



Cambridge Assessment
International Education

Syllabus

Cambridge O Level For centres in Brunei Arabic 3183

For examination in November 2021.



Changes to the syllabus for 2021

The latest syllabus is version 1, published September 2018.

There are no significant changes which affect teaching.

You are strongly advised to read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Why choose Cambridge International?

Cambridge Assessment International Education prepares school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. We are part of the University of Cambridge.

Our Cambridge Pathway gives students a clear path for educational success from age 5 to 19. Schools can shape the curriculum around how they want students to learn – with a wide range of subjects and flexible ways to offer them. It helps students discover new abilities and a wider world, and gives them the skills they need for life, so they can achieve at school, university and work.

Our programmes and qualifications set the global standard for international education. They are created by subject experts, rooted in academic rigour and reflect the latest educational research. They provide a strong platform for students to progress from one stage to the next, and are well supported by teaching and learning resources.

Every year, nearly a million Cambridge learners from 10000 schools in 160 countries prepare for their future with the Cambridge Pathway.

Cambridge learners

Our mission is to provide educational benefit through provision of international programmes and qualifications for school education and to be the world leader in this field. Together with schools, we develop Cambridge learners who are:

- **confident** in working with information and ideas – their own and those of others
- **responsible** for themselves, responsive to and respectful of others
- **reflective** as learners, developing their ability to learn
- **innovative** and equipped for new and future challenges
- **engaged** intellectually and socially, ready to make a difference.

Recognition

Our expertise in curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment is the basis for the recognition of our programmes and qualifications around the world.

Cambridge O Level is internationally recognised by schools, universities and employers as equivalent in demand to Cambridge IGCSE™ (International General Certificate of Secondary Education). There are over 700000 entries a year in nearly 70 countries. Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition

Support for teachers

A wide range of materials and resources is available to support teachers and learners in Cambridge schools. Resources suit a variety of teaching methods in different international contexts. Through subject discussion forums and training, teachers can access the expert advice they need for teaching our qualifications. More details can be found in Section 2 of this syllabus and at www.cambridgeinternational.org/teachers

Quality management

Cambridge International is committed to providing exceptional quality. In line with this commitment, our quality management system for the provision of international qualifications and education programmes for students aged 5 to 19 is independently certified as meeting the internationally recognised standard, ISO 9001:2015. Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/ISO9001

1.2 Why choose Cambridge O Level?

Cambridge O Level is typically for 14 to 16 year olds and is an internationally recognised qualification. It has been designed especially for an international market and is sensitive to the needs of different countries. Cambridge O Level is designed for learners whose first language may not be English, and this is acknowledged throughout the examination process.

Our aim is to balance knowledge, understanding and skills in our programmes and qualifications to enable students to become effective learners and to provide a solid foundation for their continuing educational journey.

Through our professional development courses and our support materials for Cambridge O Levels, we provide the tools to enable teachers to prepare students to the best of their ability and work with us in the pursuit of excellence in education.

Cambridge O Levels are considered to be an excellent preparation for Cambridge International AS & A Levels, the Cambridge AICE (Advanced International Certificate of Education) Diploma, Cambridge Pre-U, and other education programmes, such as the US Advanced Placement program and the International Baccalaureate Diploma programme. Learn more about Cambridge O Levels at www.cambridgeinternational.org/olevel

Guided learning hours

Cambridge O Level syllabuses are designed on the assumption that learners have about 130 guided learning hours per subject over the duration of the course, but this is for guidance only. The number of hours required to gain the qualification may vary according to local curricular practice and the students' prior experience of the subject.

1.3 Why choose Cambridge O Level Arabic?

Cambridge O Levels are established qualifications that keep pace with educational developments and trends. The Cambridge O Level curriculum places emphasis on broad and balanced study across a wide range of subject areas. The curriculum is structured so that candidates attain both practical skills and theoretical knowledge.

Cambridge O Level Language qualifications are accepted by universities and employers as proof of knowledge and understanding of a language. Successful candidates gain lifelong skills including:

- The ability to communicate clearly, accurately and effectively in writing.
- The ability to use a wide range of vocabulary, and correct grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- A personal style and an awareness of the audience being addressed.

Candidates are also encouraged to read widely, both for their own enjoyment and to further their awareness of the ways in which the language can be used. Cambridge O Level Language qualifications also develop more general analysis and communication skills such as synthesis, inference, and the ability to order facts and present opinions effectively.

Prior learning

We recommend that candidates who are beginning this course should have previously studied Arabic for 2–3 years.

Progression

Cambridge O Levels are general qualifications that enable candidates to progress either directly to employment, or to proceed to further qualifications.

Candidates who are awarded grades C to A* in Cambridge O Level Arabic are well prepared to follow courses leading to Cambridge International AS and A Level Arabic, or the equivalent.

2. Teacher support

2.1 Support materials

We offer a wide range of practical and innovative support to help teachers plan and deliver our programmes and qualifications confidently.

For teachers at registered Cambridge schools a range of additional support materials for specific syllabuses is available online from the School Support Hub. Go to **www.cambridgeinternational.org/support** (username and password required). If you do not have access, speak to the Teacher Support coordinator at your school.

Please see the syllabus materials DVD for more information.

2.2 Training

We offer a range of support activities for teachers to ensure they have the relevant knowledge and skills to deliver our qualifications.

3. Assessment at a glance

Scheme of assessment

All candidates take Papers 1, 2, 3 and 4.

| Paper 1: Composition | 1½ hours |
|---|--------------------|
| <p>Section A – 15 marks One composition of about 120 words in Arabic from a choice of three topics.</p> <p>Section B – 30 marks One essay of about 200 words in Arabic from a choice of four topics.</p> <p>Weighting: 37.5% of total marks</p> | |
| Paper 2: Reading Comprehension | 40 minutes |
| <p>25 marks Questions on a set passage in Arabic.</p> <p>Weighting: approximately 21% of total marks</p> | |
| Paper 3: Translation | 50 minutes |
| <p>30 marks Two translations: one from Arabic into Bahasa Melayu and one from Bahasa Melayu into Arabic.</p> <p>Weighting: 25% of total marks</p> | |
| Paper 4: Speaking | approx. 10 minutes |
| <p>Section A – 10 marks Reading aloud.</p> <p>Section B – 10 marks Conversation.</p> <p>Weighting: approximately 16.5% of total marks</p> | |

Availability

This syllabus is examined in the November examination series.

This syllabus is available to private candidates.

Combining this with other syllabuses

Candidates can combine this syllabus in an examination series with any other Cambridge International syllabus, except:

- Cambridge O Level Arabic (3180)
- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

Please note that Cambridge O Level, Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) (syllabuses are at the same level.

4. Syllabus aims and assessment objectives

4.1 Syllabus aims

The aims of the syllabus are the same for all students. The aims are set out below and describe the educational purposes of a course in Arabic for the Cambridge O Level examination. They are not listed in order of priority.

The aims are to:

- enable students to communicate accurately, appropriately and effectively in writing
- enable students to understand and respond appropriately to what they read and experience
- enable students to develop an awareness of the nature and structure of the Arabic language
- encourage students to enjoy and appreciate the variety of language
- complement the students' other areas of study by developing skills of a more general application (e.g. analysis, synthesis, drawing of inferences)
- promote the students' personal development and an understanding of themselves and others.

4.2 Assessment objectives

Composition

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

W1: articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined

W2: order and present facts, ideas and opinions

W3: communicate effectively and appropriately

W4: demonstrate an awareness of the conventions of paragraphing, sentence structure, punctuation and spelling

W5: express thoughts, feelings and opinions in order to interest, inform or convince

W6: demonstrate control of vocabulary, syntax and grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Reading Comprehension

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

R1: exercise control of appropriate structures

R2: understand and employ a range of apt vocabulary

R3: recognise implicit meaning and attitude

R4: evaluate information and express it in their own words.

Translation

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

T1: understand and adequately convey information

T2: show a sense of audience and an awareness of register and style.

Speaking

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

S1: understand and respond to spoken language

S2: communicate in speech, showing knowledge of a range and variety of vocabulary and applying the grammar and structures of the target language adequately.

5. Description of papers

5.1 Paper 1: Composition

1½ hours, 45 marks

Section A: Letter, report or speech, dialogue (15 marks)

From a choice of three topics, candidates must write one composition of about 120 words in Arabic. The choice of topics will allow candidates to demonstrate ability in using written Arabic to:

- communicate by letter
- compose a report or a speech
- compose a dialogue.

Section B: Essay (30 marks)

From a choice of four topics (narrative, descriptive or argumentative), candidates must write one essay of about 200 words in Arabic.

5.2 Paper 2: Reading Comprehension

40 minutes, 25 marks

Candidates will be required to answer a variety of questions testing understanding of a given passage in Arabic.

5.3 Paper 3: Translation

50 minutes, 30 marks

Candidates will be required to:

- translate a passage from Arabic into Bahasa Melayu (10 marks);
- translate a passage from Bahasa Melayu into Arabic (20 marks).

5.4 Paper 4: Speaking

Approximately 10 minutes, 20 marks

This component description should be read in conjunction with Section 6 (Topic areas) and Section 7 (Administrative guidance on the Speaking test). The *Working Mark Sheet*, which is required for the assessment of the Speaking test, may be downloaded from www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples. The database will ask you for the syllabus code (i.e. 3183) and your centre number, after which it will take you to the correct form. Follow the instructions when completing the form.

It is important that the timing of the test is adhered to.

Section A: Reading aloud (10 marks)

Candidates will be required to read aloud a text provided in Arabic and to answer orally a series of comprehension questions based on the text. The text will be on a specific topic taken from one of the topic areas listed in Section 6.

Section B: Conversation (10 marks)

Candidates will be required to discuss two different topics with the teacher/Examiner.

The conversation takes the form of two topics chosen by the candidate from the list in Section 6 and prepared before the test. Candidates are encouraged to choose a topic in which they have a personal interest and therefore we do not expect candidates in a centre to all choose the same topic. Suitable subjects might be, for example: 'School life', 'Hobbies and pastimes' (general or specific), 'My country', 'Life in another country', 'My ambitions', 'Holidays', 'Family'. Topics dealing with politics or social and economic issues are ambitious for this level of achievement and may disadvantage candidates if they do not possess the linguistic skills and maturity of ideas which such topics necessitate.

The test begins with a brief presentation by the candidate on his/her first chosen topic. The teacher/Examiner will follow up the presentation with specific questions on the topic. The teacher/Examiner will then guide the candidate to his/her second topic (by saying in Arabic, for example, "Now we will talk about your second topic") and the candidate will present it briefly. The teacher/Examiner will follow up the second presentation with specific questions on the topic.

Even though this is a test, the teacher/Examiner should try to conduct as natural a conversation as possible with the candidate on his/her chosen topics. It is not expected that this test will include questions on specific aspects of grammar/vocabulary.

In the conversation, candidates should be able to respond to the teacher/Examiner's questions in a spontaneous and natural manner. Candidates must not be allowed to deliver a prepared monologue or a series of obviously prepared replies.

Questions must be adjusted to the candidate's ability and the teacher/Examiner should be ready to pass on quickly to another question if candidates are obviously out of their depth. Candidates are expected to give natural replies to questions; their answers need not therefore be in the form of complete sentences. Teacher/Examiners should not seek precise factual information and candidates must not be penalised for lack of general knowledge: this is a test which tests ability to use language, rather than knowledge of facts. The teacher/Examiner should avoid asking questions which can be answered with 'yes' or 'no' and should instead use a variety of interrogatives, e.g. *when? how? why? how many? how long? with whom? with what?* etc.

The teacher/Examiner **must** try to lead the candidate into using other tenses. In order to extend the candidate as far as possible, the teacher/Examiner should probe, explore, ask for explanations, enlargements, descriptions (*how? when? why? tell me a bit more about... etc.*).

6. Topic areas

- Human relationships
- Family
- Young people
- Patterns of daily life
- Urban and rural life
- Law and order
- Religion and belief
- School life
- My country
- Holidays
- Sport
- Hobbies and pastimes
- My ambitions
- Cultural life/heritage
- Life in another country

7. Administrative guidance on the Speaking test

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Component 4 description (Section 5.4) and the Mark Schemes (Section 7.4). There is no question paper for Component 4, the Speaking test. Information on how to conduct and assess the Speaking test, and the website links to the forms required for assessment, are provided in this syllabus.

7.1 Conducting the Speaking test

- **Reading aloud**

The teacher/Examiner may caution candidates not to read too fast, but should avoid comment or correction during the reading.

- **Conversation**

Questions which test comprehension of the passage used in the reading aloud section must **not** be asked in the conversation section. Candidates should not be expected to give all their answers in the form of complete sentences, particularly if an answer in another form is equally appropriate and correct. Some questions which require an answer in the form of a complete sentence may of course be asked. If topics for conversation are taken from the home background or out-of-school activities of a candidate, the teacher/Examiner should try to avoid questions which might embarrass or upset a candidate.

Candidates must be examined singly and face-to-face. Only one teacher/Examiner may conduct the test. No other person should be present during the test with the exception of another teacher/Examiner or an Officer from Cambridge International. In those cases where it is necessary for a second teacher/Examiner to be present during the Speaking test, only one teacher/Examiner must conduct each test.

Examination conditions must prevail in the area where the test takes place. Supervision should be provided to ensure that candidates leaving the examination room do not communicate with those waiting to enter.

In order to put candidates at their ease when they enter the examination room, the teacher/Examiner should smile and indicate where the candidate should sit. A good teacher/Examiner will usually send a candidate out of the test smiling, no matter how good or bad their performance. The teacher/Examiner should be positioned with a table between himself/herself and the candidate. The candidate should not be positioned where he/she can see what the teacher/Examiner is writing on the mark sheets as this can be distracting.

Other instructions for teacher/Examiners:

- no smoking in the examination room
- do not walk about or distract the candidate in any way, e.g. by doodling or fiddling with papers
- always appear interested, even in mundane matters
- never show undue surprise, impatience or mockery
- never correct a candidate.

7.2 Administrative arrangements

7.2.1 Timing

The Speaking tests take place in the period before the main examination series as notified on the timetable. Each centre decides on a convenient period within these dates to conduct its Speaking tests.

7.2.2 Appointment of teacher/Examiners

Centres/The Ministry must appoint a local teacher/Examiner to conduct the Speaking test. In the interests of standardisation, only one teacher/Examiner should be appointed per centre. Cambridge International is not responsible for any fees agreed. **If a centre wishes to use more than one teacher/Examiner because it has a large number of candidates, it must seek permission from the Languages Group at Cambridge International before the start of the examination period.**

7.2.3 The *Working Mark Sheet*

Each candidate's test should be marked according to the Mark Schemes provided in Section 7.4. Candidates must be marked as they are being examined and not afterwards from a recording.

All candidates' marks must be recorded on the *Working Mark Sheet*. The *Working Mark Sheet*, and the instructions for completing it, may be downloaded from www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples. The database will ask for the syllabus code (e.g. 3183) and your centre number, after which it will take you to the correct form. Follow the instructions when completing the form.

7.2.4 Recording of candidates

Centres must record the Speaking tests of **all** candidates. Refer to section 7.3 for information regarding the arrangements for external moderation.

Centres should ensure, well in advance of the test, that a suitably quiet room is available and that the recording equipment is in good order. Rooms which are too close to a playground, recreation room or noisy classroom should be avoided.

The centre is responsible for supplying blank CDs for the recording of candidates: these will not be supplied by Cambridge International. All recording equipment must be of as high a standard as possible to ensure that moderation samples are clearly audible. It is preferable for the tests to be recorded in .mp3 format using a suitable digital voice recorder or sound recording program on a computer. The Speaking tests should then be transferred to a standard-format CD, ready for sending to Cambridge International for external moderation. (Note that it is permissible to use audio cassettes, but the use of CDs and digital recording equipment is strongly preferred.)

Care should be taken to ensure that the recording quality is good. The recording equipment must be tested in advance. New, unrecorded CDs must be used. The recording level should be tested before the start of the tests. Where possible, the recording equipment should have external microphones so that separate microphones can be used for the candidate and the teacher/Examiner. If only one microphone is being used, it should be placed to face the candidate. If the candidate is softly-spoken, the microphone should be placed nearer to the candidate before the start of the test.

Each candidate should be introduced by their candidate number and their name.

For example:

'Candidate number 0047, Candidate name Issam Ahmed'

Teacher/Examiners should take care to avoid long gaps and extraneous noise on the recordings.

The recording must not be stopped once a candidate's test has started.

7.2.5 Presentation of the sample for external moderation

The teacher/Examiner should introduce each CD with the following information:

- Centre Number
- Centre Name
- Syllabus Number
- Syllabus Name
- Name of teacher/Examiner
- Date

After the last recording, the teacher/Examiner should say: 'End of examination'. The contents of each CD should be clearly labelled.

Before CDs are despatched, spot checks must be made to ensure that every candidate is clearly audible. If a centre discovers that a candidate has not been recorded or is inaudible, the centre must contact the Ministry so that advice can be sought from Cambridge International immediately.

The correspondence must include:

- the breakdown of the marks of the candidates who have been recorded (as required on the *Working Mark Sheet*), as well as of the candidate whose recording is unsatisfactory
- detailed notes describing the unrecorded candidate's performance, mentioning specific features which led to the award of particular marks, made as soon as possible after the discovery of the problem
- comparisons for each section of the test with other candidates who took the same test.

Cambridge International will then advise on the appropriate course of action.

7.3 Arrangements for external moderation

External moderation of internal assessment is carried out by Cambridge.

Centres must return the following items to the Ministry for immediate onward transmission to Cambridge International:

- a copy of the completed Working Mark Sheet(s) listing the marks for all candidates
- a signed printout of the candidates' total marks as submitted to Cambridge International
- the recordings of all candidates
- if there are two or more teacher/Examiners: a copy of the permission from Cambridge International to use more than one teacher/Examiner, together with the details of the internal moderation procedures implemented by the centre.

The deadlines and methods for submitting internally assessed marks and work are in the Cambridge Handbook, available on our website.

Do not wait until the end of the assessment period before despatching these items.

Copies of the recordings and the Working Mark Sheet(s) should be kept by the centre in case of postal loss or delay.

7.4 Marking instructions for the Speaking test and mark schemes

General principles

- You are urged to use the full range of marks, bearing in mind that it is not necessary for a candidate to be of native speaker standard to be given maximum marks within any single category.
- Adopt a positive approach: award marks based on what the candidate can do rather than deducting marks for error.
- Above all else, please be consistent in your marking. The moderation process allows for adjustments to be made to consistently harsh or consistently generous marking. If you are unsure of the mark to award, err on the side of generosity.

Section A: Reading aloud (10 marks)

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 9–10 | Excellent pronunciation, intonation and fluency, showing complete comprehension of the passage; an occasional slight mistake or hesitation. Not necessarily a native speaker. |
| 7–8 | Good pronunciation and fluency; makes a fair attempt at correct intonation and expression; some mistakes and/or hesitation. |
| 5–6 | A fair degree of fluency and accuracy in pronunciation; quite a number of errors; some attempt at intonation and expression. |
| 3–4 | Lacks fluency; many errors; poor pronunciation. |
| 0–2 | Very poor; many gross errors; frequently incomprehensible. |

Section B: Conversation (10 marks)

- Scale (a) Comprehension/responsiveness. This assesses the candidate's response in terms of comprehension of the teacher/Examiner, immediacy of reaction/response, fluency of response, presentation of material in the topic.
- Scale (b) This assesses the linguistic content of the candidate's answers in terms of the complexity, accuracy and range of structures, vocabulary and idiom.

| Category | | Mark |
|---------------------|---|------------|
| Excellent | <p>(a) Not necessarily of native speaker standard.</p> <p>(b) The highest level to be expected of the best O Level candidates.</p> | 10 |
| Very good | <p>(a) Generally understands questions first time, but may require occasional re-phrasing. Can respond satisfactorily to both straightforward and unexpected questions.</p> <p>(b) Wide range of mostly accurate structures, vocabulary and idiom.</p> | 8–9 |
| Good | <p>(a) Has no difficulty with straightforward questions and responds fairly well to unexpected ones, particularly when they are re-phrased.</p> <p>(b) Good range of generally accurate structures, varied vocabulary.</p> | 6–7 |
| Satisfactory | <p>(a) Understands straightforward questions but has difficulty with some unexpected ones and needs some re-phrasing. Fairly fluent, but some hesitation.</p> <p>(b) Adequate range of structures and vocabulary. Can convey past and future meaning; some ambiguity.</p> | 4–5 |
| Weak | <p>(a) Has difficulty even with straightforward questions, but still attempts an answer.</p> <p>(b) Shows elementary, limited vocabulary and faulty manipulation of structures.</p> | 2–3 |
| Poor | <p>(a) Frequently fails to understand the questions and has great difficulty in replying.</p> <p>(b) Shows very limited range of structures and vocabulary.</p> | 0–1 |

8. Other information

Equality and inclusion

We have taken great care in the preparation of this syllabus and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind. To comply with the UK Equality Act (2010), we have designed this qualification with the aim of avoiding direct and indirect discrimination.

The standard assessment arrangements may present unnecessary barriers for candidates with disabilities or learning difficulties. Arrangements can be put in place for these candidates to enable them to access the assessments and receive recognition of their attainment. Access arrangements will not be agreed if they give candidates an unfair advantage over others or if they compromise the standards being assessed.

Candidates who are unable to access the assessment of any component may be eligible to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have taken.

Information on access arrangements is in the *Cambridge Handbook* at www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsOfficers

Language

This syllabus is available in English only. The assessment materials are in Arabic.

Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as 'administrative zones'. We allocate all Cambridge schools to one administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable. Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

Retakes

Candidates can retake the whole qualification as many times as they want to. This is a linear qualification so candidates cannot re-sit individual components.

Grading and reporting

Cambridge O Level results are shown by one of the grades A*, A, B, C, D or E, indicating the standard achieved, A* being the highest and E the lowest. 'Ungraded' indicates that the candidate's performance fell short of the standard required for grade E. 'Ungraded' will be reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. The letters Q (result pending), X (no result) and Y (to be issued) may also appear on the statement of results but not on the certificate.

How students and teachers can use the grades

Assessment at Cambridge O Level has two purposes:

- to measure learning and achievement

The assessment:

- confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus, to the levels described in the grade descriptions.

- to show likely future success

The outcomes:

- help predict which students are well prepared for a particular course or career and/or which students are more likely to be successful
- help students choose the most suitable course or career.

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