01 OUR MISSION
02 DELIVERING EXCELLENCE IN ASSESSMENT
03 INFLUENCING THINKING
04 A RESPONSIBLE APPROACH
05 DEVELOPMENT, DELIVERY AND RESEARCH
06 OUR GROUP
OUR MISSION

Established over 150 years ago, Cambridge Assessment owns and manages the University’s three exam boards and carries out leading-edge academic and operational research on assessment in education. We are a not-for-profit organisation.

Our mission is to promote excellence in education. We do this by playing a leading role in developing and delivering educational assessment in over 160 countries around the world. We have a deep-seated belief in the value of education and we work with our stakeholders to ensure that all our assessments support high quality learning.

We are an integral part of education and training worldwide covering all aspects from teacher training, through vocational and general qualifications, to curriculum development.

Our highly regarded research-led and evidence-based approach means our qualifications are recognised by universities, employers and official bodies across the globe.

We have a strong track record in advising governments and education bodies on education reform and engage regularly with policy makers on the education agenda, and how best to provide learners with the knowledge and skills that they need.
Delivering assessment and influencing thinking
At Cambridge Assessment we have two overarching areas of expertise – delivering assessment and influencing thinking.

We pride ourselves on world class processes and systems that ensure we deliver the right assessments to the right candidates and get them their results on time. And we believe that it is our role, as experts in assessment and a body independent of government, to influence, advise and offer guidance on education policy and strategy around the world.
Assessment and test design
As an organisation with over 150 years experience in assessment, we are well placed both to support educational systems and help with their development. We work with education ministries around the world to develop national assessment programmes, bringing to bear our global expertise and knowledge.

We believe that educational integrity should be at the heart of all assessment and that tests and qualifications are only of value if they support the learning process and accurately reflect an individual’s knowledge and understanding.

To achieve this, all our assessments are developed in line with the Cambridge Approach – a code of best practice principles. The principles emphasise strongly the need for manuals for individual assessments: detailed criteria and requirements linked to specific tests and examinations, with these reflecting their different purposes, measurement models, modes of assessment and modes of operation. We were the first UK exams group to establish such a code.

We have a strong reputation for quality of service that has been earned over decades and achieve many internationally recognised quality management standards.
Assessment and test design
Curriculum development
Monitoring and evaluation
Quality assurance in assessment
Teacher and trainer development
DELLIVERING EXCELLENCE – FIVE KEY CAPABILITIES

1. Assessment and test design
   In addition to our range of tests we offer customised assessment services that deliver all the benefits of Cambridge certification. Tests can be integrated into existing regional or national frameworks.

2. Curriculum development
   We offer a broad range of specialist services designed to help governments and education bodies around the world define, achieve and maintain learning excellence.

3. Monitoring and evaluation
   We provide expert evaluations and benchmarking of qualifications and syllabuses. This adds international credibility and recognition to national examinations. We also have extensive experience in the training, monitoring and evaluation of examiners.

4. Quality assurance in assessment
   We offer a range of quality assurance services starting with curriculum and syllabus evaluation and continuing to end-certification and on-going validation of standards. We have also developed a self-assessment framework for ministries and examination boards to assess their own performance and training needs.

5. Teacher and trainer development
   We work with governments to reform education systems and help localise examinations by training officials, teachers, markers and examiners. Our training and support services are extensive.
Examples of how we deliver excellence in assessment

DELIVERING ASSESSMENT EXCELLENCE IN OTHER INDUSTRIES
We have forged strong links with IT industry partners, such as Cisco, Microsoft and Comptia, to develop a range of IT qualifications. We have also worked with companies such as IBM to ensure that their internal training programmes allow staff to achieve an IT Apprenticeship.

TEACHER AND TRAINER DEVELOPMENT
We provide support for teachers through a package of training, seminars and reference material. We hold over 2,300 training workshops and seminars a year ranging from an accredited assessment programme to training on specific syllabuses. In addition, the Cambridge Assessment Network specifically facilitates the sharing of knowledge through its training activities for people working in assessment.

ASSESSMENT AND TEST DESIGN
We have created qualifications with educators, industry leaders and learners to ensure assessment is relevant and fit for purpose. In the UK this model has given us the Critical Thinking A Level, highly innovative approaches to Science, Maths, History and Geography, Cambridge Nationals and the Cambridge Pre-U.
In the UK we have been working in partnership with the JCB Academy – the first school of its kind to specialise in a technically-orientated education for 14 to 19 year olds. We have been able to bring our expertise in curriculum, assessment and qualifications to the development of its curriculum – not only to ensure young people achieve top grades but also to develop the key skills essential for success in the world of work. Building on this success, we are working with other University Technical Colleges around the country to support technical curriculums with a flexible range of qualifications.

SUPPORTING GLOBAL ASSESSMENT NEEDS

Working with the British Council and IDP: IELTS Australia we established IELTS, the world’s leading test of English for speakers of other languages, for immigration and higher education taken by over 1.4 million candidates a year in 120 countries. It is used as the main language qualification for immigration to Australia and Canada.
Examples of how we deliver excellence in assessment

**Curriculum development**

We have worked in partnership with ministries of education, qualifications authorities and examination and assessment boards around the world for over 150 years. For example, since 1982 we have helped to shape and establish Singapore’s education system. Throughout a number of reforms, Singapore’s ‘Cambridge Connection’ – built on mutual trust and understanding – continues to contribute to an educational system that is recognised for high-quality outcomes around the world. Every year, tens of thousands of secondary students take Singapore-Cambridge qualifications. In other parts of the world, such as Egypt and Bahrain in the Middle East, Namibia and Botswana in Sub-Saharan Africa and Mongolia and Kazakhstan in Central Asia, we work with governments to reform education systems and provide curriculum development and assessment advice to those responsible for designing and implementing change.

**Monitoring and evaluation**

We provide consultancy and benchmarking for governments worldwide. For example, we hosted events to discuss the wider context of language assessment with policy makers and academics. We also actively support the Council of Europe’s Common European Framework of Reference (which we helped to create) now used worldwide as a framework for clearer understanding of the levels of language learning – and we provide the official samples.

**Assessment and test design**

We have worked in partnership with ministries of education, qualifications authorities and examination and assessment boards around the world for over 150 years. For example, since 1982 we have helped to shape and establish Singapore’s education system. Throughout a number of reforms, Singapore’s ‘Cambridge Connection’ – built on mutual trust and understanding – continues to contribute to an educational system that is recognised for high-quality outcomes around the world. Every year, tens of thousands of secondary students take Singapore-Cambridge qualifications. In other parts of the world, such as Egypt and Bahrain in the Middle East, Namibia and Botswana in Sub-Saharan Africa and Mongolia and Kazakhstan in Central Asia, we work with governments to reform education systems and provide curriculum development and assessment advice to those responsible for designing and implementing change.
Virtual learning environments, electronic portfolios and mobile technologies have now become integral in modern education, reaching previously untapped areas of assessment. Our focus is not simply to make existing pen-and-paper tests electronic but to explore ways that computers can add real value to assessment. We have a vital role to play in delivering technological solutions, reflecting on any shift in practice and influencing how technology can support assessment.

We invest heavily in quality management systems and state-of-the-art facilities. We distribute 48 million items annually to 161 countries. In addition, our IT operations are ISO accredited – an international standard for quality management systems. This means that teachers, candidates, examiners and employees can continue to have confidence that our IT operations and systems are managed to the highest levels in terms of quality and security.
Teacher and trainer development
Influencing thinking Cambridge Assessment

INFLUENCING THINKING

In addition to our work in test delivery and development, we also offer guidance on education policy and strategy around the world.

We use our expertise to help shape thinking by sharing our views and presenting our research on assessment. Our research capability is instrumental in providing the evidence base for key areas of assessment strategy and its work is widely published.

We use our expertise in assessment to stimulate debate and help to shape thinking on education issues.

It is important to provide explanation, information and support to improve public understanding. For example, we held a debate on exam standards to clarify the public understanding of the different examination standard issues and to establish whether they were rising or falling. An important element of this campaign was to present our report, findings and recommendations to the UK Government.
MAKING OUR VOICE HEARD

Through our Parliamentary Research programme we bring together members of the research, academic and education communities with policy makers and influencers. We look to provide an opportunity for those working in educational research to present the evidence base to policy makers.

TACKLING TOUGH TOPICS – EXAM STANDARDS

Our campaign on exam standards began with a Parliamentary Research Seminar which included representatives from the House of Lords, government departments, universities, schools and assessment agencies. We then took the debate online which enabled us to open up the discussion to thousands from the education community. Finally we held a live debate bringing together over 100 practitioners and experts. This event was also broadcast live on the internet and over 1,000 people from around the world engaged with the debate online. Other campaign topics have included ‘Is 14 the new 16?’, ‘Educating an interconnected world’ and ‘Critical Thinking’.
SHARING OUR EXPERTISE

For many years we have worked with the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessments Authority to benchmark standards and facilitate international recognition of Hong Kong students seeking to enter British universities. Peter Hill, former Secretary General, Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority, summed it up by saying, “The collaboration with University of Cambridge International Examinations is crucial to the success of the assessment reforms”.

INFLUENCING POLICY – THE ROLE OF THE REGULATOR

We ran a hard fought campaign through both Houses of Parliament to persuade politicians to alter the law setting up Ofqual, the UK exams regulator. Our suggested changes enabled Ofqual to act as a genuinely independent standards-orientated regulator.
We agreed with Government that Higher Education (HE) should have a greater role in the design of post-16 qualifications in the UK and we explored how best HE could re-engage with A Level design, consulting widely with academics through colloquia, seminars and discussion groups.

We produced the policy paper *A Better Approach to Higher Education / Exam Board interactions for Post-16 Qualifications* laying out how Government could support such an approach. Our proposals were welcomed by the Universities and Science Minister, David Willetts, who said: “... it makes sense for universities and exam boards to work closer together on qualification design, just as they used to in the past. It could help improve confidence in the exam system and help pupils prepare for university life. So I am very grateful to Cambridge Assessment for showing one way this might happen.”

Government strategy has since picked up key aspects of the HE engagement proposals explored in our programme of work.
HIGHLY REGARDED RESEARCH

We have the largest research capability of its kind, pioneering the latest techniques and evaluating current assessments. Externally funded research is also undertaken, including for the regulators in the UK. This means that we are able to contribute to education debates, providing our expertise to Government, and to the wider policy-making community to ensure that education policy is informed by research and evidence. For example, our research on Emotional Intelligence and its impact on improving attainment was put under the spotlight in roundtables at the UK political Party Conferences, stimulating lively discussion.

For further information please visit our website at:
www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk
or contact us at:
expertview@cambridgeassessment.org.uk
A RESPONSIBLE APPROACH

We work with people and organisations all over the world and have a strong awareness of different cultures and a real appreciation of diversity.

Fairness, trust and integrity inform everything we do. We are a not-for-profit organisation, and we adhere to strict ethical standards and conduct our business relationships in a professional and courteous manner. As a matter of policy we aim to comply with, or exceed, all relevant legislative, regulatory and best practice standards.

“As a major contributor to society through the responsible development, management and delivery of assessments and qualifications around the world, we take social responsibility very seriously.” Simon Lebus, Group Chief Executive

We are committed to continuous improvement in keeping any negative environmental impact from our actions to a minimum. We aim to do this on a global and local basis where practicable by employing a variety of policies, programmes and practices. We regularly review these practices to make sure they are working effectively.

The Group’s values of collaboration, openness, innovation and improvement, and responsibility lie at the heart of its work. We strive for the collaborative sharing of knowledge, skills and opportunities. We are open to new ideas, in our dealings with each other, our customers, our suppliers and other stakeholders, and we are always keen to improve/innovate our processes, our products, our services and ourselves.
DEVELOPMENT, DELIVERY AND RESEARCH

Our three exam boards manage the development and delivery of innovative assessment products and services to teachers and learners in over 160 countries. Our three exam boards are:

- University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations (English for speakers of other languages)
- Cambridge International Examinations
- OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)

In addition to our three exam boards and our research operation, we also offer admissions tests, consultancy, professional development and a network for the assessment community.
OUR GROUP

We employ over 2,000 people: over 1,200 of whom are in our head office in Cambridge; 400 in our Midlands based offices; and others based in regional offices both in the UK and internationally. As well as being highly qualified, a high proportion of our people are drawn from teaching and education and have the practical experience to understand the demands placed on the people delivering our qualifications.
University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations
Cambridge ESOL offers the world’s leading range of certificates for learners and teachers of English – taken by over 3.5 million people in 130 countries. It helps people gain entrance to university or college, improve job prospects or measure progress in English. More than 12,500 employers, universities and government bodies worldwide recognise Cambridge ESOL qualifications.

Cambridge International Examinations
Cambridge International Examinations is the world’s largest provider of international education programmes and qualifications for 5 to 19 year olds. More than 9,000 schools in over 160 countries are part of the Cambridge learning community. Its qualifications, which include Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A Level, Cambridge O Level and Cambridge Pre-U, are recognised by the world’s universities and employers. It works in partnership with ministries of education, qualifications authorities and assessment boards around the world.

Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR)
OCR is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of learners of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, GCSEs, Nationals, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, health and social care, administration and secretarial skills. Each year more than three million students gain OCR qualifications, which are offered by 13,000 centres including schools, sixth form colleges, FE colleges, training providers, voluntary organisations, local authorities, and businesses ranging from SMEs to multi-national organisations.

Research
We have the largest research capability of its kind with over 60 researchers pioneering the latest techniques and evaluating current assessments. The reliability of our assessments stems from evidence-based and research-led approaches to all our products, services and developments. Externally funded research is also undertaken, including for the regulators in the UK and for many education ministries.

The results of our research are widely published in well-respected journals as well as being presented at seminars and conferences. We also have our own publications, Research Matters and Research Notes.
Cambridge Assessment Network

The Cambridge Assessment Network was established to help assessment professionals keep up to date with the latest thinking in assessment, allowing them to share ideas with like-minded people as part of an international community of practice. The Network offers a comprehensive programme of events from seminars and workshops on the latest assessment thinking to certified courses on assessment.

Admissions Testing Services

We have also been providing solutions for major higher education institutions for over 20 years and develop and deliver carefully-targeted admissions tests to help them differentiate between highly able candidates. These developments are in response to requests from the higher education institutions.