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Achieve

November 2020

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

cambridgeassessment.org.uk

Good questions

Assessment is about asking good questions, and about doing so continuously, a leading public policy forum has heard.

Cambridge Assessment's Tim Oates CBE made the remarks in a keynote speech to an event examining the next steps for primary assessment in England.

Tim, who chaired the expert panel that reviewed the National Curriculum in England, appeared at a Westminster Education Forum (WEfF) event on primary assessment in England.

The event was held ahead of the rollout across England of the new teacher-mediated baseline assessment, which originally was going to be introduced in autumn 2020, but has been postponed until autumn 2021 due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

In his speech, Tim focused on what makes good primary assessment. He said high-quality assessment enables us to determine what is happening at system level, but also at school level.

He argued that assessment is about asking good questions, and about doing so continuously. He referenced Jeffrey



Leading public policy forum WEfF heard how assessment is about asking good questions.

News in brief

Gold standard



Cambridge Assessment Network is celebrating after receiving accreditation from a leading industry body.

The 'gold standard' dual accreditation from the CPD Standards Office recognises the Assessment Network as a Provider of Training Excellence with an offering of fully CPD accredited assessment training activities.

"We are really pleased to announce that our training has been approved by CPD Standards and will now carry CPD points," said Sally Brown, Assistant Director, Cambridge Assessment Network.

"This is not only further confirmation of the high quality of our products but also endorses our view of the importance of good assessment practice."

Inspiring partnership

Cambridge Assessment has announced a partnership with Inspiring Governance, a charity which connects skilled volunteers interested in serving as school governors and trustees with schools in England.

Cambridge Assessment is the first exams group in the country to sign Inspiring Governance's School Governor Champion Charter and pledge its support to champion the role of school governor and support staff members to become governors in local schools.

Jill Duffy, Chief Executive of OCR, said: "By partnering with Inspiring Governance we can further our mission to help learners unlock their potential."

Celebrating Coventry

Coventry has been named the UK's City of Culture 2021, and as a proud and long-standing member of the community, UK exam board OCR is delighted to sponsor the programme.

Coventry is the third UK city to receive the title City of Culture following Hull and Derry/Londonderry. From May 2021 to May 2022, the city will be hosting a huge cultural programme including large-scale spectacles, music, dance, theatre and poetry as well as intimate experiences which celebrate the culture and heritage of Coventry.

Coventry is set to welcome an additional 2.5m visitors to the city during the year, and sponsors will be part of bringing economic and cultural benefits to Coventry and the wider region, as well as sharing in its citizens' civic pride.



US seal of approval

Doctors and nurses applying for positions in the United States can now validate their English language proficiency with OET, the world's only international English language test specifically for healthcare professionals.

The test has been formally recognised by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates|Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (ECFMG®|FAIMER®), the Florida Board of Nursing and the Oregon State Board of Nursing.

ECFMG Certification evaluates whether international medical graduates (IMGs) are ready to enter residency or fellowship programs in the US that are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education,

Sujata Stead, CEO of OET



Doctors and nurses applying for positions in the United States can now validate their English language proficiency with OET

"With OET now recognised in the US as well as nine other countries, including the UK and Australia, it truly is the healthcare professional's passport to an international career."

and to obtain a licence to practise from a Medical Licensing Authority. ECFMG has identified pathways for meeting the clinical skills requirements for ECFMG Certification for IMGs seeking to enter accredited US residencies or fellowships in 2021 as a result of the suspension of the Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) component of the United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®) due to Covid-19. These pathways include assessment of English proficiency by OET. OET's approval by nursing regulators in the states of Florida and Oregon will be written into the respective states' rules by the end of 2020.

OET CEO Sujata Stead said: "International medical graduates and nurses worldwide who would like to enter the US healthcare system can now do so using an English proficiency test that is designed specifically for them. OET test tasks replicate real-life communication scenarios that they are likely to encounter in the healthcare workplace and are therefore far more relevant to their careers.

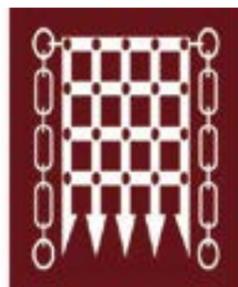
"With OET now recognised in the US as well as nine other countries, including the UK and Australia, it truly is the healthcare professional's passport to an international career."

Continued from page 1

Karpicke and Paul Kirschner's work which argued that questions immediately after a period of learning – addressing misconceptions, confirming understanding – consolidate and make permanent learning in a way in which learning, then re-learning, does not.

"Nothing is as good as a good question," Tim said. "They stimulate thought, they excite curiosity, and they tell us about the mental life of each child. If we use these criteria for good assessment in primary and the criteria which underpin the National Curriculum [such as the study of fewer things, but in greater depth] we will see continued improvement in attainment and improved equity not only in primary but everywhere else in our system."

The conference was chaired by Conservative peer and Good Schools Guide editor Lord Lucas and Lord Storey,



**WESTMINSTER
EDUCATION
FORUM**

Vice Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Education. It also heard keynotes from Alison Ley, Lead, Engagement Model Delivery, Department for Education, Louise Ling, Teaching School Director, SEND Teaching School and Carole Willis, Chief Executive, NFER.

Huge support for new Natural History GCSE

More than 2,000 people and organisations have added their voices to a consultation on creating a GCSE in Natural History.

The consultation run by UK exam board OCR ran for six weeks this summer. Hundreds of advocates for the subject took part in the online launch of the consultation in June and took to Twitter to share their support and encourage others to do the same using #GCSENaturalHistory.

The level of engagement in the consultation was fantastic. OCR received over 2,000 responses for the main consultation from a variety of interested parties including environmental and education organisations, teachers, young learners and parents. To make it as easy as possible for students to share their views, OCR also ran a bespoke

consultation for young people and received 200 responses. Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their views. All comments provided valuable evidence to support the proposal presented to the Department for Education and Ofqual.

The consultation took place in response to the call for developing a GCSE in Natural History. Last year Cambridge Assessment was approached by naturalist Mary Colwell, who has been spearheading a campaign to address the gap in natural history content in education for a number of years. Since then we have been working closely with Mary, the Natural History Museum, the Eden Project and many others to understand the purpose and themes of such a qualification.

Jill Duffy, Chief Executive of OCR, said: "We think there's a gap in the curriculum that isn't encouraging a connection with the natural world. At the same time, we know 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 it for the future."

A summary of consultation findings is available now: <https://teach.ocr.org.uk/en/summary-of-findings>. The next step is for OCR to put a proposal to England's Department for Education.

Thousands have added their voices to a consultation on a GCSE in Natural History.



A view from...

Professor Jerry Lucido

Thinking differently



We don't need any more dramatic demonstration of the need for a global outlook than Covid-19. We have a worldwide scientific community working through a health crisis, we have political boundaries that diseases, climate change, pollution and economic issues do not respect, and our ability to understand one another for our common good has never been more critical. On a more human level, a global outlook makes it far easier to tackle problems if we have an understanding of each other's perspectives, cultures and traditions – valuing what those different perspectives bring. When we bring different perspectives to a problem we tend to solve it more creatively, and with solutions that have an opportunity to last.

As a professor, and as someone who was previously responsible for admissions, I think it's critically important to have students who are well versed in all areas of the curriculum. We want to teach students who have an open mind. Students who are open to evidence and difference, who will challenge us and challenge each other in the classroom. It makes for a much more exciting, productive environment for learning. We hope to identify students who have a strong academic background and who can build upon multiple areas of study to solve problems, but we're also looking for individuals who will be engaging and engaged – students who are interested in the world and solving worldwide problems.

We see in the Cambridge curriculum in particular, and in some other advanced curriculum offerings, this notion of an engaged active learning environment – where students are presented problems, where they can identify the issues, and where they do some independent research. They draw conclusions and then have to communicate them to their peers and to faculty members. In higher education we use abstract terms like critical thinking, analysis and synthesis – but what we're really talking about is the ability to identify problems, to isolate an area of study that would be worth examining, collect data, apply relevant bodies of knowledge using multiple lenses to arrive at conclusions, to understand limitations, display and communicate results, and have an openness to feedback. All these things are critical – and we're going to expect students to do that on our campus. Students who already have an introduction to these skills can take education to a higher level.

Jerry Lucido is the executive director and founder of the USC Center for Enrollment Research, Policy and Practice at the University of Southern California.

An interview with...

Verónica Floretta

Teacher and assessment consultant



A104: Psychometrics in Educational Assessment is a new online course from Cambridge Assessment Network. It outlines how quantitative methods from psychometrics can be used to improve the quality of educational assessments. Starting with simple statistical concepts, and providing enough detail so that participants can apply the techniques themselves, A104 is an accessible introduction to how to analyse assessment data to ensure tests are reliable, valid and fair.

We caught up with Verónica Floretta, a teacher and freelance assessment consultant from Uruguay who was a participant on the successful pilot of the course. Verónica, who holds a Master's degree in Educational Assessment, has been teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) at a high school since 2004 and has had a diverse career in assessment, from Head of English for a bilingual school to Associate Professor for a Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Assessment.

What does your day-to-day work as teacher and assessment consultant involve?

As an assessment consultant, mostly in the educational field, I am usually engaged in research regarding best practices in assessment for private regional stakeholders and national authorities.

I also contribute to fellow teachers in their professional development journey, through the design and delivery of workshops, seminars, institutional projects and articles, covering issues such as marking, formative assessment, curriculum design and development, validity/reliability and differentiated instruction.

As a teacher, I teach EFL to teenagers and prepare them to take Cambridge International examinations.

What aspects of working in assessment do you like the most?

Fortunately, there are many aspects of the job I enjoy. Being able to contribute to fellow teachers' professional development in assessment is currently one of my dearest projects.

I find it rewarding when teachers discover the high value that assessment expertise brings to their classroom and when you see that their thinking and speaking about assessment changes to a more professional tone.

Why did you decide to enrol on A104: Psychometrics in Educational Assessment?

Taking into account the current situation regarding the pandemic and the obvious fact that we need to get ready for a new landscape regarding assessment, I thought that refreshing my knowledge on psychometrics would come in handy. And opportunities to think deeply about assessment and discuss with other specialists are never to be neglected.

In both of my current roles, teaching and consulting, data collection and interpretation play a major role, they are key factors in my decision making daily.

Whether it be ranking candidates, assigning grades, measuring impact or in the assessment design process, I wanted to be better ready to support my clients and students in this unprecedented educational context.

What did you like about the course?

Sometimes people have low expectations of online courses, but A104 is a great opportunity to prove them wrong.

The course is organised in nine weeks, each introducing principles of data collection and interpretation. The content is well paced and makes you reflect on the best ways to structure tests so they ensure positive learning outcomes – not only in high-stakes testing but also in the classroom.

Discussing theoretical and practical issues with like-minded professionals from all over the world has been a highly valuable experience.

In what way has your day-to-day practice been impacted?

The practical activities and apps provided allow you to actually undertake analysis using real data. That was by far my favourite part and I have been inspired to redesign some research I have been doing regarding validity and reliability, from a much more grounded and confident position.

I feel better prepared to guide my students when training for high-stakes tests as I can see what is behind the design and type of items included.

The skills I developed for interpreting items have equipped me with a wider repertoire for my teaching – I can spot students who might be struggling with an item, understand why and design a tailored response so they can improve their performance.

Online learning

Experts from Cambridge have teamed up to help English language teachers adapt to the changing education landscape because of Covid-19. Cambridge Assessment English and Cambridge University Press English Language Teaching joined forces to host a free event for teachers around the world to help them get ready for the unpredictable months ahead. Over 50,000 teachers from 162 countries around the world registered for the event.

The Cambridge Live Experience 2020 brought together some of the world's leading English language teaching and exam experts for talks on a range of themes including advice on transitioning back to the physical classroom, online learning, socially distanced teaching, understanding learners' levels and providing emotional support.

Francesca Woodward,
Chief Executive of
Cambridge English,
opened the conference.



Francesca Woodward, Chief Executive of Cambridge English, said:

"The key to success for teachers will be adaptability and we're seeing some great examples around the world of teachers bouncing back with resilience to ensure education continues."

The three-day event was open to teachers from all over the world and included more than 25 sessions showcasing teaching approaches and ideas from experts from Cambridge English and Cambridge



The Cambridge Live Experience attracted thousands of participants.

University Press. All the sessions can be watched again via the Cambridge English YouTube channel.

Earlier in the year Cambridge English was involved in a major online festival for Chinese educators which attracted over 15,000 participants. The event brought together academics, policymakers and educators to look at the future of language education and learning. This included the Cambridge English Conference 2020, which over 1,000 delegates joined to look at the theme of 'For every learner every step of the way'.

Experts share insights into maths teaching

Experts from across Cambridge Assessment shared their insights into maths teaching in England at a leading public policy forum.

Lynne McClure, Director of Cambridge Mathematics, and Sylke Scheiner, Director of Assessment at OCR, both spoke at a Westminster Education Forum (WEdF) event which focused on maths teaching in England, including qualification reform, teacher recruitment and retention, and the impact of the new Ofsted inspection framework. OCR is a core sponsor of WEdF.

Also speaking at the event was Andreas Schleicher, the man behind the influential PISA tests. The event was chaired by Claire Coutinho MP and Baroness Garden of Frognal.



Experts from across Cambridge Assessment shared their insights into maths teaching at a leading forum.

Lynne's keynote speech focused on those who do not achieve a Grade 4 or above in GCSE Mathematics at age 16. She called for consideration to be given to a 'stepping-stone' qualification taken before GCSE which would give all students a grounding in essential maths.

"For me the outcome of a successful maths education strategy would result in citizens who can engage mathematically with the world to their own and the nation's benefit," she said.

"More of whom, because they can see the point of it, may choose to continue to study maths, meaning that we would begin to plug the STEM [science, technology, engineering and mathematics] shortage."

Sylke's wide-ranging talk covered how the recent reforms in GCSE (9-1) Maths have affected students going on to A Level Maths qualifications, the take-up of Core Maths and finally the scope for alternatives to GCSE, for those students who do not achieve a Grade 4 or above at age 16.

She told the Forum that OCR had focused a lot of efforts in recent years on accessibility.

"This is something we are incredibly passionate about," she said. "We have put lots of effort and research into determining the factors that influence how students access the content of a question paper, enabling us to produce materials that students can most easily understand."

Supporting teachers

A teacher training provider in the United Kingdom is integrating a psychometric test into their training programmes – as part of a drive to support new teachers.

For the second year running, the Suffolk and Norfolk School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) programme is using the Cambridge Personal Styles Questionnaire (CPSQ) for teachers. The questionnaire is designed to identify personality traits, which the teacher trainers are using to support their trainees. Throughout June over 100 trainee teachers from primary and over 60 secondary school teachers took CPSQ.

CPSQ asks a series of questions that help organisations outline people's personality by assessing their values and behaviours and how they approach tasks and interact with others. Results are delivered instantly via an online platform and enable immediate feedback reporting on seven competency areas:

- Caring and compassion
- Person-centred communication
- Working well with others
- Self-management
- Professional practice
- Engagement with learning
- Coping with demands.

Lyn Dale is an Assessment Psychologist and Senior Assessment Manager, from Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing, which develops the CPSQ. She said:



SUFFOLK & NORFOLK SCITT
PERSONALISED. RELATIONAL. ETHICAL

Lyn Dale from Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing (pictured centre).



"CPSQ is helping to provide valuable insight that will be used to support new trainee teachers. The data allows teacher trainers to identify what further support and development teachers need to have a positive experience of teacher training. The information can also be used to check for early signs of withdrawal from courses, which makes it a great way of improving retention among trainee teachers. CPSQ covers key skills that are crucial for success and it's fast becoming a key tool in training and recruitment, as it helps organisations make fair and balanced judgements."

Anna Richards, Executive Leader at the Suffolk and Norfolk SCITT, is impressed with the trial so far: "The CPSQ has helped us gain a greater insight into them and their styles of behaviour and has helped inform how we support them," she said. "Not only does the CPSQ help trainees reflect on their own behaviour styles and needs, it also allows us to make early, targeted interventions. For example, if a trainee's answers suggest they may have an issue with 'Coping with demands' we have made sure that they work with a particularly experienced and supportive personal tutor and mentor."

Remote teaching and learning: TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES

*Webcams, online assessments and remote learning tools became the new normal this year.
So how did teachers around the world adjust to the changes?*

Philip Jackson

Economics and business studies teacher at Sha Tin College, Hong Kong

The school I work at had to adapt to school closures because of the Hong Kong protests earlier in the academic year, so when schools closed due to the virus we all already had experience of working from home. Teaching students online has its benefits as well as its drawbacks. I find myself doing more marking, which means I have lots of data to track students' progress, and I have been able to offer more one-to-one support than before. I am also now able to spend more time setting work as time-consuming physical meetings are no longer a feature of day-to-day teaching. The majority of students adapted

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I feel like everyone will come out of this with a much stronger sense of school community.

well – they have a school laptop and most students are used to doing work online. The problem has been not getting to interact in person. There are some good platforms such as Zoom's breakout room feature, but this does not compensate for the lack of human interaction. Overall though, I have found this experience has really highlighted just how adaptable students can be. I found my students online ready to learn and complete their work. Even when it came to past paper questions they all completed them and were really keen for feedback. By sharing best practices with other teachers I have been able to keep my lessons varied and that in turn has helped keep students engaged. Sharing has also helped to make what could be a lonely experience much more fun and engaging. I am looking forward to getting back into the classroom and I know that I will definitely be getting students to put away their laptops for a while! But I feel like everyone will come out of this with a much stronger sense of school community. I also feel schools will become more streamlined as they have seen the benefits of staff being freed up to focus on teaching, planning and working together.



Sha Tin College,
Hong Kong



Dulwich
College,
Suzhou, China

Erin Garnhum

Cambridge IGCSE™ English as a Second Language teacher at Dulwich College, Suzhou, China

I was luckier than many, in that our school had an online learning platform in place already. But nothing prepares you for the reality of having your whole paradigm shifted under you in an instant. In the beginning it was a mix of worksheets, some videos with PowerPoint presentations and some online collaborative group work via chat or video. In the first week of school being closed I took work in whatever fashion they could get it to me – email, Microsoft Teams assignments, photos of work written on the back of random notebooks – we were all finding our way. Technological challenges were the biggest problem, such as low bandwidth issues and students without reliable internet access. In the beginning we were wildly ambitious with how much work we were setting students too. We had to dial back our expectations. Now that schools in China have gone back we have moved to an integrated lesson model because some students have been unable to return due to the lockdown in other countries. How can I include students who are dialling in to a lesson? Can this activity work in class, but also at home? We've totally remade our expectations about what it means to 'attend' a lesson. For example, today, I had a student out with a foot injury. She and another student, still in Korea, both joined my lesson via Teams. When it came time for group work, they worked together using the 'chat' function. I had another student who couldn't stay after a class for an extra session, so he will do the work from that period on his own tonight and then watch the feedback video when he is ready for it. It has been exhausting. Everyone is going full tilt. We fall onto the school bus at the end of the day. I feel like whole sections of my brain are being rewritten at times. We don't know what the future holds, so we must make this work. We don't have a choice, because education is too important.

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We don't know what the future holds, so we must make this work... education is too important.



Dulwich College,
Suzhou, China

Dr Seth Alper

AS & A Level Psychology Instructor & Trainer, Florida, US

Overall, the transition to remote teaching was fairly smooth as I have had a flipped classroom for seven years now. The most challenging aspect was probably to coordinate schedules, as learners have had to take on more responsibilities outside of school now (such as being caregivers or having to go to work with family to help financially at this time). I believe that some students are putting on a smile and persevering whereas others have relaxed a bit too much, but I think most have adapted fairly well to the situation. Students have told me that their biggest challenge is organisation and motivation. Right now, there is no magical solution. I think that we're all learning to adjust and we're all doing the best that we can. Some days are better than others. Interestingly, I have found that talking about issues outside of school can really help some students increase their academic motivation. With this in mind, I would like to increase the opportunities for learners to connect with their peers beyond the subject matter. For example, I would like to bring back 'Feelings Friday' for Abnormal Psychology where we would collectively discuss life outside of the classroom and provide opportunities for learners to support each other. I think for most of my students the 'time off' has provided a relaxation from the intensity of papers and tests, and has enabled them to build closer family and neighbourhood relationships, especially for those going to university next year.



Right now, there is no magical solution. I think that we're all learning to adjust and we're all doing the best that we can.

Esther Glen

Head of Inclusion, The Westminster School, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

The first few days of the school closure seemed very challenging as it was all very sudden. As Head of Inclusion I take care of students with special educational needs, and I am now using Microsoft Teams to connect with my students. I conduct small group learning support for students and keep in touch with their parents through emails and Teams calls. Overall the students have adapted well, and they seem to open up and participate actively in their online lessons. Certain Microsoft tools like Immersive Reader and Translate really helped students who had difficulties with reading and comprehension. Teachers could spend extra time with their focus group after the session was over too, and this helped most students with special needs to get one-to-one support. I think this experience has taught us that online learning tools can be very effective for those students who are off school for longer durations due to sickness or for psychological reasons, even when regular lessons resume.



Dr Manoj Singh

Managing Partner, Anisha Education Society, Pune, India

Anisha Education Society, Pune, India

Covid-19 has forced the world to come to a standstill. The development of young minds, however, cannot be put on hold. At Anisha Global School, the students of lower secondary and above were well equipped with Microsoft Teams as it was already a part of their blended learning. The challenge was to get primary students on board. While at home, younger students must remain engaged, focused and happy, particularly during such challenging times. Keeping this in mind, we initiated a virtual bonding session using Teams. This was followed by a home visit from an artificial intelligence educational robot called Miko 2. As a personal social companion and coach, Miko 2 has been designed to facilitate remote learning for primary grades. Students were able to learn and have fun with the robot in their free time.



The Miko 2 educational robot

Steven Shannon

Cambridge International AS & A Level Literature teacher at Fleming Island High School, Fleming Island, US

When the Covid-19 crisis hit, we had just finished the third quarter of the school year and were setting off for a week's vacation. As a result, there was a natural pause already in my class. My first decision in terms of teaching was whether or not to proceed with reading the literature which I had scheduled to teach. My daughter happens to be a student of mine. She is taking many other Cambridge International AS & A Level courses right now, too. I have, therefore, a unique view of a student trying to navigate this type of learning while I try to navigate this type of teaching. One of the struggles she has faced is teachers asking for too much too soon. I've come to accept that as



I've never subscribed to the notion that quantity yields quality. That's even truer in these times.

long as what I'm asking students to do is valuable, the quantity of what I'm asking for is not that relevant. I've never subscribed to the notion that quantity yields quality. That's even truer in these circumstances. In a face-to-face classroom, I can provide a great deal of feedback. That is, I can show an example of work and talk through strengths and weaknesses. I can do it once, and the students will all hear it. They can then adjust their work. In these online circumstances that becomes far more difficult. I'm receiving work at different times from students and they need feedback so they can proceed to the next steps. It's difficult, but I've found that it helps to break assignments down into smaller parts. For example, I assign writing a thesis one week, students write and submit it, and I give them feedback. The next week I assign the introduction for the essay, then they write a body paragraph based on the thesis, and so on. Working in this way



Fleming Island High School, Fleming Island, US

gives students a great deal of practice with their writing. I am able to provide feedback in a timely and valuable way without becoming overwhelmed by entire essays. As a result of my approach to online instruction, I have also had more meaningful dialogue with some of my more reticent students. The faceless interactions clearly make some students feel more comfortable about asking questions and asking for help. That has been quite nice to see, and I'm still trying to come to terms with what I can do when face-to-face classes resume to help facilitate this kind of communication with those students. This situation has been unlike anything most of us could have imagined, but the way teachers and students have had to adapt has brought some semblance of normalcy to so many of our lives and made this strange time a little less so. For that, I am quite thankful.

Visual tribute

Cambridge Assessment and Cambridge University Press joined forces in a visual tribute to key workers taking part in efforts to tackle Covid-19 around the world.

The newly built Triangle tower (Cambridge Assessment's international headquarters), the iconic architectural structure of University Printing House and the 200-year-old Pitt Building (the current and former global headquarters for Cambridge University Press respectively) were lit up blue on one evening in thanks. The event was carried out by local businesses The Crane Event, Pink Lamp, JMPS, Blushed and JezO's Events who all gave their time and skills for free.



Cambridge Assessment's international headquarters Triangle was lit up blue in tribute to key workers.

Saul Nassé, Chief Executive of Cambridge Assessment, said: "Across Cambridge Assessment and Cambridge University Press we have been working hard to help students, teachers and researchers in these challenging times, and we thank them for their commitment to education and research. Parents and carers are having a bigger role than ever in children's education, and we thank them for that too."

Peter Phillips, Chief Executive of Cambridge University Press, said: "These are extraordinary and challenging times, and everyone here at Cambridge University Press and Cambridge Assessment wants to acknowledge the continued hard work and sacrifice of health workers and carers who are on the front line of this outbreak. This is one way for us to say a very big thank you to them for all that they are doing."

Game-based learning

A range of fun games has been supporting the millions of children learning English at home.

Game-based learning platform Kahoot! has teamed up with Cambridge Assessment English to help young learners practise English.



Game-based learning platform Kahoot! has teamed up with Cambridge Assessment English on the games that help young learners practise English and build their language skills. The games were accessed by thousands of players within a few hours of their launch.

Nine games are already available. They bring rich Cambridge English content into the Kahoot! environment, where bright colours, interactions and music are designed to prompt and maintain engagement.

The games are specifically designed to help learners to explore, practise and review language and reading skills at Pre A1, A1 and A2 levels. As they play, learners and their teachers can see immediately what needs more work, and games can be repeated in class or set as a challenge to help learners reach mastery of the language content, or to help prepare for Pre A1 Starters, A1 Movers and A2 Flyers.

Belinda Cerdá, Head of Digital Partnerships at Cambridge Assessment English, said:

"Well-designed games can create excitement and flow, distracting learners from stress or anxiety, and making them more open to learning. Playing the right kind of games can also lead to increased levels of intrinsic motivation in the learning environment.

"These games are not just fun – they help children practise language and vocabulary aligned to their CEFR [Common European Framework of Reference] level, something they would also be doing at school."

Craig Narveson, VP of Content Partnerships, Kahoot! said: "We are very excited to partner with Cambridge Assessment English to launch a series of games that young learners can play anywhere – in the classroom, during virtual lessons, or at home."

Examining exams



OCR Chief Executive Jill Duffy

OCR's Chief Executive, Jill Duffy, will be a keynote speaker at an online conference examining the priorities for England's exam system.

England's exam system – the impact of COVID-19, priorities for the 2021 summer series, and the future use of technology will be held by Westminster Education Forum on Wednesday 3 March 2021.

The conference provides an opportunity for stakeholders and policymakers to discuss key issues and further options for the system and exam regulation going forward.

For more information or to book a place, go to: www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk.

Watch this space

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