

in this *issue*

1

History in the making:

Proposals for a new GCSE
in Natural History

Page 3

2

Remembering Richard

Tribute to late education
journalist

Page 3

3

**Why didn't we abolish
exams for 16-year-olds?**

A historical perspective on GCSEs

Page 4



Achieve

April 2020

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

Partnership aims to lift millions of children out of learning poverty

An ambitious partnership aims to help millions of children and young people facing barriers to learning because of poverty, discrimination, conflict and disaster.

Education experts from Cambridge Assessment, Cambridge University Press and the University of Cambridge have joined forces with UNICEF and Microsoft Corp. to launch the Learning Passport.

This will see teachers around the globe given access to a cloud-based learning and skilling platform, powered by Microsoft Community Training, which will provide support to deliver learning materials in the most effective way. It will also track what has been learned, so that children and young people have a digital record of their progress that is accessible anywhere in the world.

The platform will be underpinned by curriculum frameworks developed in Cambridge to cover maths,

The Learning Passport aims to ensure that vulnerable children have access to education whatever their circumstances



© UNICEF/UN1217916/Abdul

science and literacy. In addition, a specially developed programme has been designed to meet children's social and emotional learning needs.

Building on decades of work in the field by dedicated organisations and individuals, these frameworks and materials can be adapted to meet local needs and circumstances and so provide strong support to teaching

efforts – whether in schools, or in the camps that host some of the 30 million children and youth currently displaced from their homes.

Allied with UNICEF's deep understanding of how to support children and youth in need and Microsoft's substantial

Continued on page 3

News in brief

Top of the class



Thirty-nine Malaysian students were awarded Top in the World for Cambridge International AS Level Maths

More than 190 students from 58 schools in Malaysia were named top achievers at Cambridge Assessment International Education's Outstanding Cambridge Learner Awards.

Held at Holiday Villa Subang Jaya, the ceremony acknowledged the exceptional performance of 192 students in the June 2019 exam series for Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International AS & A Levels.

Among the recipients, 39 students were awarded Top in the World for Cambridge International AS Level Maths while eight students received Top in the World for Cambridge International A Level Maths.

The Malaysian awards are just one of many Outstanding Cambridge Learner Award ceremonies held by Cambridge International around the world to recognise exceptional performance in exams.

New sponsor for Westminster Education Forum

A UK exam board is linking up with an influential London education forum. OCR has taken over the core sponsorship of the Westminster Education Forum (WEF) from Cambridge Assessment, which had been the core sponsor of the forum for many years.

WEF organises senior-level conferences on public policy relating to education and children's services. Its aim is to improve the quality of debate on public policy developments and create opportunities for informed discussion.

First state high school in Vietnam joins Cambridge community



Melvyn Lim, Country Manager, Vietnam and Myanmar presents a plaque to Ms. Le Mai Nah, Principal of Chu Van An High School in Hanoi

A pilot scheme to develop bilingual education in Vietnam has reached a major milestone with the official registration of Chu Van An High School as the first state high school in Vietnam to achieve Cambridge International School status.

Hanoi People's Committee and Hanoi Department of Education and Training launched a pilot scheme in August 2017 teaching a mix of the country's national curriculum in Vietnamese, and English language courses delivered in partnership with Cambridge International.

Record demand for proof of English

More than seven million Cambridge English exams were taken by learners around the world in 2019 – a record number.

Cambridge English exams include qualifications such as B2 First and C1 Advanced, as well as the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), and a range of tests for younger learners, teachers and the workplace. Most recently the Cambridge English exams have been joined by Linguaskill, a ground-breaking test that uses artificial intelligence and other cutting-edge technologies in language assessment.

"We're seeing huge growth in the number of people taking Cambridge English exams, from primary school students to ambitious professionals working in English-speaking environments. Demand is growing because people know they are getting the skills they need for the real world and a valuable certificate from a department of the University of Cambridge," said Francesca Woodward, Chief Executive of Cambridge Assessment English. She continued: "Our mission is to help people to learn English and prove their skills to the world. We do this by providing exams and learning support that motivates and rewards learning at every level and focuses on the communication skills that people need in real life."

Cambridge English exams test key English language skills at different levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – which is the international standard of language-learning ability. The exams include the face-to-face Speaking test which ensures that



Chief Executive of Cambridge Assessment English, Francesca Woodward

candidates develop real-life communication skills and cover varieties of English, including US, Australian and British accents. The exams are well backed by research to ensure they are fit for purpose, valid and reliable.

At the end of last year it was announced that a record-breaking 25,000 organisations accept Cambridge English exams as proof of English language ability. This includes wide recognition in the higher education sector, along with business and government departments worldwide. Big names to recognise the exams include top US and Canadian institutions, all universities in Australia, New Zealand and in the UK, as well as immigration authorities across the English-speaking world. They are also used for recruitment by top international companies such as Adidas, BP, Ernst & Young, Hewlett-Packard, Johnson & Johnson and Microsoft.

Cambridge English exams can be taken at over 2,800 authorised exam centres and there are also 50,000 preparation centres worldwide where candidates can prepare for the exams.

UK government report delivers verdict on Cambridge IGCSE

An official UK government report has shown that Cambridge IGCSE is the same standard as GCSEs in England. The report has been welcomed by Cambridge Assessment International Education, the exam board that administers the exams.

The Department for Education (DfE) confirmation, in November 2019, that Cambridge IGCSE standards are well aligned to GCSE comes at the end of an in-depth statistical analysis it carried out across over 20 subjects. Cambridge International worked openly with the DfE to provide data on student performance and standard setting in exams.

In his letter to the House of Commons Education Select Committee, the Minister for School Standards, Nick Gibb MP, said the DfE found "no evidence of systematic differences in standard between Cambridge's IGCSEs and GCSEs."

Cambridge International Chief Executive Christine Özden said: "We welcome this confirmation that Cambridge IGCSE is aligned closely with the GCSE. We are completely committed to maintaining comparability with GCSE. Cambridge IGCSE is an international qualification and is used by nearly 5000 schools in 150 countries. The content and structure of Cambridge IGCSE was a model for the new GCSE in England, so we take some pride as the new GCSE becomes more established."

The DfE's report showed some slight variation in English Language and English Literature in the June 2018 exams. Cambridge International has reported that it is using the DfE's findings to inform its standard setting and remains committed to making sure all subjects taken in Cambridge IGCSE align closely with GCSE. The exam board welcomed the report's findings that small variations in standards between different qualifications and between years are normal.

Continued from page 1

technological capability, the aim is to close the 'learning poverty gap' that sees millions of children fail to reach minimum levels in their education.

The project, led by UNICEF and in collaboration with Microsoft and the Cambridge partners, draws on the best of what is known about delivering effective education and tailors it to the needs of vulnerable children and youth, ensuring they have access to a high-quality, basic education whatever their circumstances and wherever they are.

Jane Mann, Managing Director for the Cambridge Partnership for Education, said: "Imagine that your child is one of those affected by learning poverty. Perhaps they are one of the 30 million currently displaced around the world. How are they going to get an education? What can be done to make sure their future is better than their present?"

"When children lose their homes, they lose much more than the roof over their heads; they often also lose their access to education, and we know that education is the most powerful long-term solution to poverty, to conflict, and many of the issues facing the world today."

"The barriers some children face are great. Millions are not realising their right to education..."

History in the making

A UK exam board is developing proposals for a GCSE in Natural History.

Cambridge Assessment has confirmed that its exam board OCR is proposing the new qualification, which aims to offer young people the opportunity to engage with nature and give environmental issues more prominence in the curriculum.

OCR Chief Executive Jill Duffy said: "We think there's a gap in the curriculum that isn't encouraging a connection with the natural world, and at the same time, we know

She added: "The Learning Passport will help keep children's education alive while they cannot access anything else, allow their achievements to be benchmarked and so help them to move more smoothly into formal education when this becomes a possibility."

The announcement coincided with the Education World Forum (EWF) – an annual gathering of global education ministers and experts in London – where the partnership unveiled a report outlining its research and recommendations for the project.

Robert Jenkins, UNICEF's Chief, Education and Associate Director, Programme Division, delivered a keynote speech at the EWF on what can be done to address the global learning crisis.

He said: "The barriers some children face are great. Millions are not realising their right to education, nor realising their opportunity to develop and succeed."

He added: "We must work in partnership – children and youth's needs go well beyond the capacity of any single organisation to resolve."

Professor Stephen Toope, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, said: "This partnership is an embodiment of the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence. Cambridge delivers daringly original solutions that help the world, bringing together those who share our passionate curiosity, wherever they come from and whoever they are."

that young people are very much engaged in the debate on the environment and they understand what their role should be and could be in protecting for the future.

"We know that they want to get engaged, but we also know that they feel at the moment that they don't have enough knowledge or understanding to help them engage effectively."

The initiative is the brainchild of naturalist Mary Colwell. Mary enlisted support from Green Party MP Caroline Lucas and Tim Oates CBE, Director of Assessment Research and Development at Cambridge Assessment, who began to develop a prototype assessment model for the new qualification.

Tim said: "The title 'Natural History' refers back to a long tradition established in Britain of classifying, understanding, observing and reflecting on the natural world. It looks forward, to better consciousness and management of our relationship with the natural world and back at all of the insights that we gain through the history of engagement with nature."

Tim explained how the proposed qualification could be designed to sit outside the core subjects that make up England's EBacc performance measure: "It would have a unique character. It would add to the qualifications catalogue in an appropriate way, not overlap unduly with existing well-established qualifications and subjects," he said.

Jill said that the proposed GCSE will require extensive consultation with schools, teachers, subject experts and associations. She encouraged interested stakeholders with ideas for the development of a GCSE in Natural History to contact OCR at policy@ocr.org.uk

A view from...

Richard Garner

Remembering Richard



Susannah Ireland

Tributes have been paid after the passing of veteran education journalist Richard Garner. As our own tribute we re-publish Richard's exclusive column for Achieve which looked back on his career in education.

I recently glanced through the education press in the 1980s for research, and it was almost as if I was inhabiting a totally different world. The most obvious difference was over the reporting of UK exam results – A Levels and O Levels in those days. These days the results are analysed from several different standpoints. Back then there was nothing. In fact, looking at the Times Educational Supplement for August 1982, I could find only one paragraph.

Things nowadays in the UK are different. The performance tables, first introduced under the John Major government, played an important part. Previously, there had been no publication of national results. Individual boards published their own results, but there was no national picture for the press to latch on to.

I can remember the first year they were introduced – I was working for The Daily Mirror newspaper, which backed the then Labour Party line that these tables failed to measure a school's real achievements. We therefore decided not to publish them in full. Halfway through the afternoon I noticed several senior executives queuing up at my desk to see how their local schools had fared.

I thought then that we had lost the argument over non-publication and that this information – once published – was here to stay.

The newspapers – realising the attraction to parents of school exam results – started devising their own league tables to coincide with the overall national results. The keenness of schools to get into these league tables never ceased to amaze me – if you asked every headteacher independently what they thought of the league tables, they would say they were against them.

Thus, from a whole host of points of view – parents desperately searching through newspapers on results day to find out which school would be the 'best'; growing numbers of pupils taking exams; thousands more being involved in the scramble for university places – interest in the exam results has reached fever pitch.

Will we ever step back from this more frenzied approach to exams and the reporting of results?

Suffice to say, I think it is here to stay with us for a while yet.



International education organisation reaffirms commitment to learners post-Brexit

The head of a leading international exams group has said that his organisation's commitment to learners in Europe after Brexit is as strong as ever.

Cambridge Assessment Chief Executive Saul Nassé was speaking on a visit to the British Language Training Centre



Cambridge Assessment Chief Executive Saul Nassé (centre) visits an Amsterdam language class with Lucy Burns (left) and Marleen Soto-Geertsma (right)

(BLTC) in Amsterdam, on the UK's last day as a member of the European Union.

Saul, whose visit was hosted by Marleen Soto-Geertsma, Country Manager for Cambridge Assessment English in Benelux, met students and staff at the test centre, which is located in the heart of Amsterdam. BLTC offers a range of language courses in both Dutch and English and is an authorised centre for exams provided by Cambridge English.

"It was great to meet staff and students at BLTC, one of the thousands of centres which prepare students for Cambridge English exams right across Europe," Saul said.

"As an organisation, we've been around for more than 160 years, providing education programmes and exams

in over 170 countries around the world, and BLTC is a great example of the schools all over the world which work with us to deliver educational benefits to millions of learners.

"Whatever happens after Brexit it won't affect our commitment to helping people learn and prove their skills to the world."

After touring the school Saul hosted a lunch at a restaurant run by hospitality and catering students in Amsterdam. He was joined by key partners from Cambridge University Press and the British Council among others.

Marleen said: "It was great to be able to show Saul the fantastic work that we are doing with our centres and give him a chance to meet students on their language learning journey."

Why GCSEs were spared the axe

A seminar hosted by the Cambridge Assessment Network has heard that when discussing the current role of GCSEs it is important to consider the history of the external exams system in England.

Andrew Watts, former Director of Cambridge Assessment Network, and a tutor on the Network's Postgraduate Certificate in Educational Assessment and Examinations, explored the history of exams in England, in particular a policy to abolish external exams for 16-year-olds – the precursors to O Levels and GCSEs – that was adopted by the British government but never implemented.

The talk highlighted how and why the policy was once agreed by the British government. The proposal, first recommended by influential educationalists and adopted as government policy in 1946, was to create an "internal system in which the schools were much more in control."

He explained that "the recommendation, if it had been carried through, would have meant that we would never have had an O Level system or a GCSE system and the only examinations would be for those coming towards the end of the sixth form."

Understanding our assessment culture is important when we ask why that abolition policy was never carried out. Indeed, the seminar pointed out that the national external examination system for 16-year-olds has survived in Britain for over 100 years.

At a time when it is frequently heard that GCSEs for 16-year-olds have outlived their usefulness, his talk argued that it is important to consider what that survival might tell us about the attitudes towards school exams in the country.

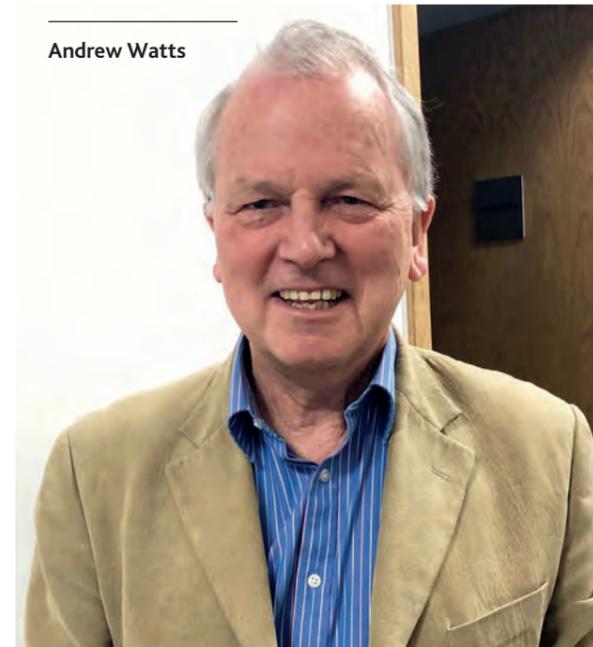
The seminar used material from extensive Cambridge Assessment archives to provide some unexpected detailed historical perspectives on that national debate. The evidence suggests that criticism of external exams from the pre-war period still resonates in discussions about the future of GCSEs. These included concerns about the effect of exams on less able pupils, impact on the breadth of the curriculum, the notion of 'teaching to the test', and arguments about the role of coursework.

He suggested some of the main reasons that external exams were not abolished, leading to the GCSE system we have today. These included the lack of a convincing alternative, a lack of contemporary political support, and the notion that education civil servants were 'out of touch' with schools.

Proponents of internal exams thought that they would be helping schools and teachers by giving them the 'freedom' of running exams, but Mr Watts pointed out that secondary school teachers appeared to be content with their close links with the exam boards that administered the external exams, and teachers' organisations spoke out against the abolition of the exam system. He said, "at that time, the autonomy



Andrew Watts



of teachers and the independence of schools was very strongly supported. Indeed, throughout the education system people were suspicious of any government attempt to control what was going on in schools."

Letters and memos from the Cambridge Assessment archives illustrate the concerns that exam boards had with the proposals, which again ring true today. They highlighted not just the logistical challenge of printing papers, but 'deeper issues' concerning the validity of exams, about the standards that are set, the consistency of marking, and the important question of oversight and quality control, all of which dictates the level of public trust in the exam system.

The seminar argued the importance of exam boards in a national system of assessment, demonstrating how boards can work with groups such as teachers, schools, examiners and the public "to hold the system in some kind of balance and to take account of different views that people bring to the system from their different perspectives."

International meeting of minds

Over 400 education leaders and experts from across the world gathered in Bali, Indonesia, for a two-day conference to evaluate the impact of teaching practice and explore issues such as innovations in learning and teacher empowerment.

Indonesia was chosen to host Cambridge Assessment International Education's 2019/20 series, hot on the heels of an announcement by the country's new education minister that he would place innovation and teacher development at the forefront of educational reforms.



Six learners from three local Balinese schools shared their experiences of a Cambridge International education at the conference

The conference offered expert presentations and interactive workshops, where Indonesian educators met with international peers and shared best practice. Six students from three local Balinese schools also spoke at the conference, sharing their experiences on how a Cambridge International education supports them in developing a lifelong love for learning while preparing them for success in higher education and beyond, ready to face new global challenges.

Dianindah Apriyani, Senior Country Manager Indonesia, Cambridge International, said:

"The Indonesian government's new vision for the future of education aligns with the themes explored during the Cambridge Schools Conference. This conference encourages critical thinking and social engagement between Indonesian teachers and educators from across the globe with the aim of finding innovative ways to improve our teaching practice."

Leading English language test retains UK government stamp of approval

UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) has announced that the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) will continue to be accepted for UK visas that require applicants to demonstrate their English.

Following a tender process, IELTS was reappointed as an official test provider for visas required as part of UK immigration applications. Christine Nuttall, Managing Director IELTS at Cambridge Assessment English, welcomed the announcement.

"We have a proven track record of delivering IELTS for UKVI with our world-leading security processes," Christine said. "This announcement is testament to the ongoing value and trust placed in IELTS by the United Kingdom government and test takers around the world. We are delighted IELTS continues to provide a gateway for people to fulfil their aspirations in the UK."

The reappointment highlights the important role IELTS plays in language testing for immigration.

Jointly owned by the British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia and Cambridge Assessment English, IELTS is the only English language test trusted for migration purposes by all four governments of the UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

New collaboration on bilingual teacher professional development in Shanghai

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) to provide professional development of Chinese bilingual teachers in Shanghai has been signed.

The agreement between Cambridge Assessment International Education, East China Normal University Education System (ECNUES) and Dipont Education was signed by Saul Nassé, Chief Executive of Cambridge Assessment, Dai Liyi, ECNUES and Benson Zhang, CEO of Dipont at a meeting in Shanghai.

It was Saul Nassé's first visit to China as Chief Executive, and he commented on how highly he valued the collaboration. He said: "Cambridge qualifications are the most widely used international qualification in China. About two years ago, we changed our name from Cambridge International Examinations to Cambridge Assessment International Education, to better describe who we are and what we do – we are more than an exam board, and we support teachers in every stage of their professional development, from novice teacher to experienced teachers.

"China has a long tradition of valuing education very highly, and parents have big expectations of their children's education. Chinese schools make a lot of effort in teachers' professional development. The achievement of Shanghai in PISA tests is a good indication that Shanghai did an excellent job in teaching and research in K12 stage.

"We would like to work with Chinese institutions more closely and learn from each other, to improve the education exchange and professional dialogue between Cambridge International and China.

"I also heard that there is a common concern that a shortage of highly qualified teachers [can slow] growth in China, as well as other countries. We want to work with Chinese institutions to address this concern and provide a high-quality in-service teacher education programme."



From left to right: Dai Liyi, Vice President of East China Normal University; Saul Nassé, Chief Executive of Cambridge Assessment; Benson Zhang, CEO of Dipont Education

Leading the way

Delegates from Pakistan's Ministry of Education have taken part in a specially designed programme on education leadership.

The Leadership in National Education course gave the country's education leaders a chance to hear from a range of experts on the role of large-scale assessment organisations and their place in the wider education context, the influence of evidence-based practice in informing policy, and frameworks for managing this complexity.

Cambridge Assessment Network and Cambridge International hosted the event, in which delegates received keynote lectures from Director of Assessment Research and Development Tim Oates CBE on 'A world view of performance in education systems', 'Emerging problems in education systems and responses to them', and 'The place and reasons for policy on textbooks' with Jane Mann, Managing Director, Cambridge Partnership for Education.

Sally Brown, Assistant Director, Cambridge Assessment Network, said: "We were delighted to host a delegation of senior education leaders from Pakistan who represented all the provinces in the country. One of the delegates had previously attended our Leadership in National



Delegates from the Pakistan Ministry of Education at a Leadership in National Education course

Assessment course, so it was great to see he wanted to come back again!

"The delegates valued the opportunity to discuss and debate key issues and challenges that many countries face in education at the moment with experts from across Cambridge Assessment. As is often the case we also learnt much from our delegates as we hope they did from us."

Sessions from Cambridge Assessment experts included Principal Research Officer Dr Tom Benton

on 'Unpacking PISA', and 'Concepts and challenges in comparability' by Gill Elliot, Deputy Director of Assessment Research and Development.

Delegates heard from external speakers including Isabel Nisbet, Affiliated Lecturer at the University of Cambridge's Faculty of Education and the first CEO of UK exam regulator Ofqual, and David Russell, CEO of the Education and Training Foundation. Delegates also made a visit to Cambridge Assessment's state-of-the-art print and operations facility, and received a tour of the Cambridge Assessment archives.

How do PISA tests and GCSEs measure up?

Researchers looked at the correlation between individual students' performance in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and GCSE subjects to show the extent to which they measure the same skills. Data from PISA, which measures reading, Maths, Science and collaborative problem solving, has been used to make decisions about the way GCSEs are managed, and such judgements are dependent on the assumption that both tests are closely related.

Cambridge Assessment researchers found that correlations between performance in the PISA domains and GCSE subjects are only moderately strong. As can be seen in the chart, PISA Maths and Maths GCSE and PISA Science and Core Science GCSE have the strongest

correlation, as expected, but subjects that may be expected to correlate with reading are relatively weak: English and English Literature show weaker correlations than History, Core Science and Geography.

This indicates that PISA reading measures different skills to those assessed by GCSE English. This may relate to the fact that none of the PISA domains measure skills such as essay writing, which are taught and assessed within GCSE English.

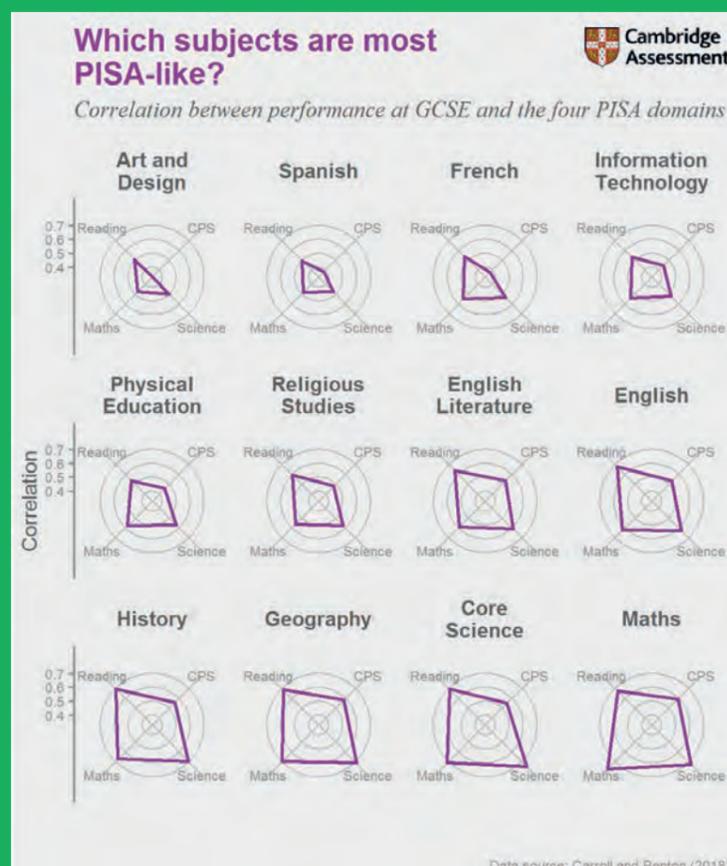
After Maths and Core Science, the subjects most strongly correlated with PISA across all four domains are Geography and History. The subjects most dissimilar to PISA are Art and Design, Spanish, French and Information Technology.

Collaborative problem solving correlations with GCSE performance are substantially lower than other PISA domains. This is notable as collaborative problem solving was the PISA domain in which England's performance was the strongest relative to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

average. In other words, England's strongest performance came in a domain that does not appear to relate to what is actually taught and assessed as part of GCSEs.

The findings highlight the fact that PISA and GCSEs measure different skills, and suggest that students' performance in PISA may depend upon their GCSE subject choices.

Correlation between performance at GCSE and the four PISA domains



No 'Bake Off effect' in schools, researchers find

Pupils are baking less in school practical cookery lessons, researchers have found, despite a surge in the popularity of baking attributed to The Great British Bake Off television programme.

Cambridge Assessment researchers Gill Elliott and Jo Ireland conducted a survey of cookery teachers 10 years after a first survey by the organisation on the history and practicalities of the subject. Their findings were presented at the Association for Educational Assessment Europe annual conference in Portugal.

Their research found that certain ingredients, generally those associated with baking, have fallen in terms of frequency of use. Preparing raw meat, pastry making and pasta making have all increased in frequency, whilst baking cakes and biscuits has decreased.

The researchers propose that their results show the effect of initiatives to encourage schools and pupils to



Gill Elliott



Jo Ireland

make healthy choices. The changes in ingredients may also reflect the reformed GCSE syllabus, which focuses on developing practical cookery skills and a strong understanding of nutrition.

The findings suggest that the new GCSE specification means that baking cakes does not fulfil enough of the required skills. The researchers presume that teachers are creating lessons that encompass as many skills and ingredients as possible. Making a chicken pie, for example, would allow pupils to practise cutting meat, cutting vegetables, making pastry, making a roux, pan cooking and oven baking in one recipe.

The research also highlights that educating and re-educating our population about food is a topic which has become of huge concern due to the climate change debate, in terms of use of resources and disposal of materials, and the nature of the food we eat.

Cutting-edge artificial intelligence capability acquired by University

An international exams group and a publisher have joined forces to acquire a world-class artificial intelligence (AI) capability to support English language teaching, learning and assessment.

Cambridge Assessment and Cambridge University Press, departments of the University of Cambridge, have signed an agreement to acquire English Language iTutoring (ELiT), a Bristol-based team with a track record in delivering online resources to support learners of English. It will operate as part of Cambridge Assessment English, which provides more than seven million exams and tests of English a year, helping people worldwide to learn English and prove their skills to the world.

The team at ELiT are world-class experts in using AI to support English learning and they have already worked with Cambridge English on ground-breaking projects and resources for learners. These include Write & Improve, Speak & Improve and the AI that powers Linguaskill – Cambridge English's new online test that has been designed to help organisations check the English levels of individuals and groups of candidates.

Cambridge University Press and Cambridge Assessment work together to provide research-driven examinations and learning solutions. ELiT will remain a separate legal entity, operating as part of the Cambridge English team and working closely with experts in Cambridge University Press.

More than a quarter of all the students who responded to the survey said climate change was the biggest issue facing the world. It topped the poll in three quarters of countries surveyed.

The survey was conducted leading up to Cambridge Global Perspectives Week which ran in March 2020. During the week, schools took the opportunity to trial a Cambridge Global Perspectives lesson with younger and older students.

Cambridge Global Perspectives is a programme that provides an opportunity for students aged 5 to 19 to think and learn more about the topics and global issues they care about. It also focuses on developing life-long skills like critical thinking, research and collaboration.



Students keen to learn about climate change

Students around the world are keener than ever before to learn about global issues like climate change in school, but almost a third aren't getting the opportunity to do so, according to new research.

Over 11,000 students aged 13 to 19 took part in Cambridge Assessment International Education's first ever Global Perspectives survey and shared their views on global issues.

Almost all students who took part in the survey (96%) believe it is important to learn about global issues in school.



Young learners from Kulachi Hansraj Model School in Delhi during Cambridge Global Perspectives Week

However, almost a third say they do not currently get the opportunity to do so, despite wanting to. As a result, the research found many students around the world are turning to other sources of information to learn about global issues. A quarter of all students surveyed said charities and organisations dedicated to global issues are their most trusted source of information, while one in five turn to the internet and 17% to social media.

International course to offer 'pick and mix' learning pathways

Delegates attending a popular course on the design and delivery of public examinations will now be able to 'pick and mix' content with new learning routes focusing on technical and policy skills in assessment and education.

The main Cambridge International Study Programme covers international issues in education including



Delegates on the Cambridge International Study Programme, run by the Cambridge Assessment Network

standards, comparability and quality, the future of learning and assessment, and system disruption.

The technical strand will allow participants to drill down on key practical issues in assessment, including developing an assessment strategy, mark scheme design and computer adaptive testing.

Those looking for policy guidance can opt for sessions on curriculum and assessment reform, competency-based assessment and how to implement large scale e-assessment.

The one-week residential course has been running annually in Cambridge for nearly 15 years, and has attracted international attendees from a variety of backgrounds including heads of ministries of education, directors and senior managers from awarding bodies, and programme and examination officers. Sessions are run by experts from across Cambridge Assessment, and time is built into the programme for networking and sightseeing around the historic city centre.

Find out more: www.canetwork.org.uk/cisp

Big boost for medical English test

A leading international English test for the healthcare sector has seen several high-profile recognitions and adoptions.

In January this year it was announced that the OET (Occupational English Test) can now be used as proof of English language ability for an employer's foundation programme aimed at recruiting international doctors to work in the UK National Health Service (NHS).

"Recruiting NHS doctors with the right levels of English language ability remains an ongoing challenge and that's why we're delighted to be included in this important initiative," said Mickey Bonin, Head of Strategy at OET.

At the end of last year it was announced that OET test results can be used by doctors, nurses and midwives applying for UK visas. This was part of a wider announcement from the UK Home Office which meant that healthcare professionals applying for Tier 2 (General) visas no longer need to meet a separate English language requirement where they have already done so as part of registering with the relevant regulatory body.

Sujata Stead, CEO of Cambridge Boxhill Language Assessment (the owners of OET), said: "We are absolutely delighted that healthcare professionals can now take OET for both visa and registration purposes. This will enormously reduce the burden on overseas trained professionals seeking to work in the UK."

It was also announced that the UK's Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) would amend the OET Writing requirement for overseas nurses and midwives taking OET. This means that the Council will accept a grade C+ in Writing alongside a minimum B grade in the OET Listening, Reading and Speaking sub-tests.



Recently qualified OET candidates now employed in the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust

Course evolves



A popular postgraduate course is evolving. The Postgraduate Advanced Certificate in Educational Studies: Educational Assessment (PGCA)

will become a 15-month, part-time course now worth 90 credits at Master's level. The qualification continues to be practice-based and is designed to directly impact students' work as they learn to apply various research methodologies to a professional context. Students learn through a mix of online learning and four day schools in Cambridge led by experts from Cambridge Assessment and the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education.

The application deadline for 2020 is Monday 1 June 2020. Find out more at www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/pgca

Watch this space

Contact us

Please feel free to contact the Editor at any time:

Hilary Fletcher
Head of Public Affairs
Cambridge Assessment
The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road
Cambridge, United Kingdom, CB2 8EA

+44 (0)1223 556018 (direct)
public.affairs@cambridgeassessment.org.uk

Also find us on Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

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.

© 2020 University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate

Credits

Design: H2 Associates, Cambridge

Editorial: James Proud

Production: Harriet Dean