

Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180

Introductory session Q&A, November 2024

Availability

- **When is the first assessment for Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180?**

The first assessment will be in June 2025.

- **Is there an exam in November 2025?**

No. Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180 will first be available in November in 2026.

- **What are my options for Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge O Level Arabic from 2025?**

	2025		2026		2027	
	June	November	June	November	June	November
IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
IGCSE First Language Arabic 0508	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IGCSE (9–1) First Language Arabic 7184	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x
O Level Arabic 3180	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x
IGCSE Arabic 0544 (Foreign Language)	✓	x	✓	x	✓	x

About Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180

- **Is the 7180 Arabic syllabus a Cambridge IGCSE or a Cambridge O Level?**

7180 Arabic is a Cambridge IGCSE (9–1). This means that candidates receive a numeric grade from 9 to 1.

- **Where can I find more information about Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180?**

The syllabus document contains all necessary information.

Please note that the full syllabus document is published in English. An accompanying ‘Key Information’ version is published in Arabic alongside the full version to provide an overview in the target language.

- **What age group is the syllabus suitable for?**

Cambridge IGCSEs are typically taught over one or two years to students who are between 14–16 years of age, although they can be taken by students of other ages. There is no prescribed duration for a course of study leading to assessment for Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180.

- **Will students receive a pass/fail grade or a numeric grade?**

Candidates will receive a numeric grade from 9 to 1. For more information on how Cambridge calculates grades and the link between A*–G and 9–1 grade sets, please follow this link: <chrome-extension://efaidnbnmnibpcjpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/Images/412121-igcse-9-1-grading-factsheet.pdf>

- **What is the assessment standard for Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180?**

UK NARIC*, the national agency in the UK for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills, has carried out an independent benchmarking study of Cambridge IGCSE and found it to be comparable to the standard of the GCSE in the UK. This means students can be confident that their Cambridge IGCSE qualifications are accepted as equivalent to UK GCSEs by leading universities worldwide.

We will be publishing grade descriptions at grades 7, 4 and 1 and example candidate responses for Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180 showing different levels of performance (high, middle and low) after first assessment in June 2025.

- **Has Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180 been accepted by education ministries and/or universities in my country?**

Please speak to your Cambridge country manager for details on acceptance and recognition in your country.

- **How many teaching hours are needed to prepare students for assessment in Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180? How will we be able to cover the curriculum in one year?**

We design Cambridge IGCSE syllabuses to require about 130 guided learning hours for each subject. This is for guidance only. The number of hours a learner needs to achieve the qualification may vary according to each school and the learners' previous experience of the subject. It is not anticipated that Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180 will require more guided learning hours than other Cambridge IGCSE or Cambridge O Level language courses.

- **Can you advise on how to transfer our current students to Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180 in order to be ready to take the exam next year?**

Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180 is a skills-based syllabus. The aims and assessment objectives are designed to target skills common to extended language learning such as communicating effectively for different purposes and audiences and reading for explicit and implicit meaning. These skills are assessed at various levels across all Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge O Level language programmes, making switching between syllabuses simple with minimal impact on teaching and learning.

Paper 2 Reading & Grammar includes assessment of understanding of grammar and rhetoric which may require more targeted teaching. Further training and support materials, available in early 2025, will provide additional guidance for teaching these skills.

Resources

- **Can you provide the PowerPoint slides and recording from the webinar?**

The slides used in the initial information briefing are provided alongside this document. A recording of the initial information session is available on request from your Cambridge representative.

- **When will teaching and learning resources be available?**

The following resources are currently available on the [School Support Hub](#):

- Specimen Papers and Mark Schemes
- Scheme of Work
- Learner Guide
- Writing skill lesson plans – narrative, descriptive, discursive
- Writing skills text types – report, letter, speech
- Teaching tools
- Lesson planning videos

Further training and support materials, including Specimen Paper Answers and guidance on grammar and rhetoric, will be available in early 2025. Past papers and Example Candidate Responses will be available after first assessment in June 2025.

- **Will there be specimen question papers? Can Cambridge provide more than one set of specimen question papers?**

Specimen question papers and mark schemes are available on the Cambridge website and [School Support Hub](#).

Specimen Paper Answers, including model answers and examiner commentary, will be available on the [School Support Hub](#) in early 2025.

Past examination papers and example candidate responses will be available on the [School Support Hub](#) after first assessment in June 2025.

Cambridge will continue to review the published and planned resource provision for Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180 and will look to provide further resources as needed.

- **Will there be teacher training for Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180?**

Teacher training for Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180 will be available in 2025. Bookings will be available through the Cambridge [PD calendar online](#).

- **Is there an accompanying textbook to support Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180?**

The provision of a textbook to support the teaching of Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180 is being explored and centres will be informed of the schedule for this in due course.

Paper 1 Writing

- **How many words are candidates required to write in each section?**

In Paper 1 Writing, candidates write approximately:

150 words in Section A

250 words in Section B

- **The duration of *Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180 Paper 1 Writing* is the same as *Cambridge O Level Arabic 3180 Paper 1 Composition*, but candidates are required to write more in 7180. Why is this?**

Word counts for Paper 1 Writing have been arrived at through a review of response data for existing Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge O Level Arabic qualifications and in consultation with teachers and subject experts.

Word counts are provided as guidance only. Candidates can write more or less than the suggested word count, though overly short responses may not meet the requirements set out in the levels-based marking descriptors and overly long responses may lead to incomplete answers.

- **Will candidates be required to write a dialogue in Paper 1?**

No. In response to feedback from teachers and subject experts, candidates will not be required to write a dialogue in Paper 1 Writing.

- **In Paper 1 Writing, will all writing types be given as options?**

In Section 1, candidates answer one question from a choice of two. The tasks will ask them to write either a letter, or a speech or a report. Candidates should be prepared to respond to all three forms of writing as only two will be present in each question paper.

In Section 2, candidates answer one question from a choice of three. The tasks will ask them to write either a narrative, descriptive or discursive response. All three forms of writing will be present in each question paper.

- **In Paper 1 Writing, Section 1, should candidates be prepared to write formal and informal letters?**

In Paper 1 Writing, Section 1, candidates will be given a choice of two questions. The tasks will ask them to write either a letter, or a speech or a report. If the candidate chooses to respond to the task of writing a letter, they are required to adapt their writing to fit the intended recipient of the letter. Examples might include a friend, a newspaper, a head teacher or local councillor. Marks are available for using an appropriate text style, tone and register to match the recipient so conventions of both informal and formal writing may be required.

As the qualification is designed for 14–16-year-olds, candidates are not required to use formal etiquette or set phrases used in unfamiliar contexts such as businesses or workplaces.

Please refer to pages 3–5 of the Specimen Paper 1 Mark Scheme for the assessment criteria for functional writing tasks. Guidance on covering writing skills for letter writing are available under the Teaching & Learning tab on the [School Support Hub](#)

Further training and support materials, available in early 2025, will provide additional guidance on teaching writing for purpose and audience.

- **In Paper 1 Writing, Section 2, should candidates write a story?**

In Paper 1 Writing, Section 2, candidates can choose between a narrative, descriptive or discursive task. If the candidate chooses to respond to the narrative task, they are required to

produce a piece of writing that contains a series of linked events that can be either real or imaginary. The writing can take the form of a story or part of a story, but it does not have to.

The marking criteria requires candidates to use features typical of narrative writing. These may include effective structuring, language devices and details to create:

- characters
- settings
- a sense of purpose and climax.

Please refer to pages 6–9 of the Specimen Paper 1 Writing Mark Scheme for the assessment criteria for narrative tasks. Lesson plans covering writing skills for narrative, descriptive and discursive tasks are available under the Teaching & Learning tab on the [School Support Hub](#)

- **Is the pattern of questions fixed in each question paper?**

Yes. The question paper structure and question types are fixed and will not change from series to series.

Paper 2 Reading and Grammar

- **In Paper 2 Reading and Grammar, what topics will be covered in the reading texts included in the paper?**

There is no prescribed topic list for Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic 7180 as it is assumed that candidates will have a working knowledge of vocabulary covering a wide range of topic areas. Reading texts will be carefully selected to be engaging, familiar and appropriate for the ages and contexts of candidates.

- **What aspects of grammar and rhetoric do candidates need to be taught to meet the assessment criteria? Can we have a list or further guidance?**

The syllabus does not contain a prescribed list of grammar and rhetoric to be taught or learnt. The assessment will test understanding and use of a range of simple and complex grammar structures across both Paper 1 and Paper 2. The range and difficulty of grammar and rhetoric being tested will be appropriate for learners with prior knowledge of the language and who use Arabic at home, at school or both.

In response to requests for guidance on the grammar and rhetoric, Cambridge will be publishing a list of suggested grammar structures for use by teachers in planning their lessons.

Training and support materials, due to be rolled out by early 2025, will provide further guidance on teaching grammar and rhetoric.

- **Why has Cambridge chosen to assess Arabic grammar explicitly when an applied approach is taken in other languages?**

When reviewing and designing syllabuses, we seek views from many sources, including current teachers, higher education faculty and subject experts.

A more explicit focus on grammar in Arabic teaching, learning and assessment was consistently identified as a priority in feedback from experts in Arabic teaching and education.

- **Paper 2 Reading and Grammar, Section A looks easy. Why is this?**

Cambridge IGCSEs (9–1) are designed to assess candidates of varying abilities using a grade set ranging from 1 to 9. In line with best assessment practice, questions are designed to target specific levels of ability with demand varying throughout the assessment.

- **In Paper 2 Reading and Grammar, Section B, is the text provided in full in the question paper?**

Yes. A short non-fiction text will be included in the question paper. All questions will be based on information from the printed text.

- **In Paper 2 Reading and Grammar, Section B, can the students copy information from the text, or should the answer be in their own words?**

Responses to short-answer questions in Section B can be copied directly from the text where applicable. Some questions will test implicit meaning and will require candidates to explain their understanding more independently.

Responses to the summary task in Section B must be in the candidates' own words. The summary task will be assessed using a levels-based mark scheme with marks awarded for effective use of own words.

- **Is the pattern of questions fixed in each question paper?**

Yes. The question paper structure and question types are fixed and will not change from series to series.

- **In Paper 2 Reading and Grammar, will grammar questions solely involve identifying and transforming elements, or will there be additional question types?**

In Paper 2 Reading and Grammar, Section C, the question format will be the same every year, but the grammatical and rhetoric topics will change; for example, one year it may test the dual and in another the plural.

- **Paper 2 Reading and Grammar includes a question on synonyms. The speaker at the webinar mentioned that the question could also focus on connectors (أدوات الربط) or verbals (المصادر). Can you please clarify what possible areas might be assessed, as "verbals" is a broad topic requiring detailed explanation?**

In Paper 2 Reading and Grammar, Section A, students should be able to replace the underlined word in the text from the four provided options. These options can be verbs, connectors, verbal nouns or others depending on the context.

General questions

- **Can we write and mark our own mock question papers within schools?**

Yes. The specimen question papers, mark schemes and specimen paper answers are provided to show the types of questions that may be asked during the live assessment. Teachers can use these as models to write mock questions; specimen mark schemes and specimen paper answers can be used to internally mark candidates' work and practice assessments.

- **How do we contact our country manager?**

For details on how to contact your country manager, please visit this link: [Our regional teams](#)

- **How do I become an examiner or setter of question papers for Arabic?**

For the latest examiner vacancies, please visit our website: [Join us and become an Assessment Specialist](#)

You can sign up to receive updates and alerts for future vacancies as they become available.

- **Can we participate in any teacher groups to share our experience and expertise?**

We encourage Cambridge schools to build informal and formal connections to share expertise, resources and professional development. In many subjects, this is done through subject-based community forums on the [School Support Hub](#). We will review the interest and feasibility of an Arabic community forum.

- **Is there an Arabic syllabus suitable for non-native speakers?**

Yes. Cambridge IGCSE Arabic 0544 is suitable for learners with no previous exposure to Arabic.

- **Is it possible to develop an introductory curriculum at an earlier education stage to prepare students for the study of Cambridge IGCSEs?**

Our Cambridge Pathway is for students aged 3 to 19. Its wide range of subjects and flexibility gives schools the chance to shape the curriculum so that it is exciting and relevant for their own students.

The five stages lead seamlessly from primary to secondary and pre-university years.

[Cambridge Early Years](#)

[Cambridge Primary](#)

[Cambridge Lower Secondary](#)

[Cambridge Upper Secondary](#)

[Cambridge Advanced](#)

Each stage builds on the learners' development from the previous one but can also be offered separately.

We do not currently offer a lower secondary language programme aimed specifically at native speakers of global languages. We have recently launched a Lower Secondary Modern Foreign Language curriculum framework that is adaptable to target language and varying abilities.