

# Cambridge online schools – a guide for parents

For most schools around the world, teaching and learning take place in traditional classrooms – but online options are becoming more popular. Sometimes, this means a blended or hybrid model including some online and some face-to-face teaching. Other providers offer a completely online approach.

## Our approach to online education

We believe that offering the Cambridge Pathway online opens more options for learners, wherever they are in the world, to access a high-quality, cost-effective international education.

Many students found during the pandemic that they preferred home-learning, and so they want to continue learning online. We want to give learners, and their parents, access to high-quality programmes and qualifications, wherever and however they choose to study.

Effective online learning is as valuable as traditional contexts. We are committed to supporting online schools to develop in line with our standards, and providing them with everything they need to deliver excellent teaching and learning to meet learners' needs. We expect online schools registered with us to offer the same high-quality teaching and learning as our physical Cambridge schools.

There are many reasons you might choose an online education for your child. They will be able to:

Access the Cambridge International curriculum even if there is no Cambridge school nearby.\*



Find support to meet their individual learning needs – smaller classes, one-on-one support from tutors and a more flexible learning experience.



Continue learning if they cannot attend school for medical or wellbeing reasons.



Study wherever they are, even if you move to another city or country.\*



Study subjects that may not be available in your local school.



\*Learners will need to sit their exams at a registered Cambridge venue.

### What is a Cambridge online school?

We work with two different types of online school:

#### Cambridge International School – registered as online

- ✓ Teaching is online.
- ✓ May offer face-to-face opportunities for extra-curricular activities.
- ✓ Students can be based anywhere in the world.
- ✓ Students sit their exams as private candidates at an approved exam venue near them.

#### Cambridge International School – also approved to offer programmes fully online

- ✓ Registered Cambridge schools with existing physical premises.
- ✓ Offers in-person, face-to-face teaching for some students, and fully online learning for others.
- ✓ Students sit their exams at the school's physical premises. Online learners must live close enough to the school for this to be possible.

Before they register with us, Cambridge online schools must go through a rigorous approval process. As part of this process, we ask schools to show that they meet our high-quality standards in areas like school management, teaching and learning, and educational values.

Our quality standards also require online schools to offer a safe and secure virtual learning environment. This means you can be confident that a Cambridge online school will offer your child the very best online learning experience.

You can make sure an online school is registered with us and approved to offer our programmes and qualifications by checking our list of approved online schools at: [www.cambridgeinternational.org/online-schools](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/online-schools). If an online school is not on this list, it is not approved to offer our programmes and qualifications.

It is important that you check this list or contact our Customer Services team to confirm the status of any online school you are interested in as some online schools may promote a connection to Cambridge that does not exist, for example, through their name, logo or information on their website. If an online school is not approved by us and claims to have a connection with us, you cannot be sure that they meet our quality registration standards.

It is easy to recognise one of our registered online schools – you will see our logo on their website and marketing materials (see logo examples below).



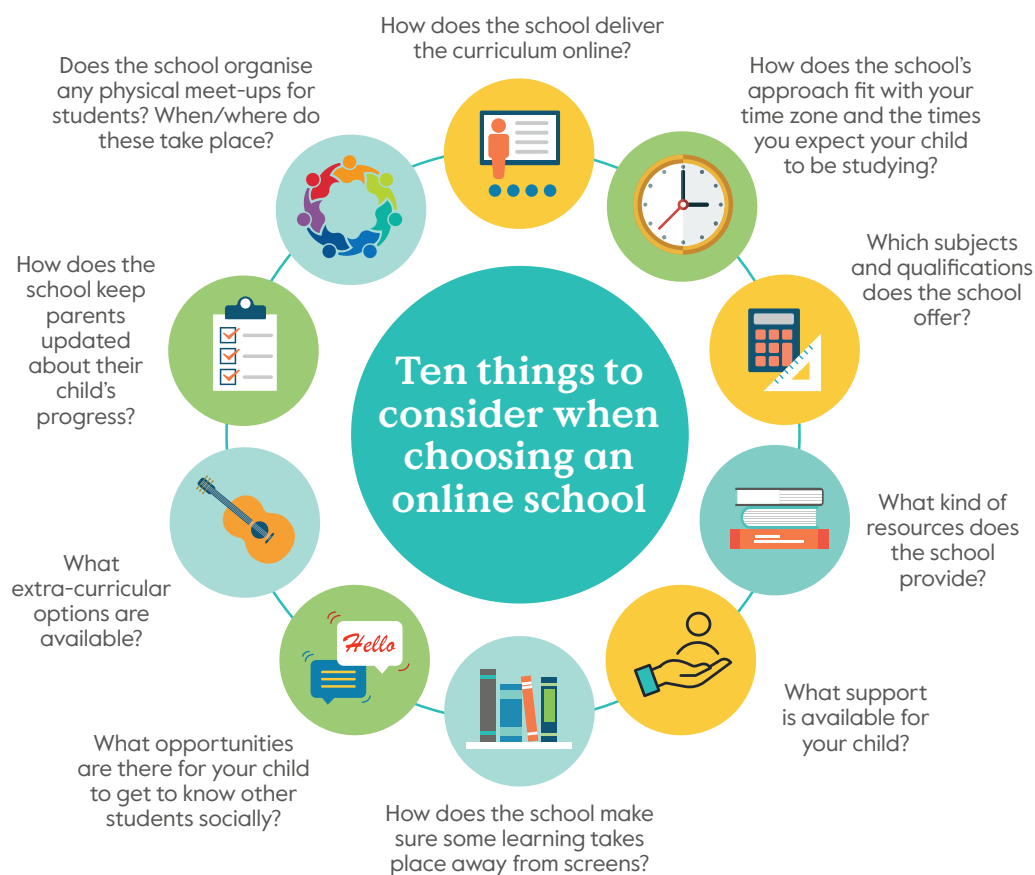
[School name here] is a registered online Cambridge International School



[School name here] is a registered Cambridge International School also approved to offer Cambridge programmes online.

### Choosing an online school for your child

There are many things to think about when you choose an online school for your child, so it is important to speak to a few different schools before you make your decision. In some ways, the process is similar to choosing a physical school – but there are factors that are unique to online schools.



### How will your child learn?

One of the most important things to consider is the teaching and learning approach the school follows. Some schools offer a 'synchronous' approach – live online lessons with homework tasks completed individually by the student.

Other schools offer an 'asynchronous' approach, where students learn individually by interacting with a range of text, videos, quizzes and other content through a learning platform. Some schools offer a mix of the two.

While each of these approaches can be effective, you should consider whether your child would be more comfortable spending time in live lessons with other students or working individually.

### Subject choices

You should check that the online school is able to offer the subjects your child wishes to study.

### Coursework subjects

Some online schools may not be able to offer coursework subjects such as Cambridge Global Perspectives™, art & design, media studies and drama. This is because these subjects are not available to private candidates and most online school students take their exams as private candidates (see section on exam venues for more information).



### Practical science

Although practical science is a challenge for online schools, many offer some experience of practical work through videos, simulations, encouraging simple experiments at home etc. Some online schools also offer in-person practical experience in a science lab during residential trips.

We offer an Alternative to Practical paper at Cambridge IGCSE™. However, this is not available at Cambridge International AS & A Level, as skills developed in practical work are assessed directly in the exam. If your child would like to study science at Cambridge International AS & A Level, it is important to discuss the approach to practical work with the online school before enrolling.

Students attending a Cambridge online school with a physical campus are not restricted in their subject choices. This is because they sit their exams at the school's physical campus and are not considered private candidates. If you would prefer this option for your child, you should look for a Cambridge International School 'also approved to offer Cambridge programmes online'.

### Exam venues

One of the most important considerations before signing up for an online school is where your child will sit their exams. All students need to sit their exams in person at a physical exam venue. For many students, this will be another registered Cambridge school.

We have the largest network of approved schools. Therefore, if you choose a Cambridge online school, you are more likely to find an exam venue that is close to where you live. If your child attends a Cambridge online school that also has a physical campus, they will sit their exams there.

We also work closely with the [British Council](#), as well as other organisations that run networks of approved exam venues.

Cambridge online schools must help their students find a suitable exam venue. Your school should give you the option to select a first-choice exam venue, and a back-up venue, when you register with them. This should mean that your child does not need to travel long distances at exam time. Please note that each school or exam venue can choose whether or not to accept private candidates, and they can change their decision at short notice.

We are supporting some of our existing physical schools that are opening their own online schools. In this case, the students registered online with the school should take their exams at the physical school campus.



Find Cambridge schools or other exam venues in your local area that accept private candidates by visiting our website: [www.cambridgeinternational.org/private-candidates](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/private-candidates)