



Cambridge

# Outlook

THE MAGAZINE FOR CAMBRIDGE SCHOOLS WORLDWIDE

Issue 28, May 2018

## Inside



### Inside the teenage mind

What we know about adolescent brains



### Science practicals

Why are they so important for students?



### View from Sudan

Meet the school with a focus on developing global citizens

## In Focus

# Student wellbeing

Giving young people the headspace to study



Cambridge Assessment International Education

# Cambridge Schools Conference

## Creating the conditions for success



Our next schools conference is in Cambridge, UK  
Tuesday 18 to Wednesday 19 September 2018

“ Listening to different keynote speakers and attending the breakout sessions really broadened my understanding of learning and most importantly how to go about helping my students to learn effectively. ”

John Ekene Ashibogwu, Gambia

To register your interest, go to [cambridgeinternational.org/conference](https://cambridgeinternational.org/conference)

# Welcome

ISSUE 28, MAY 2018

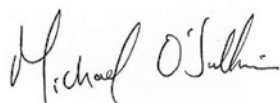
**W**e must have all experienced moments in our working lives when there is a lot going on and it can be difficult to concentrate on any one task. Cambridge students are no different and many have yet to learn the skills that can help them deal with these situations.

That's why in this issue of *Cambridge Outlook*, we have chosen to focus on student wellbeing – to help you help your students find a frame of mind that helps them to study, concentrate and to do their best. There are wellbeing tips for you as teachers and principals too.

This will be my last Welcome piece. After several very fulfilling and unforgettable years at Cambridge International I shall be moving on in July. What has made those years special for me is above all the evident value of the education which we help you to provide, in 10 000 schools in over 160 countries. It has been a privilege to see first hand in many of your countries what Cambridge schools achieve. To all who have welcomed me into your school, or shared ideas with me at Cambridge conferences, a special thanks for making my job so rewarding. I have taken the opportunity in this issue to look back at some of the schools I have visited in my role (page 27). Thank you to everyone who has worked with me over the past five years to help us all keep making progress in education – here at Cambridge International and in our global community. Keep up the good work!

I hope you enjoy the issue – thank you to all the schools around the world that contributed to it.

If you have any questions for us, please email [outlook@cambridgeinternational.org](mailto:outlook@cambridgeinternational.org)




**Michael O'Sullivan**  
Chief Executive,  
Cambridge Assessment  
International Education

## About us

Cambridge Assessment International Education prepares school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. We are part of the University of Cambridge.

Any feedback on this issue? Anything you would like to read about in the next issue? Contact us at:

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# N ews

Keeping you up to date with news from Cambridge International and our schools around the world

@CambridgeInt

www.facebook.com/cambridge.int

www.cambridgeinternational.org/linkedin

## Double honours for Cambridge students



It was a double celebration for students at the Outstanding Cambridge Learner Awards ceremony in Indonesia in February.

As well as receiving awards for exceptional achievement in Cambridge exams, some students also collected The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award at Gold level – the world's leading youth achievement award.

Pictured above is Cambridge Regional Director Southeast Asia and Pacific, Ben Schmidt, with two of the winners. The ceremony marks our closer collaboration with The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation.

We are working to help create more opportunities for Cambridge schools to offer the Award, which we believe complements Cambridge academic programmes and helps schools offer a broad and balanced curriculum.

If you are interested in offering the Award, contact [info@cambridgeinternational.org](mailto:info@cambridgeinternational.org)

## A new era for Cambridge Assessment

This is the first issue of *Cambridge Outlook* published from our new home in Cambridge – the Triangle building. Until now, generations of staff have walked between different buildings on Hills Road, Cambridge, in all weathers to meet colleagues. The move means that the organisation's Cambridge-based staff are

now all housed in one place.

We are sharing the new building with our colleagues from the Cambridge Assessment Group – including Cambridge Assessment English and OCR. The organisations often work together, sharing expertise and research, and the move to Triangle will make this easier.

As we are welcoming this new era, we are also saying farewells. Simon Lebus, Group Chief Executive of Cambridge Assessment, has left after 15 years. We are delighted that Saul Nassé, previously Chief Executive of Cambridge Assessment English, has stepped up as Simon's successor to lead the Group forward.

We are also saying goodbye to Cambridge International Chief Executive Michael O'Sullivan, who leaves at the end of July. Michael has made a substantial contribution to our organisation over the past five years, growing the range of services we offer. We pay tribute to him on page 27.



## Thriving Italian school community

The network of Cambridge schools in Italy, known as La Rete, is a great example of the philosophy 'better together'. The schools have recently formed a Facebook group to share experiences of teaching Cambridge programmes. There is high demand from state schools to teach Cambridge IGCSE® alongside the Italian national curriculum, and sharing knowledge of bilingual education is crucial to success.

Schools are also hosting informal Pit Stop events with the Cambridge Manager for Italy, Alessandra Varriale. An event at Liceo Marco

Polo in Bari (pictured) attracted over 60 teachers and principals from the Puglia region. Alessandra said: "The Pit Stops enable me to interact with teachers face-to-face. There's no set agenda – teachers can network and share ideas and experiences."



## What's new from Cambridge

Don't forget to sign up for alerts to find out about syllabus updates.

Go to [cambridgeinternational.org/syllabusupdates](http://cambridgeinternational.org/syllabusupdates)

## Global insight

Two stories from the world of international education

### Global competence added to 2018 PISA test

The OECD's PISA<sup>1</sup> is an international study that measures 15-year-old students' ability in mathematics, science and reading around the world in order to improve education policies and outcomes. In recent years, the test has also assessed collaborative problem solving and creative problem solving. This year, the OECD has announced that it will measure 'global competence' to find out how well students can critically examine local and global issues and understand 'multiple cultural perspectives'. It will consider issues such as global warming, racism and prejudice.

Students following any of our Cambridge Global Perspectives<sup>®</sup> programmes will already be developing the skills that PISA assesses. The

Cambridge Global Perspectives syllabus, now available for students aged 5 to 19, develops students' ability to engage with and think critically about a range of global issues where there is always more than one point of view.

### MIT continues to top world university rankings

US universities dominate the top places in the QS World University Rankings 2018. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) remains number one, with Stanford second and Harvard third. The University of Cambridge is the highest-ranked UK university, in fifth place. In the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2018<sup>2</sup>, Harvard continues to be ranked top for more subjects than any other institution, topping 14 subject tables.

## In brief

### From paper to pixel

The challenge of moving from 'paper to pixel' was one of the key topics discussed at Cambridge Principals Forums in Pakistan in February. Cambridge Director of Development, Claudia Bickford-Smith, explained how Cambridge International is innovating in the areas of on-screen testing and reporting, and highlighted some of the challenges of implementing new technologies on a global scale.



### Cambridge Schools Conferences

Our first Cambridge Schools Conference on American soil will take place in Miami in June. It will be the third and last of our 2017/18 global conferences to explore the theme of 'Learning and achievement for all'.

After the Miami event, our next Cambridge Schools Conference will take place in Cambridge, UK, on 18–19 September 2018. You can register your interest in the conference on our website at [cambridgeinternational.org/conference](http://cambridgeinternational.org/conference)

## Celebrating 30 years of Cambridge IGCSE



Taught in over  
145 countries  
in almost  
**5000**



Available  
in more than  
**70**  
subjects



It is 30 years since students around the world took the first ever Cambridge IGCSE exams.

Cambridge International was the first exam board to develop the international GCSE qualification. Since first examination in 1988, we have continuously revised Cambridge IGCSE, working with educators worldwide to

review syllabuses and introduce new subjects that are relevant to how students learn today.

Thank you to everyone in the Cambridge school community who has helped us develop the qualification over the past 30 years, ensuring it continues to offer the best possible international education for students aged 14 to 16.



### Are your students applying to US universities?

In a new video on our website, admissions staff from US institutions and recognitions staff from Cambridge International describe what it is like to study at a US university and offer advice on how to apply. The video is aimed at guidance counsellors, teachers, students and their parents. Watch it at [cambridgeinternational.org/recognition](http://cambridgeinternational.org/recognition)

# IN FOCUS



## Student wellbeing

*Tristian Stobie, Cambridge International's Director, Education,* introduces this issue's In Focus, which considers the vital importance of an overall state of mental health and wellbeing to students the world over

**I**n a world obsessed with grades and academic performance, it is important to remind ourselves that nothing is more important in a school than the wellbeing of its students. Sometimes responsibility for wellbeing is seen as reactive – that we need to help students who we can see are struggling. The following articles are refreshing in that they all present a very proactive approach, highlighting the importance of equipping students with the values, skills and self-understanding they will need to manage their lives effectively.

Wellbeing describes a state of overall mental and physical health, strength, resilience and fitness to function well in school and life in general. It goes beyond happiness, which is a more immediate and transitory emotion based on what is happening now, to empower the individual to control their own life. Wellbeing is, therefore, a state of mind and body that is acquired over time and which forms a critical part of the broader school curriculum.

The first step is recognising the importance of wellbeing and making it a topic of reflection and communication with teachers, administrators, students and parents around the school. Professor Glazzard (see page 8) highlights the critical importance of a supportive school culture that encourages all adults in the community to see student wellbeing as their responsibility and to work collaboratively to support it. Teacher wellbeing is also important, as it will help teachers to be effective role models focused on student needs because they feel secure and supported themselves.

The case studies from schools (pages 11–13)



“Schools are very busy places and the curriculum needs to create spaces for students to stand back, rest and talk”





GETTY IMAGES

provide illuminating examples of what can be achieved by emphasising and understanding values, creating supportive and respectful communities and allowing places and time for reflection and mindfulness. Schools are very busy places and the curriculum, broadly defined, needs to create spaces for students to stand back, rest, talk and ask for help if they need it.

One of the greatest challenges we all face in the modern world is managing social media so that it becomes a force for good and positive self-image rather than a threat. This is a particular challenge for adolescents. Nicola Morgan provides insights into understanding the adolescent mind and managing stress (page 14). Understanding the mechanisms and factors that result in harmful stress is the important first step towards developing strategies to manage it effectively and convert it into a positive force.

A theme that emerges in all the articles is the importance of developing emotional literacy. Much has been written about the importance of learning how to learn in order to be prepared for life in the modern

Managing social media so it becomes a positive force can be a particular challenge for adolescents

world. This can only be achieved when students learn to understand and manage their emotions.

Mental wellbeing is, of course, a necessary condition for optimising learning and improving performance. All learning and thinking is embedded in emotional states. A confident, responsible, reflective, innovative and engaged learner reasons and makes decisions on the basis of positive personal values and an understanding of their emotions. This was one of the reasons why we introduced the Cambridge learner attributes – to support the development of five highly desirable habits that help students to lead fulfilled and successful lives. ■

## Supporting teachers

The *Developing the Cambridge Learner Attributes* guide provides an additional resource for school leaders and teachers. While it deals with student wellbeing in general throughout, chapter 5 focuses on this subject and was written by Nicola Morgan. Download the complete guide, or specific chapters, at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/teaching-and-learning/cambridge-learner-attributes](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/teaching-and-learning/cambridge-learner-attributes)



## In this section

- 8 How can schools improve the mental health of young people? We talk to the experts
- 11 Three principals from different parts of the world tell us how they promote student wellbeing
- 14 Understanding the adolescent brain: Nicola Morgan looks at the research

# Valuing, promoting and protecting mental health in schools



An individual teacher will often be the first to notice that a student has a mental health difficulty

How can our schools help improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people? **Cambridge International Head of Teaching & Learning, Paul Ellis**, asks the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools



According to the World Health Organization (WHO), one in four of us will be affected by a mental disorder at some point in our life. And, as the WHO states, “There is no health without mental health.” So what can we do in our schools to value, promote and protect healthy minds for both students and teachers?

The Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools was established at Leeds Beckett University in 2017 to address the need for substantial research and support in the area of children’s mental health issues. It is the first centre of its kind in the UK, taking the lead from similar organisations in North America.

Working with the social enterprise Minds Ahead ([www.mindsahead.org.uk](http://www.mindsahead.org.uk)), the centre is developing an evidence base to enable schools to



take action. It provides a series of professional development opportunities for teachers, school leaders, parents and advisers to understand more about school mental health, ranging from workshops to part-time, project-based Master’s programmes.

Professor Jonathan Glazzard (pictured above), who leads the centre’s research, underlines that “a standardised approach is neither possible nor desirable”. He welcomes a variety of methods according to context. “Schools and other organisations are already undertaking a significant amount of work to improve children’s and young people’s mental health,” he says, “but myths and misconceptions remain, and many schools struggle to know where to begin.”

One of the initial challenges is the stigma attached to mental health disorders. Increased public awareness has led to less scepticism and more open conversation, but few education professionals have found the time or been able to access training to understand the issues in detail.

Jonathan says that we tend to talk in general terms about mental health, whereas we are much more specific with regard to physical health – we have the vocabulary to talk about our bodies but not about our minds, and if we have something wrong with our bodies, it is often more visible.

## Teachers’ needs

As a starting point, it is important to recognise that teachers need healthy minds too. If a teacher has unrecognised and, more importantly, unsupported mental health needs, the consequences can impact negatively on student attainment and classroom behaviour. As Jonathan notes, they may not bother to plan lessons, and may lack creativity, neglect their marking, and interact less with their colleagues and students.

Many people assume that teachers experience



## What is mental health?

In 2014, the World Health Organization defined mental health as a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. According to the WHO, one in four of us will be affected by a mental disorder at some point in our lives<sup>1</sup>. The WHO states: "There is no health without mental health."

<sup>1</sup>[www.who.int/mental\\_health/action\\_plan\\_2013/mhap\\_brochure.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/mental_health/action_plan_2013/mhap_brochure.pdf?ua=1)



It is important for schools to seek advice from clinicians, but more useful to empower teachers



“A standardised approach is neither possible nor desirable”

stress as a result of excessive workload, but Jonathan says it is more often caused by “the culture of surveillance” in schools. Teachers are now being observed more regularly or without warning; their marking is being much more closely scrutinised; they are having to justify each child’s grades; and they are set in competition against their colleagues. “Teachers need more control and autonomy over their jobs,” says Jonathan. “They should be encouraged by school leaders to operate as a supportive, collegiate unit.”

### Students’ needs

An individual teacher is often the first to recognise that one of their students has a mental health difficulty, thanks to their deep knowledge of the child and any unexpected change in behaviour. Scores in tests may take a dip; homework might not be done properly or not handed in at all; a child may react disproportionately to something that is said by the teacher or a class colleague. There is also a clear link between exclusion or absence and

difficulties with mental health.

If the signs are there, the next step is to consult other teachers and “join the dots to get the full picture”, as Jonathan says, and eventually seek help. The underlying problem may not lie with the student, however. “The trigger for student anxiety could be something adverse in the school community or environment, or even due to a school’s politics and its obsession with grades. Don’t always seek a deficit in the child.”

### Whole-school initiatives

A collaborative approach to mental health in schools will be vital in supporting students. Some UK schools have written a policy to help build awareness and increase stakeholders’ familiarity with the issues. Others focus initially on training, with external support from professionals.

Dean Johnstone, founder and CEO of Minds Ahead, cautions that clinical specialists do not always understand the nuances of an educational context. It is important for schools to seek advice

from clinicians, but more useful to empower teachers who are taking on responsibility for their school’s approach to mental health.

“Teachers struggle with medical jargon, and schools find it hard to work out where mental health fits,” he says. “Is it something for the Special Educational Needs department, or for the senior manager responsible for child safeguarding?”

To recognise schools in the UK that ensure the wellbeing

Schools should openly discuss mental health issues



### MYTHS, MISCONCEPTIONS AND MISAPPREHENSIONS

- “It’s just the child behaving badly”
- “The child will grow out of it”
- “Kids have it easy these days”
- “It’s just another label to hide behind”
- “It’s bad parenting”
- “It’s not my job”
- “We don’t have the resources”
- “I don’t have time”
- “I’ll only make things worse”
- “I don’t have the training”

of pupils and staff, Leeds Beckett University and Minds Ahead have established the Carnegie Centre of Excellence School Mental Health Award. Quality marks such as this can help raise the profile of mental health and wellbeing in schools. The programme is supported by professional development opportunities, and an encouragement to talk to other schools.

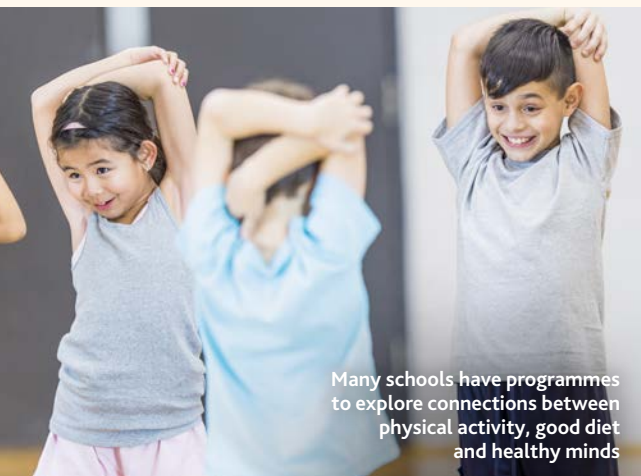
**Valuing, promoting and protecting**

All children, whether they are showing signs of struggling or not, need mental health support. All teachers need training to identify issues, both in their students and in themselves, and to feel confident about what they are saying and doing.

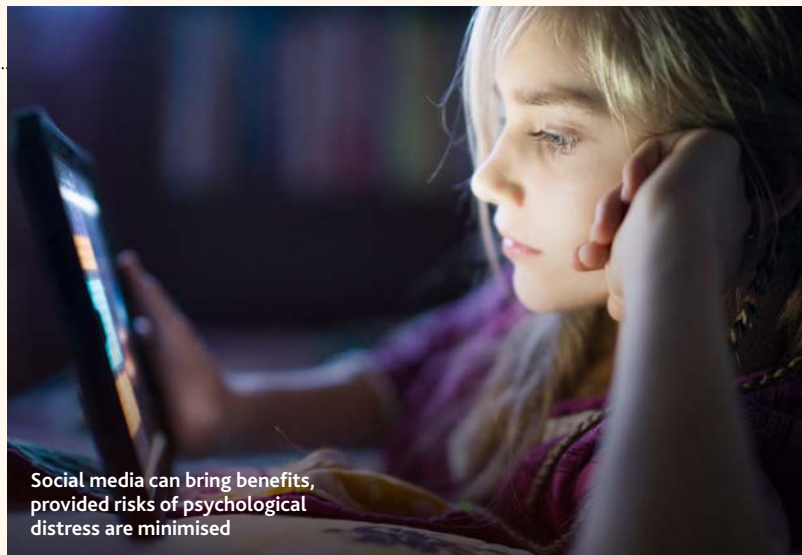
Jonathan Glazzard and Dean Johnstone believe that a policy of valuing, promoting and protecting mental health must be driven by school leadership teams, championed in the school community (both by teachers and students), and monitored rigorously for impact.

Schools should provide progressive support from an early age to help students develop emotional literacy and resilience throughout their school life. As advocated by charities such as Place 2Be ([www.place2be.org.uk](http://www.place2be.org.uk)), schools should also provide dedicated, calming spaces for both staff and students. Many schools have also established programmes to explore the connections between physical activity, good diet and healthy minds.

Above all, schools should promote open and supportive conversations around mental health issues. With a shared vision, and by listening to those who are suffering from mental disorders, school communities can make a substantial difference to the positive health of us all. ■



Many schools have programmes to explore connections between physical activity, good diet and healthy minds



Social media can bring benefits, provided risks of psychological distress are minimised

## Social media and mental health

“Social media presents children and young people with exciting opportunities that were once not possible,” says Jonathan Glazzard, principal researcher at the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools in Leeds, UK. “It is a source of information and support, and it provides a social space in which one’s anonymity can be preserved. It permits multi-modal forms of communication and is therefore inclusive of those who struggle to communicate verbally or in social situations.”

“However, while everyone has a right to benefit from being online, there is a darker side to social media use that warrants serious consideration.”

Jonathan explores some of the research in this area in a recent blog written for Cambridge International. It includes issues such as excessive internet use, sleep deprivation, poor-quality sleep, online bullying, self-harm and low self-esteem issues.

“Social media is here to stay. Its multiple platforms can bring social, educational and psychological benefits to young people, provided that the risks of psychological distress are minimised,” says Jonathan.

Parents and digital media companies also have a role to play, he concludes, but “all teachers, including those in training, need to be better prepared to educate young people about social media.”

Read Jonathan Glazzard’s full blog at: <http://blog.cambridgeinternational.org/social-media-and-mental-health>

For more on the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools visit [www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/carnegie-school-of-education/carnegie-centre-of-excellence-for-mental-health-in-schools](http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/carnegie-school-of-education/carnegie-centre-of-excellence-for-mental-health-in-schools)



*Professor Jonathan Glazzard will speak at the Cambridge Schools Conference, UK, in September 2018.*

# Wellbeing *around* the world

We talked to three principals in different parts of the world about what student wellbeing means for their school



## LEARNING HOW TO TAKE CONTROL

Like many US schools, Fairdale High in Kentucky has its own trained guidance counsellors as well as a dedicated teacher who acts as their advisor. But, explains Principal Brandy Corbin, there are two other initiatives that the school believes are key to students' wellbeing.

"Firstly, we have an intervention and enrichment hour built into our master schedule," says Brandy, who has been on the staff at Fairdale High for seven years. "Every day, students can go to their teachers to get help with coursework. That lowers stress levels, because if they don't understand something, they can get a new way to look at it. Or if they miss school because of illness, they are able to catch up."

"The students have the opportunity to meet with their teachers and get help when they feel they need it. They won't necessarily ask questions in class for a multitude of reasons – they feel embarrassed or they don't want to look like they need help – but when they have that one-on-one time every day, it's a much safer environment."

The second key initiative is Fairdale High's

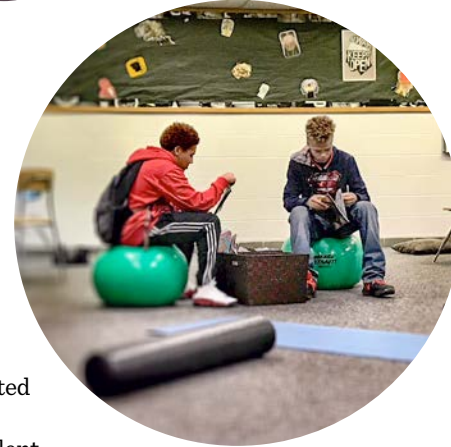
mindfulness programme. The school provides a space run by a mindfulness coordinator educated in holistic health and 13 trained student ambassadors who are available for peer interactions. Students learn mindfulness techniques such as meditation, or just take time out to talk or rest.

"A lot of our students live in a constant state of traumatic stress – they come from high-poverty single-parent households or are being raised by grandparents and live in stressful neighbourhoods. We also have a lot of children who believe that life just happens to them – they don't understand that they can be proactive instead of always reacting to certain situations."

"Students can request to go to the space at any time if they are feeling overwhelmed. They spend 15 to 20 minutes there and then go back to their learning. We also have whole-class sessions where they learn test-taking strategies such as breathing techniques for anxiety."

"Whether it's academic or life problems, students learn how to take control. In return, we see them more focused on their academics and understanding the importance of education in their lives."

Around 225 of Fairdale High's students are on the Cambridge programme, taking Cambridge IGCSE and AICE. All Cambridge students from 2016 and 2017 graduated 'college ready' and moved on successfully to post-secondary institutions. 🇯🇵



"Whether it's academic or life problems, students learn how to take control"



Taking time out can help reduce stress levels



Pathashaala's large environment-friendly campus helps connect students to nature



### A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

“At Pathashaala, we have attempted to evolve the rhythm of daily life with learning processes that blend freedom, responsibility, respect, listening, and contact with land, nature and neighbourhood,” says Mr G Gautama, Director-Secretary of the Palar Centre For Learning, an educational centre of Krishnamurti Foundation India. “Pathashaala’s choice of 150 as a community size, emphasises relatedness over rules and regulations.”

“There are many contexts at this small residential school in which teachers (called educator-learners – ELs), students (called learner-educators – LEs) and non-teaching staff share common community tasks.”

Headmaster Mr Ramesh adds: “Fear, rewards and punishments are not used as tools for motivating students. The culture of conversations, supported by circular tables in the classrooms and dining hall, provides rich ground for students to talk, to discuss, to resolve conflicts or make proposals. Open House and weekly Culture Class are spaces to air problems and discuss solutions



“I can talk to any educator-learner when I have a problem. Even if I feel angry, I don't stay angry for long”

Nandan, class 6

related to common spaces.”

Mrs Sumitra M Gautama coordinates Academics and Outreach. She says: “Academic excellence is achieved through active learning frames evoking questioning and initiative. The learning relationship, combined with a strong gradient of individual and collaborative work, shifts the focus from projected performance indicators to what each learner can do.”

The school uses multi-age groupings of a maximum of 25 children, except in exam classes, for both academic and non-academic learning.

“The school is built around a strong sense of community, where many tasks are shared,” says Mrs Uma Iyer, an EL who coordinates Admin and Finance. “The large, environment-friendly campus helps connect students to nature through observation, shared activities and lifestyle choices such as solar lighting and dry composting toilets. We are self sufficient in organic rice and also grow millet, pulses and vegetables for our kitchen.”

Mrs Sumitra adds: “Pathashaala’s Programme For Autonomous Learning for Grades XI and XII positions the most senior students as culture bearers. There are not just subjects for exams, but avenues for initiative and community-oriented work. This adds a meaningful dimension to our Outreach programme with neighbouring villages.”

Mr Gautama says: “Senior classes examine contemporary issues using multiple narratives. This approach of enhancing understanding by listening to differing, sometimes opposing, perspectives, finds echo in the Cambridge Global Perspectives programme Pathashaala offers.”

He adds: “The flat land allows us to see the setting sun and rising full moon simultaneously. And the stars at night, not dulled by the low solar street lights we use, provide a valuable perspective on the larger scheme of things.”





Head teacher Howard Thomas with students and (inset) holding the school's VbE Quality Mark award



## CALM, FRIENDLY AND PURPOSEFUL LEARNING

In March 2017, The British School of Córdoba was visited by Dr Neil Hawkes, founder of the Values-based Education (VbE) Quality Mark, awarded to schools that seek to promote an educational philosophy based on valuing self and others. The school became the first school in Spain – and one of the first international schools – to receive the award.

“The award was not an aim in itself,” says Howard Thomas, who has been the school’s head teacher for 13 years. “It’s a means of gaining an objective assessment of the success of the school’s values programme, which in Secondary we call ‘character education’. However, the journey started long before, with an emerging whole-school philosophy that is encapsulated by the phrase ‘happy children learn best.’”

The school has 570 students aged from 3 to 18. “Inherent in the idea of happiness is the need to protect and grow the self-esteem of all the children,” says Howard. “That was the foundation of our desire to equip all children with a personal toolkit of values to enable them to know and understand themselves, to become reflective learners and to develop personal ethics.

“Values-based Education is not a bolt-on extra, but an integral part of all we do. We highlight particular values each month, which become the focus for assemblies and figure in lessons across the curriculum. This ensures that all students are fully involved in the values programme. It becomes a positive force for children by giving them a values vocabulary, which they use to frame their understanding of the world. Equally, they acquire ethical and social references to be able to make the best choices in their daily



Students who are at ease are able to enjoy their learning



“Values-based Education is not a bolt-on extra, but an integral part of all we do”

behaviour both inside and outside the classroom.

“We bring our parents on board through regular communication so that values education continues in the home. We’ve had special weeks, such as Wellbeing Week, and the values curriculum is included in the learning objectives for excursions.

“The result of VbE has been the creation of a calm, friendly and purposeful learning environment. Students who are at ease with themselves and their community are able to enjoy their learning and take advantage of the opportunities the curriculum offers them.

“This approach fits perfectly with the Cambridge learner attributes because the students have become confident, reflective learners. They are responsible, they are respectful of people and ideas, and they have the confidence and courage to face challenges.”

The school offers Cambridge IGCSEs and Cambridge International AS & A Levels. “For us, examination success has become an outcome of self-motivation and self-knowledge, and not tension and uncertainty,” says Howard. 📖



# Inside the mind of a teenager



Nicola Morgan, author and expert on teenage brains and mental health, answers some key questions about the adolescent brain

## How did you become interested in research into the adolescent brain?

I'd been studying brain development ever since training as a dyslexia specialist, but I was writing fiction for teenagers when I came across a piece of research – it was a study of brain development during childhood and adolescence by neuroscientist Dr Jay Giedd from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in the US.

## What did the research find?

It showed that at very early stages of adolescence, there is a substantial increase in the connections (synapses) in several areas of the brain. It also showed that this is followed over the next few years by a pruning of those connections.

This was a really interesting set of physical developments that surprised scientists. It had previously been thought that, because the human brain is effectively full adult size by the age of six or seven, it was just a matter of everything getting connected up inside. That kind of synaptic growth had only been seen before in much younger

children around the age of two, sometimes called 'the terrible twos'.

Giedd's findings were based on a study of 145 young people and used functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) scanners, which are non-invasive. Previously, brain research had carried some kind of risk so it was only conducted on people who were already unwell. The research has since been replicated and built on by others.

## What does Giedd's research tell us?

When we know that the prefrontal cortex – which has a whole load of functions to do with controlling our impulses, making decisions and predicting future consequences – is the last one to develop (and not until well into the 20s), we can at the very least suggest that teenagers have a greater excuse than adults when emotions dominate decision-making. We also know that, statistically, teenagers are the biggest risk-taking age. All this research triggered me to write my first guide for teenagers, *Blame My Brain*.

## Does this affect all teenagers in the same way?

Many teenagers succeed in working tremendously hard, are dynamic and high-achieving and don't fall into these negative stereotypes.

From about age 15 or 16 onwards, young people

On average, girls tend to reach each stage of development before boys



“Teenagers are in a maelstrom of change and change can be exciting but it is also stressful”



develop the ability to make connections between things. Instead of just receiving information, trying to learn it and repeat it, they will be studying something in history and connect it to something happening in the modern world, for instance. Or they read about someone having an experience in a piece of fiction and connect that to something in their own life, which means a much better ability to have empathetic responses.

On average, girls tend to reach each stage of development before boys. So at 15 or 16, it is highly likely that girls may have reached the stage of being able to make these connections but boys may not.

### What part can stress play in the life of a teenager?

Teenagers are in a maelstrom of change. Change can be exciting but it is also stressful, especially when it's change you haven't chosen and can't control. That's what most change is for teenagers – their bodies, brains and friends are changing.

Then you've got the stress that can come from friendships going wrong. Also, as adults, we tend not to put ourselves in a situation where we understand less than people around us but teenagers have to do that all the time, which is inherently mind-occupying and potentially



“When you've got a load of other things on your mind, it can be really hard to focus”



Nicola spreads her knowledge to parents and teachers to help them educate teenagers in managing their own stress

stressful. That can all have a really big impact on their mental health and occupy their brain's bandwidth. We have finite brain bandwidth so when you've got a load of other things on your mind, your ability to function is impaired and it can be really hard to focus on the thing you are meant to be focusing on – such as the teacher's voice or something you are reading.

## Nicola Morgan



Nicola Morgan's teenage wellbeing titles include *Blame My Brain*, *The Teenage Guide to Stress* and *The Teenage Guide to Friends*. They speak directly to teenagers, using straightforward language to explain the science behind the teenage brain and adolescent behaviours. They are also widely read by teachers and used on teacher training courses around the world. New titles this year

are *Positively Teenage* and *The Teenage Guide to Life Online*: “It's really important that we acknowledge the phenomenal positives of the internet and social media – the ability to learn new things and communicate with different people and have a much more open mind. But our screens are distracting and there is a risk of not being able to filter out the negative stuff. The ability to switch off our screens is going to be a really important skill for all of us over the coming years.”

Nicola's teaching materials for schools include Brain Sticks – USBs packed with 100+ classroom activities on wellbeing – and a downloadable pdf *Stress Well for Schools*. Visit [www.nicolamorgan.com](http://www.nicolamorgan.com)



### What can teachers learn from this?

My top tips for teachers would be firstly to understand stress themselves and secondly to help show their students how to manage their own stress. If you understand something about the biological, psychological and physiological things that make you behave and function in the way you do, you are a big step along the way to being better in control of it. Teenagers can get to a state of learned helplessness – however, teachers can help to give young people the idea that they can control more about their wellbeing than they might think.

### What do you believe can help teenagers feel better and function better?

Eat the right things, get the best sleep you can, have the right amount of physical exercise and take daily relaxation. Relaxation is especially important for students who are perfectionists because they can think they should only relax when they deserve it – when they've finished the work, when they've achieved the great results. However, if they never feel they have got to that point, they will push themselves too hard. 🍷

# Top tips for teacher wellbeing

Teaching can be uniquely rewarding and demanding, no matter how much experience you have. Deliberately making time in each day when you can take a moment to care for yourself can be essential to your wellbeing. Try these mindfulness tips



## 1. NAME IT, OWN IT, ACCEPT IT

Feeling tense, nervous, confused, foggy, out of sorts, irritable or angry? The single most important thing you can do is to inwardly acknowledge and accept this feeling – it may not be how you want to be right now, but it is already here. So try to name it, own it and accept it before moving on. Take comfort in knowing that feelings change, and that this will pass.

## 2. TAKE A BREATH!

Use time between classes, walking through doorways, or climbing stairs as opportunities to take a conscious breath. Notice the in-breath, notice the out-breath. Say to yourself “in”, “out”, as the breath enters and leaves the body. Just try to stay with the breath cycle as it is for a few moments. By taking this moment to really be with your breath you may start to feel a little calmer.

## 3. A TO-DO LIST NEVER ENDS

Learn to accept that your to-do list will never be finished. Doing so may encourage you to prioritise tasks and also to be more deliberate about doing something for yourself during each day.

## 4. TAKE A MINDFUL MOMENT EVERY MORNING

For example, if you normally drink tea or coffee in the morning, consider using this time to simply sit and use your senses, enjoying the experience of drinking rather than reading the paper or planning your day while you drink.

## 5. REDUCE SOCIAL MEDIA OVERLOAD

Try to leave emails and social media for specific periods during the day rather than engaging in a continual, compulsive checking activity.

## 6. USE MINDFUL REMINDERS TO HELP YOU THROUGHOUT THE DAY

The bell between classes, an alert on your phone, a sticky-note on your computer or even a small picture can be reminders to slow down and take a breath.



## 7. BE KIND TO YOURSELF

Kindness is a key element of mindfulness, so practise being kind to yourself and don't beat yourself up if things don't work out as you hoped or planned. We all tend to notice the negative more readily than the positive, so learn to reflect on the successes of your day as well as the things that could be improved.

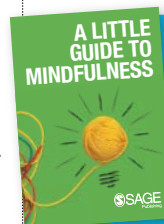


## 8. CULTIVATE A MINDFULNESS ROUTINE



Mindful awareness activities may be simple, but they are not necessarily easy to incorporate into your day.

Setting intentions and renewing them daily can help in establishing new routines.



These tips were taken from Kevin Hawkins' *A Little Guide to Mindfulness*, published by SAGE – visit [uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/a-little-guide-to-mindfulness](http://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/a-little-guide-to-mindfulness)

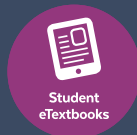
Kevin is a former school head who provides mindfulness training for schools. His latest book is *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School*. Visit [www.mindwell-education.com](http://www.mindwell-education.com)



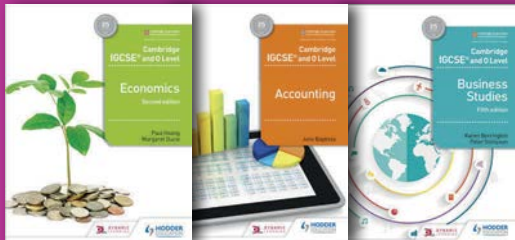


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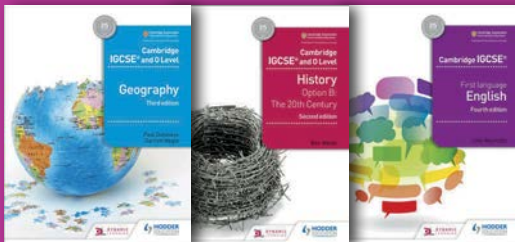
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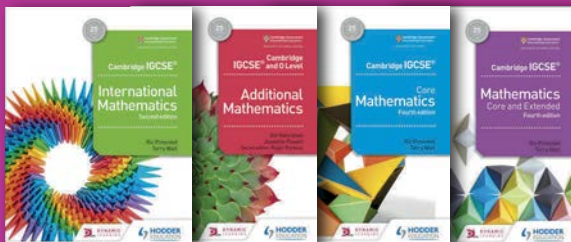
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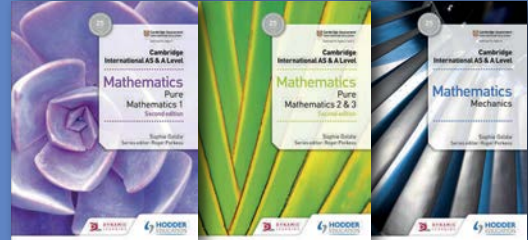
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[www.hoddereducation.com/CambridgeAssessmentInternationalEducation1](http://www.hoddereducation.com/CambridgeAssessmentInternationalEducation1)





# A view from... Sudan



**Peter Round**, Principal of Khartoum International Community School, spoke to **Khanyi Mamba**, Cambridge International's Marketing Communications Manager, Sub-Saharan Africa



**Open-air learning**  
The outdoors is valued by the curriculum at KICS

**KM: How long has Khartoum International Community School (KICS) been a Cambridge school?**

PR: We have run the Cambridge IGCSE programme for more than 10 years. Apart from core subjects, we offer courses including Arabic, French, Spanish, Computing, Art, Drama and PE, and we are considering introducing Design Technology. All students take at least two sciences, and up to 10 courses.

**What skills do the courses help your students develop?**

They offer a rigorous and recognised platform for further study, especially in developing a wide knowledge base, and skills such as research, thinking, reasoning and collaboration.

**What's unique about your school?**

We are the only school in Sudan that is truly international in its

student body, teachers, curriculum, facilities, resources and outlook. The curriculum values academics, service, the arts and the outdoors. We believe the diversity of programmes we offer is unique in Sudan – they develop the whole child to become a responsible and positive global citizen.

**Are there any challenges that are particular to teaching in Sudan?**

Well, it can get quite hot outside! This means that many activities get condensed into the 'winter' months which gives us a very busy feel, and in the hotter time of year we make more use of the gym and pool. Although power cuts are common in the city, our generators at the school mean we are only without electricity for a minute or two. School supplies can take a while to get through customs, but get here eventually.

**How does the Cambridge regional team support you?**

The support for our exams officer and teachers is excellent – they often take professional development opportunities and there are a number of resources we utilise.

**What makes you proudest of your school?**

The students, who enjoy being at school and want to learn; and the teachers, who maximise learning and keep us safe. I feel lucky to be at such a well-designed place, and one with a clear sense of purpose. The school is making a significant difference not only to its students, but also to the country: we already have returning alumni setting up businesses here in Khartoum, and working in Europe and the US after graduating. This makes our mission a growing reality. 🇸🇩



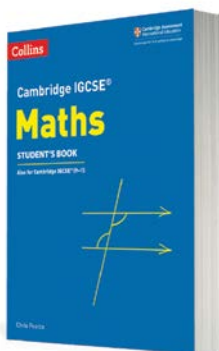
Would you like to be featured in this article? Talk to your local Cambridge representative, then email us at [outlook@cambridgeinternational.org](mailto:outlook@cambridgeinternational.org)

**Peter Round** has been at Khartoum International Community School since August 2017 and has loved the atmosphere of the school and Sudan from day one. This is his first position as a head of school. In his spare time, he has been learning to play golf on an 18-hole course just 10 minutes from the school. He finds Sudan fascinating – highlights include visiting the country's pyramids, which are older than Egypt's. He also enjoys reading.

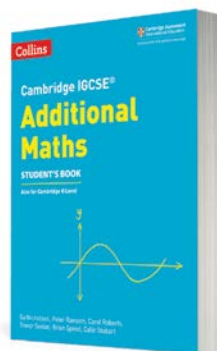
## New endorsed resources to help students build and consolidate their key mathematical skills and knowledge

Collins is proud to be working closely with Cambridge Assessment International Education to provide endorsed resources for Maths at Cambridge IGCSE® and Cambridge International AS & A Level.

### Cambridge IGCSE® Maths



### Cambridge IGCSE® Additional Maths



These resources are endorsed by Cambridge Assessment International Education to support the full syllabuses for examination from 2020.

### Cambridge International AS & A Level Mathematics

### Cambridge International AS & A Level Further Mathematics



We are working with Cambridge Assessment International Education to gain endorsement of these titles.

# A *practical* approach to science

In England, science practicals no longer count towards students' final A Level grades. We explain why Cambridge International continues to value the assessment of practical work

**U**niversities want to see evidence that a student has undertaken practical work during their science studies at school. It shows they can test out theories, and have developed skills such as observation and research. That is why practicals form part of the assessment at Cambridge International A Level sciences. However, in England, since 2017 practical work in a laboratory does not count towards final A Level grades in biology, chemistry and physics. Instead it is reported separately as an endorsement on the student's certificate.

## Debate on the value of practicals

This change has triggered debate about the value and assessment of practical science. Researchers at Cambridge International have carried out a review of the research available to understand the opposing views.

The change was motivated in part by concerns about difficulties in

assessing coursework and validating results across exam boards. However, our review also revealed concerns that the lack of assessment of science practicals is downgrading the importance of practical skills, and risks students not gaining enough hands-on science experience before university.

A report published before the introduction of the new UK A Levels by SCORE<sup>1</sup> (the partnership of The Association for Science Education, Institute of Physics, Royal Society, Royal Society of Biology and Royal Society of Chemistry) wrote that practical work in science "is intrinsic to a full learning experience for students; it is not an additional component of teaching and learning".

## Cambridge International's view

We share the view that practical science is vital to the development of the scientists of the future, so we place strong emphasis on advanced practical skills in our Cambridge International AS & A Level Biology, Chemistry and Physics qualifications. These skills continue to be assessed

## APPLYING TO UK UNIVERSITIES?

The UCAS form includes a drop-down box for applicants to include their separate science practical grade when applying to UK universities. The options are: (1) Pass; (2) Not classified (i.e. applicant did not pass or their grade was not given); (3) Not relevant. Cambridge International AS & A Level applicants should select 'Not relevant'.

in a timetabled practical examination in timed conditions. If more students are entered for a practical test than can be accommodated at one time, schools may divide candidates into two or more groups taking the exam on the same day; or we can offer schools two different but equivalent practical papers, which can be taken on different days.

As Cambridge students develop their practical skills, they can be sure their qualification will give them every chance of getting into the university of their choice and prepare them well for a science career. ■

## Resources to support science practicals

We support your teaching of our science practicals in Cambridge International A Levels with a full range of resources. We have recently published Resource Plus materials for Cambridge International AS & A Levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. These resources help teachers with the key topic areas in syllabuses that can be difficult to teach and learn. The new resources include advice about teaching practical skills. Visit

[www.cambridgeinternational.org/resourceplus](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/resourceplus)



<sup>1</sup><http://www.score-education.org/media/14286/score%20principles%20for%20the%20assessment%20of%20practical%20work%202014.pdf>



# Support for schools

The latest resources and developments  
to support you and your learners



GETTY IMAGES



## Getting the most out of schemes of work

We provide schemes of work to support teaching and lesson planning. They follow the syllabus for the subject and can improve both your teaching and your learners' potential. You can choose which teaching approach to take, so that it is right for your school and the ability of your learners. Suggestions for independent study, formative assessment and extension activities are highlighted throughout the schemes.

The latest schemes of work to be uploaded on Teacher Support ([www.cambridgeinternational.org/support](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/support)) are mostly for our newly revised syllabuses for 2020 (first teaching September 2018). We recommend you use the Word version, which you can adapt and then include your own relevant resources.

## New endorsed resources for 2020

We have a record number of new endorsed textbooks this year to support our new and revised syllabuses for first examination in 2020. Working with our Core Team Publishers – Cambridge University Press, Collins and Hodder Education – we have put more than 140 books through our endorsement process to ensure full and appropriate coverage of our syllabuses. Most of these resources were published in March 2018 in good time to support first teaching.

It has been a particularly busy year for maths, with more than 50 new endorsed resources for Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International AS & A Level Mathematics and Further Mathematics – a mixture of textbooks, practice books, teacher resources and digital materials.

We are delighted that Collins has published a textbook for our new Cambridge International AS & A Level Digital Media & Design syllabus to help teachers deliver this exciting new qualification. We've also got endorsed resources on some syllabuses for the very first time – both Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International AS & A Level Art & Design from Collins, and Cambridge IGCSE First and Second Language Chinese from Cambridge University Press. And all three of our Core Team Publishers have produced textbooks for Cambridge International AS & A Level Further Maths, offering teachers a choice of approaches to suit the needs of their own particular learners.

You can find details of all these new endorsed resources on the 'Support material' tab of the relevant syllabus pages of our website. Visit [www.cambridgeinternational.org](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org)

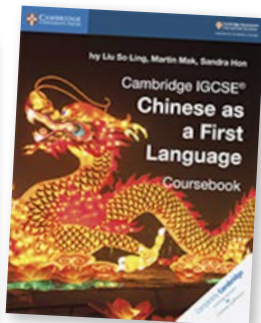
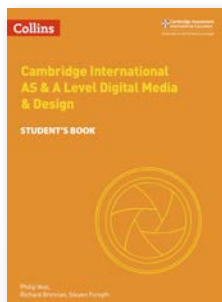
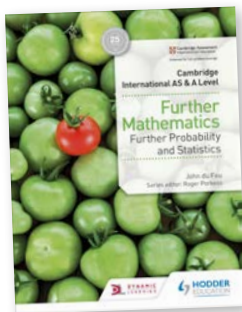


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## New discussion forums for teachers

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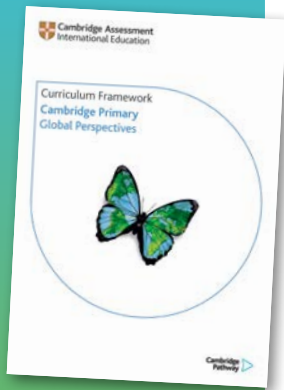
We have extended support for teachers of Urdu and Food & Nutrition by introducing new discussion forums for these subjects on Teacher Support. Teachers can be assured of a warm welcome and support from moderators, who are keen to read all posts and engage in lively conversation.



## Teaching resources for Primary and Lower Secondary Global Perspectives

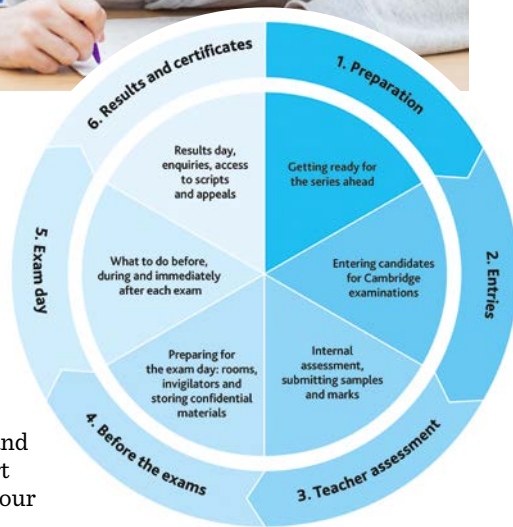
We have produced Curriculum Frameworks and Teacher Guides to support our new Cambridge Primary and Cambridge Lower Secondary Global Perspectives programmes. Curriculum Frameworks give the learning objectives and information on the assessment, and Teacher Guides contain advice on how to plan and teach the course.

Registered Cambridge schools can download these materials at <https://primary.cambridgeinternational.org> and <https://lowersecondary.cambridgeinternational.org>



## Update on resources for exams officers

Exams officers play a vital role in the administration of our exams, so we are constantly working to update and improve our support materials. Here are our latest updates:



### Extra guidance documents

Our extra guidance documents have been updated to make sure that they are helpful and effective for exams officers who need extra information. This includes our 'Handling confidential materials' poster and other guidance documents for running exams with access arrangements. New resources include a 'Packing and despatching scripts' poster. All documents are on our website, on our new 'Administrative forms and extra guidance documents' page. Visit:

[www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficersguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficersguide)

### New self-study modules

To keep the 'Getting to Know the Cambridge Exams Cycle' course as useful as possible, there are two new modules. The first is 'Making carry-forward entries' for when candidates want to retake exams. The second is focused on 'Making entries for the Cambridge AICE Diploma' so exams officers know exactly how to make entries for this group award. Access the course from our Professional Development Learning Community: [www.cambridgeinternational.org/learningarea](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/learningarea)

### New webinar topics

Exams officers ask some great questions in webinars, and these help us to improve our resources. We've decided to add two new webinar topics to our current offer. Now available is our 'How to administer Cambridge Primary Checkpoint and Cambridge Lower Secondary Checkpoint' webinar before each Cambridge Checkpoint series. This is for centres that offer our Cambridge Checkpoint qualifications. Also available is 'How to prepare for the series ahead', so exams officers can feel confident ahead of every new series. All dates and registration instructions will be published in the Cambridge Exams Officer eNewsletter.

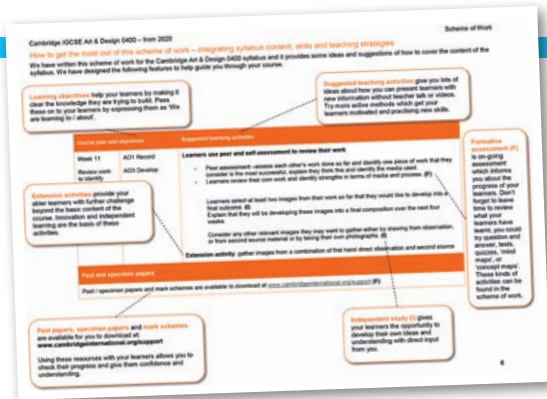
## New progression tests for young learners

Our progression tests help teachers assess the progress of their students in the classroom. We have recently produced new versions of Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary Progression Tests in English, maths and science. You can find the new tests at <https://primary.cambridgeinternational.org> and <https://lowersecondary.cambridgeinternational.org>



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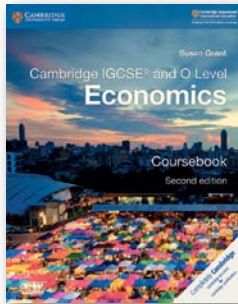


## New support for Cambridge IGCSE Art & Design

We have created a range of new and updated resources for Cambridge IGCSE Art & Design (0400). The scheme of work provides guidance to help you plan your course and prepare your learners for the exam. The updated and redesigned Example Candidate Responses, Guidance from the Principal Examiner and Learner Guide should help both you and your learners to understand the assessment criteria and standards. We've also published a new Course Handbook on Teacher Support and endorsed a textbook from Collins (see column right).

## Endorsed resources

We work with publishers to endorse resources to support your teaching. Our subject experts thoroughly evaluate each of these titles to make sure that they are highly appropriate for Cambridge programmes.



**CAMBRIDGE IGCSE AND O LEVEL ECONOMICS RESOURCE:** Coursebook, Elevate Enhanced Edition, Teacher's Resource, Workbook, Revision Guide  
**PUBLISHED BY:** Cambridge University Press

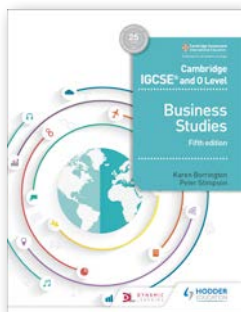
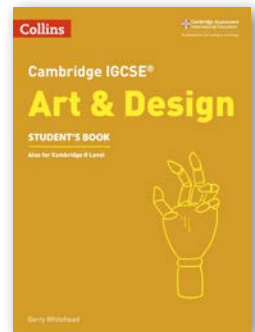
After extensive research into the needs of teachers and learners, this best-selling series has been improved further to include a range of new features and content to help students accelerate their learning. This series is particularly supportive of students who are new to Economics – helping them understand new economic theory, terminology and principles.

**Visit:** [cambridge.org/education/economics](http://cambridge.org/education/economics)  
**Email:** [educs@cambridge.org](mailto:educs@cambridge.org)

**COLLINS CAMBRIDGE IGCSE ART & DESIGN RESOURCE:** Student's Book and Teacher's Guide  
**PUBLISHED BY:** Collins

Support your students throughout their course and as they prepare for assessment with this new resource. The course offers detailed information on the key disciplines of Art and Design and builds confidence in practical skills and creative expression.

**Visit:** [www.collins.co.uk/cambridge](http://www.collins.co.uk/cambridge)  
**Email:** [collins.international@harpercollins.co.uk](mailto:collins.international@harpercollins.co.uk)



**CAMBRIDGE IGCSE AND O LEVEL BUSINESS STUDIES RESOURCE:** Student's Book, Student eTextbook, Whiteboard eTextbook, Workbook, Online Teacher's Guide.  
**PUBLISHED BY:** Hodder Education

Discover business theory beyond the classroom by exploring real-world international businesses through case studies, with a Student's Book providing in-depth coverage of the latest Cambridge IGCSE and O Level Business Studies syllabuses (0450/0986/7115).

**Visit:** [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/cambridgeigcsebusiness](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/cambridgeigcsebusiness)  
**Email:** [international.sales@hoddereducation.co.uk](mailto:international.sales@hoddereducation.co.uk)



## Resource Plus new subjects



Our Resource Plus teaching and learning materials are designed to help you deliver challenging concepts and skills in some of our most popular syllabuses. Last year we launched Resource Plus for Cambridge IGCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. We have recently added Resource Plus for Cambridge International A Levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, and Cambridge IGCSEs in Literature in English and Mathematics.

Find out more about Resource Plus at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/resourceplus](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/resourceplus)



# Training *and* events

News and resources to support your continued professional learning

## Online training for teachers

**O**nline learning provides a safe space where teachers can exchange ideas with their peers from around the world. On our online courses, teachers work closely with each other to further their knowledge and share experiences – all under the guidance of an experienced Cambridge tutor. We offer online professional development at Introductory, Extension and Enrichment levels.

At the end of all online courses, teachers produce a personal action plan to help them put into practice what they have learned.

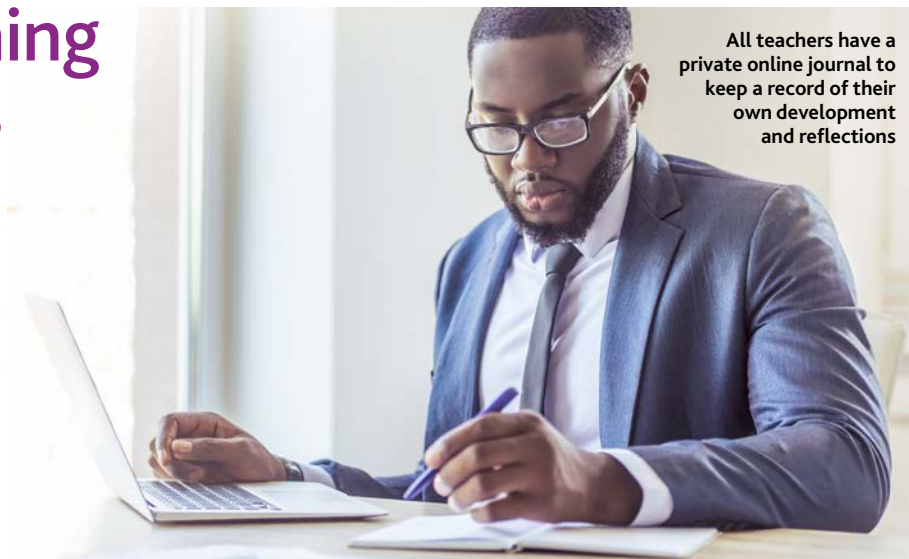
### Collaboration and reflection

Collaboration and reflection are key to effective learning. Under the guidance of an experienced Cambridge tutor, teachers work together to develop their understanding.

Throughout all courses, there are weekly activities that:

- encourage teachers to think about the course content in their own context – how it relates to their personal experience and how it can be applied or adapted to make it relevant to their learners
- allow teachers time to work together to share teaching ideas and activities, and to create new ones.

All teachers have a private online journal where they can keep a record of their own development and reflections. There are also weekly discussions during which



All teachers have a private online journal to keep a record of their own development and reflections

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teachers can raise questions on any aspect of the course and their teaching.

### The course tutor

All course tutors are subject experts and teachers. Participants can ask them any questions about the subject, or more general questions about teaching. The tutor guides each participant through their own learning, monitoring discussions, answering key questions, and making sure each participant has a clear understanding of the topic.

The tutor also keeps track of each teacher's progress throughout the course, and offers feedback and advice if teachers need to develop their work further.

### Advantages of online learning

Our online courses give teachers the opportunity to study at a time and in a location where they feel most comfortable. Teachers are able to study at their own pace, take breaks when they need them, and decide how much to learn in one sitting. The extended nature of the



“There are weekly discussions during which teachers can raise questions on any aspect of the course and their teaching”

courses (from five to seven weeks) allows teachers plenty of time for reflection and assimilation. Teachers can take their time to review what they have learned and its relevance to their existing knowledge and circumstances.

Teachers can ask questions about any aspect of the course and their teaching whenever they want, and the tutor has time to provide a measured and complete response.

Teachers can also revisit a conversation at any time to retrieve information or develop increased understanding. ■

## Find training

We offer a large programme of online and face-to-face professional development. Our syllabus-specific workshops cover a wide range of subjects at all levels, and our Enrichment Workshops further support the development of teachers and leaders. For more information on our upcoming training or to book a course, visit our training calendar at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/events](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/events)

## An online tutor's view



**Victoria Renfro**  
Online learning tutor  
for Cambridge  
International

### *Victoria Renfro says:*

In many ways the joys of online professional development training are much the same as face-to-face training, for both tutor and participant. Both provide quality training designed to have a lasting impact, along with the opportunity to work with some wonderful teaching colleagues from around the world. The Cambridge Moodle platform is easy to navigate and there is plenty of support available, both from the course tutor and the Cambridge online team. Course participants are challenged to develop their teaching practice and are given support to help them to apply their learning.

While we don't meet in person, I feel that I get to know participants better through the online course than through a two-day in-person event. As well as reviewing tasks and activities, I read participants' learning journals and engage in forum conversations. The online format gives more time for participants to consider issues and formulate questions, and more time for me to give carefully considered responses. By the end of the course it is incredibly rewarding to see the community that has developed – colleagues from as far apart as Namibia and China coming together to form a respectful learning community, sharing ideas and supporting each other.

### *What participants say:*

“It was really fruitful for us to get to know the ideas of other teachers all around the world.”

“We all had the opportunity to share our knowledge and also our questions about a number of educational topics.”

## The data expert

*Shannon Malone* (below left), who took up the new position of *Cambridge International data scientist, North America* last September, tells *Cambridge Outlook* why data is so important



**D**ata is playing an increasingly important role in the way we make decisions and improvements. I like to think about my job as democratising data – making it accessible and transparent. It's about equipping people, within Cambridge International as well as in our schools, with information that helps them do their job in a more informed way.

People are not only interested in what just happened but also in comparing trends over time – whether they be results, entries, the courses schools are offering, how interested students are in different courses or where students are applying to university.

I take a holistic approach to our data – for instance, looking at whether teachers are accessing Teacher Support, what sort of resources they are using, and how that is reflected in results.

We are also now looking at ways to make it easier for students across the US to send scores from their coursework and their Cambridge

AICE Diplomas to universities they are applying to.

And we are looking at helping teachers and heads of schools understand what they may not be most effective at teaching, and where they might want to focus their

resources in terms of professional development.

I love that my job is a perfect balance of left brain and right brain. It's very analytical, but also

very creative. I have to figure out how to display information in ways that make sense to people who don't necessarily have a strong maths orientation – who want to see a graph or chart and know immediately what it is saying. It's also necessary to have the sort of conversational and interviewing skills that allow me to dig down to the heart of what people really need.

Cambridge International is an incredible organisation, particularly in terms of how it tries to ensure that what we offer is equitable and accessible to all students. The longer I am here, the prouder I feel to be a part of that. ■



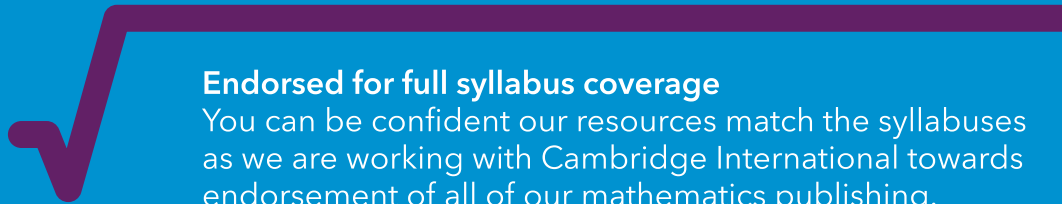
“People are not only interested in what just happened but also in comparing trends over time”



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Michael meets learners at the Amity Global School in India in April 2016



**Working with schools** At the Melvin Jones Lions Academy in Kenya in February 2018 – Michael's first official visit to the country



**International bilingual education**  
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# Making a mark *around the world*



**Presence in China** Michael plays Confucius in a ceremony to mark the start of the academic year at Xiwai International School in Shanghai in September 2017



**Meeting of minds** Attending the Pakistan Schools Conference in 2016

As Michael O'Sullivan prepares to leave his post as Cambridge International's Chief Executive, we celebrate his tenure with a look at some of his visits to Cambridge schools and events across the globe



**Celebrating success**  
Presenting an award at the Outstanding Cambridge Learner Awards ceremony in Nepal in 2016



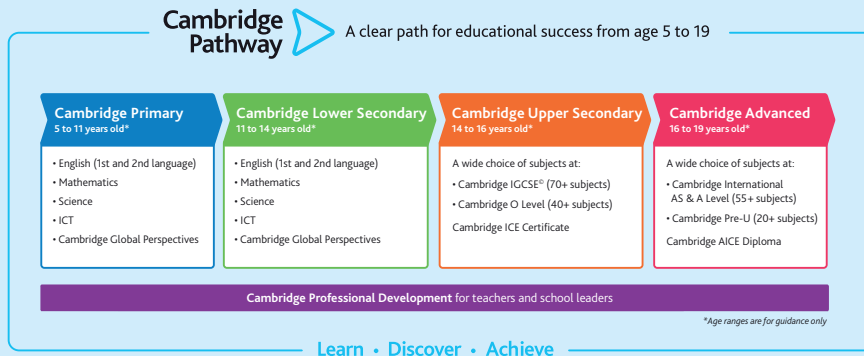
**Supporting the Cambridge school community**  
With delegates at the Cambridge Schools Conference in Dubai in December 2017



**Global influence in education reform**  
Michael is received by the president of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan, in October 2017



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