

Achieve

Summer 2011



CAMBRIDGE ASSESSMENT



Welcome to *Achieve*

The latest news from Cambridge Assessment, the University's international exams group.

Is 14 the new 16?

Guest speaker Graham Stuart MP, Chair of the House of Commons' Education Select Committee, at the big debate. see below, continued page 3

Double digit growth for Cambridge IGCSE

For the fourth year in succession there has been double digit growth in worldwide entries. see page 6

“Let's not base our 14–16 strategy on myths and misunderstandings”

Top education experts agree that “it's the content [of a learning programme] and not the system [academic, technical or vocational] that matters” and “we should not see the issue as vocational versus academic”.

Nearly 100 people attended Cambridge Assessment's debate on 'Is 14 the new 16?' at the British Library in London. Over 1,000 more watched a live stream of the event online.

Speaking at the debate, Tim Oates, Group Director of Assessment Research & Development at Cambridge Assessment, shared some of the myths and misunderstandings that ought to be considered when reviewing the education system.

He also said there was an obsession with qualification-led change and pointed to the importance of the quality of vocational training programmes. “We consequently tinker with the form of qualifications rather than looking at the curricular form of these different routes. We should just stop pursuing the wrong goals. We shouldn't pursue parity of esteem. What we need to do is establish each route as being of high status in its own right by virtue of its fitness for purpose. Forget a tidy system. Very good systems are often very messy but they get people to the right places, with the right skills, knowledge and understanding.

Tim continued: “Throughout the system we need to emphasise the importance of the central elements of maths, science and literacy... we should not see the issues as vocational versus academic. We should see the issues not as establishing a unified system, because in all systems people make choices. We should make clear the basis of the choices, we should make clear the reality of routes, and

we should make sure through regulation, and through good design, all of those routes embody fitness for purpose.”

Professor Geoff Hayward, of the University of Leeds and Professor Ken Spours, from the Institute of Education, then discussed the pros and cons of a routed education system. *continued on page 3*



Tim Oates, Group Director of Assessment Research & Development at Cambridge Assessment.

According to an audience poll; 62 per cent agreed that externally set exams at age 16 are the most reliable method of validating that a student is ready to successfully go on to study subjects at a specialised level. 68 per cent felt that a routes system could work in the UK – and when this question was repeated again at the end of the debate the figure had increased to 77 per cent.



Amanda Spielman, Research & Policy Director of ARK Schools and recently appointed chair of the English exams regulator, Ofqual

Learning, teaching and the brain

The developing field of brain research and its implications for education will be the focus of this year's Cambridge Teachers' Conference on 11–13 September 2011.

Teachers from over 40 countries are expected to attend the event hosted by University of Cambridge International Examinations in Cambridge. A mix of keynote speeches and interactive workshops will be on the agenda. This annual event contributes towards best practice

in education, creating a platform for teachers to exchange ideas and develop practical resources to take back to their classrooms.

For more information and to register visit: www.cie.org.uk/2011ctc

English language experts speak up

The English language requirements for student visas were top of the agenda at English UK's Parliamentary reception at the House of Commons this May.

The event was sponsored by Cambridge ESOL and hosted by Robert Syms, Conservative MP for Poole. Speakers included English UK Chief Executive Tony Milns and Andrew Smith, Labour MP for Oxford East.

Also in attendance was Cambridge Liberal Democrat MP Julian Huppert and Dr Nick Saville from Cambridge ESOL (pictured). Dr Saville from Cambridge ESOL – who sponsored the event – said: "Supporting this event is part of our wider initiative to ensure more fairness in language testing for immigration."



Cambridge Liberal Democrat MP Julian Huppert and Dr Nick Saville from Cambridge ESOL.

The English Baccalaureate – what does it really mean?

For years there has been a philosophical discontinuity between lower and upper secondary education in the English system.

In primary and lower secondary, the National Curriculum has been strongly influenced by the encyclopaedic and pragmatic traditions, and has come to be a definitive statement of educational 'entitlement'.

By contrast, in upper secondary education, the essentialist tradition has continued to be influential. Once an accredited GCSE has been established, it is implicitly deemed to have as much educational value as any other; and so schools have had great freedom to offer whatever range of courses they choose, subject to the overall statutory requirement for breadth and balance. And for the same reason pupils have mostly had great freedom to select their preferred mix of courses.

From age 14 to age 16, English, maths and science are core subjects and typically account for half of teaching time. The other half has been allocated on the basis of demand, which for traditional academic subjects has been low in recent years; around a third or fewer of 14 year olds have chosen to study each of history, geography and a language.

In this context the UK Government's new 'English Baccalaureate' establishes a new curriculum principle: that by default a pupil aged 14-16 should spend a minimum of 70% rather than of 50% of their classroom time on 'core' academic subjects. This is a significant change, and it is not surprising that there has been controversy both around the list of subjects to be included in this extended core and around the impact of this rebalancing on other subjects. But schools are unquestionably responding fast, as they have done in the past to the other measures: the pathways and option choices on offer to 14 year olds this year look quite different to last year.

But despite the turbulence, at ARK Schools we welcome the new measure. We know that it will help steer pupils to the most demanding courses that they can sensibly undertake, and also reduce the extent to which bright but poorly-advised children inadvertently select themselves out of the most demanding A levels and university courses.

ARK Schools runs schools through the UK government's academies programme. It is part of the international children's charity ARK which runs a range of education, health and welfare projects in the UK, Africa, India and Eastern Europe.

A multilingual Europe

The performance of Portuguese students taking Cambridge English exams has steadily increased over the last six years, according to language experts Cambridge ESOL.

Speaking at an international conference on Portugal's position in a multilingual Europe, Cambridge ESOL's Hugh Moss presented candidate performance statistics for 2004 to 2010. Results showed that 90.5 per cent of Portuguese students who took the basic level English test Cambridge English: Key in 2010 passed compared to 88 per cent in 2004.



Rachel Le Juge, Training manager from Air France, discussing the airline's experience of integrating Business English exams into their training programme.



Cambridge ESOL's Hugh Moss addresses the audience at Academia das Ciências de Lisboa.

Hugh's presentation was one of the highlights of the international road show event: 'Portugal in a multilingual Europe: challenges and opportunities'. Held at the Academia das Ciências de Lisboa in February, the event was the latest in a series of European events on multilingualism hosted by language experts Cambridge ESOL.

Hugh Moss, who previously taught English in Portugal for over ten years, compared the performance of Portuguese candidates taking Cambridge English exams between 2004 and 2010 to their counterparts in Europe. The results were "very encouraging" and showed strong performance levels in Portugal with a general increase in performance over the six year period.

The event attracted over 100 policymakers, curriculum planners, head teachers and language teachers from Portugal and around Europe and was chaired by Dr Alberto Gaspar, the President of APPI (Associação Portuguesa de Professores de Inglês). Other speakers included Professor Piet van de Craen, Department of Linguistics, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), Brussels and Dr. Luísa Araújo from CRELL, Milan.

More recently the seminar was brought to Paris to discuss similar issues in the French context. Held at Paris's Alliance Française, the event included presentations from Air France, the British Embassy and the French government's Centre International des Etudes Pédagogiques.

“Let’s not base our 14–16 strategy on myths and misunderstandings”

continued from page 1

Professor Hayward said: “Our experience suggests that hard pressed HE admissions staff don’t want to become cognoscenti of complicated qualifications systems. I suspect the same is true of employers as well. They require clear signals requiring preparation to progress, which well designed tracked systems do seem to provide.” And he echoed Tim’s sentiments that it’s the content and not the system that matters.

He went on to say that the education challenge is “how to provide access to powerful knowledge for those young people who are often written off by that ‘light bulb’ dichotomy; bright and not so bright”.

By contrast, Professor Spours emphasised the importance of choice and flexibility in the system. He said: “We need a framework that people can make choices and can experience more holistic programmes in order to have greater movement as they change their mind throughout the 14–19 phase... We should not design systems that lock them in.”

He also said: “That means we build on A levels and everyone should take a research project at 14 and 16. If you’re going to develop young people’s capacity for education you’ve got to have them researching within the curriculum as they go through it. Not just to do three A levels. A levels in themselves may be decent subjects but they’re a pretty hopeless programme. We’ve got to think about curriculum and choice and flexibility within a more unified system.”

The debate was then led by three distinguished panellists. Dr Hilary Steedman, Centre for Economic Performance, London School of Economics and



top left (L:R) Ken Spours, Geoff Hayward, Tim Oates and Chair, Bene’t Steinberg, Group Director of Public Affairs at Cambridge Assessment.

above Members of the audience, including Mark Dawe, Chief Executive of OCR.

left (L:R) Dr Matt Grist, Senior Researcher, Demos; Dr Hilary Steedman, Centre for Economic Performance, London School of Economics and Political Science; Bene’t Steinberg, Group Director of Public Affairs at Cambridge Assessment; Christopher Morecroft, President, Association of Colleges; and Graham Stuart MP, Chair of the House of Commons’ Education Select Committee.

Political Science, drew on her extensive research of overseas systems. Dr Matt Grist, from the think tank Demos, shared his concerns that the current vocational in-school offer is not equipping many young people with the skills and knowledge they require to find stable employment. And Christopher Morecroft, President of the Association of Colleges, drew on his extensive experience as a practitioner to throw a practical light on the subject.

Finally special guest Graham Stuart MP, Chair of House of Commons’ Education Select Committee, shared his views with the audience and gave a hint as to what all this could mean for the future.

For those who missed the event, films, podcasts and presentations, can be viewed at www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/ca/Viewpoints/Viewpoint?id=136882

A ‘Cambridge’ gives you entry to Oz

Australian Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Chris Bowen MP, has announced that the Cambridge English Advanced exam (also known as Certificate in Advanced English, CAE) will be recognised for Australian student visas.

The new rules give students who want to study in Australia the opportunity to use this secure international qualification to prove that they have the language skills they need for academic success. Previously, IELTS was the main English language test accepted by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) for Australian visa purposes.

“I am very pleased Cambridge has been chosen as one of the new English test providers and I am confident they will provide a valuable service to student visa applicants,” Mr Bowen said.

Cambridge English Advanced, run by Cambridge ESOL, is taken in 110 countries around the world and recognised by more than 2,800 organisations – including nearly 50 Australian universities and colleges.

Dr Mike Milanovic, the CEO of Cambridge ESOL, welcomed the Minister’s announcement and said the decision ensured there is greater choice in the English language tests available for student visas:

“Cambridge English Advanced goes beyond simply providing a snapshot of the student’s knowledge

of English. It gives an in-depth assessment of their ability to communicate in an academic environment. Most students who take Cambridge English Advanced follow a preparation course, which means that they’re really well prepared for studying in an English speaking institution.”

As well as the four skills tested by other exams – reading, writing, speaking and listening – the exam covers knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, increasing the reliability of results. It also includes a face-to-face speaking test with two examiners which gives a more rigorous assessment of the ability to use English than is possible with an online test.

Cambridge English Advanced is particularly popular with students in Europe and Latin America. Preparing for the exam enables them to master English to a degree that allows them to communicate confidently in the education and professional world.

Details of the new arrangements will be published by the Australian Government’s Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) on their website soon: www.immi.gov.au

Ready for HE?

Nearly all (94 per cent) first year students feel their secondary education could have prepared them better for university, according to a recent survey by University of Cambridge International Examinations.

Over 1,000 undergraduates were surveyed in March 2011 to find out their attitudes to the transition from secondary education to university. Half of current first-year undergraduates said they lacked the necessary independent study and research skills when they arrived at university. Just under a third (31 per cent) said they would have benefited from more in-depth study of a subject earlier on in their education.

Recognition of the benefits of independent study skills and in-depth subject knowledge is leading to increasing demand for Cambridge Pre-U among UK students. A total of 142 state and independent schools in the UK now offer the post-16 qualification and students at around 90 schools will sit Cambridge Pre-U exams this year. Another 300 schools have registered interest.

Commenting on the survey findings, Ann Puntis, Chief Executive, University of Cambridge International Examinations, said: “We consulted closely with schools and universities on how the curriculum could help develop independent learning and thinking skills. The outcome is Cambridge Pre-U. This research shows that we were right to develop a curriculum that supports schools in helping students prepare for university.”

Entry to HE – the moral imperative

Tests used to help Higher Education (HE) institutions differentiate between top applicants must be fair, valid and transparent, according to a top academic.

Speaking at a recent Cambridge Assessment Network seminar, Tim Oates, Group Director of Assessment Research and Development, said that: "Additional research and validation should be carried out for each and every admissions test used by an HE institution. We should know how it measures, and we should know and understand how performance in the test relates to the course to which people have applied. There is a technical and moral imperative to have this research in place."

Admissions testing is a much-debated topic, particularly in the context of the 'widening participation' agenda which seeks to address discrepancies in the take-up of HE opportunities between different social groups.

A popular myth is that additional tests are leading to a culture of testing twice. However, Tim says that there is no evidence to suggest this. Furthermore, some experts believe that curriculum tests should be used as part of the admissions process, but Tim warned that these tests look at the performance of schools themselves – and not the students.

Guest speaker Professor John Laycock from the Department of Medicine at Imperial College London, explained how using a subject-specific test, such as the BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT), can provide additional information for use in the admissions process for highly competitive courses.

Cambridge Assessment has been providing research-led and evidence-based solutions for major Higher Education institutions for over 20 years and develops and delivers carefully targeted admissions tests. The BMAT, for example, is used for applicants to highly competitive medical, biomedical and veterinary medicine courses at a number of UK institutions. It believes that admissions tests should only be used as a part of the overall admissions process – and only when test scores provide additional information that is clearly distinguishable from other parts of the process: interviews, application forms and other forms of academic assessment such as A levels and Cambridge Pre-U.

Find out more about the use of admissions testing for HE entry through our podcast programme and video available on www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk



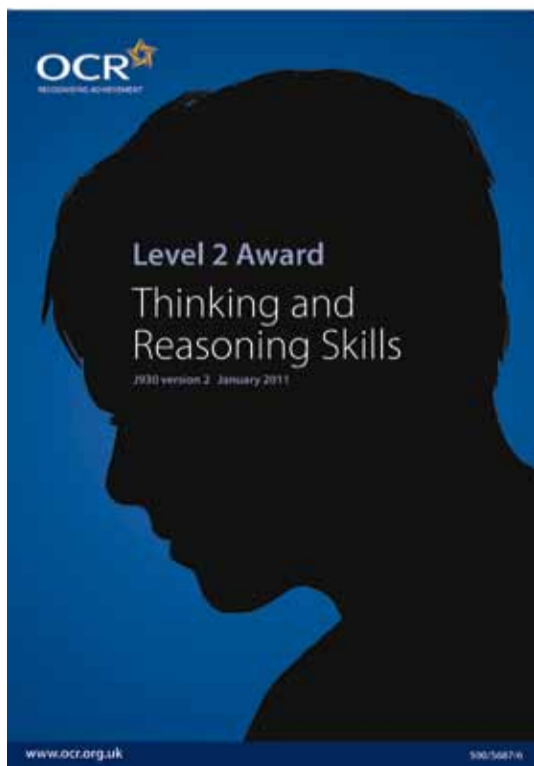
Tim Oates, Group Director of Assessment Research and Development at Cambridge Assessment.

Thinking and reasoning vital

Demand from employers and universities for improved thinking and problem-solving skills in young people are being addressed by a new qualification.

OCR's Level 2 Thinking and Reasoning Skills course aims to develop thinking skills across all subjects, from the Arts and Humanities to Science.

Pupils at Manchester Grammar School, the largest independent boys' school in the country with an outstanding academic record, have always secured places at the UK's top universities. Yet the school's teachers were keen to respond to feedback that students sometimes lacked basic skills when it came to putting their arguments and opinions forward in a coherent way.



"With so much information coming at them, and through so many different electronic devices and media, it's not easy for young people to filter out what is useful and what isn't, and then form structured opinions and arguments themselves," explains Dennis Brown, Head of Religion and Philosophy. So the school got involved with a Thinking and Reasoning pilot run by OCR in 2009.

Dennis continued: "The course is highly skills driven and the students particularly enjoy the variety of learning, especially as it crosses different subjects and isn't simply pigeon-holed as a single subject such as Latin or English or Science.

"What we've found is that the skills learned are completely transferable. In fact, it can actually help students to achieve higher grades in their other classes because they are using thinking and reasoning to build and deliver their arguments, through analysis and the corroboration of evidence, for example.

"Part of the beauty of this qualification is that it's an osmotic process – all of a sudden the penny drops and students realise they've learned a completely new skill and put it to use in a completely different situation."

The Thinking and Reasoning qualification has grown in popularity at the school and this year, double the number of boys – up to 200 – will take the exam. OCR's new qualification is now being used on UCAS application forms as the boys seek university places in an increasingly competitive market www.ocr.org.uk/thinkingreasoningskills

Keeping up with the (international) Jones'

There was a lively debate about the comparative study of education systems from across the globe at Cambridge Assessment's eighth Parliamentary Research Enquiry at the Houses of Parliament.

Download the podcast at www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk to hear what the following speakers had to say:

- Professor David Raffe, Professor of Sociology of Education, University of Edinburgh
- Dr Marian Sainsbury, Head of Centre for Evidence and Evaluation, National Foundation for Educational Research Professor
- Lorraine Dearden, Research Fellow in the Education, Employment and Evaluation Sector, Institute for Fiscal Studies and is Professor of Economics and Social Statistics, Institute of Education

The event, chaired by Graham Stuart MP, Chair of the House of Commons' Education Select Committee, was part of Cambridge Assessment's regular series of Parliamentary Research Enquiries designed to bring together members of the research, academic and education communities with policy makers and influencers.

A level reform needs to respond to needs of HE

A levels can't be reformed without taking into account the system in which they operate in, says the head of Cambridge Assessment.

Speaking at a recent debate on Higher Education (HE) Futures, Simon Lebus, Group Chief Executive, called again for more involvement from HE institutions in the design and development of UK A levels.

He commented that a lack of incentive, such as career progression or recognition, for staff in HE institutions to collaborate was having an adverse effect. He also called for there to be more of a focus on preparing students for the transition to HE, citing recent research by Cambridge Assessment's international exams board which found that 94 per cent of UK undergraduates

felt their secondary education could have prepared them better for the academic rigour of university.

A final word of caution was issued in relation to the admissions process. As the number of admissions has escalated, the investment figure has halved. As a result, the system relies more crudely on public exam results without taking other factors into account. Simon commented that the admissions process needs to be more holistic to ensure equity and access, and that students end up on the right courses and in the right HE institutions.

Simon's comments were made during his participation in a panel debate on 'Higher Education: ensuring access through partnerships with schools' together with Liam Owens, Head of Student Recruitment, Edge Hill University, Chair, Higher Education Liaison Officers Association (HELOA) and Dr Graeme Atherton, Executive Director, Aimhigher London West, Central and North (WECAN) Partnership.

Further information about Cambridge Assessment's consultation on HE/exam board engagement can be found at www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk

Cambridge expands role in global education reform

An education partnership emerging between University of Cambridge International Examinations and the Mongolian Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, is the latest in a series of international education reform projects involving Cambridge.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in April 2011 to support a strategic partnership. This will include the introduction of Cambridge international education programmes into a new model of bilingual school in Mongolia, as well as development of the national schools' curriculum, resources and training for teachers. The aim is to give Mongolia an education system of international standard.

The first bilingual state school in Mongolia was opened in September 2010. The 'New Era' school offers instruction in both English and Mongolian, linked



The MoU was signed in Mongolia by Ann Puntis, Chief Executive of University of Cambridge International Examinations, and Mr Yondon Otgonbayar, Minister of Education, Culture and Science, in the presence of Simon Lebus, Group Chief Executive, Cambridge Assessment, and Mr Sukhbaatar Batbold, Prime Minister of Mongolia.

to internationally recognised qualifications from Cambridge including Cambridge IGCSE. The Ministry intends to open a further 29 bilingual schools from September 2012, opening up global opportunities for young Mongolians.

Ann Puntis, Chief Executive, University of Cambridge International Examinations said: "Mongolia has its own vision for educational reform, and we are delighted to

share our expertise with them. We are exploring how we can work together to implement the reforms, and our discussions to date show great commitment from both sides."

University of Cambridge International Examinations works with over 30 ministries of education worldwide, and is currently engaged in education reform projects in Egypt and Bahrain.

Connecting education experts



Delegates from the 6th Cambridge Assessment Network International Study Programme outside Madingley Hall, Cambridge. The 24 delegates came from countries including Barbados, Botswana, Brunei, Jamaica, Malaysia, and Kenya, to share best practice in assessment and discuss issues faced by assessment experts around the world.

Double digit growth for Cambridge IGCSE

For the fourth year in succession there has been double digit growth (up 17 per cent on June 2010) in worldwide Cambridge IGCSE entries.

In the UK, entries have almost doubled since last year. There has also been significant growth in Egypt, China, Indonesia and Malaysia.

Take up of new Cambridge IGCSEs in Global Perspectives and International Mathematics from University of Cambridge International Examinations is also growing worldwide. Global Perspectives is now being taught in nearly 40 countries, including China, the US, India, Oman, Hong Kong and the Netherlands. International Mathematics, which was specifically developed for schools offering an international curriculum, is being taught in 70 schools worldwide.

The international exam board is currently seeking accreditation from the UK regulator, Ofqual, for Global Perspectives and International Mathematics so that they can be made available to state schools in the UK. Cambridge IGCSE Mandarin Chinese (Foreign Language) is also pending Ofqual accreditation.

Nineteen Cambridge IGCSE subjects can already be taught in UK state schools, with over 500 other UK schools offering at least one Cambridge IGCSE subject. Jonathan Curran, a history teacher at Dr Challoner's Grammar School in Amersham said the flexibility of Cambridge IGCSE is one of its key appeals: "Without needing to worry too much about examinations until towards the end of the course, you can drill down into topics that students are really finding interesting... Cambridge IGCSE History is good for both the most capable students, and the weaker students."



Global perspectives

Exploring contemporary global issues to develop skills in research, analysis and communication is the basis for a new qualification.

The Cambridge International AS level in Global Perspectives gives learners the opportunity to engage with global topics such as the impact of the internet, migration and work, the ethics and economics of food, and the religious-secular divide in the 21st century.

As there are usually no right or wrong answers, learners develop the skills to explore issues from

different – and sometimes opposing – perspectives. Students showcase their development of a reasoned argument by preparing a presentation to address contrasting perspectives

The suite of Global Perspectives qualifications, from University of Cambridge International Examinations, also includes Cambridge IGCSE Global Perspectives and Cambridge Pre-U Global Perspectives and Independent Research. The qualifications are designed to give students the skills they need to make a successful transition to the next stage of their education.

Helen Eccles, Director of Development at University of Cambridge International Examinations said: "We are very excited about this latest development in our Global Perspectives suite. We realise that learners in the twenty-first century need to be prepared in a different way for further study or work – these sort of skills will be so important. We want our students to become well prepared by acquiring skills during their Cambridge studies."



Big three debate vocational education

Cambridge Assessment, the Association of Colleges and the Association of School and College Leaders will be hosting joint fringe events on 'What next for vocational education?' at all three main political party conferences this year.

The events will provide an opportunity to discuss some of the key recommendations of the Wolf Report; and to discuss with those involved in the provision of vocational education the detail of how those recommendations should be taken forward.

Given the combined perspectives and experiences provided by the panel – a leading provider of vocational qualifications, the representative body for colleges, and the professional association for secondary school and college leaders – we feel this should be a valuable discussion about the next steps for vocational education.

A round up of our proceedings at Party Conference will be published in the autumn issue of Achieve.

Comparability of examination standards

With many new qualifications being introduced and international comparisons taking place, comparability is becoming increasingly important in the assessment world.



Comparability of examination standards is a multifaceted and contentious area of research, involving practical dilemmas and complex theoretical modelling of the issues, which have been complicated by a lack of clarity in the terminology being used. Finding effective methodological solutions to inform practice is a challenge which has been exercising researchers in the field for many years.

Hear what Cambridge Assessment experts have to say on the issues surrounding comparability by visiting: www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/ca/Spotlight/Detail?tag=comparability

Cambridge Assessment has been involved in research into the comparability of examination standards for many years and has a dedicated programme of research in this important field.

Engineering a better education

The £22 million JCB Academy in Staffordshire, the first school of its kind to specialise in a technically-orientated education for 14 to 19 year olds in the country, is using OCR's qualifications to achieve its aims.

Funded by the Department for Education but sponsored by JCB, the Academy's aim is to nurture the engineering and business leaders of the future. Pupils at the Academy, which was officially opened by Prince Charles in Spring 2011, follow a unique curriculum which is 60 per cent technical and 40 per cent academic. The Academy is an example of a University Technical College (UTC), a new concept in education backed by the Coalition Government.

OCR's Engineering and Business Diploma is a core qualification on the JCB curriculum, supported by our GCSE, A levels and OCR Nationals in a wide range of subjects including Maths, Science, ICT and German.

Building on the success of the JCB Academy, OCR is working with other UTCs around the country to support technical curriculums with a flexible range of qualifications. Discussions are now taking place with more than 10 proposed colleges around the country to create bespoke packages of OCR qualifications to suit individual college needs.

OCR's Charlotte Bosworth commented: "We worked in partnership with The JCB Academy, and with employer and HE partners, to build a really exciting, engaging curriculum. The technical education provided is inspirational for young people, and of great value to the national economy through the skills it will provide to our manufacturing and engineering companies."



Boost for English teachers

More recognition and flexible study options for English teachers.

Earlier in the year Ofqual, the UK regulator, confirmed that Cambridge ESOL's Delta qualification for teachers is at the same level of study as a Master's degree or a professional diploma in the UK, Ireland and other European Countries. This was the result of Delta being placed at level 7 of the UK government's Qualification and Credit Framework.

"Teachers holding this qualification demonstrate a very high level of expertise indeed and we're delighted by this acknowledgment from Ofqual," said Dr Mike Milanovic, Cambridge ESOL's Chief Executive. "This reflects the quality standards associated with the Delta qualification which is great news for teachers and the millions of students around the world learning English."

This year also saw the issue of a new online blended learning course for those wanting to gain a CELTA qualification – a teaching qualification taken by over 10,000 people each year. Cambridge ESOL's Liz Robinson comments: "We developed the online CELTA course as an alternative to the already popular face-to-face option. The new course combines online study with classroom activity which increases flexibility for trainee English teachers juggling other demands."

Polish schools adopt Cambridge English

Students and teachers in Poland will now be able to improve their English language learning thanks to Cambridge language experts.

Cambridge ESOL has signed an agreement with the leader of Polish non-public education, STO – the Association of Civic Schools – to offer Cambridge English exams in schools throughout Poland, working with Warsaw-based exam centre Lang LTC.

"We're working really hard to improve the standards of language learning amongst children and teenagers in Poland," says Arek Jaworski, Cambridge ESOL's Development Manager for Central Europe. "Many STO schools are already integrating Cambridge English tests in their curriculums and this collaboration will widen this reach further."

The Executive Board of the Association of Civic Schools in Poland say the project is an important first step in a wider education initiative. Anna Okońska, the Chair of STO says: "Language education is one of our strategic aims for this year and we've now taken the first step in implementing this important programme."

Under the project, existing STO teachers will be able to upgrade their teaching knowledge and train as Cambridge ESOL examiners at Lang LTC. There will also be preparation sessions for those taking part in a CLIL programme (Content and Language Integrated Learning) where staff can learn how to teach various subjects in English.

World of Science

World of Science, OCR's digital science game, is moving from strength to strength. Launched in April, it's so far exceeded 1.6 million plays and the tool has now generated, in total, around 80,000 visitors to OCR's website and 23,000 downloads of OCR's new GCSE science specifications. If you haven't already seen it for yourself, log on to www.ocr.org.uk/worldofscience



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Face-to-face

The UK's largest ever arts project is being launched in schools and colleges this spring to help celebrate HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee and London Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012.

As part of project Face Britain, run by The Prince's Foundation for Children and the Arts, UK exam board OCR is helping to make it part of the curriculum.

Mark Dawe, OCR Chief Executive, is enthusiastic: "We're excited about the opportunity to be involved with this project, which inspires young people to create something unique based on activities right across the curriculum."

As well as encouraging every young person to create a self portrait – breaking a Guinness World Record in the process – the project complements a broader curriculum. OCR is supporting participation in the classroom in a range of subjects including History, Citizenship and ICT as well as Art and Design.

For further information about the project, visit: www.facebritain.org.uk

Face Britain

The Prince's Foundation for
Children & the Arts



Better value for FE

A new initiative that aims to provide better value for large colleges and FE networks is being launched – good news for a sector currently experiencing a funding squeeze.

The new approach means colleges and providers can work with UK exam board OCR to create bespoke packages of qualifications to suit their key programmes of learning, supported by resources such as the best publisher materials and IT, and tap into OCR's expertise

in assessment to identify and deliver the most appropriate form of accreditation.

OCR is currently working in a pilot partnership scheme with two major FE networks centred on Westminster Kingsway College in London and North Hertfordshire College. Based on the success of this pilot which is part of a publicly funded Skills Funding Agency project, OCR is looking to go into partnership with more FE networks seeking to gain similar advantages from a customised qualification and support model.

Cambridge English meets UK immigration requirements

New lists of approved Secure English Language Tests (SELTs) published by the UK Border Agency this spring, include Cambridge English exams.

Cambridge English qualifications have satisfied the new English language requirements for all categories of visa for immigration to the UK, including visas for study under the Tier 4 regulations.

Dr Mike Milanovic, Chief Executive of Cambridge ESOL, said: "If language tests are used for immigration they must be valid, secure and provide an accurate measure of an individuals' ability. Cambridge English exams are designed to meet all of these criteria."

The Cambridge English qualifications, developed by Cambridge ESOL, are closely linked to the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – which the UK Border Agency has used to specify minimum requirements for each category of visa. Cambridge English qualifications are taken by over 3.25 million people a year in 130 countries and recognised by more than 12,000 government departments, universities and employers around the world.

A full list of SELTs published by the UK Border Agency includes the following Cambridge English qualifications:

- Cambridge English: Proficiency (CPE)
- Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE)
- Cambridge English: First (FCE)
- Cambridge English: Preliminary (PET)
- Cambridge English: Key (KET) (including CEFR level A1 certificates)
- Cambridge English: Business Higher (BEC Higher)
- Cambridge English: Business Vantage (BEC Vantage)
- Cambridge English: Business Preliminary (BEC Preliminary)
- International Legal English Certificate
- International Certificate of Financial English
- IELTS
- BULATS Online (certificated version)
- ESOL Skills for Life (accepted at five levels — Entry 1, Entry 2, Entry 3, Level 1 and Level 2)