

Cambridge and multilingualism

We work in long-term strategic relationships with ministries of education, national qualifications authorities, overseas examination boards and other statutory bodies responsible for education to provide a range of services dedicated to the development and reform of public education. In these partnerships we are 'language aware' and sensitive to the language needs of each context.

We work closely with more than 30 ministries of education around the world to develop curricula and qualifications to meet national needs. These can be benchmarked to national and international standards as appropriate. They can also be developed in different languages to meet requirements at the relevant national level in relation to bilingual or trilingual education, where at least two languages are used to teach different subjects such as science or maths. Even in monolingual education, where all the subjects are taught through one language, we value multilingualism and are supportive of our partners who may wish to develop the acquisition of additional languages, or to maintain and respect first languages.

We selectively support educational reform initiatives with national partner bodies that have a broader focus, including the development of new assessments and professional development programmes for teachers and schools leaders. In our education reform projects, our contribution includes partnerships that draw on the wider expertise of the Cambridge Assessment group and the University of Cambridge, including its Faculty of Education.

Our range of services is based on the development of long-term relationships with our partners and includes the following:

- professional development for thousands of teachers around the world each year
- collaboration with government bodies to design and deliver bilingual or trilingual education programmes
- work with national education authorities to raise students' performance and equip them well for university education and for employment

Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, Vice-Chancellor, University of Cambridge said:

"The University of Cambridge values the role of Cambridge International Examinations in extending access to world class education to countries around the globe."

Case Study: Kazakhstan

The Kazakhstan government is continuing to reform its national education system, following independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. It has recently created new schools, Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS), and a national university, Nazarbayev University. Working with Cambridge it wants to combine the strengths of the existing system, particularly their success in maths and science teaching, with international best practice. This includes developing Kazakh, Russian and English as languages of instruction. The objective is to create a world-class education system that will prepare learners for university-level study in English and ultimately help Kazakhstan compete internationally.



Background

Kazakhstan has a multi-ethnic and culturally-diverse population for whom Kazakh is the state language. In the past, Russian was used in schools and this led to big differences in language use between urban and rural communities, and different levels of language proficiency. Russian is still accepted as a national language and a regional language of education in many parts of the country.

NIS is working with several international partners including the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge and the University of Pennsylvania. It appointed Cambridge as its strategic partner for the project because of our strong international reputation and success in assisting with the delivery of education reform in other countries, such as Singapore.

The challenge

The long-term aim is to launch a new curriculum with three languages of instruction (Kazakh, Russian and English) in the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS).

NIS also wants to improve teachers' skills and to set student language targets for each language at different ages. By the end of school, age 18, learners should take English-medium exams in the core subjects (maths, science and English). These qualifications are designed to meet Kazakhstani standards and to be recognised by international universities.

A further longer-term aim is to improve the standard of English among teachers to enable NIS teachers to teach other subjects through the medium of English. A large number of international teachers are currently working in NIS with Kazakhstani teachers to support this approach.

Preparing teachers and schools for change

The first step was for Cambridge to analyse the needs of the schools. Our partner, Cambridge ESOL, has tested learners in the NIS schools to benchmark their English language level as part of the project.

Before Cambridge became involved in the project, NIS had already tested the level of English of their teachers. NIS also commissioned a trilingual education model that stated which subjects would be taught through which language at each grade of school. Cambridge commissioned an expert consultant to develop this trilingual strategy – focussing on key issues such as:

1. preparing a clear statement of values and pedagogical principles for trilingual education
2. developing a language policy
3. agreeing the pedagogical approach
4. advising how to use and improve students' language skills in content classes using a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach.

Cambridge is also advising how to involve stakeholders in the process of educational reform and measure results.

Solution design

At the heart of the project is a collaborative approach to the development of the new curriculum. Cambridge is working on this with curriculum developers in Kazakhstan and is supplying course plans for teachers to support the introduction of the curriculum into the schools.

Some subjects, however, will be delivered through programmes that are already available from Cambridge. For example, NIS decided to use an English curriculum developed with Kazakhstani developers using Cambridge ESOL standard assessments, and Cambridge International AS Level in Global Perspectives developed by

Cambridge International Examinations. Apart from these exceptions, the main approach is to develop curricula and qualifications for Kazakhstan that are benchmarked to international standards.

Cambridge is providing guidance on assessment so that the NIS awarding body can administer its own exams. Some exams will be taken in English and other subjects will be assessed in the students' first language, either Russian or Kazakh. Cambridge will also ensure that these Kazakh- and Russian-medium assessments in core subjects are aligned with appropriate Cambridge standards. We will also advise on recognition work by authorities in Kazakhstan to make sure that the new qualifications are recognised by universities internationally.

Project implementation

A Cambridge project manager and project specialist work on a full-time basis with NIS. We draw expertise from within Cambridge to support development work, assessment work and operational aspects of the project. We also use expert consultants when needed to provide valuable specialist advice. A programme of teacher training is carried out by local and international teacher trainers working together.

Next steps

The new curriculum is being implemented from September 2012 beginning with grades 7 and 11. The first external summative assessments will take place for grade 11 and grade 12 students two years after.

As this is a pilot project, there will be a survey after the first year to find out what learners and teachers think and this will help to inform future development.

Case study: Netherlands

TTO (Twee Talig Onderwijs) schools are a network of state-funded national bilingual schools in the Netherlands. Many TTO schools are following the Cambridge Secondary 1 Programme and using Cambridge Checkpoint, a diagnostic test which provides feedback in English, Maths and Science.

Background

Bilingual education is already very well established in the Netherlands, and many Dutch people speak English to a high standard. Although not all schools in the Netherlands are bilingual, the TTO network of bilingual schools has operated since 1993 and there are now 120 schools in the network. The European Platform, an autonomous Dutch organisation mandated by the government, oversees the quality of bilingual education in the country by setting standards for bilingual schools and teachers. There are also four Dutch universities offering the Cambridge International Certificate for Teachers in Bilingual Education, which was piloted in the Netherlands.

The challenge

Learners in TTO schools are already taught some subjects in English through a bilingual education programme. Teachers and school administrators wanted to give learners in TTO schools recognition for their English-medium work and provide an international benchmark.

Preparing teachers and schools for change

Teachers and schools were well prepared for the challenge because of the high level of English language ability within schools. It was not necessary to test entry level into the Cambridge Secondary 1 programme as the Dutch system is linked to the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR).

Solution design

In partnership with Cambridge, the European Platform and TTO network decided that using existing programmes and qualifications was the best solution to give the learners recognition for their English-medium work. Using examinations that had

already been developed was easier and cheaper than the Netherlands developing their own new exams. It was also logistically simpler as the examinations are administered and marked by Cambridge.

Project implementation

The first examination to be introduced was Cambridge Checkpoint. This programme includes diagnostic tests, which are used at the end of Cambridge Secondary 1. The tests are marked by Cambridge and provide schools with an external international benchmark for student performance. Schools involved in the project found that Cambridge Checkpoint helped to get feedback on learners' strengths and weaknesses in the core subject areas of English, Maths and Science. Parents, students and teachers all appreciated this feedback.

Next steps

The implementation of Cambridge Secondary 1 and Checkpoint has been very successful and there are now 35 TTO schools using the tests. Teachers and learners find the detailed feedback from the tests very useful and teachers particularly like the schemes of work and resources that support the curriculum.

Following this early success, some TTO schools are now entering learners for Cambridge IGCSEs and AS/A-Levels. They take Cambridge IGCSE at age 16 and then take Cambridge AS/A-Levels alongside the local Dutch examinations in the last year of their education at age 18. The implementation of Cambridge IGCSEs and AS/A-Levels is expected to increase as TTO schools look for international benchmarking as recognition of their bilingual learners' achievements.



Case study: Malaysia

In 2011, the Majlis Amanah Rakyat (The Council of Trust for the Indigenous People, commonly abbreviated as MARA), a statutory body reporting to the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development, decided to use Cambridge Secondary programmes for students in all of its Junior Science Colleges.

Background

MARA runs 47 Junior Science Colleges with more than 35,000 students, mainly in rural areas. The colleges are intended to bring about change and development in their rural communities. The colleges are purpose-built and well-resourced and the teachers are well trained.

MARA wanted their students to have the opportunity to obtain international qualifications to be qualified to apply to universities internationally.

The challenge

MARA asked Cambridge to support the implementation of a bilingual dual-certification programme at secondary level. Learners from age 13 to 17 would prepare for Cambridge IGCSE and the Malaysian Certificate of Education (Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia or SPM).

To begin the dual-certification programme, teachers need to develop their language skills to be able to teach maths and science courses in English. They also need to update their skills to deal with new pedagogical approaches relating to skills development and active learning.

Preparing teachers and schools for change

Before the programme could begin, MARA staff and teachers reviewed



both the Cambridge curriculum and the Malaysian curriculum to identify the level of overlap between them. A further review was then carried out to understand the assessment implications of the two different curricula. Programmes of study were devised so that students are properly prepared for both Cambridge and Malaysian national examinations.

Solution design

MARA students will take Cambridge Checkpoint tests in English, maths and science at age 14. This will provide valuable feedback on their progress in the core subjects. They will then go on to take Cambridge IGCSEs at age 16 in chemistry, biology, physics, maths, additional maths and ICT. Students who wish to do so will then take the national SPM qualification at age 17.

Project implementation

MARA provides strong leadership on the programme, supported by Cambridge. Cambridge provided training courses for teachers at the first two groups of schools to familiarise them with the curriculum and assessment. Cambridge also supported the first school leaders taking part in the programme by

organising study visits to UK schools studying for Cambridge IGCSEs. This enabled the school leaders to study international best practice.

Cambridge has a senior schools' development manager based in Malaysia who supports the Junior Science Colleges through the process of registration as Cambridge centres and provides day-to-day support to schools as and when required.

Next steps

The first Junior Science College, Tun Abdul Razak, began the programme in 2011, and was followed by four others in 2012. Eight more are due to start the programme in 2013. Cambridge will continue to provide professional development and training as new colleges enter the programme up to 2016.

The early results from the first group of participating schools show that learners are enthused by the opportunities and challenges of the bilingual education programme. They see it as a good opportunity to gain qualifications that can help them access international higher education.

Learn more! For more information on [Cambridge programmes and qualifications](#) visit www.cie.org.uk or contact your school.

