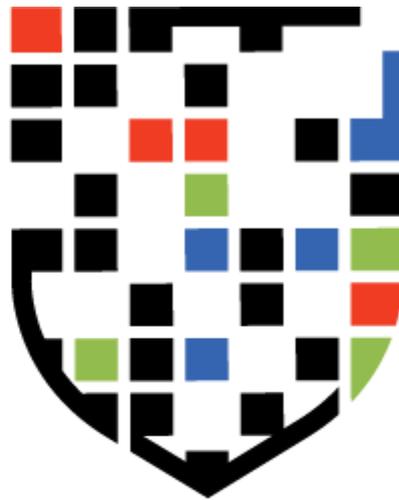


# Curriculum Handbook



**CAMBRIDGE**  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

The information contained here may be amended or added to from time to time. Additions/amendments will be included with newsletters or sent by individual email/letter. Further related documents, and the latest version of this handbook, can be found on our website at [cambridgeschool.eu](http://cambridgeschool.eu).

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# 1 Introduction to Curriculum and School Structure

## 1.1 Normal Age for Each Year Group 2015-2016

The age of admission for Year groups in the school is based on the student's age on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015 before the start of the school year. The Director may, at his discretion, allow flexibility of up to one Year where appropriate; e.g. a student of Year 5 age could be placed in Year 4 or 6 depending on their educational background / results of the placement process. No other variation is possible. The terminology used is that found in British schools where the term Year is used rather than Grade. The ages for each Year group are based upon the norms in British schools as we are using a curriculum which is British based and designed for students of the age within each Year group. Classes in the school are arranged as follows:

<b>Class</b>	<b>Curriculum Based on</b> (Cambridge means University of Cambridge International Examinations Curriculum)	<b>Age of Student at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015 before start of school year</b>	<b>Age of Student at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016 after end of school year</b>	<b>Student Date of Birth</b>
Nursery	English Early Years Foundation Curriculum	3	4	1/9/2011 to 31/8/2012
Reception	English Early Years Foundation Curriculum	4	5	1/9/2010 to 31/8/2011
Year 1	Cambridge Primary Stage 1 + English National Curriculum Year 1	5	6	1/9/2009 to 31/8/2010
Year 2	Cambridge Primary Stage 2 + English National Curriculum Year 2	6	7	1/9/2008 to 31/8/2009
Year 3	Cambridge Primary Stage 3 + English National Curriculum Year 3	7	8	1/9/2007 to 31/8/2008
Year 4	Cambridge Primary Stage 4 + English National Curriculum Year 4	8	9	1/9/2006 to 31/8/2005

Year 5	Cambridge Primary Stage 5 + English National Curriculum Year 5	9	10	1/9/2005 to 31/8/2006
Year 6	Cambridge Primary Stage 6 + English National Curriculum Year 6	10	11	1/9/2004 to 31/8/2005
Year 7	Cambridge Secondary 1 Stage 1 + English National Curriculum Year 7	11	12	1/9/2003 to 31/8/2004
Year 8	Cambridge Secondary 1 Stage 2 + English National Curriculum Year 8	12	13	1/9/2002 to 31/8/2003
Year 9	Cambridge Secondary 1 Stage 3 + English National Curriculum Year 9	13	14	1/9/2001 to 31/8/2002
Year 10	Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE)	14	15	1/9/2000 to 31/8/2001
Year 11	Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE)	15	16	1/9/1999 to 31/8/2000
Year 12	Cambridge Advanced Subsidiary Level (AS Level)	16	17	1/9/1998 to 31/8/1999
Year 13	Cambridge Advanced Subsidiary Level (AS Level) and Advanced Level (A Level)	17	18	1/9/1997 to 31/8/1998

### 1.2 Curriculum Outline

The school's curriculum is broad, balanced and interesting, and involves formal international examinations in the senior years. From Year 1 to Year 9, the core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science follow the international curricula of the University of Cambridge in England. From Year 10 to Year 13, our entire examined curriculum comes from Cambridge. The various courses from Cambridge are used by thousands of schools in over 160 countries worldwide.

In the primary and lower secondary years, a broad academic programme is balanced with other activities such as Art, Drama, Music and Physical Education. In addition, other aspects and in particular a uniquely student-centred approach ensures that school is a happy place for all our children. Putting the student at the centre of our school is also true throughout the senior years. In Years 10 and 11, courses from the University of Cambridge known as the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) are studied alongside Physical Education to ensure bodies as well as minds are exercised. The IGCSE courses are 2 year programmes, requiring a considerable amount of study in each subject. In May and June of Year 11, usually when they are aged 16, students sit examinations at the school that have been sent to us from Cambridge. The exams are taken under very strict conditions, at the same time as they are being taken by hundreds of thousands of other students around the world. The completed examination papers are sent back to Cambridge where they are marked. Those students who achieve the required standard are awarded IGCSE diplomas by Cambridge. These diplomas are internationally recognised and respected qualifications, and are accepted as sufficient qualification for entry to colleges and universities in a number of countries.

In Years 12 and 13, students follow further courses from Cambridge known as Advanced Subsidiary (AS Level) and Advanced Level (A Level). In May and June of Years 12 and 13, usually when they are aged 17 and 18, the students sit examinations at the school that have been sent to us from Cambridge. The exams are again taken under very strict conditions. Completed examination papers are sent back to Cambridge where they are marked. Those students who achieve the required standard are awarded AS or A Level diplomas by the University of Cambridge. These diplomas are keys to further and higher education around the world. For instance, A Levels are welcomed by hundreds of universities worldwide, including the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, New York, Boston, Yale, and Harvard, where they can gain a student advanced placement on degree courses.

Normally twice during the school year, at the ends of January (half-year) and of June, we issue our own reports and certificates so that parents have a regular formal record of their child's progress<sup>1</sup>. This is in addition to parent-teacher meetings which are held once or twice a year depending on the student's age.

## **2 Curriculum Structure Years 1 to 9**

### **2.1 Brief Overview**

The curriculum for Years 1 to 9 at the Cambridge International School is derived from a number of sources as shown in the table below.

The University of Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) have developed a curriculum for the first 6 years of schooling which is used in international schools around the world and is known as Cambridge Primary. They have also developed a curriculum for Years 7 to 9 known as Cambridge Secondary 1. In both the Primary and Secondary 1 curricula, Cambridge covers the subjects of Mathematics, English (including English as a Second Language) and Science. This leaves schools free to incorporate other national or international features into

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<sup>1</sup> Our curriculum is also fully validated by the Slovak Ministry of Education which will provide an Apostille stamp on our own school reports/certificates for official use in other countries.

their overall curriculum provision. At CIS, we use suitably adapted components of the English National Curriculum to inform our school programme. The adaptation we undertake is to ensure that the subject content is relevant to our international student body.

	<b>SUBJECTS</b> <b>Mathematics / English / Science</b>	<b>SUBJECTS</b> <b>Geography / History / Music / Art and Design / Physical Education / ICT / German (from Year 4) / Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) / Citizenship</b>
Year 9	LOWER SECONDARY YEARS	
Year 8	Cambridge Secondary 1 Curriculum	Adapted English National Curriculum - Secondary Curriculum for Key Stage 3 (Years 7 – 9)
Year 7		
Year 6		
Year 5	PRIMARY YEARS	
Year 4	Cambridge Primary Curriculum	Adapted English National Curriculum - Primary Curriculum for Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) and Key Stage 2 (Years 3 – 6)
Year 3		
Year 2		
Year 1		
Year 1		

## 2.2 Cambridge Primary Curriculum

The Cambridge Primary curriculum covers the core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science. The curriculum provides subject content, planning and resource guides, guidance for curriculum implementation and development, plus support for classroom teaching and student learning. Because it is a programme which has been developed with consistent standards that are externally benchmarked across tens of thousands of students, it enables reliable structured reporting to parents about the performance of their children, which has validity beyond the school.

Cambridge provides two types of test for use at the end of a stage (school Year) and at the end of the primary programme (end of Year 6): Cambridge Primary Progression Tests and Cambridge Primary Checkpoint.

Cambridge Progression Tests are available for English, Mathematics and Science for stages 3 to 9. They are used internationally and are marked at school using full mark schemes and marking guidance provided by Cambridge. The tests are optional and the results are just for school use or reporting to parents. However, Cambridge provides schools with a unique online Progress Checker. Student marks in the Progression Tests for Years 3 to 9 are entered

question-by-question into the Progress Checker which is able to produce reports about performance on different aspects of the three subjects (very useful for teacher and school purposes particularly when evaluating teaching effectiveness). It can also provide comparisons of a student's performance year-on-year and of their performance on a standard referenced against participating schools worldwide.

Cambridge Primary Checkpoint is a diagnostic assessment tool for the end of the Cambridge Primary programme in English, Mathematics and Science (end of Year 6). These particular tests are again optional and it is not required that they be taken in order to progress to Cambridge Secondary 1. Students have to be entered for the tests with Cambridge and the question papers are issued from and returned to Cambridge for marking. Analysis and certificates are provided to the school by Cambridge after about two months.

### **2.3 Primary Curriculum in Other Subject Areas**

The framework which we use for most other subjects across Years 1 to 6 is the Primary National Curriculum for England (Key Stages 1 and 2). It provides statements of content, knowledge, skills and understanding, and attainment target level descriptions for all the subjects we teach. There is a huge range of resources available to assist teachers both through the National Curriculum and other teacher websites, as well as from dozens of publishers and educational resource manufacturers supplying thousands of schools in the UK and internationally.

Although we use the National Curriculum for England, we are not a British/English school. Where subject content is considered to be too UK centred, we have sought other international replacements as appropriate. An obvious example would be in the teaching of history where some details of British history are replaced with other interesting and relevant history from around the world.

### **2.4 Cambridge Secondary 1 Curriculum**

This is the first programme of curricula provision from Cambridge targeted at secondary age students. It is followed by the IGCSEs from Year 10. The Secondary 1 curriculum like the Primary curriculum covers the subjects of English, Mathematics and Science. It too consists of subject content, planning and resource guides, guidance for curriculum implementation and development, and support for classroom teaching and student learning. Again, as a programme developed with consistent standards that are externally benchmarked across tens of thousands of students, it enables reliable structured reporting to parents about the performance of their children, which has validity beyond the school. It also enables the school to ensure that students are properly prepared for the demands of the IGCSE courses in these subjects.

Cambridge provides two types of test for use during Secondary 1; at the end of a stage (school Year) and at the end of the programme (end of Year 9): Cambridge Secondary Progression Tests and Cambridge Secondary Checkpoint. The marks for the Progression Tests can be entered into the Cambridge Progress Checker and the same analyses as for the primary years' tests can be obtained.

Cambridge Secondary 1 has its roots in the National Curriculum for England. Each subject area has a separate curriculum framework presenting the learning objectives for each stage in

content areas or strands. This is designed specifically for an international audience. It provides a clear structure for planning each stage as well as a description of the expectations for learners as they progress through Cambridge Secondary 1. The optional testing structure is also aligned with the expectations of the National Curriculum for England.

The English as a Second Language curriculum frameworks and Progression Tests which are available for Years 3 to 9, are aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

## **2.5 Lower Secondary Curriculum in Other Subject Areas**

The framework which we use for most other subjects across Years 7 to 9 is the Secondary National Curriculum for England (Key Stage 3). It provides statements of content, knowledge, skills and understanding, and attainment target level descriptions for all the subjects we teach. There is a huge range of resources available to assist teachers both through the National Curriculum and other teacher websites, as well as from dozens of publishers and educational resource manufacturers supplying thousands of schools in the UK and internationally.

Although we use the National Curriculum for England, we are not a British/English school. Where subject content is considered to be too UK centred, we have sought other international replacements as appropriate. We are also mindful of the demands of the international examination programmes which start in Year 10. Consequently, we ensure that our curriculum in Years 7 to 9 provides students with the opportunity to build a strong foundation in preparation for the challenges that the future will bring.

## **3 Curriculum Structure Years 10 to 13**

### **3.1 Introduction to the Examination Years**

University of Cambridge International Examinations provide special internationally focused courses for the huge and growing number of international schools throughout the world. During Years 10 to 13 at CIS, students follow courses that lead to the UK government validated and internationally renowned Cambridge IGCSE, AS and A Level examinations. Success in these examinations opens the door to college and university degree courses the world over.

### **3.2 IGCSE Courses in Years 10 to 11**

IGCSEs (International General Certificate of Secondary Education) are two year programmes designed for 14 to 16 year olds. These courses are renowned for developing vital educational knowledge, understanding and skills in:

- Subject content
- Applying knowledge and understanding to familiar and new situations
- Intellectual enquiry
- Flexibility and responsiveness to change
- Working and communicating in English
- Influencing outcomes
- Cultural awareness.

IGCSEs are established qualifications that keep pace with educational developments and trends and so are ideal foundations for higher level study. They are recognised throughout the world, by academic institutes and employers, as a mark of quality and evidence of real ability. Our students typically sit eight to ten subjects in one session at the end of Year 11. Schools can offer any combination of subjects with each subject being certificated separately. Over 70 subjects are available, including more than 30 language courses, offering a variety of routes for learners of different abilities, interests and backgrounds. Passing grades for IGCSE exams range from A\* to G, with A\* being the highest. Assessment may include coursework, final examination, practical and oral tests. Five passes at grade C or higher would indicate a student's readiness to begin higher level, pre-university programmes such as AS and A Levels, or the IB Diploma.

IGCSE has grown tremendously over the years and is now taken in over 100 countries by an annual candidate entry of more than 250,000. It is taken not only in international schools, but also in large numbers of both public and private schools where there is a desire to have an international perspective and to have a recognised international scale against which to measure performance. In recent years, it has been introduced across the USA as a means of increasing standards of education in many public schools. Grade C in IGCSE English (either First Language or Second Language) satisfies the English proficiency requirements of many universities in the UK, USA and other Anglophone countries.

The subjects taught at this level are fixed for the duration of the two year course, however there may be some variation over time as the curriculum develops based upon the interests and abilities of our students. The listed subjects are taught or supported. We are also able to help students requiring individual support in some other subjects that they may have already studied elsewhere. Currently available subjects include:

- English Language (English First Language is taken by most of our students, even non-natives. English Second Language is available for relatively new learners)
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Additional Mathematics (optional for those who have very high skills in the subject)
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Coordinated Science (an alternative to the three separate sciences – it is a double subject worth 2 IGCSEs)
- Geography
- German (only available for those who have already reached a good level in the language)
- French (only available for those who have already reached a good level in the language)
- Spanish (only available for those who have already reached a good level in the language)
- History
- Information and Communication Technology (computers)
- Business Studies.

### **3.3 AS and A Level Courses in Years 12 to 13**

The General Certificate of Education Advanced Level, or A Level, is the 'gold standard' of Cambridge qualifications. It is accepted as an entry qualification by universities of the European Union and elsewhere around the world. A Level examinations are usually taken after 13 years of education and are based on approximately 360 hours of guided learning per

subject, normally over a two year period (so 5 to 6 hours per subject per week). A Levels are highly specialised and a student will normally take three subjects, although occasionally exceptional students take more.

Cambridge International A Levels are taken throughout the world, sometimes as the national examinations of certain countries (such as Singapore and Mauritius), sometimes within international schools and sometimes in bi-lingual government schools alongside national exams.

There are six passing grades (A\* – E). Typical UK university entrance requirements are above three passes at grade C for academic courses in established universities. Very popular courses will often require higher grades. For example, medical schools in the UK often require grades of AAB and highly selective universities such as Cambridge, Oxford and Imperial College usually ask for at least AAA. Good A Level grades can also be a key to admission for all the world's major Anglophone universities. University course credit and advanced standing is often available in countries such as the USA and Canada, where entrance to university takes place after 12 years of education. Good grades in carefully chosen A Level subjects can result in up to one full year of credit.

An A/AS Level Recognition Search is available from the CIE website at [recognition.cie.org.uk](http://recognition.cie.org.uk). It provides the most up-to-date information on universities that recognise Cambridge International AS and A Levels for entry to undergraduate programmes. It also includes details of advanced credit offered.

The subject content of each of the CIE A Level syllabuses has been subdivided into two parts: the AS syllabus content which is expected to be covered in the first half of the course, and part two of the syllabus commonly referred to as 'A2'. This flexible approach enables students to choose between three main options:

- Take all A Level components in the same examination session at the end of a course of study, usually at the end of the second year
- Follow a staged assessment to an A Level by taking the AS qualification in one examination session, and the A2 assessment in a subsequent session
- Take the AS qualification only – either at the end of a one-year or two-year course.

The General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary Level, or AS Level, represents the first half of an A Level course but may also be taken as a freestanding qualification. AS Level examinations are usually taken at the end of Year 12 and are based on approximately 180 hours of guided learning per subject (so 5 to 6 hours per subject per week). However they are also sometimes studied over a two year period and taken at the end of Year 13 (so 2.5 to 3 hours per week per subject over two years). AS Levels are accepted in all UK universities and carry half the weighting of an A Level. For example, students may be admitted with suitable grades in two A Levels and two AS Levels (in place of 3 A Levels). Details of the tariff operated by the UK Universities and Colleges Admission Service are given on the UCAS website ([www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)). Institutions outside the UK which offer credit for A Levels can be expected to offer half that amount of credit for AS Levels.

Pass grades for AS Level are A to E. Assessment may include coursework, final examination, practical and oral tests. Students wishing to go on to university will typically follow four to five AS courses in their first year of study and then continue with three subjects to the full A Level in their second year, perhaps alongside another AS Level course. Thus in their final two years of schooling, students can study a range of subjects chosen either from a single academic field (such as purely sciences, or languages or humanities, for example AS Biology and Chemistry along with A Level Physics, Mathematics and Further Mathematics), or they can opt for a wide range across disciplines (such as AS English and French plus A Level Business Studies, Physics and Maths). Consequently, the AS/A Level route offers the advantage over the IB Diploma of a free choice of subjects that can be chosen for specialism or academic breadth.

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Further curriculum information can be found on our website. Subject details and timetables for each class can be downloaded from [cambridgeschool.eu](http://cambridgeschool.eu).