Cambridge ICT Starters

How do the ICT Starters differ from the Cambridge International Diploma in ICT?
The ICT Starters are aimed at school children between the ages of 4 and 14. Assessment is rooted very much in the school curriculum and centres can design their own assessment tasks to meet the Performance Criteria. The Diplomas place ICT in the context of the workplace, with a practical assessment produced by CIE.

Can students progress from the ICT Starters to the Cambridge International Diploma in ICT?
Yes, On Track Level of the ICT Starters crosses the boundary of Foundation and Standard Level of the CID in ICT. Candidates finishing the ICT Starters may prefer to enter for Foundation Level of the Diploma in order to adjust to this different assessment approach. More able candidates, however, may wish to progress straight onto the Standard Level.

How many modules do students have to take to gain the full award?

2003: *6 modules at Initial Steps Level (all core modules) and 10 at Next Steps and On Track Level (6 core modules and 4 optional modules).*

2004 onwards*: Each level of the scheme contains 2 stages, with an equal number of modules. Initial Steps Level has 3 modules at each stage, while Next Steps and On Track Levels have 4 modules at each stage. Modules can be taught in any order, although all modules must be achieved at Stage 1 for a Starter Stage 1 certificate and all modules must be achieved at both stages for a full certificate.*

Can individual modules be taken?
No, either the stage one modules or the full award at the appropriate level must be completed together.

Do the ICT Starters have exam papers, or practical assessments like ICT?
No. Each module of the syllabus contains the Assessment Criteria which must be met to achieve a Pass or Merit and an Example Assessment Activity. At the end of each level is the Learning Objectives Record Sheet, where the tutor must sign to say that each candidate has met all the appropriate criteria. However, centres are free to design their own assessment activities related to the school curriculum they are delivering.

So can assessments be carried out in lesson time?
Yes, as long as the procedures stated in the syllabus are followed. These include the necessity for candidates to be supervised, not have access to their own files, not receive tuition during the assessment and to complete work within a fixed time period (maximum 1 hour at Initial Steps and 1 ½ hours at Next Steps and On Track Levels).

Is any special training or certification required of tutors of ICT Starters?
We don't demand any formal training or certification for teachers. Centres should familiarise themselves with the skills required from the whole syllabus before delivering a course. In particular, they should be able to design assessment activities and cope confidently with a wide range of software and applications. However, we do offer the Cambridge International Diploma in Teaching with ICT for teachers who wish to gain formal certification in this area.

What should the pupil:PC ratio be?
Pupils can share PCs during their learning but they all need access to a computer individually during the assessment itself.

How does the moderation process work?
CIE will request to see a sample of work completed at each level from the centre (see page 102 of the syllabus). Moderators will then make recommendations to:
- *approve all marks*
- *approve some marks but request that all others are adjusted for a particular module or modules (e.g. pass to fail, pass to merit)*
- *request to see further samples of work.*

Can the ICT Starters be taken on Apple Mac computers?
Yes. The only evidence we require is printed copies of the students' work and the Learning Objectives Record Sheet.

Does specific software have to be used?
No. Any software which the centre and students feel comfortable with is appropriate, as long as it allows candidates to meet all Learning Objectives.

Are the ICT Starters available in any other languages?
The syllabus and assessment is available in English and Spanish. With the prior consent of CIE, some centres may be permitted to translate the ICT Starters syllabus and administer their assessment tasks in the local language, providing the resulting sample of candidates' work is translated before submission.

How much class time is recommended?
There are no easy answers to this one! The reason we don't prescribe this is that students may be at different ages or levels and are able to devote varying amounts of time to the course. We recommend 1 - 2 years for a full level. The best approach is to look at the modules yourself and decide how long you think it would take for your students to be able to confidently meet the Learning Objectives.

How can I register for the ICT Starters?
If you are already a CIE centre you need only notify us in writing that you wish to add ICT to the list of courses you are eligible to run. You will automatically be sent an information pack, including Provisional Entry Forms, once you have been registered. If you are not an existing Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) centre you will need to contact CIE Customer Support in the first instance. We will send you a centre registration pack. Subject to a centre inspection and, satisfaction of our centre status criteria, you will be allocated a centre number and you will automatically be sent entry documentation. Please note registration can take some time so we advise you contact us at least 3 months prior to offering your first course.