

Frequently Asked Questions
IGCSE Mandarin Chinese – Foreign Language (0547)
First examination in 2015

Are there changes to the syllabus?	In 2015 and thereafter a new IGCSE Mandarin Chinese syllabus will be examined. Please read the syllabus and specimen papers carefully.
What resources are available to support this syllabus?	The following resources are available on the Cambridge teacher support site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined Content Booklet (provides guidance on the topic areas, vocabulary and grammar/structures that are tested on the question papers) – the minimum core vocabulary is provided alphabetically and by topic area • Speaking Test Training Handbook (provides guidance on the conduct and assessment of the Speaking test) • Past Papers • Past Mark Schemes • Principal Examiner Reports for Teachers • Resource List • Teachers' Notes booklet in Mandarin
Is specimen material for the new 0547 syllabus available on the website?	Specimen papers are available on the main Cambridge website and on the teacher support site. In addition, all past papers on the teacher support site contain material that is valid for the new examination: Paper 1: All of the material is valid. Paper 2: All of the reading comprehension exercises are valid; the Section 2 Exercise 2 writing exercise can be used for the new Paper 4 Question 2. Paper 3: All of the material is valid. Paper 4: The three writing tasks can be used for the new Paper 4 Question 3.
Are students allowed to take dictionaries into the examination room?	No. This is an IGCSE Language examination and dictionaries are not permitted.
I have heard that some of the candidates who sit this paper are native speakers of Chinese and I am worried that my foreign language speakers are being judged against what a first language speaker might achieve.	You do not need to worry. The level of performance achieved by a native speaker candidate will be off the top of the scale of what is expected from candidates taking this examination.
Paper 1 Listening: How many candidates may I have in the room for a Listening examination?	We would advise a maximum of 30 candidates in the examination room.
Paper 1 Listening: I would like to listen to the whole Listening examination to check it before I play it to my candidates in the examination. Is this allowed?	No. You should spot-check the CD for sound quality when you receive it. Then, in order to check the acoustics, you should spot-check one of the CDs in the examination room one

	<p>working day before the examination takes place. On neither of the above occasions may the recording be listened to in full nor may the recording be removed from the Centre for checking. After each check the examination materials must be returned to your Centre's secure store.</p>
<p>Paper 3 Speaking: Must I be accredited by Cambridge before conducting and assessing the 0547 Speaking test?</p>	<p>Accreditation from Cambridge is not required in order to conduct the 0547 Speaking test. However, if you are new to the syllabus, you will benefit from undergoing distance training using the Speaking Test Training Handbook, and in the interests of your candidates we recommend that you do so.</p>
<p>Paper 3 Speaking: When will I receive the materials for the Speaking test?</p>	<p>The materials for the conduct and assessment of the Speaking test are sent out in February for the May/June examination. They are sent out on the basis of Centres' Estimated Entries. If your Centre has not made Estimated Entries, this may result in your not having the necessary material to carry out the Speaking tests at the specified time.</p>
<p>Paper 3 Speaking: How should I record my candidates?</p>	<p>It is preferable for the Speaking tests to be recorded using a suitable digital voice recorder or sound recording programme on a computer. Each candidate's file must be saved individually and in .mp3 format.</p>
<p>Paper 3 Speaking: Who marks the Speaking test?</p>	<p>It is the responsibility of the person conducting the Speaking tests in the Centre to mark them. The Speaking tests must be marked as they are being conducted.</p>

<p>Paper 3 Speaking: How should I go about choosing someone to conduct the Speaking tests at my centre?</p>	<p>Ideally, a teacher at the school should conduct the Speaking tests. Where this is not possible and it is necessary to look for someone outside the school, look for someone who is fluent in the target language, preferably with teaching experience and with experience of conducting other oral examinations. The person appointed must be given the opportunity to familiarise him/herself with the requirements of the examination before conducting any 'live' Speaking tests. Give the examination syllabus for the relevant year and a copy of the Teachers' Notes booklet and Role Play Cards from a previous examination session to the examiner to read before the day of the examination so that s/he can familiarise him/herself with the general requirements for the conduct and assessment of the Speaking test and there is time to clarify any doubts. On the day of the examination, arrange for the examiner to arrive at the Centre 1–2 hours before conducting and assessing the first Speaking test, in order that s/he can prepare the role play situations and read through the instructions contained in the Teachers' Notes booklet for the live session. It is essential that the use of an external examiner does not compromise the security of the Speaking test. For further advice, email info@cie.org.uk</p>
<p>Paper 3 Speaking: What happens to the Speaking test marks when they arrive at Cambridge?</p>	<p>When the recorded sample and paperwork arrive at Cambridge, they are forwarded to one of our Moderators. The Moderator listens to the sample and looks at the marks that have been awarded to ensure that they are in line with the IGCSE standard. If the marks are in line, they will not be changed. If they are not in line, then an adjustment will be made to bring them into line, i.e. the marks will be raised if the candidates have been marked too severely, or lowered if they have been marked too generously. A report on the conduct and assessment of the Speaking test will be sent to the Centre with the results.</p>
<p>Paper 4 Writing – Questions 2 and 3: Is there a limit to the number of characters that the examiner will mark for either of these questions?</p>	<p>The examiner will mark the number of characters produced by the candidate as long as the material is relevant. However, candidates should be encouraged to keep to the number of characters stated on the question paper, and to allow themselves time to think about what the question is asking before they start writing, and to check their work carefully once they have finished writing.</p>