

# Destination UK

Using your Cambridge qualifications to study in the UK



**CAMBRIDGE**  
International Examinations

*Excellence in education*

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## About us

Cambridge International Examinations is part of the University of Cambridge. We prepare school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning.

Our international qualifications are recognised by the world's best universities and employers, giving students a wide range of options in their education and career. As a not-for-profit organisation, we devote our resources to delivering high-quality educational programmes that can unlock learners' potential.

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# A pathway to UK university success with Cambridge

Cambridge International AS and A Levels are recognised as a passport to success in education, university and employment. They are valued by UK universities as academically rigorous qualifications that equip students with the skills they need to succeed both at university and beyond. Cambridge International AS & A Levels are recognised by UK higher education institutions as equivalent to UK GCE AS and A Levels.

Cambridge qualifications prepare students for the next stage of their educational journey. We believe that it is essential to make sure that students holding Cambridge qualifications don't just get into universities in the UK, but also that they are well prepared to succeed in their studies and are well equipped with the necessary academic skills.



“Cambridge International A Levels are the ‘gold standard’ qualification. They are based on rigorous, academic syllabuses that are accessible to students from a wide range of abilities yet have the capacity to stretch our most able”

Mark Vella, Director of Studies,  
Auckland Grammar School, New Zealand

## Did you know?

- The UK higher education sector is the top destination for students with Cambridge qualifications and the second most popular destination in the world for international students in general.
- The UK higher education sector is **international** in its makeup: **24%** of all academic higher education staff and **18%** of higher education students are international.
- **88%** of international graduates were **satisfied** with their higher education studies in the UK\*.
- The number of EU applications and non-EU applications to study in the UK **rose by 5% and 9%** respectively last year.
- UCAS (University and Colleges Admissions Service) provides international guides that help to explain UK higher education and how to make a university application through UCAS. These guides have been translated into a number of different languages which you can download from the UCAS website at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)
- Cambridge International AS & A Level is taught in over **2000 schools** in **127 countries**.

\*Survey conducted by BIS: The Department for Business, Innovation & Skills

**Please note:** All information is correct at the time of publication. For the latest information and statements on UK universities accepting Cambridge qualifications, search our recognitions database at [www.cie.org.uk/recognitionsearch](http://www.cie.org.uk/recognitionsearch)

# Why choose the UK?

There are many reasons to apply to study at undergraduate level in the UK. The quality of UK education is internationally recognised by employers, universities and governments, making it a popular choice for many international students. The UK is also renowned for the excellence of its research and teaching.

You will notice, as you conduct your research, that UK universities are varied in their missions and location. There are over 160 universities and colleges in the UK with degree-awarding powers, many of which rank among the best in the world. Indeed, four of the top six universities in the world can be found in the UK: University of Cambridge, UCL (University College London), Imperial College London and the University of Oxford (2013 QS World University Rankings).

A number of universities have formed groups with common interests. For example, the Russell Group ([www.russellgroup.ac.uk](http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk)) is an association of 24 leading research-intensive universities.

University Alliance universities focus on combining science and technology with design and creative industries. More information can be found at [www.unialliance.ac.uk](http://www.unialliance.ac.uk)

## Which course is right for you?

Choosing the right university course is a very important decision. Take time to research the courses that are on offer. You also need to think about the type of university you are most interested in, the location of the university, the choice of activities on offer, and the costs. This information is available on university websites. Many UK universities have specialist admissions tutors who can talk to you about your options.



## Tip

The most important decision you have to make concerns the degree course you wish to study; it is not about which university you want to apply to. Think carefully about what choices are right for you then choose an undergraduate course that suits your needs.



## Advice from UCAS: The UK's higher education admissions service

### Choose wisely

# UCAS

Wherever you decide to study, it's important to do as much research as possible.

If you can visit the UK before applying, you should consider attending some university open days – UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service)\*, regularly updates a list at [www.ucas.com/open-days-dates](http://www.ucas.com/open-days-dates)

We realise that not everyone can attend an open day, but it's pretty important to see where you'll be studying and possibly living. Visit [www.ucas.com/virtual-tours](http://www.ucas.com/virtual-tours) to see a list of virtual tours and videos from universities and colleges, so you can see what it's like on campus and what facilities are available. If your university isn't listed, take a look at their website or YouTube channel instead.

UCAS' international team attend numerous overseas education conventions. Take a look to see if they're coming to a local event in your country: [www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/international/international-events](http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/international/international-events)

Once you have an idea of what and where you'd like to study, you'll find a wealth of additional information on the UK's 37,000 higher education courses in the UCAS search tool – [search.ucas.com](http://search.ucas.com). Here you have the opportunity to explore the subjects that interest you in more depth, find out entry requirements, student statistics, and specific course details.

\* UCAS is the organisation which runs the UK's centralised admissions system. Further information about the organisation is available in the section 'How do I apply to study at a UK university?'

# What qualifications do I need to get a place on a course at a UK university?

First choose the subject you want to study at university. The next step is to decide which course you would like to follow. Before selecting a course, there are a number of things to check first, such as entry requirements.

## Entry Requirements

Each higher education course has its own entry requirements. You'll have to achieve certain exam grades and you may need qualifications in particular subjects to ensure that you have the right skills and knowledge to successfully complete the course.

Universities list the entry requirements for each of their courses on their websites alongside other requirements, such as an admissions test or an interview. Check the entry requirements for each of your selected courses carefully since these vary from university to university, even for the same course of study. Some universities and colleges use UCAS tariff points or a combination of tariff points and exam grades in their entry requirements. Further details can be found at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com): search for 'Tariff'. It's important to remember that all admission to universities is competitive and that universities have only limited numbers of places available. **Satisfying the minimum requirements does not guarantee admission.**

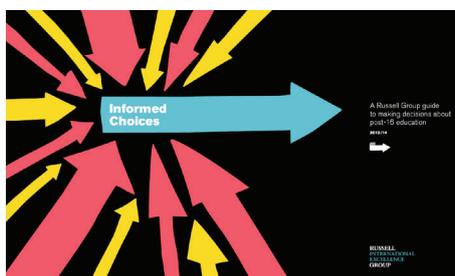
For academic courses at established universities, typical UK university entrance requirements are three A Level passes at minimum grade C or above, although some courses may have lower entry requirements. Competitive courses require three A Levels with good grades (ABB or above). Competitive universities (Oxford, Cambridge and other Russell Group universities such as UCL [University College London], Durham, Kings College London) require three very good A Levels (for example, A\*AA-AAB, depending on the course).

Medicine and law in particular require three very strong A Levels, and sometimes an additional AS Level.

## Cambridge International AS & A Levels

Cambridge International AS & A Levels are equivalent to UK AS and A Levels, which means that you will have to meet the same entry requirements as students applying with UK GCE A Levels.

Check that your choice of Cambridge International AS & A Levels subjects is suitable for your intended degree course, especially if you have a specific career path in mind such as medicine, engineering or law. For medicine, for example, two sciences or one science and a maths is often expected. A number of courses have subject-specific requirements so be sure to bear this mind when selecting your university course. **Check the entry requirements for your chosen course carefully before submitting your UCAS application.**



The Russell Group has published a helpful guide to post-16 subject choices entitled *Informed Choices*. The guide includes advice on the best subject combinations for a wide range of university courses. A copy is available at: [www.russellgroup.ac.uk/informed-choices](http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/informed-choices)

Some universities (the University of Oxford, for example) or individual subject departments may only consider A Levels taken at the same time – that is, three A Levels taken in your final A Level year – as evidence of whether you can cope with the demands of a rigorous undergraduate degree course. There are other universities that will not consider GCSE or IGCSE re-sits.

## Cambridge IGCSEs or Cambridge O Levels

Performance at IGCSE or O Level can be a good indicator of how well a student will do in their A Levels. Information about the required GCSE grades or their equivalent (i.e. Cambridge IGCSE or Cambridge O Level) will be clearly stated on university websites. They can also be found on UCAS course pages.

UK applicants typically hold at least five GCSEs at grade C or above in academic subjects. However, do bear in mind that for competitive courses such as medicine, a whole suite of good GCSEs – mostly A\* and A grades – may be expected. Since Cambridge IGCSE and O Level qualifications are equivalent in standard to the UK GCSE, universities will expect the same grades in Cambridge IGCSE or Cambridge O Level examinations.

Most university courses require at least a grade C in GCSE English and mathematics, and sometimes a science depending on the course (for example, medicine, nursing and primary school teaching). Some university courses go even further and ask for specific subjects at

# What qualifications do I need to get a place on a course at a UK university? continued

GCSE, with certain grades. Note too that for courses such as medicine, science and engineering, the English language requirement is higher – a grade B at least. For full information on undergraduate courses, go to the UCAS website. You can find details of the types of qualification accepted, and the minimum grades required for each course at <http://search.ucas.com>. If you have any questions concerning a course or its entry requirements, contact the university concerned.

## Do I need to sit an admissions test?

You may have to take an admissions test, particularly for medicine or law, and/or attend an interview or audition (for performing arts) as part of the entry requirements for your chosen course.

Admissions tests assess particular abilities, such as thinking skills and logical reasoning. Most admissions tests happen at the start of the academic cycle. The standard academic year starts in September or October and runs until June or July so, if you do need to sit such a test, make sure you register on time. You will probably need to take the test before sending in your UCAS application. If you need to have an interview, the university will let you know about the arrangements.

Some of the most common admissions tests are: BMAT and



UKCAT for medical courses, STEP for mathematics, Cambridge Law Test for law and ELAT for English literature. Specific details for some of the more well-known admission tests can be found at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) – search for 'admissions'.

You can also find information on admissions tests on university websites. Read the information carefully, as admissions tests can form an important part of your application. If you have any questions about an admissions test or interview, contact the university concerned.

## What courses can I study?

There are thousands of excellent courses offered by UK universities and colleges which lead to qualifications that are respected by employers and academics worldwide.

At undergraduate level, most students study for a bachelor's degree. Shorter courses are also available: Foundation degree, Diploma of Higher Education, Certificate of Higher Education and the Higher National Diploma (HND).

A full-time bachelor's or undergraduate degree normally takes three years to complete (four in some cases, such as language courses that require a year of study abroad or business courses that require work experience). Depending on your chosen course of study, there are different titles of degree, namely: Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Science (BSc), Bachelor of Education (BEd) and Bachelor of Engineering (BEng). For more information on the different types of course, visit the UCAS website at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) and search for "different types of study". The British Council website is also helpful: [www.educationuk.org](http://www.educationuk.org). Choose 'Your study options' and select 'Higher education – Courses and qualifications'.

If you are considering a career in medicine, then visit the Medical Schools Council's website ([www.medschools.ac.uk](http://www.medschools.ac.uk)). It provides a wealth of information about applying to medical schools in the UK. For veterinary medicine, the Royal College of Veterinary Standards website will be helpful: ([www.rcvs.org.uk](http://www.rcvs.org.uk) education /i-want-to-be-a-vet). For law, visit <http://studyinglaw.co.uk>

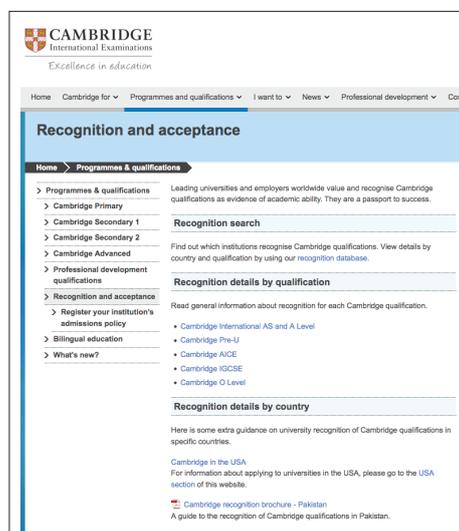
You may choose up to five courses. However, if you are applying for medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or veterinary science, you can only apply for up to four courses with the fifth choice being an alternative course. Your fifth choice could be another science course such as biochemistry.

## Do I need to take an English language proficiency test?

When applying to study at undergraduate level in the UK, you must be able to communicate effectively in English in an academic environment. You normally need to provide certification of your competence in English before starting your studies. Details of English language requirements can be found on each university's website. These may vary depending upon the course and the university.

UK universities recognise Cambridge IGCSE and O Level English Language qualifications as evidence of English language proficiency for university study. Most universities accept these qualifications for general admissions purposes. However, it is important that you check the English language requirements of your selected universities and individual departments or faculties before submitting your application. This is because English language requirements differ depending on whether you are applying from within the UK, within the EU or EEA or Switzerland, or from overseas.

Applicants who require a Tier 4 (General) student visa must obtain a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) from their chosen university before submitting a visa application to the Home Office. However, before the university will issue you with a CAS, it must assess your English language ability. You may well have to show evidence of your proficiency in all four language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking). Cambridge offers support to students who require evidence of their competence in English as part of their visa application to study in the UK. Further details are found at [www.cie.org.uk/igcserecognition](http://www.cie.org.uk/igcserecognition)



## Making arrangements

Students from EU countries have the same right to study in the UK as UK students, but those from outside the EU will need a student (Tier 4) visa. While UCAS doesn't arrange visas, there's lots of advice on the Immigration and visas section of the UCAS website at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) – search for 'visas'.

If you have any questions about your student visa, you should contact the university acting as your Tier 4 Sponsor. Most universities have designated international admissions staff available who can answer questions about Tier 4 visa applications.

The Home Office website also provides information about the documents required for studying in the UK. Go to [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search for 'UK Visas and Immigration'.

## What fees will I need to pay?

There are two levels of UK tuition fees at publicly funded universities: home student fees (including EU students) and international student fees. You need to find out as early as possible whether you are considered as a home or an international student. This is because some programmes might not be available to international students or there might be significant restrictions.

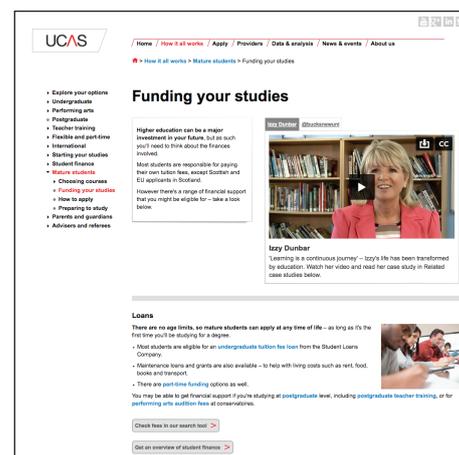
The website *Reddin survey of university tuition fees* is also helpful: [www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/university-tuition-fees/reddin-survey-of-university-tuition-fees/](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/university-tuition-fees/reddin-survey-of-university-tuition-fees/)

If you're thinking of studying for a medical qualification, you may be able to get funding from the UK National Health Service – there's more information on the NHS Bursaries website: [www.gov.uk/nhs-bursaries/overview](http://www.gov.uk/nhs-bursaries/overview). If not, take a look at your chosen universities websites for more details. It's also worth reading the financial section of the UCAS website at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com): search for "cost of UK study".



However, do check your fee status with your chosen university. You may also have to pay a deposit. The university will hold your deposit against your tuition fee account for the year the course is expected to start.

You can find out how much tuition will cost when researching different courses using the UCAS search tool. Many universities and colleges list any available scholarships and bursaries under the 'Fees & Finances' tab.



# What qualifications do I need to get a place on a course at a UK university? continued

## Can I apply for a scholarship?

A wide variety of scholarships are available to EU and international students; individual Faculties sometimes offer course-specific scholarships and bursaries. In addition, many international organisations offer financial assistance. Demand for these scholarships, however, can be high.

You can usually find details of scholarships available at each university by searching the institution's website. Financial assistance is also available at some universities once you have started your course. For information concerning finance, contact the student services department at your chosen universities.

UCAS also provides helpful information regarding finance at: [www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/student-finance](http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/student-finance)

The Scholarship Search website also gives details of undergraduate scholarships: <http://www.scholarship-search.org.uk>

You will find information on scholarships and other funding before coming to the UK in a British Council leaflet, entitled *Sources of Funding for International Students*: [www.britishcouncil.org/learning-funding-your-studies](http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-funding-your-studies)

## Remember

There may be scholarships available from organisations in your home country or your local UK embassy. Competition will be high but it is always worth investigating what is on offer.



“Cambridge International A Levels are an excellent technical qualification. They provide really good core knowledge and help to build aptitude and they provide a really good bedrock for the move – the transition to university in the first year of study.”

Richard Partington, Senior Tutor, Churchill College, University of Cambridge



**Ashara Fernando** took Cambridge International A Levels in Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics at Wycherley International School in Colombo, Sri Lanka. She is now studying Medicine at the University of Nottingham.

“The first step towards reaching my goal to become a doctor was made easier by choosing to do Cambridge international AS & A Levels. The curriculum is well structured and develops a logical and independent way of thinking. The syllabus gave me an excellent and comprehensive foundation that helped me get accepted into the University of Nottingham to study Medicine. What I loved about the Cambridge International A Level was its ability to develop a mindset that not only enhanced analytical thinking and problem-solving but also gave an insight into interpersonal skills such as time management and teamwork. I would highly recommend Cambridge International A Levels, as they are an invaluable preparation for confronting all the challenges students will face at university.”

# How do I apply to study at a UK university?

International Cambridge students apply to university in the same way as UK students. You can get advice from your school or college, or from British Council offices.

You are responsible for:

- paying the correct application fee
- getting an academic reference and attaching it
- submitting the completed application online to UCAS.

The application form on the UCAS website has sections for:

- your personal details
- exams that you have passed and are working towards
- a personal statement about your academic interests and career aspirations.

You can start to complete your online application form in June; applications can be submitted from September. The key deadline date for the majority of undergraduate courses, called the equal consideration deadline, is 18:00 (UK time) on 15 January.

Applications for Oxford, Cambridge or any course in medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine/science should arrive at UCAS by midnight on 15 October. Some art and design courses have an application deadline of 18:00 on 24 March but you should check with the institution concerned when to submit your application.<sup>2</sup>

International students applying to UK universities don't contact each institution they're interested in directly. Instead they use a centralised admissions system, run by an organisation called UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service), which processes over 2.5 million applications every year, placing over 650,000 undergraduates in some 350 UK higher education institutions.

**UCAS**

UCAS is a strong advocate of making UK higher education more accessible internationally and works closely with organisations like the British Council to support the recruitment of students from around the world. This means there's already a broad range of advice on offer to international students. The UCAS website has a dedicated International section where students, tutors, advisers, agents and parents can find out more about studying in the UK: [www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/international](http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/international)

## The application process

### Step 1: Choosing courses

- explore your options
- search for courses
- decide on a subject
- check entry requirements.

### Step 2: Applying, go to [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)

- apply online
- wait to hear back from course providers
- reply to any offers you get
- see if you meet the conditions and get accepted.

### Step 3: Starting your course

- make sure your finance is sorted
- buy course materials
- check social options and get ready to go!

In simple terms, applying to university in the UK is a three-step process:

- Choose your course
- Apply online at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)
- Make arrangements to study.

If you're applying for performance arts subjects at one of the UK's conservatoires, you'll need to use the CUKAS admissions service – a dedicated performing arts admissions portal that's also run by UCAS. Take a look at [www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/performing-arts](http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/performing-arts) for more information.

**UCAS**

## How do I apply to study at a UK university? continued



### Personal statement

As part of your application, you are required to write a 'personal statement' – a short essay (no more than 4 000 characters or 47 lines of text) about yourself, your academic interests and what has motivated you to choose a certain subject at university. Even though you can select up to five courses on your UCAS form, you can only submit one personal statement so you should plan and write this carefully. The emphasis should be on how your Cambridge International A Level subjects have helped prepare you for your chosen degree course. **Use a few but well-chosen examples to demonstrate this.**

You could also mention any additional reading or relevant experiences you have had (e.g. work experience or voluntary work, hobbies, interests) which have led you to choose this subject at university. It's your enthusiasm for, and commitment to, your chosen subject that universities are keen to see. The inclusion of a couple of sentences about any related

### Checklist

You've completed your research and chosen your five courses!  
You've checked the:

- ✓ entry requirements for your chosen courses
- ✓ English language requirements for your chosen courses
- ✓ scholarships you can apply for – both in the UK and from home
- ✓ deadline date for submission of your UCAS application
- ✓ Home Office student visa requirements (should you require a visa) tuition fees, your fee status and whether you need to pay a deposit.

**You are now ready to start working on your online UCAS application form!**

Full information on how and when to apply for undergraduate courses is available on the UCAS website: <http://www.ucas.com/apply>

super-curricular activities (e.g. Debate Club, Model United Nations) will demonstrate not only your passion for the subject you want to do at university but also how you have explored your interest in this subject outside the classroom. Remember that the personal statement is your opportunity to convince your chosen

universities why your application is unique and should be accepted. Information on how to write a personal statement can be found at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) – search for 'personal statement'. Many university websites also give good advice about what they are looking for in a personal statement.





## Providing an academic reference

You must ask an academic to provide a reference as part of your UCAS application. This can make a real difference to your application. It is usually a teacher at your current school or college who completes this part of your application form since s/he can give an opinion on your academic performance during your Cambridge International A Level studies.

The reference should include comments on your suitability for your chosen course as well as on your attitude, motivation, commitment to your studies. Your predicted grades for the Cambridge International A Level subjects you are taking should be mentioned because universities use this information when they assess your application. If your first language is not English, your referee could also comment on your ability in English, whether you studied through the medium of English at school and/or how well you would be able to communicate in an academic environment in English.

Universities want to be sure that you are going to benefit from your time with them. UCAS has a section on its website which provides helpful guidelines for referees – go to [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) and search for 'referees'. You can share this link with the person writing your reference.

## Applications to Oxford and Cambridge

It is **not** possible to apply to **both** Oxford and Cambridge in the same admissions round as an undergraduate. Some courses/ combinations of subjects are offered at one of the universities but not the other; courses with a similar title offered at both of the universities may be different in content.

Check each institution's Undergraduate Prospectus/website for specific course details, and then read the details carefully to see which course will suit you best before choosing which of the two universities you will apply to.

## Key deadlines

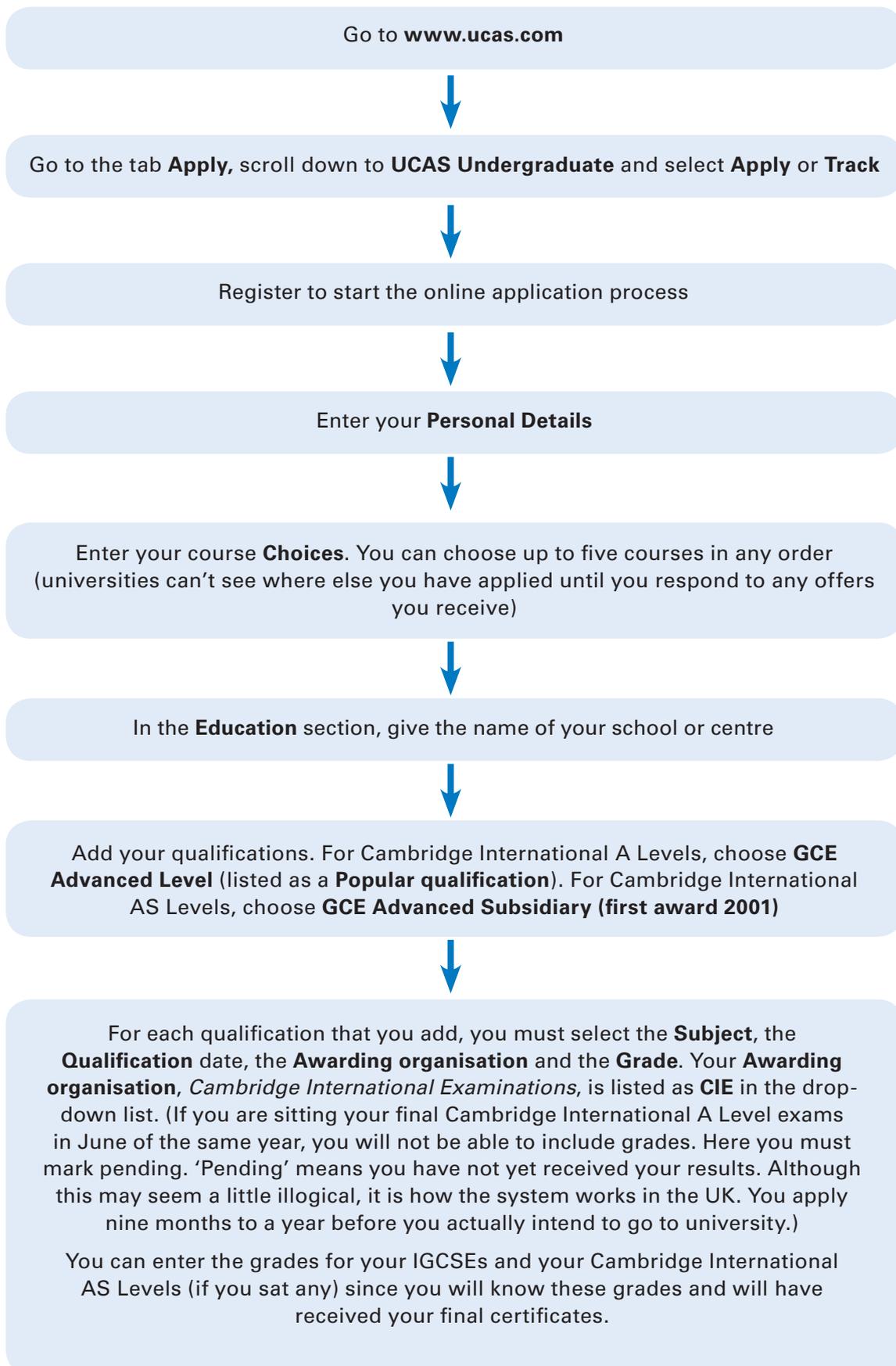
- For Oxford, Cambridge and courses in medical, dentistry and veterinary medicine, it's 15th October
- For all other applications, it's 15th January – what UCAS calls the 'equal consideration' deadline.
- For some Art and Design courses, it's 24th March. Check course details to confirm the correct deadline.



## Remember

You can apply as soon as possible. However, your personal statement and your academic reference have to be completed **before** you submit your application to UCAS. Your referee will need time to write your reference so do ask well in advance. Make sure that your referee knows that your reference must be done online.

# How do I complete the UCAS application form with Cambridge qualifications?



## Your Cambridge IGCSE English language qualification

Before you enter your grade for your IGCSE English language qualification on your UCAS application form, check which IGCSE English language qualification and syllabus you took. Your Cambridge IGCSE Statement of Results gives this information in full. Alternatively, your English teacher will be able to help. You can also confirm which qualification you took by checking which grades appear on your Cambridge IGCSE certificate.

There are two Cambridge IGCSE English language qualifications: *First Language English* and *English as a Second Language*. Each qualification has two syllabuses: IGCSE First

Language English – syllabuses 0500 and 0522; IGCSE English as Second Language – syllabuses 0510 and 0511.

Grades for either IGCSE First Language English 0500 or IGCSE English as a Second Language 0510 must be entered under the section ‘**International GCSE**’ on the UCAS online application form. Grades for either First Language English 0522 or English as a Second Language 0511 must be entered under the section ‘**Level 1/Level 2 Certificates**’.

You may have a numeric grade (for the Speaking and Listening test for 0500 or the Speaking test for 0510)



### Tip

Remember to save any information entered before closing a section and moving to another one.

as well as an alpha grade (A\*-G). If you do, enter both these grades as per the instructions in the Education section of UCAS ‘Apply’.

You can also find detailed information on how to enter your IGCSE English language grades on our website at [www.cie.org.uk/igcserecognition](http://www.cie.org.uk/igcserecognition) and also at [www.cie.org.uk/help](http://www.cie.org.uk/help)



**Suvini Abeyrathna** is studying Law at the University of Reading. She took Cambridge International A Levels in Law, Accounting and Economics at Wycherley International School in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

“Cambridge International A Levels gave me a head start in securing a place to study Law at one of the most prestigious universities in the world. The University of Reading is ranked in the top one per cent of universities in the world and The School of Law was ranked seventh (of 67 universities) in the UK for world-leading research and international excellence (Research Assessment Exercise). Cambridge International A Level in Law introduced me to the main principles of the law as it is practised in England and Wales, an excellent foundation for my tertiary study. Cambridge has prepared me for the demanding situations that I experienced at university. I can proudly say that my Cambridge studies have given me an advantage at university.”

“We’re pretty pleased with Cambridge as a preparation for university study. Indeed, I suppose we are so pleased that we offer them ourselves as part of our foundation programme so that’s really the strongest endorsement that a university can offer.”

Dr Richard Harvey, Academic Director of Admissions, University of East Anglia

# What happens after I submit my application form?

After you've sent off your application you can see how it's progressing by logging in to UCAS' Track system – [track.ucas.com](http://track.ucas.com) (which is essentially an extension of Apply). Through Track you can see when decisions are received from each of your chosen universities and colleges. If you don't receive any offers, or decline the offers you do receive, you may be able to apply for an additional course through a scheme called Extra – [www.ucas.com/extra](http://www.ucas.com/extra). Extra enables you to apply for any course that still has vacancies, and runs from the end of February and early July each year.

When each university or college has received and considered your application, they will make their decisions. If they make an offer it may be either 'Unconditional' or 'Conditional'.

- **Conditional** – a place is reserved for you, subject to entry requirements being met (usually academic conditions)
- **Unconditional** – a place is guaranteed, as you've met all entry requirements

The majority of offers made are 'Conditional' and, more often than not, are dependent on the results you get in your summer exams. A typical offer will be expressed as a series of grades or UCAS Tariff points, referencing the subjects you're currently studying for. An example offer could be: 'A levels grade AAB with A in chemistry and at least two other sciences or mathematics'.

You can only reply to your offers when you've received all your decisions.

- If you have an unconditional offer, you can select it now to confirm your place.
- If your offers are conditional on exam results or other requirements, you can pick two so you have an extra one as a back-up.

The types of reply you can make are:

- firm acceptance – your first choice
- insurance acceptance – back-up choice
- decline.

UCAS

After you've received all of your university decisions, you must decide which two courses will be your firm (or first) and insurance (or back-up) choices. You should have a few weeks before you need to send in a reply so take the time to review all your offers carefully.

The UCAS website has helpful information regarding how to make a firm acceptance and an insurance acceptance – go to [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) and search for 'offers'.

## Remember

Your firm choice should be your first choice, that is, the course that you really want to study. Your insurance choice should be your 'back-up' option, that is, a course that requires lower grades than your firm choice. This is just in case you don't achieve the grades you were expecting for your firm choice – although your insurance choice should also be a course that you would like to study!

Once you've sent in your firm and insurance choice, you can't change your mind when you receive your results. If you achieve the grades you need for your firm choice, you must accept the place – that's why it's important to think carefully before sending in your choices.

## Other useful websites:

- UKCISA website – [www.ukcisa.org.uk/International-Students/Fees--finance/Home-or-Overseas-fees](http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/International-Students/Fees--finance/Home-or-Overseas-fees)
- British Council's Education UK scholarship and financial support advice – [www.educationuk.org/global/articles/scholarships-financial-support](http://www.educationuk.org/global/articles/scholarships-financial-support)
- UK government's student finance calculator – [www.gov.uk/student-finance-calculator](http://www.gov.uk/student-finance-calculator)
- International Student Calculator – [international.studentcalculator.org](http://international.studentcalculator.org)

## What happens once an application is made

### 1. Apply online\*

Check course details to see which deadline your application should arrive at UCAS by.

- 15 October for Oxford, Cambridge or professional courses in medicine, dentistry or veterinary medicine/science.
- 15 January for the majority of courses.
- 24 March for some art and design courses.

### 2. Wait to hear back

The universities or colleges will decide whether to make you an offer.

- Either unconditional if you've already met the entry requirements.
- Or conditional if the offer's based on your exam results.

### Looking for more courses

If you have no offers or you've declined them all you can still find other courses.

- Either by adding more choices one at a time in our Extra service.
- Or if you didn't meet the conditions and Clearing has started, you can see which courses still have vacancies

### 3. Reply to your offers

Once all their decisions are in you have to reply to your offers by a specific deadline.

- If your firm acceptance is an unconditional then the place is yours.
- Or if it's conditional it's yours if you meet the entry requirements – you can choose an insurance acceptance as a backup.
- And decline the rest.

### 4. See if the university or college confirms your place

- They might not if you don't meet the conditions of an offer.
- But if they do then you're in – hooray!
- (If you've met and exceeded your offer conditions you might be able to look for alternative courses in our Adjustment service while holding your original confirmed place.)

\*If you miss these deadlines, we recommend you contact your chosen university or college to ask if you're allowed to apply late as some will accept applications up to 30 June. All applications submitted after 30 June are automatically entered into Clearing.

## How do I get my results and what do I do next?

Cambridge International Examinations marks your examination papers and sends your results to UCAS. You do not need to send your results yourself to your chosen Universities.

UCAS matches your exam results to your application and sends your results to your firm and insurance choice Universities. Your chosen Universities check whether your results meet the conditions of your offers and send their decisions to

UCAS. These are shown in *Track*: [www.ucas.com/apply](http://www.ucas.com/apply)

Once you have received your results from your school, you should check Track to see if you have been accepted. If you've achieved the required grades, you should be able to accept either your firm or your insurance offer - depending on the grades you've achieved. If you haven't achieved the required grades, you might still be offered an

alternative course by your chosen University. You can always contact the University concerned to discuss this. If you are not offered an alternative place then you can go through 'Clearing' to see which courses have vacancies. The UCAS website has some very helpful advice about how 'Clearing' works so you can see which courses still have places and apply – go to [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) and search for 'clearing'.

# Student success stories

## A passport to study in the UK

**Prinka Anandawardhani Choessin** took Cambridge International A Levels in Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics at Binus International School, Serpong, Indonesia. She is now studying Architecture at the University of Kent.



“Going to a university in the UK was one of my biggest dreams. I could not be more grateful that my Cambridge International A Level results got me into the School of Architecture at the University of Kent, which is accredited by

the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). I also received the Kent Scholarship for Academic Excellence. My Physics and Mathematics A Levels have helped me to understand the technical aspects of architecture. Studying in the UK is a great experience, and having Canterbury as my place of study is an added bonus. I have only been studying here for a few months and yet it has definitely improved my English skills and broadened my perspectives on the world.”

**Pelayo Méndez** studied Cambridge International A Levels in Mathematics, Physics and History at the British School of Barcelona in Spain. He went on to study Economics at the London School of



Economics and Political Science, where he was awarded the Gonner Prize for his final year results.

“The qualifications I took required consistent hard work throughout the two years. However, I soon realised the efforts had been well invested – not only did Cambridge International A Levels allow me to be accepted at LSE, they also provided me with excellent skills to deal with all the courses of my undergraduate program. This included both the essay-based and the mathematically oriented subjects present in a hybrid science-arts undergraduate like that of Economics. Few examination boards have the recognition Cambridge International A Levels enjoy amongst top UK universities, making the efforts put into studying A Level even more worthwhile. For all of this, I am highly grateful to my school and teachers.”

**Toby Van Ness** took Cambridge International A Levels in Biology, English Literature, History and Thinking Skills at Lanna International School in Thailand. He gained admission to University College London, where he is thoroughly enjoying his studies in Human Science.

“Studying Cambridge International A Levels was a perfect introduction to university in the UK. I was able to fit straight in without any gaps in my knowledge or confidence! It was a perfect start and allowed me to really hit the ground running.”



**Marie Shabaya**, from African Leadership Academy in South Africa, took Cambridge International A Levels in English Literature, Economics, History and Mathematics. She studied Economics at Durham University before completing a Masters of Science in Journalism at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism in New York.



“Thanks to the Cambridge International A Levels I sat, I had the necessary skills and background to survive a complex and demanding degree. I also gained a great sense of discipline when it came to independent study. I feel that those exams prepared me for a very challenging and academic qualification. Everyone in the North of England was friendly and welcoming. I liked the academic challenge too – a lot of trust was placed on me as a student to learn on my own. It taught me to be accountable to myself as a student – a trait which I have carried to the professional sphere too.” to my teachers who eagerly gave us their time, effort and knowledge and who put so much faith in us.”

**Wang Yiyang** completed her Cambridge International A Levels in Economics, Mathematics, Further Mathematics and Physics at the Middle School Affiliated to Shaanxi Normal University in Xi’an, China. She is studying Economics and Statistics at University College London (UCL).



“After my first term at UCL, I have already found that what I learnt in my Cambridge International A Levels has been extremely useful for my studies. The style of teaching and learning is similar, as are the forms of assessment, which has made it much easier to adjust to studying overseas. I am thoroughly enjoying my studies in the UK. Seminars and tutorials give me a chance to study and discuss theories as part of a group. Being in London also means that there are opportunities to get in touch with top investment banks. The city’s cultural environment, with its many museums, libraries, parks and theatres, makes it the perfect blend of a modern yet historical place to live.”

**Anuruddha Higgoda** took Cambridge International A Levels in Physics, Mathematics, Chemistry and Further Mathematics at Wycherley International School in Sri Lanka. He is studying Aerospace Engineering at the University of Southampton.

“Cambridge International Examinations is well recognized for its syllabus quality and depth. It was important to me that I gained reputable qualifications that would allow me to qualify successfully in my chosen field. I am currently a second-year Aerospace Engineering student studying an MEng degree in Aeronautics & Astronautics. Cambridge exams provide the ideal foundation to undergraduate level studies - I was able to grasp new ideas and concepts with relative ease. The Cambridge system encourages students to expand their knowledge and push their limits. I am extremely grateful to both Cambridge International Examinations and Wycherley for providing me with the right foundation as I embark on my journey into a career in the aerospace industry.”



**Kaelan Ong Wei Ern** studied Cambridge International A Levels in Further Mathematics, Mathematics, Economics, Physics and Critical Thinking at Taylor's College Subang Jaya in Malaysia. He is now studying Economics at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

“The academic rigours of Cambridge International A Levels prepared me for a stellar start to university in the UK. Thanks to both the breadth and depth of the syllabuses, I found it relatively easy to understand a large part of my course, as I had already delved into the more complex aspects of the subject beforehand. This is particularly true for my more quantitative modules, as the challenging nature of Cambridge's assessments had trained me to think critically when solving problems. But more importantly, I believe the programme has developed a strong foundation for me to build on moving forward. I am thoroughly grateful that my Cambridge qualifications acted as the key to my admission to the university of my dreams!”



**Sophia Jacobs** took Cambridge International A Levels in Mathematics, Physics, Geography, Business Studies and Spanish at The British School of Barcelona in Spain. She went on to study for a BSc in Business Management at the University of Leeds, and has also studied at the University of Hong Kong.

“Taking Cambridge International A Levels has definitely put me ahead of the game, both academically and in global awareness. Having chosen the University of Leeds, studying BSc Business Management has led me to pursue further studies abroad in Hong Kong. With my international background and diverse skill set, having taken Mathematics, Physics, Geography, Business Studies and Spanish at A Level, I received a scholarship to study in Hong Kong. I solidly believe that Cambridge International A Levels have acted as a catalyst for the decisions I have made in the past three years in my life, and will do so in those to come.” I am just very grateful that all of the hard work done in high school really prepared me for college.”



**Raunaq Bagchi** took Cambridge International A Levels in Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Mathematics at The Cambridge School, Kolkata, India. He is now studying Chemical Engineering at Imperial College, London

“While preparing for my A Level examinations, I decided to pursue Chemical Engineering at Imperial College, London, ranked among the top ten of its kind in the world. My strong relationships with school faculty and the academically focused environment helped turn me into the student I am now. As well as exploring my subjects in depth, my interests in interdisciplinary fields that connect academia with industry led to my final choice of discipline. This step towards university would not have been possible without the Cambridge system. Cambridge has provided a gateway for countless students to access higher educational institutes of repute abroad, especially in the UK. This exam board has eased my transition from high school to a leading UK university.”



**Aditya Sakhuja** studied Cambridge International A Level Physics, Mathematics and Chemistry at Delhi Public School International in India. He is now studying Electronic and Information Engineering at Imperial College London.

“Studying Cambridge International AS & A levels has had an immense impact on my life and career. My admission to one of the best universities in the world, Imperial College, is down to my A Level grades. Even while studying a dual-subject course, I easily covered most of my first-year mathematics course from the in-depth of knowledge I gained while studying Cambridge International A Level Mathematics. My grades and UCAS points helped me get an internship at the end of first year, which is uncommon with companies in London. But the biggest reward I have achieved through my grades is a scholarship from BP that has not only supported me financially but also boosted my confidence. Cambridge International A Levels have undoubtedly given me more than I had ever expected.”



# Cambridge International AS & A Level recognition

Cambridge International AS and A Levels are recognised by UCAS, UK universities and institutions overseas as equivalent in standard and grade to the AS and A Levels taken by students in the UK.

UK universities tell us that they accept Cambridge International AS & A Levels as evidence of academic ability because:

- the qualifications are linear and retakes are only allowed for the whole subject
- they provide a reliable measure of a student's knowledge and skills in the subject studied
- they are a reliable test of a student's problem-solving and critical thinking abilities
- they are reliable indicators of a student's performance.

## Recognition statements

The recognitions database on our website shows worldwide institutions that have given formal written acceptance of Cambridge qualifications. It is regularly updated with new recognition statements, allowing Cambridge students to see where their Cambridge qualifications are accepted.

To see the latest information, or to search for your chosen institution, visit our recognitions database at [www.cie.org.uk/recognitionsearch](http://www.cie.org.uk/recognitionsearch)

Here are **some examples** of the official recognition that Cambridge has received from UK higher education institutions.

### University of Oxford

The University of Oxford has for many years accepted the Cambridge International A Level as a suitable qualification to meet our conditions for entry to the collegiate University. The qualifications provide candidates with suitable subject knowledge, although the competitive nature of our applications means that success in the A Level alone does not automatically result in an offer. Further details on making an application for undergraduate study at Oxford can be accessed at [www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate)

### St George's, University of London

St George's, University of London, welcomes students with Cambridge International A Levels. Cambridge International A Level is accepted as equivalent to UK A Level on a grade-for-grade basis. St George's, University of London, welcomes linear qualifications as they very much match the style of teaching at university.

### Manchester University

The University of Manchester welcomes students with Cambridge International A Levels. The University of Manchester accept International A Levels as equivalent to GCE A Levels and accept them on a grade-for-grade basis. We have no plans to change this in light of the planned reforms to International A Levels. We continue to view them both as excellent preparation and indicators of potential for progression to university study.

### Newcastle University

We welcome applications from candidates with Cambridge International qualifications. Our experience is that Cambridge Advanced qualifications such as Cambridge International AS and A Levels are consistently robust and reliable, and prepare students very well for higher education.

### University of St Andrews

The University of St Andrews welcomes students with Cambridge International A Levels. The University of St Andrews accepts the Cambridge International AS & A Level qualifications as equivalent to the UK A Levels. This will continue be the case as changes to the UK AS and A Levels are implemented in the coming years. The Cambridge qualification will be viewed as meeting the general entry requirements, although some courses may have specific subject requirements relevant to the specific degree. All applications will be considered on an individual basis.

**“ We think that Cambridge International qualifications are a really good preparation for university study. They allow students to specialise in particular subjects and to develop lots of other skills which are really useful for university study – things like communication skills, research skills and problem-solving skills ”**

Roseanna Cross, Head of Undergraduate Admissions, University of Bristol

“ We accept the Cambridge international qualifications as directly equivalent to their UK counterparts. We think they are very robust and trusted qualifications. Students come to us with in-depth knowledge and general skills such as independent learning, problem-solving and critical thinking that they will need to get them through their degree programme. ”

Jo Labudek, Head of Undergraduate Admissions, University of Birmingham

### Cambridge recognition across the UK



● Universities that accept Cambridge qualifications

### Recognitions database

You can find more information on which universities formally recognise Cambridge programmes and qualifications by searching our online recognitions database. Go to [www.cie.org.uk/recognitionsearch](http://www.cie.org.uk/recognitionsearch)

### Online help

You can find answers to frequently asked questions about Cambridge examinations and services at [www.cie.org.uk/help](http://www.cie.org.uk/help). Simply type your question into the search box, or use the menu to guide you.

### Customer Services

You can email us at [info@cie.org.uk](mailto:info@cie.org.uk) or call us on +44 1223 553554.

Cambridge International Examinations  
1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU, United Kingdom  
t: +44 1223 553554 f: +44 1223 553558  
e: [info@cie.org.uk](mailto:info@cie.org.uk) [www.cie.org.uk](http://www.cie.org.uk)

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