

# Annual Review 2004-2005



CAMBRIDGE ASSESSMENT



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE  
Local Examinations Syndicate

Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, a department of the University of Cambridge. Cambridge Assessment is a not-for-profit organisation.



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE  
ESOL Examinations  
English for Speakers of Other Languages



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE  
International Examinations



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International Examinations



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE  
ESOL Examinations

English for Speakers of Other Languages



# Introduction

The past year has been one of great significance for Cambridge Assessment with the launch of our new corporate brand at the forefront of developments. Changing our name from UCLES (University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate) was not simply a cosmetic exercise. It signalled our intention to become the leading world authority on assessment and our desire to influence the development of education policy and strategy around the world.

We are a department of the University of Cambridge and the largest assessment agency in Europe. We play a vital role in both developing and delivering assessment across the globe by offering qualifications through our three examination boards: OCR, University of Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) and University of Cambridge English for Speakers of Other Languages (Cambridge ESOL).

Assessment is the key to identifying and measuring achievement – it shows us when education works. Effective assessment enriches lives, broadens horizons and shapes futures. Qualifications are an international currency of opportunity - and it is assessment that gives them value.

Over the past year we have pioneered a wide array of projects, ranging from the formative assessment for learning tool – achieve – to launching the first four-unit A Levels in the UK and celebrating 20 years of the Cambridge IGCSE. We want to ensure that individuals make the most of their learning. By creating innovative new assessment tools we hope to encourage that personal development.

We constantly strive to be at the forefront of developments and to influence thinking on assessment. Our first Annual Review will give you an overview of highlights from the past year, including major developments within the key fields of E-Assessment, Innovation, Research and 14-19 education. To find out more about us and the work we do, please visit [www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk](http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk).

I hope you enjoy this Review.



Simon Lebus  
Group Chief Executive  
Cambridge Assessment

# The year that was...

## STEP BULATS

ESOL has launched the Business Language Testing Service (BULATS) in Tokyo, Japan, in conjunction with Japan's leading testing body, the Society for Testing English Proficiency (STEP). The agreement led to the launch of the jointly branded STEP BULATS scheme.



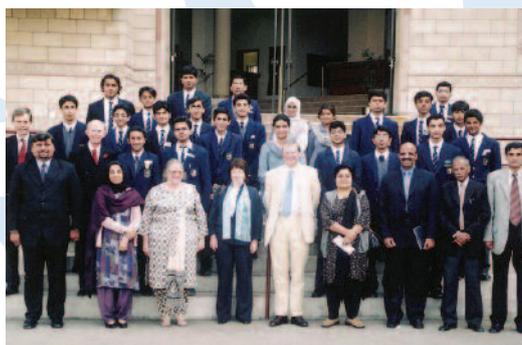
## Mill Wharf and National Trust Training

OCR owned Mill Wharf Training, together with the National Trust, introduced teacher training courses at heritage sites across the UK in December. Key courses such as "Risk Assessment in School Trips" are now delivered at Quarry Bank Mill and the Styal Estate. Mill Wharf Training and Consultancy Services has a twelve-year track record of responding to the continuing professional development of teachers, managers and support staff in primary, secondary and FE.



## Art Exhibition

In November, BBC Newsround presenter Lizo Mzimba officially opened the OCR National Art Exhibition. Work was selected from a range of GCSE, Applied GCSE and Entry Level Art & Design candidates of different abilities, resulting in an impressive and diverse display of exhibits.



## Bangladesh Conference

The Cambridge in Bangladesh Conference was hosted in November by CIE and the British Council Dhaka to raise awareness of the launch of O Level Bangladesh Studies which was developed in conjunction with teachers from Bangladesh.

## Bangalore Conference, India

CIE hosted a Getting Ahead in Learning Seminar in Bangalore, India, about how to improve students' learning. Professor David Hargreaves, a Fellow of Wolfson College, Cambridge, gave the key note speech focussing on the challenge for education in the twenty-first century, including assessment for learning and how to create independent learners.

# 2004-2005

## 14-19 Reform Conference

Following the publication of the government's response to Tomlinson's paper on 14-19 reform, we organised a conference, in partnership with The House magazine, for teachers and leading figures from within Westminster and Whitehall. Over 200 people attended the conference and listened to the views of high-profile speakers including MPs Ivan Lewis and Barry Sheerman and John Morris, Headmaster of Auckland Grammar School in New Zealand, before engaging in active debate about the proposed reforms.



## TKT Launched

A new international badge of professional knowledge was launched by Cambridge ESOL in April. The Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT) is a test for teachers of English which focuses on the core teaching knowledge needed by teachers of primary, secondary and adult learners, anywhere in the world.



## On the move

On 17th March, newly refurbished offices at 9 Hills Road, Cambridge, were opened by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, Professor Alison Richard. The building now serves as the Group's headquarters and a Cambridge base for OCR.



## Singapore minister visit

CIE welcomed Thaman Shanmugaratnam, Singapore's Minister for Education, and guests to Cambridge on 26th April. The delegation learnt more about the excellent work the CIE team carry out in Cambridge and worldwide.

## 2nd International ALTE conference

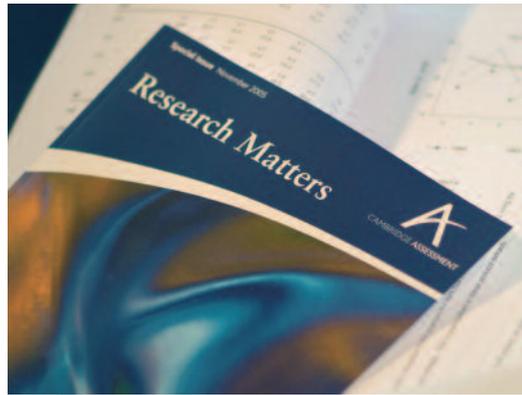
The 2nd International Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) conference was held in May and opened by Dr Mike Milanovic, Chief Executive of Cambridge ESOL. Over 300 delegates from 51 countries attended the event and listened to papers presented by ESOL staff.

## New data centre

A new data centre has been created in Cambridge to house the central printing facilities for Hills Road and Coventry offices. The centre, which also provides a consistent and cost effective approach to systems hosting, has significant business continuity benefits.

## International visitors

The Indonesian Ministry of Education visited CIE in July to find out more about the excellent assessment work we carry out in Cambridge.



## uniTEST

In September the first trials of a generic university admissions test called uniTEST took place. The test, which is being developed in conjunction with the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER), is a way of identifying talent in potential undergraduates.

# uniTEST



CAMBRIDGE ASSESSMENT

## New brand for a new era

The University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) unveiled a new brand name on 21st July. 'Cambridge Assessment' is designed to provide a focus for our aspiration to become a major world influencer. The new name builds on the traditions of both the 'Silicon Fen' Cambridge business and the Nobel Prize winning University.

## Research Matters launched

Our Research Division always strives to stay at the forefront of new technologies and developments. To make sharing this information amongst other research professionals easier they created Research Matters, a bi-annual publication produced for the wider assessment community.

## West Midlands Bursary Scheme

In September six of the brightest students from the West Midlands had their achievements recognised with a £2,500 a year bursary from OCR. All six students will be studying at Cambridge University with additional financial support, and received words of support from Cambridge alumni including Terry Waite and Sir Christopher Frayling.



### OCR introduces four-unit A Levels

In September 2005 OCR was the first awarding body to introduce four-unit A Levels in Law and Accounting, ahead of the UK White Paper on 14-19 reform's deadline of September 2008. These qualifications will help shape future developments and will be available for teaching from September 2006. OCR also launched a Critical Thinking A Level, and students will sit their first AS assessments for this in January 2006 celebrations.



### IGCSE 20th

A celebration and seminar event in September marked 20 years of the Cambridge IGCSE. In 2004/5 nearly 100,000 students studied for 324,047 exams in 124 different countries. CIE now offers 61 IGCSE qualifications, with the most popular being Mathematics.

## asset languages

### Asset Languages launch

In September 2005 the Asset Languages scheme went live. Funded by DfES to support the National Languages Strategy, the scheme will allow students to learn 26 languages from breakthrough to mastery level. Students are assessed separately on the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, using a proficiency scheme based on the Languages Ladder.

### Lord Kinnock visits

The Rt Hon Lord Kinnock of Bedwelty, Chair of the British Council, visited Cambridge Assessment in October to find out more about our national and international work. He enjoyed presentations about the work of Cambridge ESOL and CIE, as well as a demonstration of the new Asset Languages programme.



### Cambridge Assessment Network

In October we launched the Cambridge Assessment Network, a virtual centre of excellence in assessment that will offer professional development opportunities to people working in assessment, both in the UK and internationally. Global education experts including Baroness Onora O'Neill – renowned for her BBC Reith Lectures – debated the key issue of trust in the UK assessment system at the Network's "A Question of Confidence: Maintaining Trust in National Assessment Systems" conference.





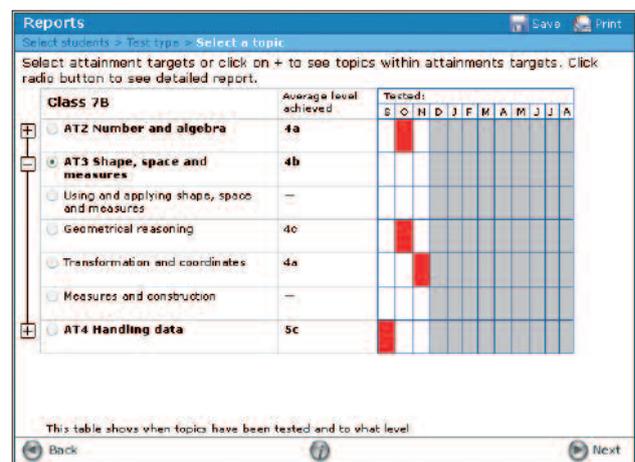
# E-Assessment

Our primary objective has always been to ensure that all learners benefit from the education they receive by having their skills and knowledge assessed accurately and fairly. Increasingly this will rely on the development of assessment methodologies and tools that can be utilised electronically. Therefore, E-Assessment is at the forefront of our work. All of our examination boards are utilising new technologies to aid and improve the assessment process.

Encouraging students to engage with their learning is one of the main aims of our innovative new project, achieve. In collaboration with the educational publishers Harcourt Assessment, we have created a formative assessment product that targets Key Stage 2 and 3 English, Maths and Science students via an interactive, online assessment for learning system. achieve will be rolled out to schools throughout 2006, providing diagnostic reporting, targeting and detailed teaching plans in addition to thousands of questions.

This year we saw the launch of computer-based versions of Cambridge ESOL's International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and Preliminary English Test (PET). The new systems offered in addition to paper based testing, generate a higher frequency of test dates, faster turn-around time for results and, with online entries, shorter lead in times for candidates. The tests go international in 2006.

In the UK, over 600 centres used OCR e-tests during 2004/5, with 60,000 on-screen tests delivered for Key and Basic skills. In addition, electronic portfolios have been used extensively across a wide range of our qualifications. To expand our offering we have joined leading IT provider RM to develop an on-screen marking tool, which is currently being trialled in an extensive pilot scheme.



The screenshot shows a 'Reports' window with a table of attainment targets for 'Class 7B'. The table has columns for 'Average level achieved' and 'Tested:' (with sub-columns for months B, O, N, D, J, F, M, A, M, J, J, A). Red bars in the 'Tested:' columns indicate when a topic was tested.

Class	Topic	Average level achieved	Tested:
			B O N D J F M A M J J A
Class 7B	AT2 Number and algebra	4a	[Red bar in B]
	AT3 Shape, space and measures	4b	[Red bar in B]
	Using and applying shape, space and measures	—	
	Geometrical reasoning	4c	[Red bar in N]
	Transformation and coordinates	4a	[Red bar in D]
	Measures and construction	—	
	AT4 Handling data	5c	[Red bar in B]

Cambridge ESOL's computer-based Business Language Testing Service (BULATS) is now well established and has moved into new markets. BULATS has been used by a wide variety of institutions across the globe including the French Chamber of Commerce Language Study Centres, the Shanghai civil service and EADS/ Airbus.

In February 2005 we championed a major revision of the worldwide technical standard for computer-based exchange of questions using Question and Test Interoperability (QTI). Funds granted to us by the Joint Information Systems Committee will allow further development of an open-source toolkit for developers of QTI-based systems.

# Research

Table 1. Average word length (letters per word) and sentence length (words per sentence)

Year	A	B	C	D	E	F
1980	45	43	43	44	42	42
1981	45	43	43	44	42	42
1982	45	43	43	44	42	42
1983	45	43	43	44	42	42
1984	45	43	43	44	42	42
1985	45	43	43	44	42	42
1986	45	43	43	44	42	42
1987	45	43	43	44	42	42
1988	45	43	43	44	42	42
1989	45	43	43	44	42	42
1990	45	43	43	44	42	42
1991	45	43	43	44	42	42
1992	45	43	43	44	42	42
1993	45	43	43	44	42	42
1994	45	43	43	44	42	42
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2012	45	43	43	44	42	42
2013	45	43	43	44	42	42
2014	45	43	43	44	42	42
2015	45	43	43	44	42	42
2016	45	43	43	44	42	42
2017	45	43	43	44	42	42
2018	45	43	43	44	42	42
2019	45	43	43	44	42	42
2020	45	43	43	44	42	42
2021	45	43	43	44	42	42
2022	45	43	43	44	42	42



# A

# Research

The integrity of assessments developed and delivered around the world is significantly influenced by research undertaken by Cambridge Assessment. This year our research capacity became the largest of its kind in Europe. The Research Division provides major research programmes to many educational institutions whilst evaluation and validation work shapes individual qualification development within our examination boards.

Our new bi-annual publication, *Research Matters*, allows us to share with the wider assessment community the research that we produce. A special edition dedicated to *Variations in Aspects of Writing in 16+ English Examinations between 1980 and 2004* was featured heavily in the UK national press. Focussing on vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure and non-standard English, the report compared recent examination results with those from 1994 and 1980. The study demonstrated that in many aspects of writing the samples from 2004 were better than those seen in 1994, but fell below the quality seen in equivalent samples from a 1980 O Level English Language examination.

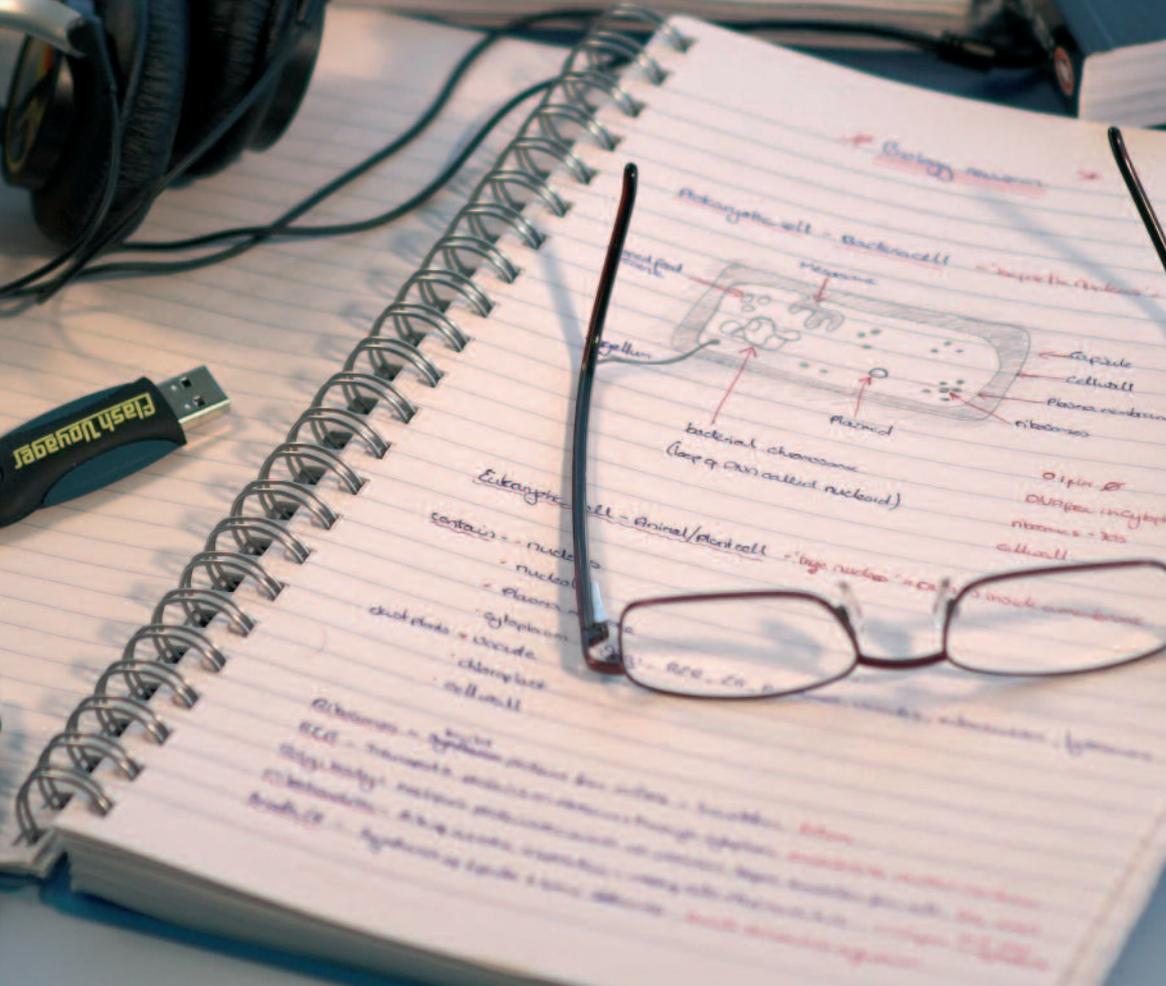
Online research undertaken by OCR to assess students' perceptions of science and science teaching significantly contributed to the development of new GCSE specifications which have received critical acclaim. Another research project reviewing customer needs in the light of the imposed withdrawal of GNVQ is also helping to shape future qualifications.

We continue to look for ways to increase our reach to examiners. CIE has been running trials to assess the potential for replacing face-to-face examiner co-ordination meetings with a "virtual" co-ordination process for certain subjects. Examiners will be able to interact via an online discussion forum. Results to date have indicated that online coordination is feasible with some subjects achieving similar consistency of marking as conventional methods. We are currently reviewing the trial's findings and will feed them into the on-going Electronic Script Management (ESM) research and development programme.



Three new volumes of the *Studies in Language Testing (SILT)* series, produced by Cambridge ESOL in conjunction with Cambridge University Press, have been published in the past year focusing on important developments in language testing and assessment, including the history of English language tests developed by Cambridge.

The Research Division has been supporting the development of digital assessment across the Group. Studies into strategies and methodologies for evaluation and validation in the e-environment as well as issues such as statistical methods of detecting malpractice, will help shape the modernisation programme.



# 14-19 Education

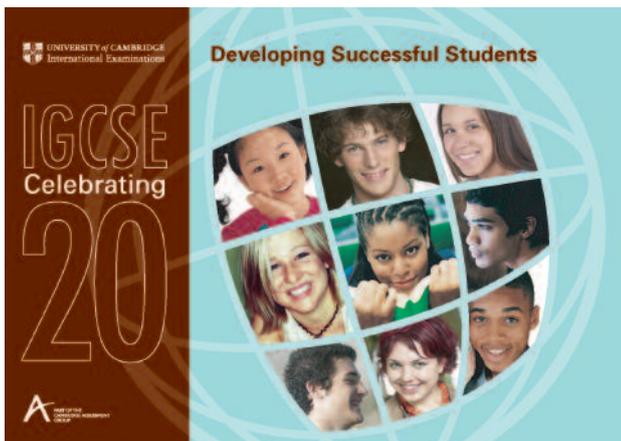
We are the largest provider of qualifications for this sector in the world, and we strongly believe in giving all students the opportunity to flourish. During a year of reforms to 14-19 Education in the UK, we have been well positioned to respond to new assessment and qualification demands.

OCR was the first awarding body to launch 4-unit A Levels and is the only awarding body to offer a full A Level in Critical Thinking. Demand for the new OCR Nationals, which offer a practical alternative to GCSE and A Levels whilst still attracting UCAS points, has exceeded expectations. For the third consecutive year more centres than ever before have chosen OCR thanks to a rich and seamless blend of vocational and general qualifications.

Overseas we have been involved with a wide variety of projects. We continue to assist with the Junior College Curriculum Review in Singapore, which has now completed syllabus and specimen paper production and received HE recognition for the new secondary qualification. Work is now being carried out on training and research.

Cambridge ESOL worked with the Chilean Ministry of Education to test students' reading and listening comprehension skills as a part of the Government's English Opens Doors strategy. A total of 12,000 students aged 13-14 and 17-18 took the tests under the supervision of our local partner – the Instituto Chileno de Cultura.

Our BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT) also had a very successful year with new university users resulting in a 30% increase in candidature. The Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA), used by many Cambridge colleges, is now taken on-line by around 75% of prospective Cambridge applicants.



This year we celebrated 20 years of the Cambridge International GCSE (IGCSE). An event in September drew together principals who pioneered the qualification, UK schools currently offering it and successful IGCSE students past and present. Following on from the celebrations we held an IGCSE seminar for 150 heads of department from UK independent schools. As a result, 2004/5 saw a 100 increase in the number of IGCSE enquiries from independent schools.



LITERARY  
KNOWING FACILITIES

WORKING GROUP

Human Nature  
Intuition

Foresight  
Blandness  
Agreeableness  
Youthfulness

Adaptiveness  
Gesture  
Mimicry

IMITATION  
Idealism  
Perfection

Expansiveness  
Refinement

Comparison  
Criticism

Reasoning  
Causality  
Planning

Humour  
Wit  
Mirthfulness

Constructiveness  
Ingenuity  
Dexterity

Acquiring  
Destructiveness

Association  
Actions  
Eventuality

Locality  
Exploration

Time  
Measure

Contrivance  
Tune  
Modulation

Desire for Liquids  
Alimentiveness

Solids  
Destructiveness

Mental  
Physical  
Individuality

Weight  
Form  
Size

Colour

Order  
Neatness  
System

Calculation  
Figures  
Estimates

Language  
Verbal Memory  
Verbal Expression

# Innovation

Fresh thinking, originality and new ideas have always been part of our ethos to provide excellence in assessment. As well as being rigorous and fair, we seek to incorporate fresh and exciting opportunities offered by the latest technological and academic developments. Innovation is therefore a vital aspect of everything we currently do, and everything we seek to achieve in the future.

In February 2004 we signed a major five-year contract with the UK Department for Education and Skills (DfES) to deliver the voluntary National Languages Recognition Scheme in 26 languages from Breakthrough to Mastery level. Asset Languages, as the scheme is now known, forms a unique suite of qualifications to support the Government's National Languages Strategy.

Using OCR's network of centres and Cambridge ESOL's internationally renowned expertise in language assessment, Asset Languages was piloted in September 2004. Around 40 centres representing primary, secondary and further education trialed external and teacher assessment materials and gave the project an overwhelmingly positive response.

The Asset Languages scheme became available to all in September 2005. Students can now be separately assessed on each of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, using a proficiency scheme based on the Languages Ladder. These proficiencies go on to create a series of short term targets which can be highly motivational for all ages and abilities. Assessment is demand-led with teachers being able to administer classroom tests at any time to suit their students. External assessment is available throughout the year for languages as diverse as French and Chinese to Urdu and Yoruba.



Another UK Government initiative in which we are heavily involved is Skills for Life – the national strategy for improving adult literacy, language and numeric skills. Cambridge ESOL provides external assessment of Skills for Life for tens of thousands of entrants, thereby giving teachers the freedom to teach and centres savings on overheads and administration costs.

Working to keep assessment fresh and innovative, OCR worked in partnership with Macromedia and Adobe to create a unique iMedia qualification. The two-level award enables students to gain accreditation for their interactive media skills and knowledge to enhance their future career prospects in the dynamic creative industry.



# Innovation

The Cambridge International Primary Programme was developed specifically for international education. Launched in April 2005, it provides a framework and tests for primary schools to develop their students' Maths, English and Science skills and knowledge. As the English Regulator withdraws its SAT tests from overseas schools we are already seeing a strong uptake in India, Argentina and Indonesia, with other countries expressing interest.

CIE is developing plans for a new Cambridge pre-university qualification as an alternative to International A and AS Level after receiving positive responses to an initial consultation paper. The qualification would prove that students had followed a particular programme with clearly expressed goals in a framework of strong educational value. The next phase of the consultation will take place in August 2006.

## uniTEST

We are currently developing a generic university admissions test for the UK in collaboration with the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER). The project, uniTEST, was successfully trialled in September 2005 and a large scale validity study will take place in May 2006.



The range of vocationally focussed English language qualifications we offer is continuing to expand. In the past year we have launched both the International Legal English Certificate (ILEC) and the Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT). ILEC is intended for both practising lawyers and as a preparatory tool for law students intending to continue their studies with further law courses containing a significant English language element. A number of legal associations already recognise ILEC and the first exam will be available in May 2006. TKT is a test for teachers of English which focuses on the core teaching knowledge needed by teachers of primary, secondary and adult learners, anywhere in the world. The test is suitable for experienced teachers as well as new entrants to the profession.



# Other developments

Our leading computer skills assessment programme, CLAiT, was adopted by major distance learning provider LearnDirect as its preferred IT qualification. OCR strengthened its position as the UK's leading provider of Basic Skills qualifications and saw strong growth with its new Administration and Business NVQ.

This year we celebrated the launch of the Data Centre – a state of the art facility which provides secure hosting for the 200 servers necessary for running a large organisation. In addition to housing the servers, the Data Centre also houses central printing facilities for Hills Road and Coventry to provide a consistent and cost effective approach to systems hosting and business continuity benefits. Underlying this commitment to producing fair and dependable assessments the Data Centre became the first examination board facility to be accredited with BS15000 and BS7799 secure status.

Development of Electronic Script Marking (ESM) has continued throughout the year. A number of successful pilots have been undertaken and the volume of live marks collected online has increased. Our examiners have received the first wave of online marking tool software (DOMS) and feedback has been positive. We now collect a significant number of entries on-line and the majority of results are issued on-line to centres and, in some cases, directly to candidates.



Our programme of work to support item commissioning, item banking, question paper production and computer based testing (CBT) has progressed well. The CBT system has been developed and deployed in trials across a number of assessments including our Preliminary English Test (PET), Asset Languages and CIE Checkpoint. Both the CBT and item banking systems are now integrated to facilitate the full automation of assessment production and delivery.

Structural changes to increase the effectiveness of our business have been implemented over the past year, including the first phase of the warehouse management system and major upgrades to our finance systems. In addition, we have a continuing programme of infrastructure work including upgrades to our wide area network (WAN) and local area networks (LAN) running alongside our building refurbishment programmes.

We would welcome any feedback or comments on our Annual Review so please do contact us either via email at [public.affairs@cambridgeassessment.org.uk](mailto:public.affairs@cambridgeassessment.org.uk) or telephone +44 (0) 1223 558307.

To find out more about Cambridge Assessment please visit [www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk](http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk)

For more information about our three examination boards please visit:

[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

[www.cie.org.uk](http://www.cie.org.uk)

[www.cambridgeesol.org](http://www.cambridgeesol.org)



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