



Cambridge Assessment  
International Education

# Syllabus

Cambridge IGCSE®

Mandarin Chinese 0547

For examination in June 2020 and 2021.

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## Why choose Cambridge?

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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.

Our international qualifications are recognised by the world's best universities and employers, giving students a wide range of options in their education and career. As a not-for-profit organisation, we devote our resources to delivering high-quality educational programmes that can unlock learners' potential.

Our programmes and qualifications set the global standard for international education. They are created by subject experts, rooted in academic rigour and reflect the latest educational research. They provide a strong platform for learners to progress from one stage to the next, and are well supported by teaching and learning resources.

Our mission is to provide educational benefit through provision of international programmes and qualifications for school education and to be the world leader in this field. Together with schools, we develop Cambridge learners who are confident, responsible, reflective, innovative and engaged – equipped for success in the modern world.

Every year, nearly a million Cambridge students from 10 000 schools in 160 countries prepare for their future with an international education from Cambridge International.

**'We think the Cambridge curriculum is superb preparation for university.'**

**Christoph Guttentag**, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, Duke University, USA

### Quality management

Our systems for managing the provision of international qualifications and education programmes for students aged 5 to 19 are certified as meeting the internationally recognised standard for quality management, ISO 9001:2008. Learn more at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/ISO9001](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/ISO9001)



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## Changes to this syllabus



For information about changes to this syllabus for 2020 and 2021, go to page 24.

The latest syllabus is version 1, published September 2017. There are no significant changes which affect teaching.

Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2015 are still suitable for use with this syllabus.

# 1 Why choose this syllabus?

## Key benefits

Cambridge IGCSE® syllabuses are created especially for international students. For over 25 years, we have worked with schools and teachers worldwide to develop syllabuses that are suitable for different countries, different types of schools and for learners with a wide range of abilities.

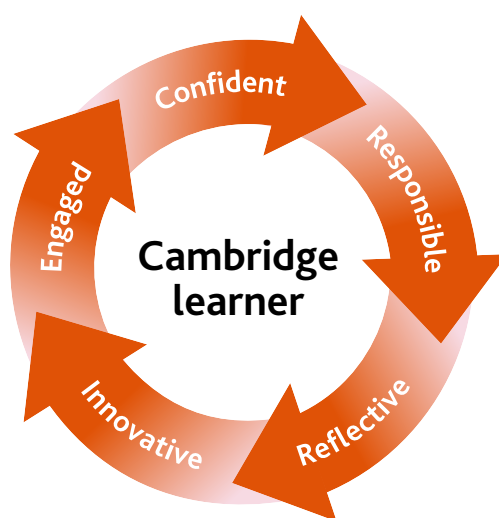
Cambridge IGCSE Mandarin Chinese encourages learners to develop lifelong skills, including:

- the ability to use a foreign language as a means of practical communication
- insight into the culture and civilisation of countries where the language is spoken
- a positive attitude towards language learning, towards the speakers of other languages, and towards other cultures and civilisations
- techniques which can be applied to other areas of learning, such as analysis and memory skills
- a sound foundation for progression to employment or further study.

This is one of a number of Cambridge IGCSE foreign language syllabuses. For a full list, visit the Cambridge International website at [www.cambridgeinternational.org](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org)

Our programmes balance a thorough knowledge and understanding of a subject and help to develop the skills learners need for their next steps in education or employment.

Our approach encourages learners to be:



**'The strength of Cambridge IGCSE qualifications is internationally recognised and has provided an international pathway for our students to continue their studies around the world.'**

**Gary Tan**, Head of Schools and CEO, Raffles International Group of Schools, Indonesia

## Recognition and progression

The combination of knowledge and skills in Cambridge IGCSE Mandarin Chinese gives learners a solid foundation for further study. Candidates who achieve grades A\* to C are well prepared to follow a wide range of courses including Cambridge International AS & A Level Chinese.

Cambridge IGCSEs are accepted and valued by leading universities and employers around the world as evidence of academic achievement. Many universities require a combination of Cambridge International AS & A Levels and Cambridge IGCSEs or equivalent to meet their entry requirements.

UK NARIC, the national agency in the UK for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills, has carried out an independent benchmarking study of Cambridge IGCSE and found it to be comparable to the standard of GCSE in the UK. This means students can be confident that their Cambridge IGCSE qualifications are accepted as equivalent to UK GCSEs by leading universities worldwide.

Learn more at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition)

## Supporting teachers

We provide a wide range of practical resources, detailed guidance, and innovative training and professional development so that you can give your learners the best possible preparation for Cambridge IGCSE.



**'Cambridge IGCSE is one of the most sought-after and recognised qualifications in the world. It is very popular in Egypt because it provides the perfect preparation for success at advanced level programmes.'**

**Mrs Omnia Kassabgy**, Managing Director of British School in Egypt BSE

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## 2 Syllabus overview

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### Aims

The aims describe the purposes of a course based on this syllabus.

The aims are to:

- develop the ability to communicate effectively using the target language
- offer insights into the culture and society of countries where the language is spoken
- develop awareness of the nature of language and language learning
- encourage positive attitudes towards speakers of other languages and a sympathetic approach to other cultures and civilisations
- provide enjoyment and intellectual stimulation
- develop transferable skills (e.g. analysis, memorising, drawing of inferences) to complement other areas of the curriculum
- form a sound base of the skills, language and attitudes required for progression to work or further study, either in the target language or another subject area.

### Content overview

The subject content is organised around five broad Topic areas which provide contexts for the acquisition of vocabulary and the study of grammar and structures. Through the study of these Topic areas, candidates gain insight into target language countries and communities. The Topic areas are:

- Everyday activities
- Personal and social life
- The world around us
- The world of work
- The international world.

#### Support for Cambridge IGCSE Mandarin Chinese



Our School Support Hub [www.cambridgeinternational.org/support](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/support) provides Cambridge schools with a secure site for downloading specimen and past question papers, mark schemes, grade thresholds and other curriculum resources specific to this syllabus. The School Support Hub community offers teachers the opportunity to connect with each other and to ask questions related to the syllabus.

## Assessment overview

All candidates take four papers.

### All candidates take:

**Paper 1** approximately 35 minutes  
Listening 25%  
30 marks  
Candidates listen to a number of recordings  
and answer questions testing comprehension  
Externally assessed

### and:

**Paper 2** 1 hour 15 minutes  
Reading 25%  
36 marks  
Candidates read a number of texts and answer  
questions testing comprehension  
Externally assessed

### and:

**Paper 3** approximately 15 minutes  
Speaking\* 25%  
100 marks  
Candidates complete two role plays, a topic  
presentation/conversation and a general  
conversation  
Internally assessed/externally moderated

### and:

**Paper 4** 1 hour 15 minutes  
Writing 25%  
45 marks  
Candidates respond in the target language to  
three tasks  
Externally assessed

\* *Individual centres are responsible for conducting the tests and for the initial assessment, which is then subject to moderation by Cambridge International. Please see the Paper 3 – Speaking section of this syllabus for additional information.*

## Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) are:

### AO1 Listening

Understand and respond to spoken language.

### AO2 Reading

Understand and respond to written language.

### AO3 Speaking

Communicate in speech, showing knowledge of a range and variety of vocabulary and applying the grammar and structures of the target language accurately.

### AO4 Writing

Communicate in writing, showing knowledge of a range and variety of vocabulary and applying the grammar and structures of the target language accurately.

## Weighting for assessment objectives

The approximate weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives (AOs) are summarised below.

### Assessment objectives as a percentage of the qualification

Assessment objective	Weighting in IGCSE %
AO1 Listening	25
AO2 Reading	25
AO3 Speaking	25
AO4 Writing	25

### Assessment objectives as a percentage of each component

Assessment objective	Weighting in components %			
	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	Paper 4
AO1 Listening	100	0	0	0
AO2 Reading	0	100	0	0
AO3 Speaking	0	0	100	0
AO4 Writing	0	0	0	100



### 3 Subject content

#### Topic list

Candidates will be required to show knowledge and understanding of the five Topic areas listed below. These provide contexts for the acquisition of vocabulary and the study of grammar and structures. Through the study of these Topic areas, candidates gain insight into target language countries and communities. For further guidance on these Topic areas, please refer to the Mandarin Chinese *Defined Content Booklet*. In the Speaking test, candidates also have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of a topic of their own choice which might be outside the list below.

	Topic areas	Examination topics	
<b>Area A</b>	<b>Everyday activities</b>		
	Home life and school	Home life	A1
		School routine	A2
	Food, health and fitness	Eating and drinking	A3
		Health and fitness	A4
<b>Area B</b>	<b>Personal and social life</b>		
	Self, family and personal relationships	Self, family, personal relationships, pets	B1
		Everyday life	B2
		Eating out	B3
	Holidays	Holidays	B4
<b>Area C</b>	<b>The world around us</b>		
	Home town and local area	Home town and geographical surroundings	C1
		Clothes	C2
		Shopping	C3
		Public services, customs, etc.	C4
	Natural and made environment	Weather	C5
		Finding the way	C6
	People, places and customs	Meeting and greeting phrases	C7
		Travel and transport	C8
		Famous sites and famous cities	C9
		Animals	C10
<b>Area D</b>	<b>The world of work</b>		
	Continuing education	Further education and training	D1
	Careers and employment	Future career plans	D2
		Employment	D3
<b>Area E</b>	<b>The international world</b>		
	Tourism at home and abroad	Holiday travel and transport (see also C8)	E1
		Geographical surroundings (see also C1)	E2
		Weather (see also C5)	E3
	Life in other countries	Places and customs	E4
		Food and drink (see also A3)	E5
		Meeting people (see also C7)	E6

## The Defined Content Booklet

A Mandarin Chinese *Defined Content Booklet* is provided to guide teachers and candidates preparing for this examination. It should be downloaded from the Cambridge International website at [www.cambridgeinternational.org](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org) and includes the following sections:

- *Topic areas*: the list of topic areas from which all textual material used in the examination will be drawn.
- *Minimum Core Vocabulary*: the list of vocabulary to be tested in Sections 1 and 2 of Papers 1 and 2, Role Plays A of Paper 3 and Section 1 of Paper 4.
- *Grammar and structures*: the list of grammar and structures that candidates aiming at grades C to G are expected to learn, and a supplementary list for those aiming at grades A\* to B.

The table below summarises the relationship between the Defined Content and the question papers.

Paper	Section	Topic areas	Minimum Core Vocabulary	Grammar and structures
Paper 1	1	A, B, C	✓	Part 1
	2	A, B, C, D*, E*	✓	Part 1
	3	A, B, C, D, E		Parts 1 and 2
Paper 2	1	A, B, C	✓	Part 1
	2	A, B, C, D*, E*	✓	Part 1
	3	A, B, C, D, E		Parts 1 and 2
Paper 3	Role Plays A	A, B, C	✓	Part 1
	Role Plays B	A, B, C, D, E		Part 1
Paper 4	1	A, B, C, D <sup>†</sup> , E <sup>†</sup>	✓	Part 1
	2	A, B, C, D, E		Parts 1 and 2

\* Where Section 2 of this paper features passages based on Topic areas D and E, only vocabulary from the Minimum Core Vocabulary will be tested.

† Where Section 1 of this paper features questions based on Topic areas D and E, only vocabulary from the Minimum Core Vocabulary will be tested.

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## 4 Details of the assessment

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All examination papers are set in the target language: this includes rubrics and all questions. All questions requiring written answers, including questions testing Listening and Reading comprehension, are to be answered in the target language.

**Dictionaries are not permitted in the examination.**

For detailed guidance on how the papers are marked, please refer to the published specimen mark schemes available on our public website at **[www.cambridgeinternational.org](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org)**

### Paper 1 – Listening

Approximately 35 minutes, 30 marks

The Listening examination will be provided to centres on a pre-recorded CD. All listening material will be heard twice by candidates and appropriate pauses for candidates to write their answers will be included on the recording.

All candidates must attempt all three sections.

The aim of this paper is to test candidates' listening comprehension skills and every effort will be made to minimise the amount of reading and writing candidates are required to do in the examination.

The examination is divided into three sections, each worth 10 marks, and there is progression as higher grades are targeted.

#### Section 1 (10 marks)

One or two exercises, consisting of short recordings (one or two sentences), some involving two speakers, tested mainly by visual material (pictures, line drawings, etc.).

#### Section 2 (10 marks)

Two or three exercises.

Candidates hear recordings containing largely factual information, about travel, weather, opening times, facilities available, etc.

#### Section 3 (10 marks)

Two or three exercises.

Candidates hear recordings containing information which is of interest to the candidate: conversations, discussions, interviews, factual reports are likely sources.

Questions are usually objective requiring non-verbal responses. Test types include multiple-choice, matching, box ticking. Visuals are used wherever possible.

Five of the 20 marks allocated to Sections 2 and 3 correspond to questions requiring answers in Chinese. These questions are phrased in such a way that answers can be brief and candidates are allowed to write their answers in either Chinese characters or pinyin. As long as communication is achieved, candidates are not penalised for language which may be incorrect. Where candidates write their answers in pinyin, tones do not need to be correct for the mark to be awarded. Answers written in any language other than Mandarin Chinese will be ignored.

### Administration of the Listening examination

Cambridge International will supply centres with one audio CD for every 20 candidates, and one spare. These can be kept by the centre after the examination. Centres are strongly advised to hold the test in rooms which are suitable for up to 30 candidates at a time. If centres have equipment which is especially powerful, more candidates may be accommodated without special permission. In exceptional circumstances, centres may transfer material from CD to audio cassette, but this should be done under strict security conditions with adequate supervision.

CDs must be spot-checked as soon as they are received. Shortly before the examination day (e.g. the teaching day before), CDs must be spot-checked again, in the room to be used for the examination, to test the acoustics.

In the examination, the invigilator should instruct candidates to open the question paper as s/he starts the recording. Once the recording is started, it must run without interruption. The recording must not be 'rewound' to go back for a question which may have been missed because of noise from outside (e.g. aircraft), and candidates should be warned of this before the test is started. The recording may only be stopped/paused if there is a serious emergency and must then be restarted from exactly the same place, once the emergency has been dealt with. In such cases, an application for Special Consideration must be made and sent directly to Cambridge International (see the *Cambridge Handbook*). Centres must state the point on the recording at which any interruption took place and the reasons for and length of the interruption. If, as a result of the interruption, there is reason to believe that candidates may not have clearly heard parts of the recording, a note of the question numbers affected should also be included.

Transcripts of the recording are issued with the published mark scheme.

### Paper 2 – Reading

1 hour 15 minutes, 36 marks

All candidates must attempt all three sections.

Candidates will encounter a variety of question types on the Reading Paper. The paper is designed to test comprehension skills and includes objective questions and questions which require candidates to write answers in the target language. Where candidates are required to produce written answers in the target language, they are not penalised for incorrect or inaccurate language unless it makes their answers ambiguous. It is important that they write briefly, relevantly and concisely. Provided that answers are unambiguous, long answers in full sentences are often not required. Candidates should be encouraged to paraphrase and manipulate the language in order to answer questions appropriately. They are unlikely to score high marks on this paper if they simply copy large chunks from the stimulus material, with no attempt to select what is relevant. Candidates should write their answers in characters. Answers written in any language other than Mandarin Chinese will be ignored.

## Section 1 (12 marks)

- *Exercise 1* (5 marks): candidates read a series of short notices, signs, instructions, messages, advertisements, etc. and answer multiple-choice questions.
- *Exercise 2* (4 marks): candidates read a series of short statements and complete a matching exercise which tests the main words in these statements.
- *Exercise 3* (3 marks): candidates read a short text in the form of an email, message, postcard, letter, etc. Questions are objective and test the main points and some detail.

## Section 2 (12 marks)

- *Exercise 1* (4 marks): candidates read a short text in the form of a brochure, guide, etc. Questions are objective and test the main points and specific detail.
- *Exercise 2* (8 marks): candidates read a longer text in the form of a letter, email, etc. Questions test general understanding of the main points, which includes recognising simple attitudes and opinions. Questions require short answers in the target language.

## Section 3 (12 marks)

- *Exercises 1 and 2* (12 marks): candidates read two longer, more complex texts. Questions test general and specific comprehension. They also require candidates to identify attitudes, emotions and ideas, the main points or themes, and to draw conclusions. Some of the questions are objective; some require short answers in the target language.

### Paper 3 – Speaking

Approximately 15 minutes, 100 marks

The Speaking test consists of a single interview with three compulsory parts:

- Test 1: Role Plays
- Test 2: Topic Presentation/Conversation
- Test 3: General Conversation.

The Role Play tasks are provided by Cambridge International, but individual centres are responsible for conducting the tests and for the initial assessment. This assessment is then subject to moderation by Cambridge International.

Full instructions on the conduct and assessment of the Speaking test are provided in the *Teachers' Notes Booklet* and *Role Play Cards*. These items are despatched to centres on the basis of their estimated entries and it is therefore important that centres submit estimated entries for this syllabus by the deadline published in the *Cambridge Handbook*.

Specimen/past copies of the *Teachers' Notes Booklet* and *Role Play Cards* can be downloaded from the School Support Hub and contain the instructions for the conduct and assessment of the Speaking test. It is crucial that teachers/Examiners study these instructions well in advance of conducting their first Speaking test so that any doubts or queries can be resolved in good time.

A Speaking Test Handbook is available and provides the opportunity for teachers/Examiners to practise conducting and assessing the Speaking test before they undertake their first live tests.

## Structure of the Speaking test

### Test 1: Role Plays (approximately 5 minutes, 30 marks)

Cambridge International supplies a number of alternative Role Play Cards which the teacher/Examiner allocates at random to candidates during each session of examining. Each candidate is given **one** card containing two role play situations, each of which consists of five tasks. Each candidate is examined in both role play situations on the card they have been given. The first role play (Role Play A) is more straightforward than the second (Role Play B). Candidates should be allowed approximately 15 minutes to prepare their two role play situations. They may not take any written notes into the preparation room nor may they make any notes during their preparation time. Candidates should have a copy of the Role Play Card they have prepared to refer to in the examination room but must not be allowed to take it away with them after the test.

Each role play situation specifies the roles of the teacher/Examiner and candidate. Teachers/Examiners must conduct the role plays in accordance with the instructions and script provided in the *Teachers' Notes Booklet*. They must prepare the situations carefully so that the candidate's tasks follow on naturally from the teacher's/Examiner's response. As marks can only be awarded for the stipulated tasks, the teacher/Examiner must not create extra tasks, and if a candidate misses out a task, should try to guide him/her back to it, in as natural a way as possible. It does not matter that this may lead to tasks occurring in a different order, as long as they are all attempted.

For the mark scheme, see Table A of the Marking instructions which start on page 14 of this syllabus.

### Test 2: Topic Presentation/Conversation (approximately 5 minutes, 30 marks)

This part of the test starts with a one to two minute presentation by the candidate on a topic of his/her choice which s/he will have prepared in advance. The teacher/Examiner will follow up the presentation with specific spontaneous questions on the topic, bringing the total time for the Topic Presentation and Topic Conversation to approximately five minutes.

Candidates are encouraged to choose a topic in which they have a personal interest. Suitable subjects might be, for example: 'School life', 'Hobbies and pastimes' (general or specific), 'My country', 'Life in another country', 'My ambitions', 'Holidays'. Topics dealing with politics or social and economic issues are ambitious for this level of achievement and may disadvantage candidates if they do not possess the linguistic skills and maturity of ideas which such topics necessitate. Candidates should be encouraged to prepare different topics within a centre and should not be allowed to present 'Myself' or 'My life' as topics, as these can often pre-empt the General Conversation section. **Candidates may use illustrative material, e.g. photographs, if this seems appropriate to their topic. However, they are not allowed to make or use written notes of any kind. Furthermore, illustrative material must not contain any words or notes of any kind.**

The teacher/Examiner will allow the candidate to speak for one to two minutes uninterrupted on his/her chosen topic before starting the Topic Conversation. Where a candidate has been talking for two minutes and shows no sign of finishing his/her Topic Presentation, the teacher/Examiner must interrupt and start the Topic Conversation.

In the Topic Conversation, candidates should be able to respond to the teacher's/Examiner's questions in a spontaneous and natural manner. It is the extent to which candidates can manipulate their prepared material according to the needs of the teacher/Examiner that determines their marks: once discussion of the prepared topic begins, candidates must not be allowed to deliver a prepared monologue or a series of obviously prepared replies.

The teacher/Examiner **must** try to lead the candidate into using other time frames. For a mark of 7 or above to be awarded for Language, candidates must show that they can convey past and future meaning and teachers/Examiners need to ask questions which allow them to do this. In order to extend the candidate as far as possible, the teacher/Examiner should probe, explore, ask for explanations, justifications, enlargements, descriptions (*how? when? why? tell me a bit more about ... etc.*).

For the mark scheme, see Tables B and C of the Marking instructions which start on page 14 of this syllabus.

### Test 3: General Conversation (approximately 5 minutes, 30 marks)

The Topic Conversation will lead into a spontaneous discussion of a more general nature. The teacher/Examiner will announce the transition to the General Conversation and should ease the candidate into the General Conversation by starting out from any point of interest noted earlier or by asking a couple of general 'starter' questions relating to the candidate's everyday life, e.g. school, home, town, journey to and from school, free time (evenings, weekends), holidays, hobbies. All candidates can reasonably be expected to have the command of vocabulary and idiom necessary for this.

The teacher/Examiner should aim to cover **two or three** of the Defined Content Examination Topics in this section of the test (listed in the Subject content section of this syllabus). With weaker candidates, it may be necessary to cover a greater number of topics superficially, but with more able candidates, the teacher/Examiner should ask a series of linked questions on just two or three topics, in order to explore these in greater depth. Precise factual information or knowledge is not required and candidates must not be penalised for lack of such knowledge. Questions must be adjusted to the candidate's ability and the teacher/Examiner should be ready to move on quickly to another subject if candidates are obviously out of their depth.

Candidates are expected to give natural replies to questions; their answers need not therefore be in the form of complete sentences. The teacher/Examiner should avoid asking questions which can be answered with 'yes' or 'no' and should instead use a variety of question types and interrogative adverbs, ranging from a basic level of simple questions which demand short predictable responses, e.g. *when? how many? how long? with whom? with what? how?*, etc. to more searching questions such as *why? tell me about ... what do you think about ...?* Questions should be adjusted to the candidate's ability. However, as in the Topic Conversation, the teacher/Examiner must try to extend the candidate as far as possible by giving him/her the opportunity to explain and justify his/her opinions.

As in the Topic Conversation, the teacher/Examiner must try to lead the candidate into using other time frames (themes could be visits to other countries, plans for the future, etc.) and s/he can then be extended as far as possible. For a mark of 7 or above to be awarded for Language, candidates must show that they can convey past and future meaning and teachers/Examiners need to ask questions which allow them to do this.

For the mark scheme, see Tables B and C of the Marking instructions which start on page 14 of this syllabus.

### Test 4 Impression (10 marks)

At the end of the Speaking test, based on the candidate's overall performance, the teacher/Examiner awards a mark for pronunciation, intonation and fluency.

For the mark scheme, see Table D of the Marking instructions which start on page 14 of this syllabus.

## Administration of the Speaking test

### Examination period

The Speaking tests take place before the main examination series as notified on the timetable. Each centre decides on a convenient period within the dates specified on the timetable to conduct the Speaking tests.

### Appointment of teacher/Examiner

Each centre selects its own teacher/Examiner to conduct and assess the Speaking tests. This is normally a teacher from within the Languages department, but could be someone from outside the centre.

**In the interests of standardisation, there will be only one teacher/Examiner per centre.** Where a centre needs to use additional teachers/Examiners permission to do so **must** be sought from Cambridge International before the start of each Speaking test period. Permission to use more than one teacher/Examiner will only be granted on the understanding that teachers/Examiners at the centre work together to ensure a common approach to the conduct of the Speaking tests and the application of the mark scheme, and that Internal moderation is carried out at the centre. This is in order to ensure that marks submitted by the centre are consistent for all candidates, irrespective of which teacher/Examiner conducted and assessed the test. The sample that the centre submits to Cambridge International must include work of each teacher/Examiner and a Speaking examination *Working Mark Sheet* must be submitted for each teacher/Examiner, with candidate names and numbers clearly entered. The final column on the *Working Mark Sheet* (Internal and/or External moderation) should be used to record the results of Internal moderation, and details of the centre's Internal moderation procedures must be enclosed with the materials for External moderation. Guidelines for the Internal standardisation/moderation of Speaking tests are available from Cambridge International.

### Arrangements for the test

It is the centre's responsibility to make available suitable rooms and good quality equipment in order to ensure the smooth running of the Speaking test. Examination conditions must prevail in the area where the Speaking tests take place and adequate supervision must be provided to ensure that each candidate can prepare his/her role plays in silence and without distraction. Dictionaries and writing materials are not allowed in the preparation room.

### Preparation of confidential test materials

Confidential test materials (*Teachers' Notes Booklet* and *Role Play Cards*) are sent to centres approximately two to three weeks before the assessment period and include full instructions on how to conduct and assess the Speaking tests. These should be opened in the four working days before the centre's assessment starts and studied, in secure conditions at the centre by the teacher/Examiner before conducting his/her first Speaking test. Teachers/Examiners who have prepared their own roles fully and are confident in what they are doing are better able to help candidates who experience any difficulty. Once the materials have been opened, the Speaking tests must be completed as soon as is realistically possible. Once the centre has completed its Speaking tests, the materials remain confidential and must be kept in a secure place by the centre until the end of the examination period. Candidates must not have knowledge of the role play situations in advance of the examination.

### Recording of the Speaking test

**The centre must record the Speaking tests of all candidates.** The centre will then select the sample for External moderation according to the instructions below. Only the recordings chosen as part of the sample for External moderation must be sent to Cambridge International. The other recordings must be retained at the centre until the result enquiry period has elapsed as they may be requested by Cambridge International at a later stage.

### Marking instructions for the Speaking test

#### General principles

- You are urged to use the full range of marks, bearing in mind that it is not necessary for a candidate to be of native speaker standard in order to be given maximum marks within any single category.
- Adopt a positive approach: award marks based on what the candidate can do rather than deducting marks for errors.
- Above all else, please be consistent in your marking. The moderation process allows for adjustments to be made to consistently harsh or consistently generous marking. If you are unsure of the mark to award, err on the side of generosity.



It is important that teachers/Examiners award marks positively. In order to ensure that they reward achievement rather than penalise failure or omissions, teachers/Examiners should start at the bottom of the mark scheme and work upwards through the descriptors when awarding marks.

The teacher/Examiner should adopt a 'best-fit' approach. For each of the assessment criteria, Communication (Table B), Language (Table C) and Impression (Table D), the teacher/Examiner must select the set of descriptors provided in the mark scheme that most closely describes the quality of the work being marked. As the teacher/Examiner works upwards through the mark scheme, s/he will eventually arrive at a set of descriptors that fits the candidate's performance. When s/he reaches this point, the teacher/Examiner should always then check the descriptors in the band above to confirm whether or not there is just enough evidence to award a mark in the higher band.

When awarding the marks for the Topic Presentation/Conversation the teacher/Examiner may find that the quality of the work produced in the presentation is superior to that produced in the conversation (or vice versa). In such cases, the teacher/Examiner will need to award a mark that takes into account both the strengths and weaknesses of the performance.

To select the most appropriate mark within each set of descriptors, teachers/Examiners should use the following guidance:

- If most of the descriptors fit the work, then the teacher/Examiner will award the middle mark in the band.
- If the descriptors fully fit the work (and the teacher/Examiner had perhaps been considering the band above), the highest of the three marks will be awarded.
- If there is just enough evidence (and the teacher/Examiner had perhaps been considering the band below), then the lowest mark in the band will be awarded.

Where there are only two marks within a band, the choice will be between work which in most respects meets the descriptor and work which just meets the descriptors.

**Table A – Mark Scheme for Test 1: Role Plays (30 marks)**

In this part of the Speaking test, the teacher/Examiner plays the part of a sympathetic native speaker with no knowledge of the candidate's first language.

The role plays test the ability of candidates to communicate needs, information, requests, etc., in plausibly life like situations. Intelligibility is therefore more important than grammatical or syntactic accuracy. However, only verbal communication is assessed: credit is not given for gestures, facial expressions or other non-verbal forms of communication.

Candidates are required to give natural responses, not necessarily in the form of full sentences. The use of appropriate register and correct idiom is rewarded.

Each of the ten tasks to be performed in the role plays will be assessed using the mark scheme below. Marks may not be awarded for the completion of tasks other than those specified by Cambridge International in the *Role Play Cards/Teachers' Notes Booklet*, nor may they be awarded for tasks that are omitted.

An accurate utterance which not only conveys the meaning but which is expressed in native idiom and appropriate register. Minor errors (adjective endings, use of prepositions, etc.) are tolerated. The utterance is intelligible and the task of communication is achieved.	3
The language used is not necessarily the most appropriate to the situation and may contain inaccuracies which do not obscure the meaning.	2
Communication of some meaning is achieved, but the native speaker would find the message ambiguous or incomplete.	1
The utterance is unintelligible to the native speaker.	0

**Notes**

- 1 If there are two elements in a task and only one is completed, then a maximum of one mark only may be awarded.
- 2 Short utterances, if appropriate, can be worth three marks.

## Tables B and C – Mark Schemes for Test 2: Topic Presentation/Conversation and Test 3: General Conversation (2 × 30 marks)

Each of Tests 2 (Topic Presentation/Conversation) and 3 (General Conversation) is awarded two marks:

- a mark out of 15 for Communication (see Table B)
- a mark out of 15 for Language (see Table C).

### Table B – Mark Scheme for Communication

This assesses the candidate's response in terms of comprehension of the teacher/Examiner, immediacy of reaction/response, and successful transmission of messages (including presentation of material in the topic).

Outstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A spontaneous interchange between candidate and Examiner. Candidate responds fully and confidently to all question types.</li> <li>• Can justify and explain routinely.</li> <li>• Very consistent performance. Not necessarily of native speaker standard.</li> </ul>	14–15
Very good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally understands questions first time, but may require occasional rephrasing. Can respond satisfactorily to both straightforward and unexpected questions.</li> <li>• Regularly develops own ideas and opinions and provides justifications.</li> </ul>	12–13
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has no difficulty with straightforward questions and responds satisfactorily to some unexpected ones.</li> <li>• Communicates essential elements and can expand occasionally.</li> <li>• Regularly expresses opinions with some simple justifications.</li> </ul>	10–11
Satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands most straightforward questions, but has difficulty with some unexpected ones and needs some rephrasing.</li> <li>• Communicates most of the essential elements.</li> <li>• Can convey simple, straightforward opinions.</li> </ul>	7–9
Weak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has difficulty with many straightforward questions, but still attempts an answer.</li> <li>• Communicates simple pieces of information.</li> </ul>	4–6
Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequently has difficulty understanding the questions and has great difficulty in replying.</li> <li>• Communicates a few facts.</li> </ul>	1–3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicates no relevant information.</li> </ul>	0

### Table C – Mark Scheme for Language

This assesses the linguistic content of the candidate's answers in terms of complexity, accuracy and range of structures, vocabulary and idiom.

Outstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very accurate use of a wide range of structures, vocabulary and idiom with occasional errors in more complex language.</li> <li>Not necessarily of native speaker standard.</li> </ul>	14–15
Very good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wide range of mostly accurate structures and vocabulary.</li> </ul>	12–13
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good range of generally accurate structures, varied vocabulary.</li> </ul>	10–11
Satisfactory*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adequate range of structures and vocabulary. <b>Can convey past and future meaning.</b> Some ambiguity.</li> </ul>	7–9
Weak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some manipulation of structures and awareness of verbs, though often faulty and/or incomplete. Shows elementary, limited vocabulary.</li> </ul>	4–6
Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows very limited range of structures and vocabulary.</li> </ul>	1–3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nothing coherent or accurate enough to be comprehensible.</li> </ul>	0

\* Candidates who do not show that they are able to convey past and future meaning accurately cannot be awarded a mark in the Satisfactory band or above for Language.

### Table D – Mark Scheme for Impression (10 marks)

A mark out of 10 is awarded for Impression. This mark scheme assesses the candidate's performance across the whole Speaking test in terms of pronunciation, intonation and fluency.

Very good pronunciation, intonation and fluency; an occasional slight mistake or hesitation. Not necessarily of native speaker standard.	9–10
Good pronunciation and fluency; makes a fair attempt at correct intonation and expression; some mistakes and/or hesitation.	7–8
A fair degree of fluency and accuracy in pronunciation despite quite a number of errors; some attempt at intonation and expression.	5–6
Conveys some meaning despite a lack of fluency and many errors; pronunciation strongly influenced by first language.	3–4
Many gross errors; frequently incomprehensible.	1–2
Nothing comprehensible.	0

### Completion of the Speaking examination *Working Mark Sheet*

Candidates' marks must be recorded on the Speaking examination *Working Mark Sheet*. Candidates must be marked as they are being examined and not afterwards from a recording. The Speaking examination *Working Mark Sheet*, and the instructions for completing it, may be downloaded from [www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples). The database will ask you for the syllabus code (i.e. 0547) and your centre number, after which it will take you to the correct form. Follow the instructions when completing the form.

### Arrangements for External moderation

For information, dates and methods of submission of the Speaking test marks and sample, please refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* and the Samples Database [www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples)

### Composition of sample for External moderation

In order to allow Cambridge International to accurately check the standard of assessment, each centre must select and send to Cambridge International a recorded sample as follows:

- **Centres entering 1–16 candidates** must send the recordings of all candidates
- **Centres entering 17 or more candidates** must send:
  - (i) the recordings of the first 10 candidates according to candidate number  
**and**
  - (ii) the recordings of 6 candidates spread evenly across the ability range. The candidates selected should be representative of the range of marks awarded by the centre and should be spread as evenly as possible across that range. If possible, the recordings of the strongest and the weakest candidates at the centre should be included, with the other recordings spaced at equal intervals in between.

**Note:** Centres entering 17 or more candidates must send a total of 16 recordings. The category (ii) candidates must be chosen from candidates who do not fall into category (i). In centres with just over 17 candidates, Cambridge International accepts this may mean that the category (ii) candidates are not fully representative of the range.

### Presentation of the sample for External moderation

Moderation samples must be recorded at normal speed onto standard format CDs. Mini CDs must not be used for sending the moderation sample to Cambridge International. Each candidate's file must be saved individually and saved as .mp3 so that it can be accessed for the purposes of moderation. **The centre is responsible for supplying blank CDs in order to record the Speaking tests of all its candidates.** All recording equipment must be of as high a standard as possible to ensure that moderation samples are clearly audible.

### Feedback on the conduct and assessment of Speaking tests

Centres will receive a brief report on the outcome of moderation (Form *CW/C/REP*).

## Paper 4 – Writing

1 hour 15 minutes, 45 marks

All candidates must attempt both sections.

Answers written in any language other than Mandarin Chinese are ignored.

### Section 1 (20 marks)

- *Question 1* (5 marks): candidates are required to write single words linked to a topic. Any words relevant to the topic that are produced by the candidate in the examination will be considered for reward.
- *Question 2* (15 marks): a directed writing task. 80–100 characters in total are required. 10 marks are available for Communication and 5 marks for Language.

Marks are only awarded for material which addresses the set tasks.

### Section 2 (25 marks)

- *Question 3* (25 marks): candidates are offered a choice of three tasks (an email/letter, an article, and a narrative) and must complete one of these. 150 characters in total are required.

Candidates are expected to communicate accurately and should make use of a wide variety of idiom, vocabulary, structure and show that they can convey past and future meaning. A system of positive marking is used. Irrelevant material is not rewarded.

Questions in Section 2 are marked out of 25 under the following three headings:

- |                        |          |
|------------------------|----------|
| • Communication        | 5 marks  |
| • Accuracy of Language | 15 marks |
| • Impression           | 5 marks  |

## 5 What else you need to know

This section is an overview of other information you need to know about this syllabus. It will help to share the administrative information with your exams officer so they know when you will need their support. Find more information about our administrative processes at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers)

### Before you start

#### Previous study

We recommend that learners starting this course should have studied a modern foreign language curriculum such as the Cambridge Lower Secondary programme or equivalent national educational framework such as the Key Stage 3 programme of study within the National Curriculum for England.

#### Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge IGCSE syllabuses based on learners having about 130 guided learning hours for each subject during the course but this is for guidance only. The number of hours a learner needs to achieve the qualification may vary according to local practice and their previous experience of the subject.

#### Availability and timetables

You can enter candidates in the June exam series. You can view the timetable for your administrative zone at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables)

This syllabus is available to private candidates provided that the accommodating centre can make appropriate arrangements to conduct and assess the Speaking test, and submit the required sample and paperwork to Cambridge International for External moderation. For more information, please see the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*.

#### Combining with other syllabuses

Candidates can take this syllabus alongside other Cambridge International syllabuses in a single exam series. The only exceptions are:

- Cambridge IGCSE First Language Chinese (0509)
- Cambridge IGCSE Chinese as a Second Language (0523)
- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) and Cambridge O Level syllabuses are at the same level.

#### Group awards: Cambridge ICE

Cambridge ICE (International Certificate of Education) is a group award for Cambridge IGCSE. It allows schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum by recognising the achievements of learners who pass examinations in a range of different subjects.

Learn more about Cambridge ICE at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/cambridgeice](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/cambridgeice)

## Making entries

Exams officers are responsible for submitting entries to Cambridge International. We encourage them to work closely with you to make sure they enter the right number of candidates for the right combination of syllabus components. Entry option codes and instructions for submitting entries are in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*. Your exams officer has a copy of this guide.

### Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as 'administrative zones'. We allocate all Cambridge schools to one administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable. Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

### Support for exams officers

We know how important exams officers are to the successful running of exams. We provide them with the support they need to make your entries on time. Your exams officer will find this support, and guidance for all other phases of the Cambridge Exams Cycle, at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers)

### Retakes

Candidates can retake the whole qualification as many times as they want to. This is a linear qualification so candidates cannot re-sit individual components.

### Equality and inclusion

We have taken great care to avoid bias of any kind in the preparation of this syllabus and related assessment materials. In compliance with the UK Equality Act (2010) we have designed this qualification to avoid any direct and indirect discrimination.

The standard assessment arrangements may present unnecessary barriers for candidates with disabilities or learning difficulties. We can put arrangements in place for these candidates to enable them to access the assessments and receive recognition of their attainment. We do not agree access arrangements if they give candidates an unfair advantage over others or if they compromise the standards being assessed.

Candidates who cannot access the assessment of any component may be able to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have completed.

Information on access arrangements is in the *Cambridge Handbook* at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers)

### Language

This syllabus is available in English only. The associated assessment materials are available in the target language.



## After the exam

### Grading and reporting

Grades A\*, A, B, C, D, E, F or G indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge IGCSE.

A\* is the highest and G is the lowest. 'Ungraded' means that the candidate's performance did not meet the standard required for grade G. 'Ungraded' is reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. In specific circumstances your candidates may see one of the following letters on their statement of results:

- Q (result pending)
- X (no result)
- Y (to be issued)

These letters do not appear on the certificate.

## How students and teachers can use the grades

Assessment at Cambridge IGCSE has two purposes.

- To measure learning and achievement.

The assessment:

- confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus, to the levels described in the grade descriptions.

- To show likely future success.

The outcomes:

- help predict which students are well prepared for a particular course or career and/or which students are more likely to be successful
- help students choose the most suitable course or career.

## Grade descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give an indication of the standards of achievement candidates awarded particular grades are likely to show. Weakness in one aspect of the examination may be balanced by a better performance in some other aspect.

Grade descriptions for Cambridge IGCSE Mandarin Chinese will be published after the first assessment of the IGCSE in 2020. Find more information at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/igcse](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/igcse)

## Changes to this syllabus for 2020 and 2021

The syllabus has been updated. This is version 1, published September 2017.

From 2020 this syllabus will no longer be regulated by the qualifications and examinations regulator in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Changes to the syllabus and specimen papers reflect the change in regulated status. There are no other changes to the syllabus or specimen assessment material.

The syllabus and specimen papers have been updated with the new name for Cambridge Assessment International Education.

**You are strongly advised to read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.**

Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2015 are still suitable for use with this syllabus.



'While studying Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International A Levels, students broaden their horizons through a global perspective and develop a lasting passion for learning.'

**Zhai Xiaoning**, Deputy Principal, The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China

Cambridge Assessment International Education  
1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU, United Kingdom  
Tel: +44 (0)1223 553554 Fax: +44 (0)1223 553558  
Email: [info@cambridgeinternational.org](mailto:info@cambridgeinternational.org) [www.cambridgeinternational.org](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org)

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