas supported by details from the text(s). (R5)
4	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of straightforward ideas and opinions offered, mostly explicit. (R1, R2) Opportunities for development of ideas, attitudes and opinions are rarely taken. (R3, R4) Includes some details, but there may be mechanical use of the text(s). (R5)
3	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some straightforward reference to explicit ideas and opinions. (R1, R2) Recognises some of the main ideas, attitudes and opinions. (R3, R4) There may be some reliance on lifting from the text(s). (R5)
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited response with little reference to the text(s), or a reproduction of sections of the original. (R1, R2) Limited response to the topic of the text(s). (R3, R4) Content is either insubstantial or unselective. (R5)
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very limited response with minimal relation to the text(s). (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5)
0	0	No creditable content.

Table C: Level descriptions for composition: content and structure in Assignments 2 and 3 (10 marks each)

Level	Marks	General and specific marking criteria	
6	9–10	General	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content is highly focused on the task, complex and engaging. (W1) Structure is secure, well balanced and carefully managed for deliberate effect. (W2) 	
		Specific – descriptive	Specific – narrative
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Creates well-defined and developed ideas and images to offer a convincing overall picture.</i> <i>Effectively uses features of descriptive writing such as close observation, effective use of figurative language and varieties of focus.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Crafts a well-defined and strongly developed plot in response to the prompt.</i> <i>Effectively uses features of fiction writing such as description, characterisation and effective climax, with convincing details.</i>
5	7–8	General	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content is developed, engaging and effective. (W1) Structure is well managed, with some choices made for deliberate effect. (W2) 	
		Specific – descriptive	Specific – narrative
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Frequent, well-chosen images and details give a mostly convincing picture.</i> <i>Uses some features of descriptive writing such as close observation, effective use of figurative language and varieties of focus.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The plot is defined and developed.</i> <i>Uses some features of fiction writing such as description, characterisation, climax and details.</i>
4	5–6	General	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content is relevant with some effective development. (W1) Structure is competently managed. (W2) 	
		Specific – descriptive	Specific – narrative
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A selection of relevant ideas, images and details, even where there is a tendency to write in a narrative style.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The plot is relevant and cohesive, with some features such as characterisation and setting of scene.</i>
3	3–4	General	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content is straightforward with some development. (W1) Structure is mostly organised but may not always be effective. (W2) 	
		Specific – descriptive	Specific – narrative
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A series of generally relevant details, with limited use of the features of descriptive writing.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The plot is straightforward, with limited use of the features of narrative writing.</i>

Level	Marks	General and specific marking criteria	
2	2	General	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content is simple; ideas and events may be limited. (W1) Structure is partially organised. (W2) 	
		<p style="text-align: center;">Specific – descriptive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Occasionally relevant with limited detail.</i> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Specific – narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Events are only partially linked and/or lack clarity.</i>
1	1	General	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content is occasionally relevant or clear. (W1) Structure is limited and ineffective. (W2) 	
		<p style="text-align: center;">Specific – descriptive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The description is unclear.</i> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Specific – narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The narrative lacks coherence.</i>
0	0	No creditable content.	

Table D: Level descriptions for composition: style and accuracy in Assignments 2 and 3 (15 marks each)

Level	Marks	Description
6	13–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Precise, well-chosen vocabulary and varied sentence structures, chosen for effect. (W3) Highly effective use of language to engage the reader. (W4) Spelling, punctuation and grammar always accurate. (W5)
5	10–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mostly precise vocabulary and a range of sentence structures mostly used for effect. (W3) Effective use of language to engage the reader. (W4) Spelling, punctuation and grammar is mostly accurate with some minor errors. (W5)
4	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some precise vocabulary and a range of sentence structures sometimes used for effect. (W3) Sometimes effective use of language to engage the reader. (W4) Spelling, punctuation and grammar generally accurate with some errors. (W5)
3	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate vocabulary and a range of straightforward sentence structures. (W3) Some awareness of the reader. (W4) Frequent errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar, sometimes affecting communication. (W5)
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited and/or imprecise vocabulary and sentence structures. (W3) Limited awareness of the reader. (W4) Persistent errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar, occasionally impeding communication. (W5)
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently imprecise vocabulary and sentence structures. (W3) Very limited awareness of the reader. (W4) Persistent errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar impede communication. (W5)
0	0	No creditable content.

Component 4 – Speaking and Listening Test

Individual Talk and Conversation, approximately 10–12 minutes in total, 40 marks

This component is separately endorsed with grades of 1 (high) to 5 (low). Marks for Component 4 do **not** contribute to a candidate's overall grade.

Teachers must treat this component as a non-coursework speaking test and must read this information in conjunction with the relevant sections of the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment.

There are two parts to the Speaking and Listening Test. In Part 1, candidates present an individual talk. In Part 2, candidates engage in a conversation with the teacher/examiner on their chosen topic.

There is no question paper for the test. The test must be taken within the Speaking and Listening Test window. You should record all candidates. Candidates must only take the Speaking and Listening Test **once** and both parts of the test **must** be recorded as one.

Part 1 Individual Talk (3–4 minutes) (20 marks)

The candidate talks for about 3–4 minutes on a single topic or theme which they have selected before the test. The candidate talks about a topic of particular interest, for example, about the candidate's passion for a specific hobby or activity, which would include persuasive suggestions as to why others would also find it engaging.

Candidates need to show that they are able to prepare and organise material, are aware of audience, and can select and employ a range of spoken language devices. Candidates are encouraged to make presentations which are engaging, by perhaps incorporating more creative presentational styles, such as taking up a 'voice' or presenting a dramatic monologue.

There is no question paper and each candidate chooses their own subject with guidance from their teacher. Teachers should advise on the suitability of topics or themes, but must **not** be involved in the preparation of material for the Individual Talk. The interaction is between the candidate and the teacher only, although the class may be present as an audience.

Candidates may bring one 'cue card' (about postcard size) into the examination room, to remind them of the main points they wish to make. The cue card should contain a list of key points, not continuous sentences. Candidates may write their points on one side of the cue card only. Candidates may also use a limited quantity of illustrative material, which may include maps, diagrams, statistics and pictures. Reading from, or reliance on, a script or extended notes is **not** allowed. Recitation of a memorised script is unlikely to be successful. The cue card and illustrative material must be labelled with the candidate's name and number and must be retained by centres until six months after publication of results.

The talk should be continuous. If absolutely necessary the teacher/examiner may prompt but not question a candidate who is finding it difficult to continue within the advised time of 3–4 minutes. Teachers/examiners should interrupt to ask questions, and begin Part 2, if the candidate shows no sign of finishing after 4½ minutes.

Dictionaries may be used to prepare the Individual Talk, but they may not be taken into the test.

This part of the test is to be assessed using the level descriptions in Table A on page 31.

The Individual Talk tests the following speaking and listening assessment objectives (20 marks):

- SL1 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined
- SL2 present facts, ideas and opinions for effect
- SL3 communicate clearly, purposefully and fluently appropriate to context
- SL4 use register appropriate to context.

Part 2 Conversation (7–8 minutes) (20 marks)

The Individual Talk leads into a conversation with the teacher/examiner about the candidate's chosen topic. For example, an account of a specific hobby or activity that could be developed into a discussion of wider issues such as the importance of having a hobby or interest to one's mental and physical wellbeing. A talk about physical activity could be developed into discussion of wider issues such as who should be responsible for ensuring relevant facilities exist and how should they be funded.

Candidates should be encouraged to consider how a conversation might develop around their chosen topic; if they cannot think of a number of questions they **could** be asked, the topic is unlikely to be easy to discuss.

During the Individual Talk, teachers/examiners are likely to make notes in order to help them ask appropriate questions. The primary role of the teacher/examiner in Part 1 is to be a passive but attentive listener.

Candidates must be prepared to supply additional factual material where appropriate and to express and defend a point of view. In order to give the candidate every opportunity, questions should be open, such as 'tell me more about ...', 'why?' and 'how?', rather than closed questions which may be answered by 'yes/no'. Candidates should not be made to feel embarrassed about expressing viewpoints that are not those of the teacher/examiner. The teacher/examiner may wish to ask questions about those views, but these questions must not be judgemental.

The teacher/examiner should normally allow 7–8 minutes for each candidate. If a candidate 'dries up' after a few minutes, teachers/examiners should be ready to explore another aspect of the topic or theme; they should keep trying to make conversation so that the candidate is given every opportunity to demonstrate their ability. Questions should be rephrased (rather than repeated) in an attempt to continue the dialogue.

Teachers/examiners should beware of talking too much and of candidates being given credit for what the teacher/examiner has actually said. Candidates are responsible for showing that they can converse adequately; at the same time the teacher/examiner must make sure the candidate is given every opportunity to converse by following up any opening given.

Dictionaries may **not** be used in the test.

This part of the test is to be assessed using the level descriptions in Table B on pages 32 and 33.

The Conversation tests the following speaking and listening assessment objectives (20 marks):

SL1 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined

SL2 present facts, ideas and opinions for effect

SL3 communicate clearly, purposefully and fluently appropriate to context

SL4 use register appropriate to context

SL5 listen and respond appropriately in conversation.

Marking instructions

The teacher must mark each candidate's test out of a total of 40, in line with the level descriptions. The total mark for the test is divided into 20 marks for Speaking in Part 1 (Individual Talk), and 10 marks for Speaking and 10 marks for Listening in Part 2 (Conversation).

For information, dates and methods of submission of the Speaking and Listening Test marks and sample, please refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment and the samples database at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples

Marking: general principles

Marking of the Speaking and Listening Test should be positive, rewarding achievement where possible, but clearly differentiating across the whole range of marks, where appropriate.

The marker should consider the skills and understanding evidenced by the candidate and then make a judgement about which level statement is the best fit. Candidates' work does not always match one level statement precisely, so a judgement will often need to be made between two or more level statements.

Once a best-fit level statement has been identified, use the following guidance to decide on a specific mark:

- If the candidate's work **convincingly** meets the level statement, award the highest mark.
- If the candidate's work **adequately** meets the level statement, award the most appropriate mark in the middle of the range (where middle marks are available).
- If the candidate's work **just** meets the level statement, award the lowest mark.

Table A: Level descriptions for Component 4, Part 1 – Individual Talk (20 marks)

This task tests assessment objectives SL1, SL2, SL3 and SL4.

Level	Marks	Description
5	17–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex and developed use of content. • Delivery is consistently assured and fully engages the audience. • Effective use of a wide range of spoken language devices. • Sustained, appropriate and accurate use of spoken language throughout. • Effective register for audience and purpose.
4	13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some developed use of content. • Delivery is competent with frequent attempts to engage the audience. • Uses a good range of spoken language devices confidently. • Mostly appropriate and accurate use of spoken language. • Some awareness of an appropriate register for audience and purpose.
3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant use of content. • Delivery is secure with some attempt to engage the audience. • Some appropriate use of spoken language devices. • Generally accurate use of language.
2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content is limited or loses focus. • Delivery is not secure, with limited attempt to engage the audience. • Limited use of spoken language devices. • Some appropriate use of language but frequent inaccuracies affect communication.
1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content is very brief and undeveloped. • Delivery is weak, with very limited attempt to engage the audience. • Spoken language is not used appropriately or inaccuracies impede communication.
0	0	No creditable content.

Table B: Level descriptions for Component 4, Part 2 – Conversation (20 marks)

For Part 2, record separate marks for speaking and for listening.

Speaking: SL1, SL2, SL3 and SL4			Listening: SL5		
Level	Marks	Description	Level	Marks	Description
5	9–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extends the subject matter and confidently elicits responses from the teacher/examiner. Uses a wide range of spoken language devices effectively; sustained, appropriate and accurate use of language throughout. 	5	9–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages effectively in a natural conversation with the teacher/examiner. Responds fully to questions and develops prompts; deals confidently with alterations in the direction of the conversation.
4	7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organises and expresses the subject matter competently; elicits responses from the teacher/examiner. Uses a good range of spoken language devices confidently; mostly appropriate and accurate use of language. 	4	7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages appropriately with the teacher/examiner, sometimes shaping the conversation. Responds in some detail to questions and prompts; deals competently with most of the changes in the direction of the conversation.
3	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deals with the subject matter adequately and attempts to elicit responses from the teacher/examiner. Spoken language devices are used appropriately; generally appropriate use of language, but with some inaccuracy. 	3	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains a conversation with the teacher/examiner. Responds to questions adequately but deals less effectively with prompts; some changes in the direction of the conversation are dealt with.
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deals with the subject matter simply with some loss of focus and limited attempt to elicit responses from the teacher/examiner. Limited use of spoken language devices; some appropriate use of language but frequent inaccuracies affect communication. 	2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relies on questions from the teacher/examiner to maintain the conversation. Provides limited responses to the questions and prompts, occasionally recognises changes in the direction of the conversation.

Speaking: SL1, SL2, SL3 and SL4			Listening: SL5		
Level	Marks	Description	Level	Marks	Description
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very limited attempt to deal with the subject matter or to elicit responses from the teacher/examiner. Very limited use of language or inaccuracies impede communication. 	1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A two-way conversation is not successfully maintained. Provides very limited responses to the questions and prompts, does not recognise changes in the direction of the conversation.
0	0	No creditable content.	0	0	No creditable content.

Command words

Command words and their meanings help candidates know what is expected from them in the exams. The table below includes command words used in the assessment for this syllabus. The use of the command word will relate to the subject context.

Command word	What it means
Analyse	examine in detail to show meaning, identify elements and the relationship between them
Assess	make an informed judgement
Consider	review and respond to given information
Describe	state the points of a topic / give characteristics and main features
Evaluate	judge or calculate the quality, importance, amount or value of something
Explain	set out purposes or reasons / make the relationships between things clear / say why and/or how and support with relevant evidence
Give	produce an answer from a given source or recall/memory
Identify	name/select/recognise
Justify	support a case with evidence/argument
Outline	set out the main points
Suggest	apply knowledge and understanding to situations where there are a range of valid responses in order to make proposals / put forward considerations

5 What else you need to know

This section is an overview of other information you need to know about this syllabus. It will help to share the administrative information with your exams officer so they know when you will need their support. Find more information about our administrative processes at www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

Before you start

Previous study

We recommend that learners starting this course should have studied a broad curriculum such as the Cambridge Lower Secondary programme or equivalent national educational framework.

Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge IGCSE syllabuses to require about 130 guided learning hours for each subject. This is for guidance only. The number of hours a learner needs to achieve the qualification may vary according to each school and the learners' previous experience of the subject.

Availability and timetables

All Cambridge schools are allocated to one of six administrative zones. Each zone has a specific timetable. Find your administrative zone at www.cambridgeinternational.org/adminzone

You can view the timetable for your administrative zone at www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables

You can enter candidates in the June and November exam series.

Check you are using the syllabus for the year the candidate is taking the exam.

Private candidates can enter for this syllabus. Some components are not available to private candidates. For more information, please refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*.

Combining with other syllabuses

Candidates can take this syllabus alongside other Cambridge International syllabuses in a single exam series. The only exceptions are:

- Cambridge IGCSE English (as an Additional Language) (0472)
- Cambridge IGCSE First Language English (0500)
- Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language (0510)
- Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) English as a Second Language (0993)
- Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language (count-in oral) (0511)
- Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) English as a Second Language (count-in oral) (0991)
- Cambridge O Level English Language (1123)
- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) and Cambridge O Level syllabuses are at the same level.

Group awards: Cambridge ICE

Cambridge ICE (International Certificate of Education) is a group award for Cambridge IGCSE. It encourages schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum by recognising the achievements of learners who pass exams in a range of different subjects.

Learn more about Cambridge ICE at www.cambridgeinternational.org/cambridgeice

Making entries

Exams officers are responsible for submitting entries. We encourage them to work closely with you to make sure they enter the right number of candidates for the right combination of syllabus components. Entry option codes and instructions for submitting entries are in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*. Your exams officer has access to this guide.

Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as administrative zones. We allocate all Cambridge schools to an administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable.

Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

Support for exams officers

We know how important exams officers are to the successful running of exams. We provide them with the support they need to make entries on time. Your exams officer will find this support, and guidance for all other phases of the Cambridge Exams Cycle, at www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

Retakes and carrying forward marks

Candidates can retake the whole qualification as many times as they want to. Information on retake entries is at www.cambridgeinternational.org/retakes

Candidates cannot resubmit, in whole or in part, coursework or speaking tests from a previous series for remarking. For information, refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment at www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

To confirm what entry options are available for this syllabus, refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries* for the relevant series. Regulations for carrying forward component marks can be found in the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment at www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

Language

This syllabus and the related assessment materials are available in English only.

Accessibility and equality

Syllabus and assessment design

At Cambridge we recognise that our candidates have highly diverse socio-economic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and may also have a variety of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics include special educational needs and disability (SEND), religion and belief, and characteristics related to gender and identity.

We follow accessible design principles to make our syllabuses and assessment materials as accessible and inclusive as possible. We review language accessibility, visual resources, question layout and the contexts used in questions. Using this approach means that we give all candidates the fairest possible opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding.

Access arrangements

Our design principles aim to make sure our assessment materials are accessible for all candidates. To further minimise barriers faced by candidates with SEND, illness or injury, we offer a range of access arrangements and modified papers. This is the principal way in which we comply with our duty to make 'reasonable adjustments', as guided by the UK Equality Act 2010.

Important:

Requested access arrangements should be based on evidence of the candidate's barrier to taking an assessment and should also reflect their normal way of working. This is explained in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

- For Cambridge to approve an access arrangement, we need to agree that it constitutes a reasonable adjustment and does not affect the security or integrity of the assessment.
- Details of our standard access arrangements and modified question papers are available in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide
- Centres are expected to check the availability of access arrangements and modified question papers at the start of the course. All applications should be made by the deadlines published in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide
- Contact us at the start of the course to find out if we can approve an access arrangement that is not included in the list of standard access arrangements.
- Candidates who cannot access parts of the assessment may be able to receive an award based on the parts they have completed.

Some access arrangements are not allowed in this syllabus because they affect the assessment objectives:

- candidates must **not** use voice-activated software to dictate their written work
- candidates must **not** use a human reader.

After the exam

Grading and reporting

Grades 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2 or 1 indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge IGCSE (9–1).

9 is the highest and 1 is the lowest. ‘Ungraded’ means that the candidate’s performance did not meet the standard required for grade 1. ‘Ungraded’ is reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate.

In specific circumstances your candidates may see one of the following letters on their statement of results:

- Q (PENDING)
- X (NO RESULT).

These letters do not appear on the certificate.

On the statement of results, Cambridge IGCSE is shown as INTERNATIONAL GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION (IGCSE).

On certificates, Cambridge IGCSE is shown as International General Certificate of Secondary Education.

How students and teachers can use the grades

Assessment at Cambridge IGCSE has two purposes:

- 1 to measure learning and achievement
The assessment confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus.
- 2 to show likely future success
The outcomes help predict which students are well prepared for or likely to be successful in a particular course or career.
The outcomes help students choose the most suitable course or career.

Changes to this syllabus for 2027, 2028 and 2029

The syllabus has been reviewed and revised for first examination in 2027.

You must read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.

Changes to syllabus content

- The syllabus content has been reworded.
- The list of command words has been updated.

Changes to assessment (including changes to specimen papers)

- The syllabus aims have been updated.
- Learner attributes have been introduced.
- The wording of the assessment objectives has been updated. The knowledge and skills assessed have not changed.

Paper 1 Reading

- The number of total question paper marks has not changed.
 - The duration of the paper has not changed.
 - The question paper has been restructured to help candidates to navigate the paper efficiently and use their exam time effectively.
 - The questions are based on three reading texts which are printed in an insert.
 - Candidates answer four compulsory questions worth 20 marks each.
 - The marking criteria for Paper 1 have been updated.
 - **Question 1 Comprehension questions**
 - These questions now test all five reading assessment objectives.
 - There are now 20 marks for comprehension.
 - **Question 2 Summary task**
 - There is a new 5-mark question incorporated that tests R2 and R3.
 - There are now 15 marks for reading and 5 marks for writing.
 - **Question 3 Short answer questions**
 - There are now 2 marks for questions which require candidates to show their understanding of words identified from a text.
 - The style of questions with underlining has changed to use bold.
- Language task**
- The wording of the question has been simplified.
 - The amount candidates write has reduced to 200–250 words.
- **Question 4 Extended response to reading**
 - There are now 10 marks for reading and 10 marks for writing.
 - The amount candidates write has reduced to 250–300 words.

continued

Changes to assessment (including changes to specimen papers) continued

Paper 2 Directed Writing and Composition

- The number of total question paper marks has not changed.
- The duration of the paper has not changed.

Section A: Directed Writing

- The total word count for the reading texts has been reduced to 550–650 words.
- This task has been divided into two parts, question 1(a) and 1(b) to help candidates with their comprehension of the text(s).
- Question 1(a) assesses R3 and R4. R4 was not previously assessed in this paper.
- Question 1(b) the Directed Writing task has 10 marks for reading and 25 marks for writing.
- The marking criteria have been updated.

Section B: Composition

- The composition tasks remain unchanged.
- The marking criteria have been updated.

Component 3 Coursework Portfolio

- The forms in which candidates write have been updated and clarified.
- There are no changes to the mark allocations.
- The marking criteria have been updated.

Component 4 Speaking and Listening Test

- There are no changes to the speaking and listening tasks and mark allocations.
- The marking criteria have been updated.

In addition to reading the syllabus, you should refer to the updated specimen assessment materials. The specimen papers will help your students become familiar with exam requirements and command words in questions. The specimen mark schemes show how students should answer questions to meet the assessment objectives.

Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2027 are suitable for use with this syllabus.



Syllabuses and specimen materials represent the final authority on the content and structure of all of our assessments.

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Feedback from: Zhai Xiaoning, Deputy Principal, The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China

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