

Cambridge International Examinations Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is CIE?

University of Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) is the world's largest provider of international qualifications.

- It is part of the University of Cambridge.
- CIE operates in 157 countries around the world.
- 6,000 schools in 150 countries around the world
- internationally known and recognized
- All program teachers trained and certified by Cambridge
- Programs for secondary schools since 1869

2. What is Checkpoint?

Cambridge Checkpoint tests are for use at the end of Cambridge Secondary 1. They are marked by CIE and provide schools with an external international benchmark for student performance.

Cambridge Checkpoint enables feedback to be provided on a student's strengths and weaknesses in key curriculum areas. Feedback of this kind is an invaluable source of information. Cambridge Checkpoint tests are available in English, Mathematics and Science and can be offered at two sessions during the year.

The tests cover all major areas of learning required in the first years of an international secondary education. It is these topics/skills and sub-topics/skills that provide the framework for feedback on each learner.

3. What does IGCSE stand for?

The International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE). It is the world's most popular international qualification for 14-16 year olds.

4. Why this curriculum for my child?

CIE curricula and qualifications are designed to support high-quality educational performance and to develop successful students.

A Cambridge international education is progressive and flexible.

CIE qualifications are recognized by universities and employers worldwide.

Advantages of the Cambridge Program are that students will develop higher level skills like:

. Acquisition of knowledge

- Writing
- Logic and thought process skills
- Emphasis on skills
- Application and use of creativity.
- Project based learning
- Creativity and analysis rather than rote memorization.
- Investigative learning approach
- Individual/group projects
- Internationally recognized
- Excellent preparation for college

5. How is it different from the other curriculum?

Life Long Advantages -

- Responsibility
- High level analysis and problem solving
- Cooperation between peers to accomplish goals
- Time management
- Long term planning

6. Is this curriculum for only smart children?

No, this curriculum caters to all children who are ready to take on the academic challenge. CIE curriculum is accessible to learners of all abilities. Bright students have the chance to excel by doing the extended curriculum and others can do the core curriculum. Students of all abilities are assessed positively.

7. Will it be difficult for my child to cope up with this?

CIE takes teaching to an entirely different level. Not only do the teachers provide unlimited support they also motivate and encourage students at every point. The devoted teachers kindle a burning desire in students to not only excel academically but also learn for the sake of acquiring knowledge. Its course specific worksheets and periodic tests prepare students to cope with the curriculum. The homely yet focused study environment has provides the students with an opportunity to really enjoy the subjects.

8. How does the classroom implementation take place?

Teachers are well supported and are able to offer the best education possible and develop successful students. CIE offers teachers an extensive programme of training events and services, providing professional development and support including online training and face-to-face training.

9. Is it chalk and talk? Is it hands on like PYP?

There's a lot more hands-on involvement with the investigations and the modeling and the other activities. They learn better, and they remember better what they've learned. It offers an understanding of different cultures and allows students to develop new skills – observation, evaluation, problem solving collaboration. It gives our students an understanding of the wider world and allows them to compare their national experience with this just like the PYP.

Focus: Creative writing

- Author/genre studies
- Oral communication skills

Focus on hands-on problem solving.

- Project based learning.
- Application of concepts
- Putting concepts together to see the “Big Picture”.

10. Will you share the syllabus with us?

Syllabus is available on the CIE website. www.cie.org.uk

11. Are Checkpoint tests essential?

Checkpoint tests are not essential, but there are a number of ways in which Cambridge Checkpoint might be used; some of these are outlined below:

- To test students' strengths and weaknesses on entry to a school/course of study
- To use as a guide for setting/streaming
- To inform students/teachers/parents about suitable exam entries for students, for example to provide evidence
about which IGCSE tier to prepare for
- To act as a basis for action planning between student and teacher

12. Do students write a checkpoint at the end of VII too?

No. They write the Cambridge Checkpoint at the end of the Grade VIII only.

13. Do you teach only English, Math and Science in VI, VII and VIII?

No. We teach all the subjects – English, Mathematics, Science, Social Sciences, II Language & III Language, ICT and the students have all other activities like Art and Music, Hobbies, Games. Cambridge Checkpoint tests are available in English, Mathematics and Science.

14. How do you teach other subjects?

Other subjects are taught and are designed to cover the core content necessary for study towards IGCSE.

15. What books do you follow?

We follow the Pearson-Longman Active teach series as well as Cambridge endorsed books published by Cambridge University Press.

16. Why not MYP?

The two programs share the same philosophy and goals. They both promote international understanding, responsible citizenship, and stress the importance of student centered inquiry and effective communication.

The MYP program is intended to prepare students for the Diploma Program. There is no board examination. Instead students have to only successfully complete the program to be awarded the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program Certificate as well as the MYP Portfolio of Achievement.

CIE is a standard international board and not a diploma program like the MYP. Cambridge International Certificate of Education (ICE) is an added certificate for students who follow the recommended criteria.

Cambridge ICE is the group award of the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and requires the study of subjects drawn from the five different IGCSE subject groups.

17. What is the comparison of IGCSE to other programmes like CBSE, ICSE or the Middle Years Programme of the IB?

- IGCSE is one of the most sought-after and recognized qualifications in the world. It develops and encourages vital educational skills, including oral skills, investigative skills, problem solving, team work, recall of knowledge, and initiative.
- Like other modern programmes, IGCSE offers a wider range of subjects and encourages high academic standards through a practical approach to teaching and learning. Assessment is not limited to conventional written papers and they consist of a variety of tests e.g. oral and listening tests.
- The assessment is aimed at a wide ability range of students, with an eight-point grading scale, from A* to G, with A* being the highest.
- IGCSE is a balanced curriculum and a flexible course of study.
- Most subjects offer a choice between core curriculum and extended curriculum.
- This gives students of all ability levels the freedom to choose subjects that are right for them and, thereby, the opportunity to score good grades.
- The core curriculum is an overview of the subject and is suitable for students who are expected to achieve grades C to G.
- The extended curriculum is, sort of, a specialization in that subject. It is more challenging and designed for students who are expected to achieve grades A+ to C.
- While the syllabi and curricula of both IB MYP and IGCSE have an international outlook, IGCSE appears to be slightly better, in that it is tailored for a more multi-cultural and more multi-lingual audience.

18. Does the IGCSE start only in Class 9? What about the primary years? Can a student do IGCSE after completing his/ her earlier schooling through a different board?

IGCSE is a two-year programme starting at the Class 9 level. A student who has done his/ her early schooling from any other board can join the IGCSE programme at the Class 9 level.

The IGCSE curriculum is balanced and lends an international perspective to studies. It also takes account of differing abilities of students.

19. What is the International Certificate of Education (ICE) that is awarded to some IGCSE students?

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