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Foreword



In 2017 our organisation changed its name to Cambridge Assessment International Education. Before that we were known for many years as Cambridge International Examinations. Older readers may hold qualifications of ours issued under the imprimatur of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, the name our parent gave us when it established us in the 1850s.

We chose our new name for two reasons. It signals that we are part of the Cambridge Assessment Group, a department of the University of Cambridge. The Group includes, in addition to ourselves, Cambridge Assessment English – the world's most respected provider of English language assessment, and OCR – a leading UK awarding body, and a shared research capability in education and assessment, which is one of our most prized assets as part of a great research university.

The other feature of our new name is closely related to the purpose of this updated guide. In replacing the word 'examinations' with 'education', we wanted to emphasise that our relationship with schools continues to evolve as one of partnership in the improvement of education and learning. Qualifications based on fair and reliable assessments, which both stimulate learning and command wide international recognition, are a crucial component of school education, but the educational benefit of such qualifications depends on learners having the opportunity to learn well from the day they start school. Our proper concern therefore is to assist schools in every way we can to design and implement unique, well-conceived curricula which prepare students both with understanding measurable in examinations and for success in life.

Each year some 500 schools across the world join the Cambridge family, now some 10 000 schools strong and growing. For schools new to Cambridge programmes, this guide should be an indispensable manual for school leaders and staff, but it is intended not only for them. As I have visited numerous Cambridge schools in recent years, I have noticed that good schools are far from

complacent, but rather are self-critical and ambitious for improvement, driven by the aspiration that every learner should achieve to their full potential. For such dynamic, experienced Cambridge schools, this guide should prove no less valuable than for new Cambridge schools.

Implementing the Curriculum with Cambridge works for schools, I hope, on two levels. On the one hand, it is a map and guide to the wide range of resources – subject syllabuses, learner and teacher support – from which schools can draw in building and delivering a curriculum appropriate to their learners' needs. On another level, it sets out and explains the principles which we believe should underpin an effective school curriculum – principles based not on ideology but on our own research and that of others – and discusses how these principles can be applied in practice.

I want to thank Dr Tristian Stobie, our Director of Education, and the many expert colleagues who have supported him in authoring this guide. We are fortunate to employ many staff with years of experience as school leaders and classroom teachers. They are nourished professionally by the frequent interactions with educators in Cambridge schools, and national leaders in education in every part of the world, which their work affords them. Many thousands of conversations within this wide community have contributed to the ideas and insights shared in this guide. I hope you will find it useful, and wish your school every success.

Michael O'Sullivan

Chief Executive, Cambridge Assessment International Education

Introduction

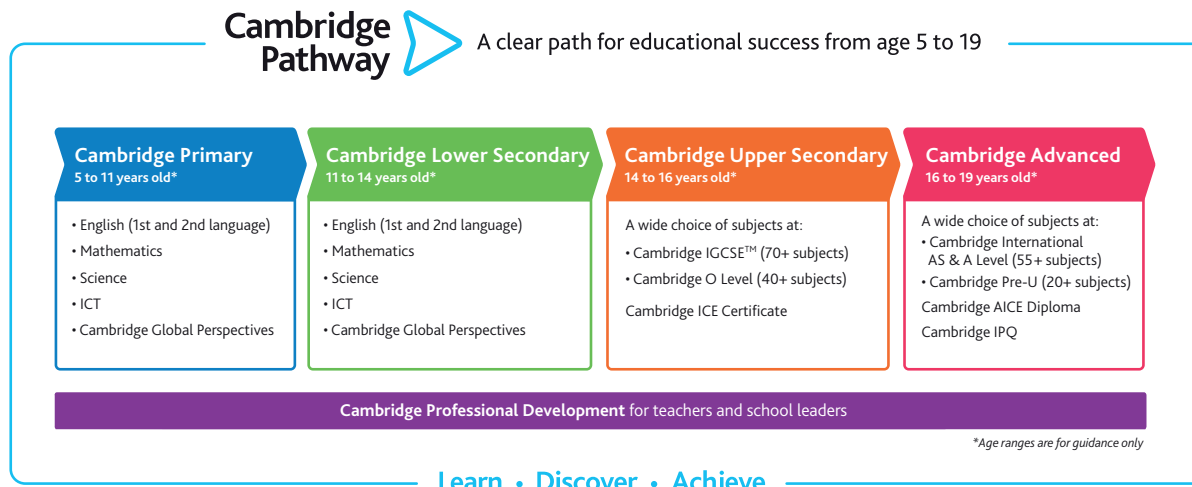
This guide will help school principals, school leaders, and others responsible for the educational programme in a school to design, develop, implement and evaluate the curriculum where Cambridge programmes and qualifications are followed.

Schools require well-designed and well-supported curricula to achieve their educational vision and aims. These aims usually include academic excellence, fulfilling the potential of every learner and nurturing the competencies learners need to succeed in higher education, the world of work and to lead fulfilled lives.

The guide focuses on the curriculum as a whole. It:

- identifies fundamental principles that we believe schools need to engage with while they design, implement and evaluate their curriculum
- considers practices that support these principles
- explains our programmes and the support we offer in detail
- highlights where to find more specific information.

Schools are responsible for their own curriculum; our role at Cambridge International is to support school leaders in making informed decisions. The Cambridge Pathway provides a coherent curriculum structure made up of four stages – from Primary to Advanced. Each stage builds on the previous one in a carefully aligned instructional system. Some schools choose to adopt the whole Cambridge continuum, others choose to offer one or two stages, while many schools combine Cambridge programmes with other national and international programmes. This guide is relevant to all of these approaches.



The principles and practices outlined in this guide are based on our experience of listening to what schools want to achieve through their curriculum, and are informed by research-based best practice.

Every school is a unique community with its own identity and will be at a different stage in its evolution; some will be starting up while others will be evaluating where they are with a view to improving provision and practice. This guide is written with this fact in mind.

Curriculum, pedagogy and assessment are inherently linked. Hence, this guide focuses on curriculum within the context of the broader school policies and

practices in which it is embedded. Developing the curriculum involves building school capacity, structure and operations to support it. This guide relates to all of these facets of effective schools.

We have produced two other guides and a series of resources that complement and further develop many of the points made in this guide.

1. ● Developing your School with Cambridge
2. ● Developing the Cambridge learner attributes
3. Other resources in our ● Teaching Cambridge at your school area including education briefs and *Getting Started with guides*.