

A–Z of useful terms

This A–Z gives a simple explanation for the terminology we use in our syllabuses and administrative communications. Some may be unfamiliar or mean something different in the US.

This is a live document that we update regularly. If you think there are any words that should be added, please email us at: info@cambridgeinternational.org

To find out about our regulations for conducting Cambridge exams and our administrative procedures please refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* at: www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsOfficersguide

A	
Access arrangements	A pre-exam arrangement made on behalf of a candidate with particular needs, for example, the use of a scribe, modified papers or extra time. Applications for access arrangements are made before the exam takes place. Application deadlines are in Part 1 of the <i>Cambridge Handbook</i> .
Cambridge Advanced Advanced Level (A Level) Advanced Subsidiary (AS) Level	The international version of the Cambridge Advanced program. It consists of a one-year course of study which is called Advanced Subsidiary (AS) and a two-year course of study, the full A Level. The Cambridge Advanced program (AS & A Level) is a national qualification usually taken at age 16 to 18. The full A Level qualification is divided into two sections that can be taken over two years. The AS (usually taken in the first year of the two-year program) is a one-year college-level course. The A Level two-year course of study includes everything from the AS Level coursework but goes into more depth in year two of the program. Grades and college or university credit and/or placement are awarded at both the AS and the A Level.
Advanced Subsidiary (AS)	One of the set of courses we offer as part of the Cambridge Advanced program. Cambridge AS Level courses and exams are one-year college-level courses and examinations, and are granted college credit or advanced placement with qualifying scores. Passing grades range from A* to E.
A Level	A Level or our full Advanced Level course is a two-year course of study with examinations that can be taken both at the end of year one and two, and are our most rigorous courses that go into great depth within a given subject area.
AICE Diploma (group award)	'AICE' stands for the Advanced International Certificate of Education and is a rigorous credential. If a student takes and receives qualifying scores in Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives, a Science and Math, Humanities and Languages among other electives, they will be awarded the Cambridge AICE Diploma (group award). The award comes in three levels: Pass, Merit and Distinction.
Assessment	The method used to evaluate a candidate's performance, for example, a written exam or coursework.
Assessment criteria	The requirements that learners must meet to achieve a given score on an exam or part of an exam. Known as rubrics in the US.
Assessment objectives (AOs)	A set of statements in a syllabus describing the focus of assessment. AOs determine what learners must do to prove that they have fulfilled the requirements of the syllabus.
Attendance register	Forms used in the exam room to record the presence of each candidate.

Authentication	Confirmation that the work submitted for assessment is the candidate's own and where applicable, that they produced it under the required conditions. This is typically in the form of a statement by the candidate's teacher.
Awarding	The process of determining a candidate's results and/or achievement levels using the available evidence.
Awarding body	An examination board, for example, Cambridge International.
B	
Band	A band is a level on a scale of performance used to rate a candidate's ability.
C	
Coursework Assessment Summary Form/Oral Examination Summary Form/Speaking examination Summary Form/Working Mark Sheet	These forms should be used when assessing candidates' work in coursework and speaking test components. Depending on the component, you need to complete a Coursework Assessment Summary Form, Working Mark Sheet or Oral Examination Summary Form. The forms must show the marks of all candidates entered for the component and must be sent with the samples. For some components you also need to complete an Individual Candidate Record Card for each candidate. Visit the samples database (www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples) to check which forms are required for specific components and to access interactive copies of the forms.
Cambridge Assessment International Education	Cambridge Assessment International Education (Cambridge International for short) is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group. Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate.
Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education (Cambridge IGCSE™)	The international version of the GCSE (GCSEs are national qualifications usually taken by students at around age 16 in England). Cambridge IGCSE is the most popular course of study for 14–16 year olds across the globe and is excellent college preparatory course work. Cambridge IGCSEs are progressive and offer strong foundation to Cambridge Advanced Level courses.
Candidate	A student or person who has been entered for a Cambridge assessment.
Carried-forward marks	A score awarded for a component in one exam series that is applied to a future exam series to contribute towards the final exam score. Most center-assessed components or externally assessed coursework/oral scores can be carried forward to a subsequent exam series as long as the final score is awarded within a 13-month period.* *Note that candidates are allowed to take five sessions (25 months) to complete the Cambridge AICE Diploma.
Center	A school, college, organization, or institution approved by and registered with Cambridge International to teach and offer Cambridge programs and examinations to candidates.
Center number	The five-character code given to a center, Cambridge Associate or Associate Center (for example, US123)
Certificate	A Cambridge certificate records and confirms a candidate's final results.



Certifying statement	An official document issued by Cambridge International to show the scores achieved by a candidate in a particular series. Cambridge International can send certifying statements at any time to any address, including educational institutions, as long as the original certificate has been issued. Candidates can apply for certifying statements or centers can apply on their behalf.
CIE Direct	CIE Direct is a secure website for the direct submission and transfer of data and other information between centers and Cambridge International. It is used by Cambridge exams officers to manage exam entries, download results and carry out other key administrative tasks. https://direct.cie.org.uk
College	An institution of higher learning. In the USA Colleges and Universities are terms used interchangeably. However, in the United Kingdom some schools are referred to as colleges, particularly if they offer qualifications to students aged 16 years and over.
Component	A component is part of or a section of the subject exam. An individual syllabus usually has several components. A component is sometimes referred to as a paper. Typically several components make up the assessments for an examination.
Component number	The number allocated to each component of a syllabus.
Core route	In some Cambridge IGCSE qualifications, there are two levels of achievement possible for a qualification, via two separate routes: core and extended. Learners following the core route are eligible to achieve up to and including a Grade C. See also: extended route.
Coursework/portfolio	Classroom assignments undertaken by learners as prescribed in the syllabus. Normally scored by the candidate's teacher according to criteria set by Cambridge International. These scores are standardized within the center and then standardized by Cambridge International.
Curriculum	A description of the goals, content, organization, methods, and evaluation of an educational course.

E

Enquiries about results	Services available to centers after the release of provisional results if they want to have a candidate's script reviewed or their candidates' coursework re-moderated.
Enter for an exam	Register for an exam.
Entries	The candidates a center has entered for a Cambridge qualification in a particular series.
Exam series	A group of exams in the same range, for example, Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International AS & A Level, with the same closing date for entries and timetable period. A series is identified by a month and year, for example June 2019.
Examiner	An individual with subject expertise who is responsible for scoring candidates' responses according to a scoring guide and using professional judgment.
Exams officer	The person appointed by the Head of Center to act on behalf of the center, with specific responsibility for the administration of Cambridge exams. The Head of Center may also be the exams officer.
Exemplar	An example of the quality/level of work that is used to demonstrate the standard for success.



Extended route	In some Cambridge IGCSE qualifications, there are two levels of achievement possible for a qualification, via two separate routes, core and extended. Learners aiming to achieve Grades A*, A, B, and C must take the extended route. See also: core route
External assessment	Where learners' work is assessed by Cambridge International.
External moderator	An individual appointed by Cambridge International to make sure there are accurate and consistent standards of assessment across centers and over time. See also: internal moderator

F

Forecast grade	The score a teacher expects a candidate to achieve for a syllabus.
Full Center Supervision	<p>Full Center Supervision is a specific type of supervision for exam candidates. If candidates are not in their exam at the Key Time, they must be under Full Center Supervision. Full Center Supervision means candidates are supervised by at least one invigilator for every 30 candidates. When supervised, candidates must not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be in the same room as other people, except for invigilators or candidates taking the same exam • have any access to telephones, cell phones, laptops/computers or any other electronic device with and without internet access, or any other means of communication outside of the supervised group • communicate in any way with anyone who is not under Full Center Supervision at the center. When supervised, candidates may have access to their books and notes, and talk to each other, provided that they do not cause any disturbance to candidates who are taking an exam. See also: Key Time

G

Grade (score)	<p>A scale of performance used to differentiate achievement (for example: A, B, C, D, E, F, G; Distinction, Merit). At Cambridge International, we use the British grading scale, which is very different than the A–F grading scale in the US or that used with the AP or IB program.</p> <p>The Cambridge IGCSE scale goes from A to G, and Cambridge International AS & A Level from A* to E. For AS Level, typically a grade of E translates to a score of 3 on an AP exam, 4 on an IB exam or a C in the American grading system.</p>
Grade boundary	The minimum score needed to obtain a certain grade.
Grading	The process of converting test scores or points into grades.
Group award	An award given to a candidate who has studied and passed assessments from a specified number of subject groups. Examples are Cambridge ICE, a group award for Cambridge IGCSE, and the Cambridge AICE Diploma, a group award for Cambridge International AS & A Level.
Guided learning hours	The average amount of contact time that a center would typically need to allocate to ensure the achievement of a qualification.

H

Head of Center	The Head of Center is the person who has been appointed by the Responsible Person as the head or principal of the center. See also: responsible person.
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I	
Internal assessment	Assessment tasks assessed wholly within the candidate's center, subject to external moderation or verification.
Internal Assessment Mark Sheet (MS1)	Form used to record and submit internally assessed marks to Cambridge International. Use this form if you do not submit your marks through CIE Direct. We send the form in the pre-exam dispatch.
Internally assessed mark	A score awarded by the center for an internally assessed coursework or speaking test component.
Internal moderator	An individual appointed by a center to ensure accurate and consistent standards of assessment, both between assessors operating within a center and between centers offering the same award. See also: external moderator
Internal standardization	A process carried out by teachers in relation to internally assessed work to ensure that all candidates are judged according to the same standards, across different assessors and teaching groups.
Invigilator (exam proctor/ test administrator)	A suitably qualified person, sometimes referred to as a supervisor, who is appointed by the Head of Center to be responsible for the proper conduct of a particular exam in line with Cambridge regulations. Invigilators work closely with and often report to the exams officer.
K	
Key Time	A time, defined by the location and country of a center, specified by Cambridge International, when all candidates taking timetabled exams must either be in an exam or under Full Center Supervision. The Key Time will always be expressed as GMT/UTC. You can find your Key Times at www.cambridgeinternational.org/keytime
L	
Linear exam	An exam in which all components are taken in the same series.
M	
Making entries	The process by which an exams officer registers individuals for an exam. For Cambridge exams, the exams officer is responsible for this process, not the individual student.
Malpractice	Malpractice is any action that breaks our regulations and potentially threatens the integrity of our exams and certification.
Mark scheme	Known as a rubric in the USA, a mark scheme details how to award scores for assessment tasks. It indicates the number of points each question or component attracts. It can also indicate acceptable answers or criteria for awarding marks
Marking	Assigning a score to a candidate's response to a test. This may involve professional judgment or the application of a scoring guide that lists all acceptable responses.
Marks	The total score or individual points given by an examiner on a specific component. Marks are totaled and ultimately converted to a grade.



Moderation	The process to bring the marking of an internally assessed component to an agreed standard in all participating Cambridge centers. See also: verification
Moderator	Reviewer. The person who conducts the moderation process. See also: moderation
Modular exam	A Cambridge International AS & A Level or Cambridge IGCSE scheme (plan) of assessment in which the components may be taken over more than one exam series.
O	
Option code	A code that indicates the combination of components a candidate is taking. Option codes are specific to each syllabus, series and administrative zone. Option codes are shown in the <i>Cambridge Guide to Making Entries</i> .
Optional unit	Part of a qualification or program. The syllabuses may include rules about the number and combinations of optional units or components that are required or allowed.
Q	
Qualification	A certificated award made by Cambridge International to learners to demonstrate their achievement. In the US, 'qualification' is an unfamiliar term and essentially translates to 'course' and 'exam' in a given subject area. A set of component exams that make up the full assessment for a course is considered a qualification.
Question paper	A form of external or internal assessment including tests, assignments, and projects.
P	
Paper	Sometimes referred to as a component, a paper is a part or section of the subject exam. An individual syllabus usually has several papers. Can also be referred to as a question paper.
R	
Raw score	A test score that has not been statistically manipulated.
Reasonable adjustment	Arrangements which are approved by Cambridge International before an exam or assessment to allow attainment to be demonstrated by learners with a permanent or long-term disability or illness.
Responsible Person	The Responsible Person is the person legally responsible for an institution to offer Cambridge assessments and exams. They are responsible for discharging their duties in line with the Agreement and the <i>Cambridge Handbook</i> , whether or not they have delegated the duties to the Head of Center or to any other person.
Rubric	The instructions given for a particular test task outlines how the task will be marked.
S	
Scheme	Overview/program/plan.
Scheme of assessment	The exam components through which a candidate's achievement in a particular assessment is determined.
Scheme of work	Unit lesson plans.



Script	One candidate's response to the whole question paper or component. Usually written on paper in one or on more booklets or multiple sheets.
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S	
Separately endorsed	In the context of Cambridge IGCSEs, an extra piece of information about the level of achievement in speaking (for example, Pass, Merit, Distinction). Both the score and the endorsement are reported on the certificate.
Series	A group of exams in the same range, for example, Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International AS & A Level, with the same closing date for entries and timetable period. A series is identified by a month and year, for example June 2019. In the US the exam series is also known as the <u>test administration</u> for a given period (e.g. the June 2018 series, November 2019 series).
Session	A period in a day in which an exam takes place, which is either the morning or afternoon.
Special consideration	A post-exam adjustment made to a candidate's score, by Cambridge International, to make allowances for any adverse circumstances, for example illness, bereavement or temporary injury.
Standard	The criteria for success at a particular level. At schools' standardization meetings, discussion will make sure that teachers within schools/departments assess students' work in the same way.
Standardization (of assessment)	A process to make sure that the assessment criteria for a qualification, unit, or component are applied consistently by assessors, moderators, and verifiers. Standardization can be carried out within centers (internal standardization) as well as by Cambridge International (external standardization).
Statement of entry	A document showing a candidate's details and the entry options the candidate has been entered for.
Statement of results	A document showing a candidate's details and the syllabus grades they have been awarded.
Stimulus material	Materials the learner may be required to respond to in the exam, for example, maps, images, graphs, and texts.
Syllabus number	A four-digit number allocated to each syllabus.
T	
Timetable	Schedule.
Timetable deviation	Arrangements proposed by the Head of Center to resolve any timetable clashes.
V	
Venue	A location where assessments are taken.
Verification	A process of moderation that includes local checking of assessment processes and decisions.
Verification of results	A service offered by Cambridge International if a third party, such as an employer or university, wants to verify results/scores issued by Cambridge International.
W	
Weighting	The relative contribution of a question, task or component in relation to the equivalent parts of the same test.

