CAMBRIDGE

Developing skills for the future with Cambridge Advanced

Abigail Barnett - Director of 3-19 Curriculum, International Education
Aman Sidhu - Curriculum Programmes Manager, International Education
Stephanie Smith - Curriculum Development Manager, International Education

22 October 2026

Cambridge Schools Conference Online, October 2026
Future-ready: preparing learners to thrive

CAMBRIDGE

Housekeeping

Developing skills for the future with Cambridge Advanced International Education

CAMBRIDGE

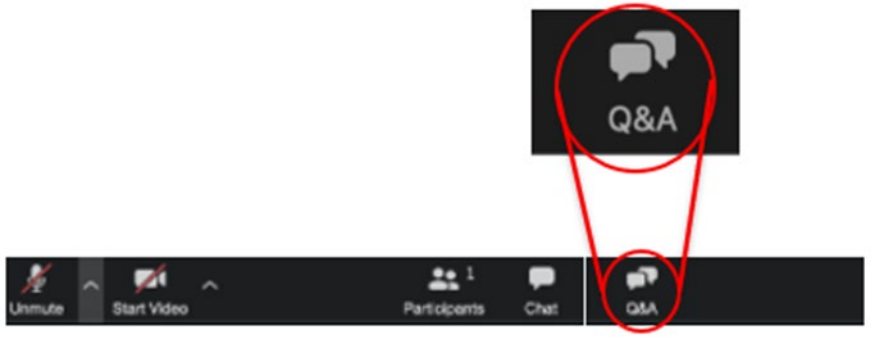
Q&A

Microphones & cameras off.

Use the Q&A Function in the toolbar to send us your questions (not the chat).

Like the questions you want answered (we will prioritise those with the most ‘likes’)

Q&A session will be at the end of the presentation





CAMBRIDGE

Agenda

- Skills and knowledge: the powerful combination at the core of our approach
- Introducing the Cambridge skills framework
- Using the framework with our Cambridge International A level questions
- In development: a new skills profile tool for learners
- Hear about our brand-new pilot with IE University

CAMBRIDGE

Skills are making the headlines again!

CAMBRIDGE

Reactions to the PISA 2025 results

PISA 2025 results: reading and math scores plummet worldwide (*Deutsche Welle*)

Global test scores hit new lows – just as AI takes hold in schools (*The74*)

Reading ability craters on international exam, both in the United States and abroad (*Education Week*)

CAMBRIDGE

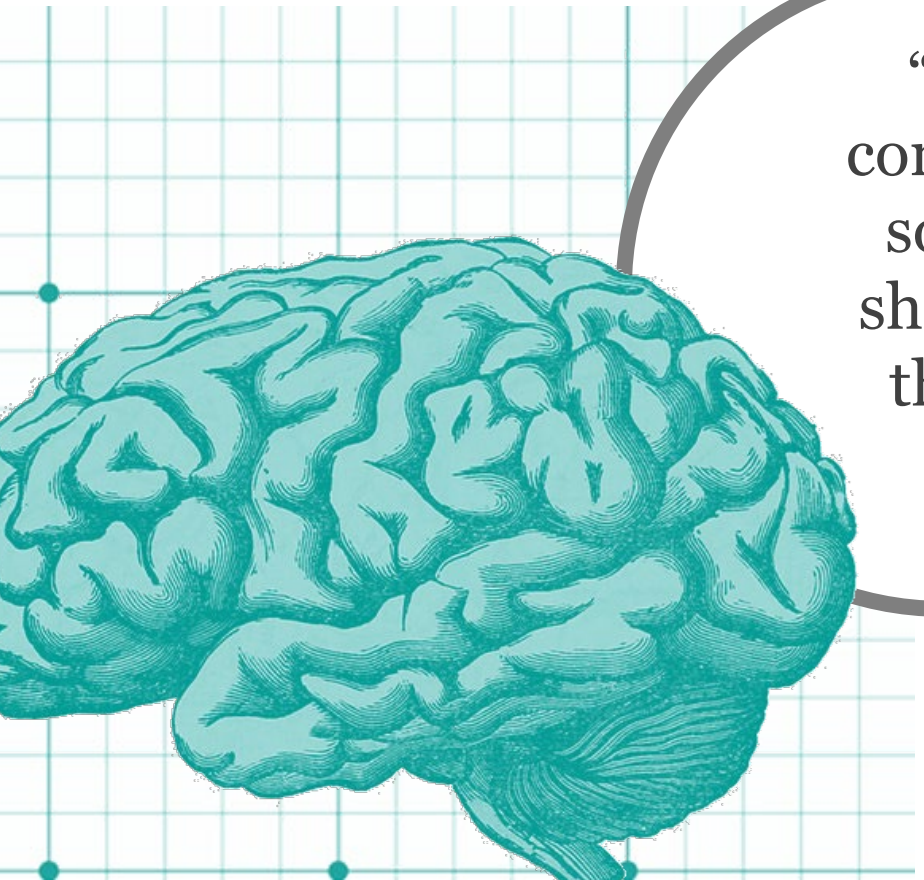
“The most concerning finding was the global drop in reading scores. In the past decade, scores dropped by the equivalent of a year and a half of learning on average across the OECD. And these declines were seen most in the types of reading skills that matter most in the age of AI, like evaluating information and reflecting critically.”

Andreas Schleicher

Director for Education and Skills at the OECD

How skills and knowledge combine in A level study

- Moving information into procedural memory involves constructing frameworks of understanding (schemata) about a subject.
- Need to be able to think like a mathematician automatically with little conscious effort.

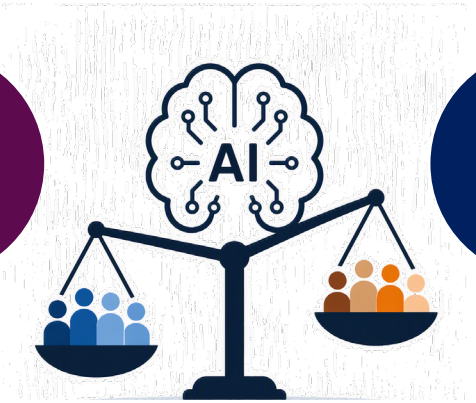


"Knowledge is something you have to actively construct. It involves you and not just someone or something providing you with information. We should think about knowledge being the medium through which you develop these sophisticated learning skills."

Professor Rose Luckin (UCL)

Knowledge underpinning skills – dealing with bias

AI reflects the biases in the data that it is trained on



Internet overrepresents white western and extremist sources

"Copilot - create an image of an academic conference"

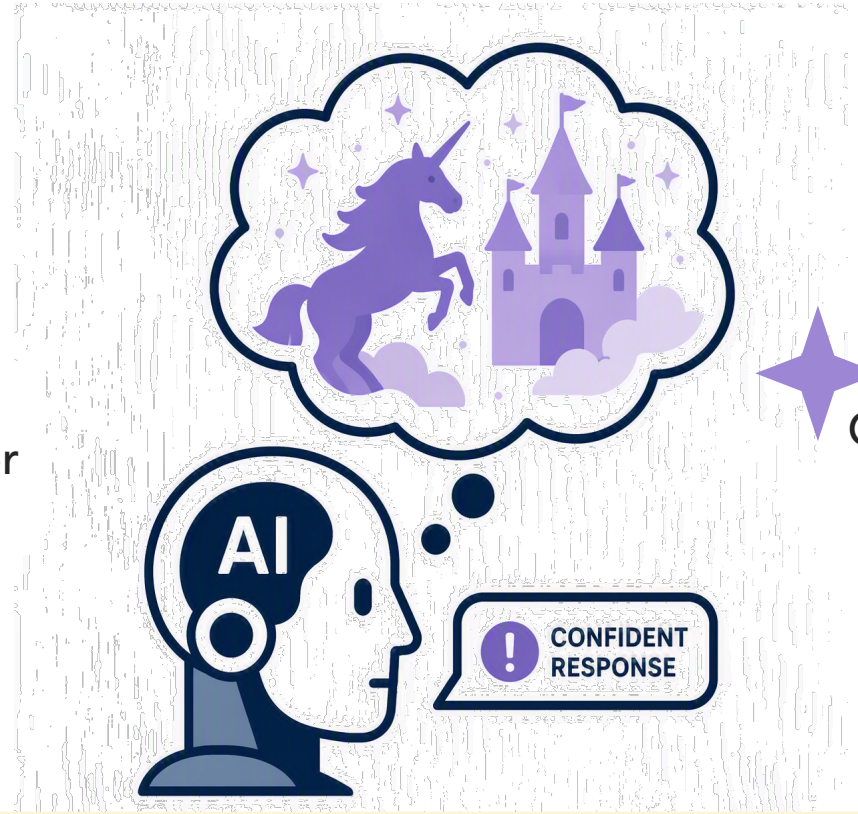


Being aware of bias and being able to spot and react to these is going to be a critical skill in the future

Students of history become skilled in detecting where, when and why sources might not be trusted. We can bring those same questioning skills to AI outputs.

Knowledge underpinning skills – spotting hallucinations

It is very hard to spot hallucinations unless you have an intuitive feeling for what the answer should be



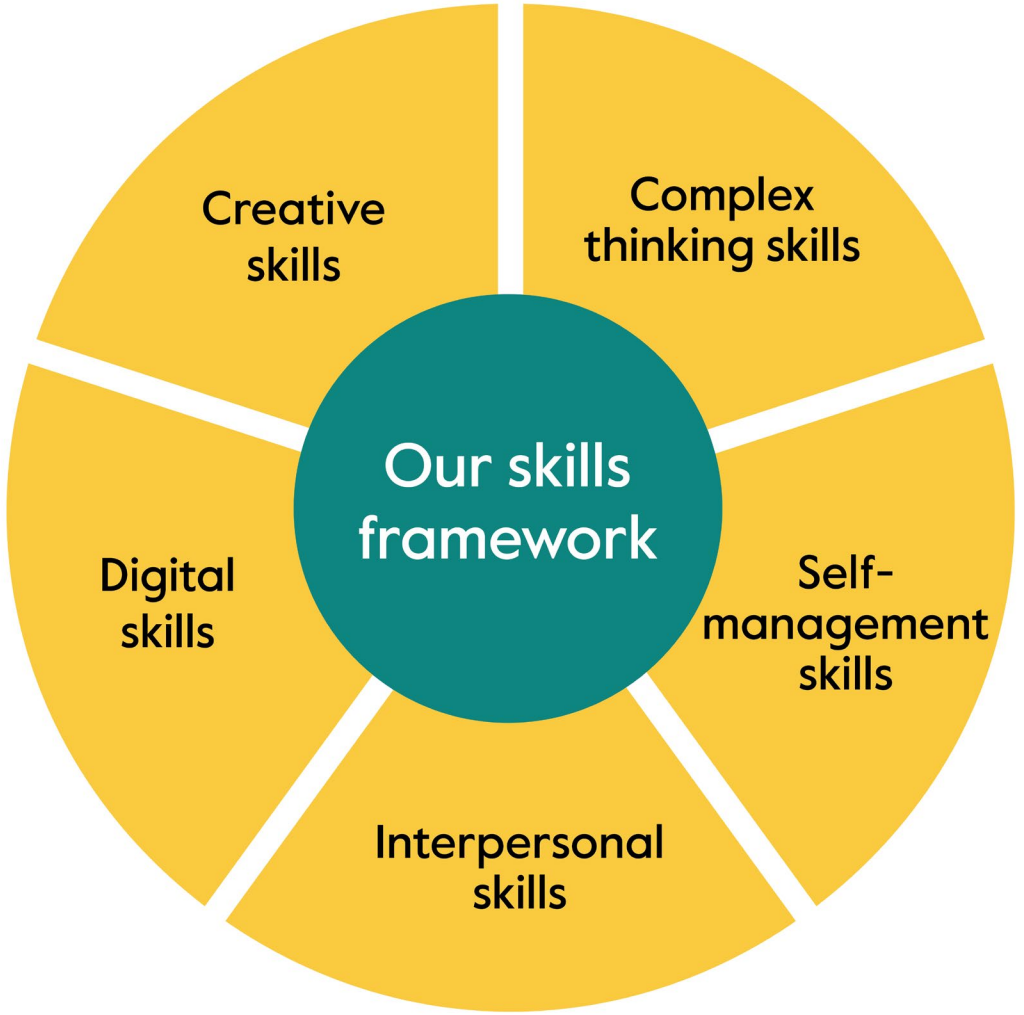
Checking every fact and conclusion is very difficult and time-consuming

Hallucinations are permanent, not a temporary defect. Formal analysis proves hallucination is mathematically inevitable: a limitation rooted in how the models function.

Introducing our new skills framework

Key strengths:

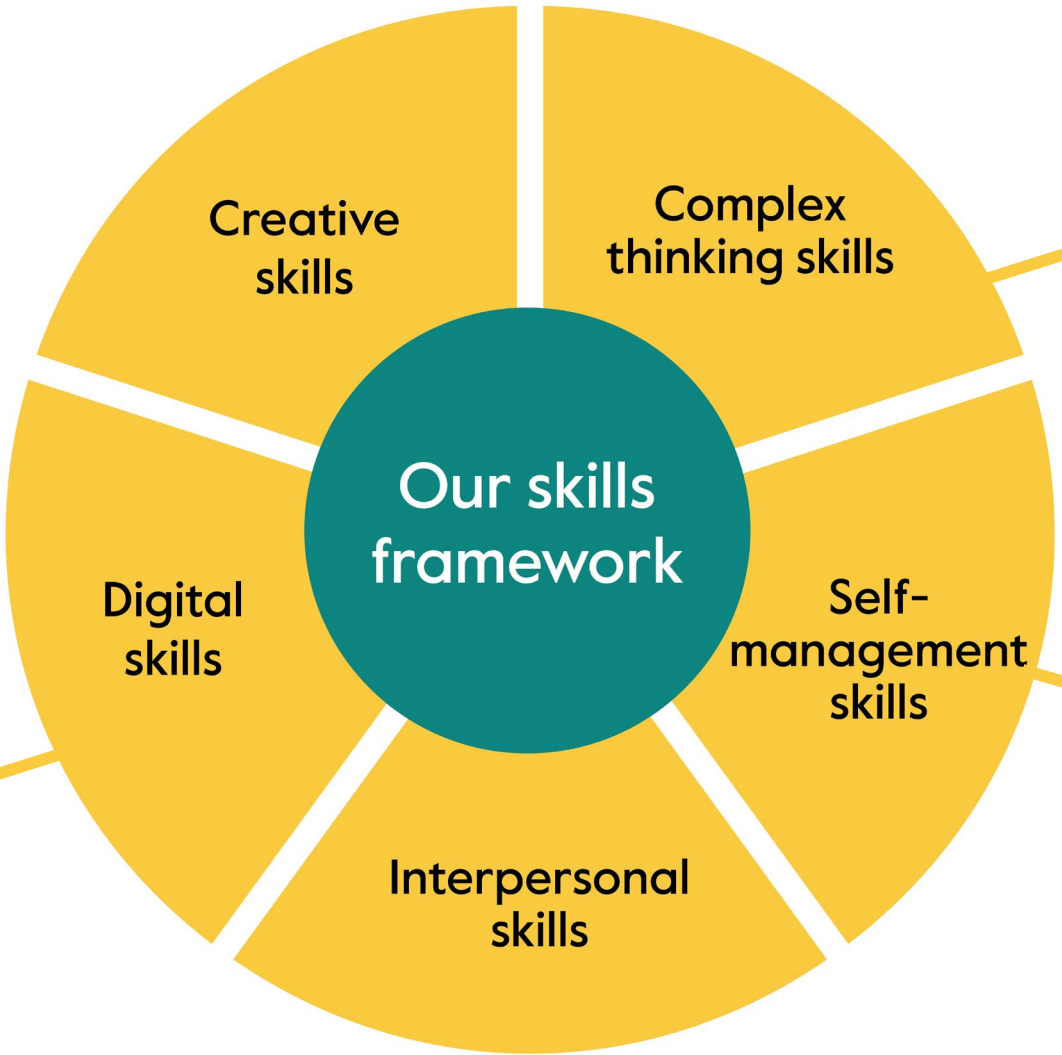
- Firmly grounded in research.
- Both simple and comprehensive – we are able to map any future-ready skills into the Cambridge skills framework.
- Relevant to all subjects and stages of the Cambridge Pathway.



CAMBRIDGE

Evaluate what psychologists have discovered about the management of stress, including a discussion of experiments. [10]

Cambridge examinations reward skills development



Systems thinking
Evaluative reasoning
Problem solving

Research

Effective revision
Metacognition (how to organise knowledge across the syllabus)

Evaluate what psychologists have discovered about the management of stress, including a discussion of experiments. [10]

Mark scheme

Level	Marks	Level descriptor
4	9–10	• Evaluation is comprehensive and the range of issues covered is highly relevant to the question. • The answer demonstrates evidence of careful planning, organisation and selection of material. • There is effective use of appropriate supporting examples which are explicitly related to the question. • Analysis (valid conclusions that effectively summarise issues and arguments) is evident throughout. • The answer demonstrates an excellent understanding of the material.

Systems thinking

Evaluative reasoning

Metacognition

Knowledge and strong schemata

CAMBRIDGE



How does the development of these skills help students succeed in answering examination questions?

Business

Evaluate whether supply chain management is the most important operational activity to the success of a manufacturer of electric cars. [12]

Geography

With reference to **one** country, assess the extent to which the management of agricultural change has been successful. [20]

CAMBRIDGE

Business



Evaluate whether supply chain management is the most important operational activity to the success of a manufacturer of electric cars. [12]

Metacognition

AO1 Knowledge and understanding 2 marks	AO2 Application 2 marks	AO3 Analysis 2 marks	AO4 Evaluation 6 marks
2 marks **Developed knowledge** of relevant key term(s) and/or factor(s) is used to answer the question.	**2 marks** **Developed application** of relevant point(s) to the business context.	**2 marks** **Developed analysis** that identifies connections between causes, impacts and/or consequences.	**5–6 marks** **Developed evaluation in context** • A developed judgement/conclusion is made in the business context. • Developed evaluative comments which balance some key arguments in the business context.

Knowledge and strong schemata

Complex thinking skills:
Systems thinking
Problem solving
Evaluative reasoning

CAMBRIDGE

Geography



With reference to **one** country, assess the extent to which the management of agricultural change has been successful. [20]

Level 4 (16–20)
Response thoroughly discusses with reference to one country, the extent to which the management of agricultural change has been successful. An effective and sustained evaluation with a sound conclusion. Response is well founded in detailed exemplar knowledge and strong conceptual understanding of the topic. Examples used are appropriate and integrated effectively into the response

Systems thinking

Knowledge and strong schemata

Evaluative reasoning

Metacognition

CAMBRIDGE

Design your own learning pathway

CAMBRIDGE

Design your own learning pathway



Cambridge Schools Conference Online, October 2026
Future-ready: preparing learners to thrive

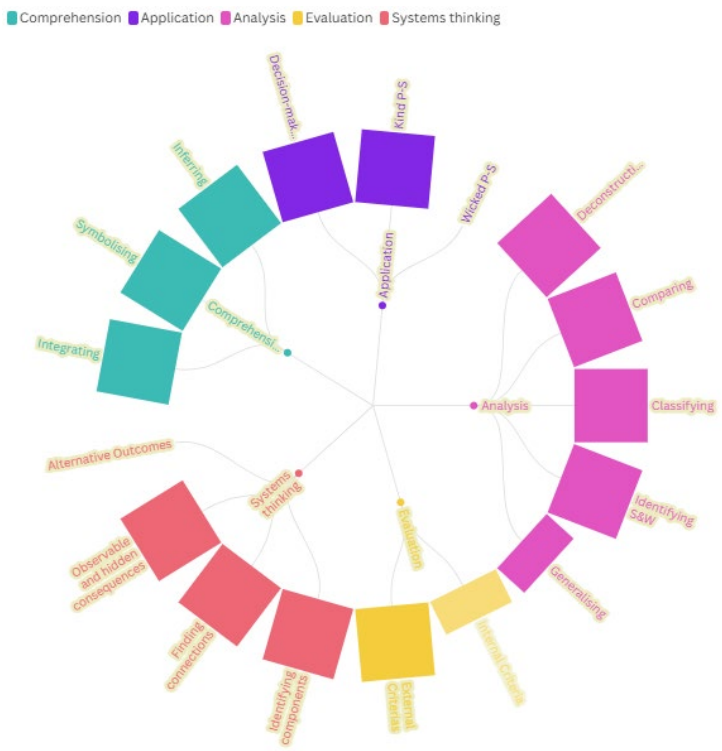
CAMBRIDGE

Single subject representations

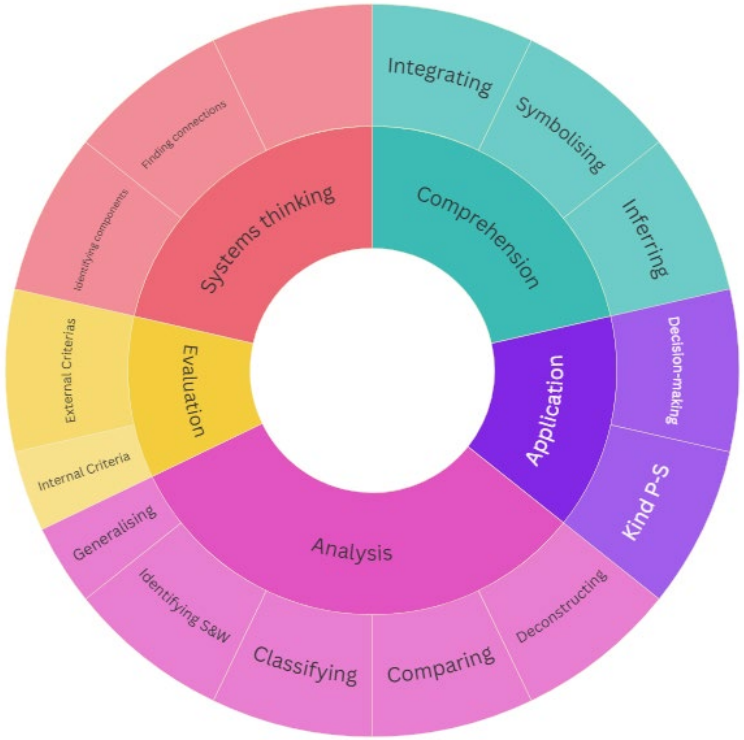
CAMBRIDGE

9708 Cambridge International A Level Economics

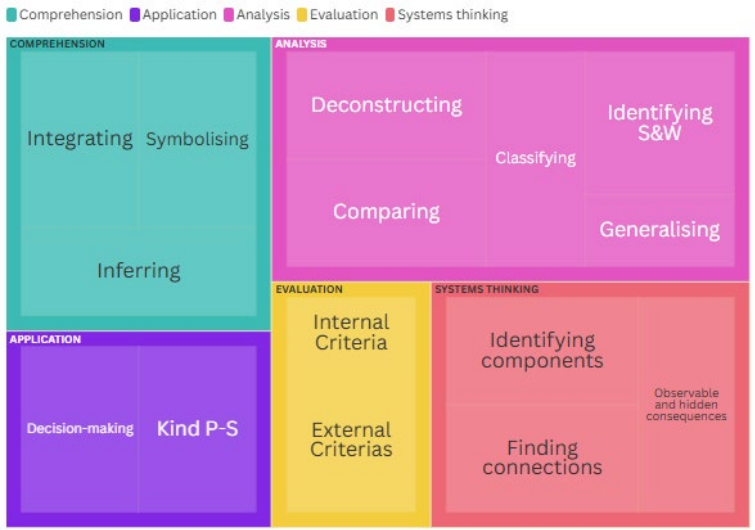
A



B



C

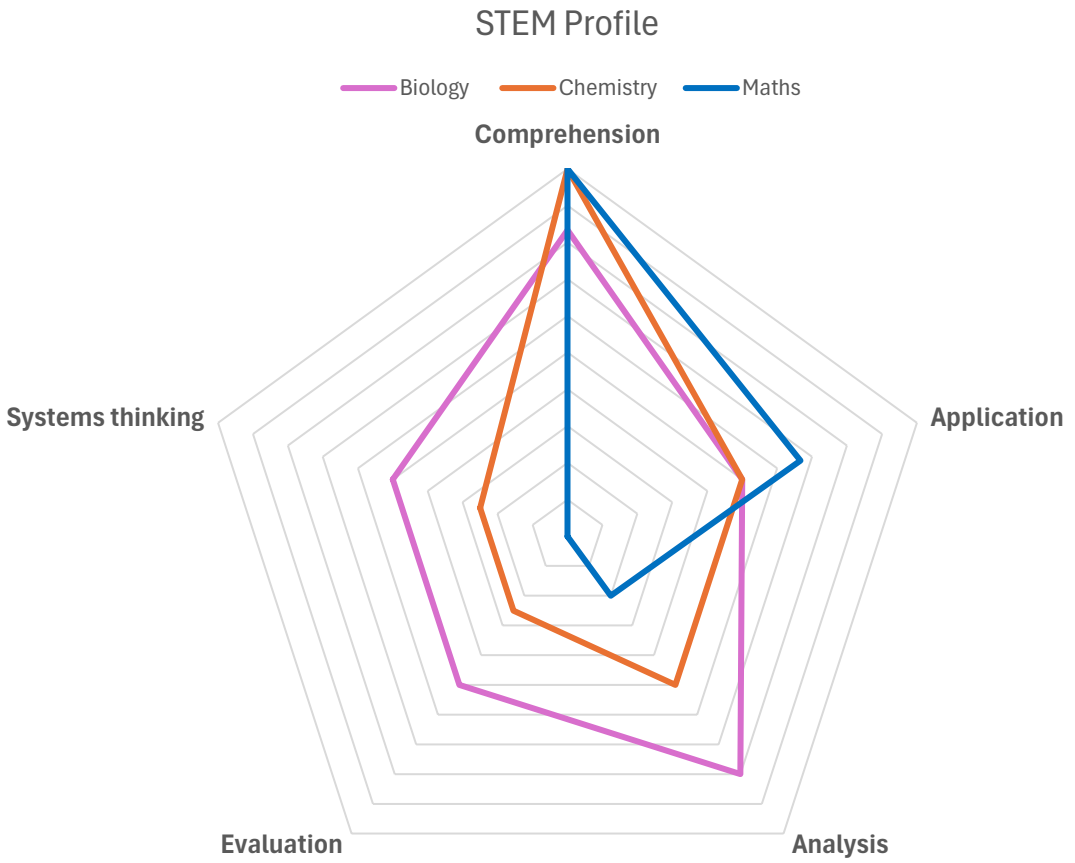


CAMBRIDGE

Subject combination representations

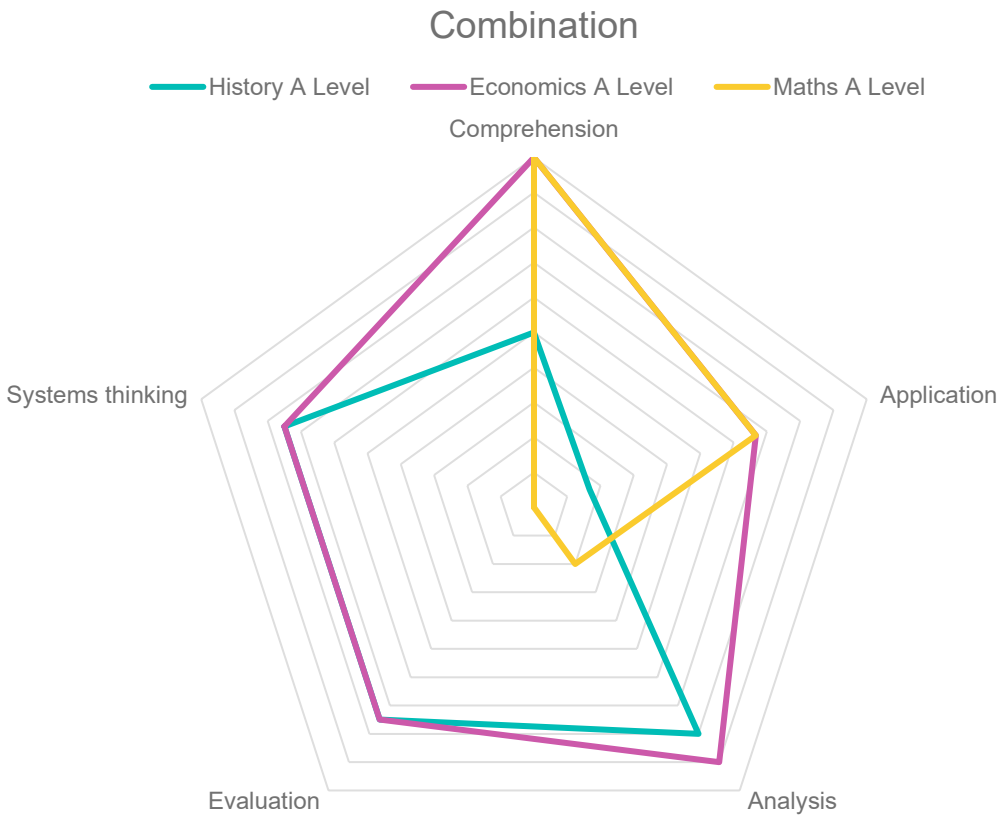
CAMBRIDGE

Exploring a STEM combination



CAMBRIDGE

Exploring a mixed combination



CAMBRIDGE

Help us shape our skills profile tool for learners

CAMBRIDGE

POLL

Do you think this skills tool will be useful for learners, parents, teachers and/or counsellors?

Yes / No

CAMBRIDGE

POLL

What additional support do you think is required to use this tool?

- Clear explanations of each skill
- Prompts for conversations between learners and their teachers, parents and counsellors
- Other

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge Advanced Skills Award Entrepreneurial Mindset

CAMBRIDGE

Why “Entrepreneurial Mindset”?

Entrepreneurship is identified as a desirable future-ready skill, equipping young people to navigate uncertainty, identify opportunities, and create solutions in a rapidly changing world

When auditing our Cambridge International AS & A Level portfolio for skills, we found that entrepreneurial skills was a gap

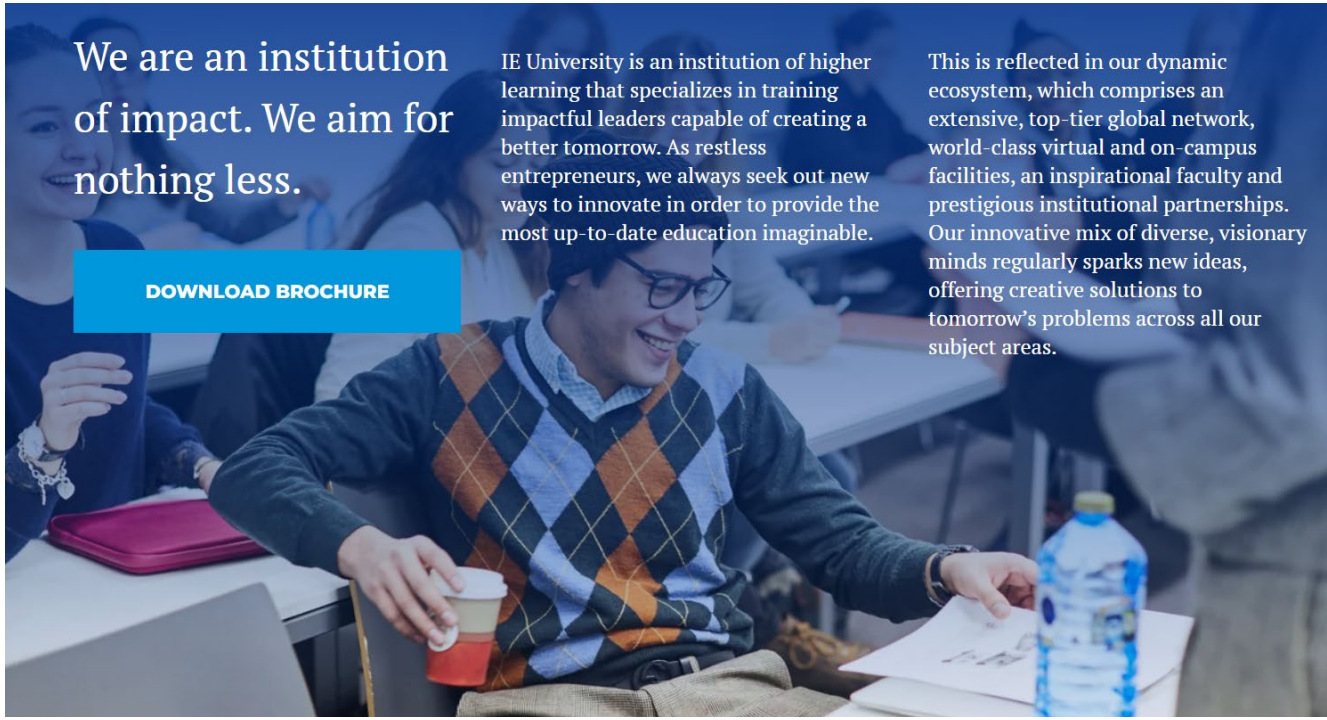


CAMBRIDGE

Our partner

‘By integrating entrepreneurship and university-level learning into the Cambridge International A Level pathway, we strengthen the bridge between secondary and higher education, equipping students with the mindset, skills, and global outlook needed to create impact in a rapidly changing world.’

Manuel Muñiz, Rector of IE University,



CAMBRIDGE

Curriculum strands

Understanding entrepreneurship

See how entrepreneurship works in the real world and how opportunities are created in different contexts.

Developing an entrepreneurial mindset

Build confidence, creativity, and the ability to take action and learn from challenges.

The entrepreneurial process

Learn how to turn ideas into solutions through testing, feedback, and iteration.

Entrepreneurial project

Work in teams to develop a real idea and present it in a final pitch.

CAMBRIDGE

In conversation with Manmeet Kaur



Manmeet teaches at HELP International School in Malaysia, which is one of eight schools piloting the Cambridge Advanced Skills Award Entrepreneurial Mindset.

Today, Manmeet and I will be discussing her experience in delivering the programme so far.

CAMBRIDGE

Any questions?

Cambridge Schools Conference Online, October 2026
Future-ready: preparing learners to thrive

cambridge.org/internationaleducation

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2026

CAMBRIDGE

Thank you!

Cambridge Schools Conference Online, October 2026
Future-ready: preparing learners to thrive

cambridge.org/internationaleducation

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2026

CAMBRIDGE

cambridge.org/internationaleducation

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2026