CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Syllabus

Cambridge O Level
Modern Standard Chinese 3252
for centres in Mauritius

Use this syllabus for exams in 2028, 2029 and 2030.
Exams are available in the November series.

Version 0.3

For the purposes of screen readers, any mention in this document of Cambridge IGCSE refers to Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education.

Cambridge Pathway

Why choose Cambridge?

We work with schools worldwide to build an education that shapes knowledge, understanding and skills. Together, we give learners the confidence they need to thrive and make a positive impact in a changing world.

As part of the University of Cambridge, we offer a globally trusted and flexible framework for education from age 3 to 19, informed by research, experience, and listening to educators.

With recognised qualifications, high-quality resources, comprehensive support and valuable insights, we help schools prepare every student for the opportunities and challenges ahead.

Qualifications that are recognised and valued worldwide

From the world's top-ranked universities to local higher education institutions, Cambridge qualifications open doors to a world of opportunities.

Setting a global standard

With over 160 years of experience in delivering fair, valid and reliable assessments to students worldwide, we offer a global, recognised performance standard for international education.

Your path, your way

Schools can adapt our curriculum, high-quality teaching and learning resources and flexible assessments to their local context. Our aligned offer helps Cambridge schools support every learner to reach their potential and thrive.

Learning with lasting impact

Cambridge learners build subject knowledge and conceptual understanding, and develop a broad range of skills, learning habits and attributes to help make them ready for the world.

Improving learning outcomes through data-led insight and action

Our trusted baseline and diagnostic assessments, together with our insights and evaluation service, help schools turn data into knowledge and actionable insights, to inform teaching decisions and improve learner outcomes.

Bringing together a community of experts

We bring together the collective knowledge of experts and our diverse community of educators worldwide, supporting them to learn from one another and share ideas and information.

Tackling the climate crisis together

We believe that education is key to tackling the climate crisis. Together with Cambridge schools, we can empower young people with the skills and knowledge to take action on climate change, helping them be ready for the world.

School feedback: 'We think the Cambridge curriculum is superb preparation for university.'

Feedback from: Christoph Guttentag, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, Duke University, USA

©Cambridge University Press & Assessment September 2025

Cambridge International Education is the name of our awarding body and a part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, which is a department of the University of Cambridge.

Cambridge University Press & Assessment retains the copyright on all its publications. Registered centres are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use. However, we cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within a centre.

Contents

Why choose Cambridge? **2**

1 Why choose this syllabus? **4**

2 Syllabus overview **7**

Aims 7

Content overview 8

Assessment overview 9

Assessment objectives 10

3 Subject content **11**

Skills 11

4 Details of the assessment **13**

Paper 1 – Writing and Translation 13

Paper 2 – Reading and Translation 14

5 What else you need to know **16**

Before you start 16

Making entries 16

Accessibility and equality 17

After the exam 18

How students and teachers can use the grades 18

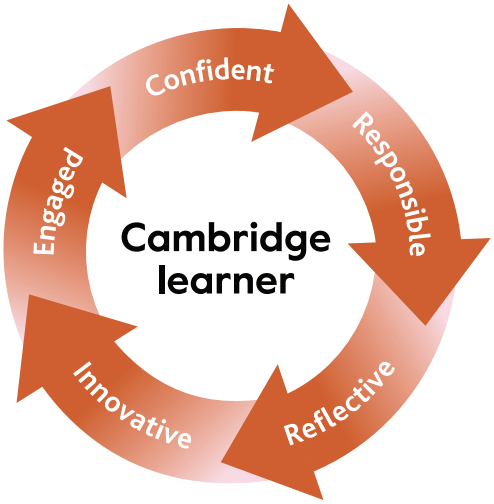
Changes to this syllabus for 2028, 2029 and 2030 19

Important: Changes to this syllabus

For information about changes to this syllabus for 2028, 2029 and 2030, go to page 19.

1 Why choose this syllabus?

Key benefits



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 programmes promote a thorough knowledge and understanding of a subject and help to develop the skills learners need for their next steps in education or employment.

Cambridge O Level Modern Standard Chinese develops skills for understanding and communicating in a range of situations in Modern Standard Chinese. These skills include the ability to understand written texts and select relevant information from them. This information may be directly stated or implied. Learners develop the linguistic skills required for progression to further studies or employment through being able to communicate clearly in writing, on both familiar and less familiar topics.

Our approach in Cambridge O Level Modern Standard Chinese encourages learners to be:

confident, using language to communicate ideas and information effectively in writing

responsible, seeking opportunities to use and develop language skills

reflective, considering different opinions and information in written form, and responding to them appropriately

innovative, using language creatively to express ideas and information

engaged, developing different learning strategies and using language skills in a range of situations.

School feedback: 'Cambridge O Level has helped me develop thinking and analytical skills which will go a long way in helping me with advanced studies.'

Feedback from: Kamal Khan Virk, former student at Beaconhouse Garden Town Secondary School, Pakistan, who went on to study Actuarial Science at the London School of Economics

Qualifications that are recognised and valued worldwide

Cambridge qualifications prepare and equip learners with the skills they need to thrive at university and beyond. The world's best higher education institutions recognise our qualifications and value the critical thinking skills, independent research abilities and deep subject knowledge that Cambridge learners bring.

We continually work with universities and colleges in every part of the world to ensure that they understand and accept our qualifications. Cambridge O Level provides a springboard to the Cambridge Advanced stage, as well as other post-16 routes. The combination of knowledge and skills in Cambridge O Level Modern Standard Chinese gives learners a solid foundation for further study. Candidates who achieve grades A* to C are well prepared to follow a wide range of courses including Cambridge International AS & A Level Modern Standard Chinese.

Many universities require a combination of Cambridge International AS & A Levels and Cambridge O Levels or equivalent to meet their entry requirements.

Learn more at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition**

Supporting teachers

Support materials

We provide a wide range of resources so that you can give your students the best possible preparation for Cambridge O Level.

Find out more at Mauritius School Support **www.cambridgeinternational.org/mauritius**

Training

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

2 Syllabus overview

Aims

The aims describe the purposes of a course based on this syllabus.

The aims are to enable students to:

- develop their ability to use Modern Standard Chinese effectively for the purpose of communication
- understand and respond appropriately to what they read
- develop awareness of the nature of language and language-learning skills
- develop transferable skills to complement other areas of the curriculum
- experience personal development and enjoyment through language learning.

We are an education organisation and politically neutral. The contents of this syllabus, examination papers and associated materials do not endorse any political view. We endeavour to treat all aspects of the exam process neutrally.

Content overview

Cambridge O Level Modern Standard Chinese offers learners the opportunity to develop and apply communication skills in writing, reading and translation.

Learners will learn to read and understand a variety of everyday material, informative texts and narrative texts in Modern Standard Chinese. Learners will be required to demonstrate understanding of the main ideas, opinions and attitudes, as well as select and extract relevant details, understand a range of vocabulary and show understanding of implied meaning.

Learners will have opportunities to develop their writing skills in Modern Standard Chinese. They will learn to communicate information, ideas and opinions, and to organise ideas into a coherent text. Learners will be encouraged to use and manipulate a range of vocabulary and grammatical structures, and to use an appropriate register and style for the given purpose and audience.

Assessment overview

All candidates take two components. Candidates will be eligible for grades A* to E.

All candidates take:

Paper 1 1 hour 45 minutes
Writing and Translation 50%

50 marks

Candidates answer three questions, one from each section.

Section A: candidates write one composition (a letter, report or speech), from a choice of two tasks

Section B: candidates write one essay, from a choice of three tasks

Section C: candidates translate a text from English into Modern Standard Chinese

Externally assessed

and:

Paper 2 1 hour 45 minutes
Reading and Translation 50%

50 marks

There are five questions. Candidates answer all the questions.

Questions 1–4: candidates read a number of texts and answer multiple-choice questions and questions requiring short answers

Question 5: candidates translate a text from Modern Standard Chinese into English

Externally assessed

Information on availability is in the **Before you start** section.

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) are:

AO1 Writing

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

W1: communicate information, ideas, opinions and key points
W2: organise ideas into coherent text using a range of linking devices
W3: use and manipulate a range of appropriate grammatical structures and vocabulary in context
W4: use appropriate register and style for the given purpose and audience

AO2 Reading

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

R1: demonstrate understanding of everyday material, informative texts and narrative texts
R2: understand ideas, opinions and attitudes
R3: identify and select details for a specific purpose
R4: understand and employ a range of apt vocabulary
R5: demonstrate understanding of implied meaning

Weighting for assessment objectives

The approximate weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives (AOs) are summarised below.

Assessment objectives as a percentage of the qualification

Assessment objective	Weighting in O Level %
AO1 Writing	50
AO2 Reading	50
Total	100

Assessment objectives as a percentage of each component

Assessment objective	Weighting in components %	
	Paper 1	Paper 2
AO1 Writing	100	0
AO2 Reading	0	100
Total	100	100

3 Subject content

This syllabus gives you the flexibility to design a course that will interest, challenge and engage your learners. Where appropriate you are responsible for selecting resources and examples, texts, topics and subject contexts to support your learners' study. These should be appropriate for the learners' age, cultural background and learning context as well as complying with your school policies and local legal requirements.

The texts selected for each exercise are from areas of contemporary interest and relevance for language learners of Modern Standard Chinese.

Skills

The skills covered in the syllabus are outlined below.

1 Writing

Candidates should be able to:	Examples
• communicate information, ideas, opinions and key points	• communicate factual information in writing • write about what is thought, felt or imagined
• organise ideas into coherent text using a range of linking devices	• use connectors (e.g. but, because, then) to link a series of elements into a sequence of points • use paragraphs and sequencing of ideas to structure writing logically and coherently
• use and manipulate a range of appropriate grammatical structures and vocabulary in context	• use grammatical structures including verb forms and tenses, and varied sentence structures • use simple and complex vocabulary, idioms and set phrases
• use appropriate register and style for the given purpose and audience	• include content appropriate for the purpose • consider the audience when using formal or informal language and register • employ conventions of different genres, e.g. argumentative, narrative, report-writing

2 Reading

Candidates should be able to:	Examples
• demonstrate understanding of everyday material, informative texts, and narrative texts	• understand the main points and key information in factual material • identify and select relevant information in informative and narrative texts
• understand ideas, opinions and attitudes	• identify emotions, opinions and attitudes which are stated or implied in texts • show understanding of the connections between ideas, opinions and attitudes
• identify and select details for a specific purpose	• identify the question type and information required • use a range of reading strategies, including skimming, scanning and reading for detail • demonstrate understanding by selecting relevant information
• understand and employ a range of apt vocabulary	• deduce the meaning of unknown words/ phrases from the context of the text • demonstrate understanding of words or phrases by giving appropriate definitions or synonyms
• demonstrate understanding of implied meaning	• show understanding of ideas and feelings which are not explicitly stated • recognise words or phrases that suggest the writer's attitude or feelings

4 Details of the assessment

Paper 1 – Writing and Translation

Written paper, 1 hour 45 minutes, 50 marks

This paper has three sections. Candidates answer three questions, one question from each section.

The paper will be written as an English prototype and then translated into Modern Standard Chinese.

Section A

Candidates write one composition, with a choice of two tasks:

Question 1 – letter

or Question 2 – report or speech.

The composition should be about 110 characters. Total 16 marks.

Section B

Candidates write one essay, with a choice of three tasks: argumentative, descriptive or narrative.

The essay should be about 175 characters. Total 24 marks.

Section C

Candidates translate a short passage of 100–110 words into Modern Standard Chinese.

Total 10 marks.

Description of questions	
Section A	
Assessment objectives	W1, W2, W3, W4
Task	From a choice of two tasks, candidates write one composition of about 120 characters in Modern Standard Chinese. Question 1 is a letter, Question 2 is a report or a speech.
Total marks	16 marks
Section B	
Assessment objectives	W1, W2, W3, W4
Task	From a choice of three tasks (one argumentative, one descriptive, one narrative) the candidates write one essay of about 200 characters in Modern Standard Chinese.
Total marks	24 marks
Section C	
Assessment objectives	W1, W3
Task	Candidates translate a short text (approx. 100–110 words) from English into Modern Standard Chinese.
Total marks	10 marks

Paper 2 – Reading and Translation

Written paper, 1 hour 45 minutes, 50 marks

This paper has five questions. Candidates answer all the questions.

The paper will be written as an English prototype and then translated into Modern Standard Chinese.

Question 1

Candidates read a short text, then answer eight multiple-choice questions with three options.

The text will be an email, message or letter. Total 8 marks.

Question 2

Candidates read a text, then answer nine comprehension questions. The text will be an informative text or newspaper extract.

Candidates write short factual answers in Modern Standard Chinese. Total 12 marks.

Question 3

Candidates read a narrative text, then answer 11 comprehension questions.

The questions require candidates to select specific information from the text and write short answers in Modern Standard Chinese.

Five marks will be awarded for correctly selecting implicit information. Total 16 marks.

Question 4

This question uses the same narrative text as in Question 3.

Candidates answer four questions testing understanding of language. Total 4 marks.

Question 5

Candidates translate a short text from Modern Standard Chinese into English. Total 10 marks.

Description of questions	
Question 1	
Assessment objectives	R1, R2
Task	Candidates read a text and answer eight multiple-choice questions.
Text type	The text will be an email, message or letter.
Total marks	8 marks

Description of questions	
Question 2	
Assessment objectives	R1, R2, R3, R4
Task	Candidates read a text and answer nine comprehension questions, writing short answers in Modern Standard Chinese.
Text type	The text will be an informative text or a newspaper extract.
Total marks	12 marks
Question 3	
Assessment objectives	R1, R2, R3, R4, R5
Task	Candidates read a text and answer 11 comprehension questions, writing short answers in Modern Standard Chinese.
Text type	The text will be a narrative text.
Total marks	16 marks
Question 4	
Assessment objectives	R4
Task	Candidates answer four questions on the use of language within the text.
Text type	The text will be the same narrative text as for Question 3.
Total marks	4 marks
Question 5	
Assessment objectives	R1, R2, R4
Task	Candidates translate a short text from Modern Standard Chinese into English.
Total marks	10 marks

5 What else you need to know

This section is an overview of other information you need to know about this syllabus. It will help to share the administrative information with your exams officer so they know when you will need their support.

Before you start

Previous study

We recommend that learners starting this course should have studied a broad curriculum such as the Cambridge Lower Secondary programme or equivalent national educational framework.

Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge O Level 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.

Availability and timetables

You can enter candidates in the November exam series.

Check you are using the syllabus for the year the candidate is taking the exam.

Private candidates can enter for this syllabus. For more information, please refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*.

Combining with other syllabuses

Candidates can take this syllabus alongside other Cambridge International syllabuses in a single exam series. The only exceptions are:

- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

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

Making entries

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 an 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. Please refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries* for the relevant series for the correct entry option code.

Retakes

Candidates can retake the whole qualification as many times as they want to.

Learn more about retake entries, including definitions and information on entry deadlines, at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/retakes**

To confirm what entry options are available for this syllabus, refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries* for the relevant series. Regulations for carrying forward component marks can be found in the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

Language

This syllabus is available in English only. The assessment materials are in English and Modern Standard Chinese.

Accessibility and equality

Syllabus and assessment design

At Cambridge we recognise that our candidates have highly diverse socio-economic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and may also have a variety of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics include special educational needs and disability (SEND), religion and belief, and characteristics related to gender and identity.

We follow accessible design principles to make our syllabuses and assessment materials as accessible and inclusive as possible. We review language accessibility, visual resources, question layout and the contexts used in questions. Using this approach means that we give all candidates the fairest possible opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding.

Access arrangements

Our design principles aim to make sure our assessment materials are accessible for all candidates. To further minimise barriers faced by candidates with SEND, illness or injury, we offer a range of access arrangements and modified papers. This is the principal way in which we comply with our duty to make 'reasonable adjustments', as guided by the UK Equality Act 2010.

Requested access arrangements should be based on evidence of the candidate's barrier to taking an assessment and should also reflect their normal way of working. For Cambridge to approve an access arrangement, we need to agree that it constitutes a reasonable adjustment and does not affect the security or integrity of the assessment. This is explained in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

Applying for access arrangements

- Details of our standard access arrangements and modified question papers are available in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**
- Centres are expected to check the availability of access arrangements and modified question papers at the start of the course. Check the *Cambridge Handbook*, the assessment objectives listed in the syllabus document and, where applicable, any access arrangement restrictions listed in the syllabus document.
- Contact us at the start of the course to find out if we can approve an access arrangement that is not listed in the *Cambridge Handbook*.

- All applications should be made by the deadlines published in the *Cambridge Handbook*.

Some access arrangements are not allowed in this syllabus because they affect the assessment objectives:

- candidates must **not** use voice-activated software to dictate their written work
- candidates must **not** use word processing technology which uses word prediction and/or phrase prompting including spell check and grammar check
- candidates must **not** use a human reader.

Please note that we cannot provide braille papers for this syllabus. We can only provide braille papers for languages which use the Roman alphabet.

After the exam

Grading and reporting

Grades A*, A, B, C, D or E indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge O Level.

A* is the highest and E is the lowest. 'Ungraded' means that the candidate's performance did not meet the standard required for grade E. 'Ungraded' is reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate.

In specific circumstances your candidates may see one of the following letters on their statement of results:

- Q (PENDING)
- X (NO RESULT).

These letters do not appear on the certificate.

On the statement of results, Cambridge O Level is shown as GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION ORDINARY LEVEL.

On certificates, Cambridge O Level is shown as General Certificate of Education.

How students and teachers can use the grades

Assessment at Cambridge O Level has two purposes:

1 to measure learning and achievement

The assessment confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus.

2 to show likely future success

The outcomes help predict which students are well prepared for or likely to be successful in a particular course or career.

The outcomes help students choose the most suitable course or career.

Changes to this syllabus for 2028, 2029 and 2030

The syllabus has been reviewed and revised for first examination in 2028.

You must read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.

Changes to syllabus content	• The name of Paper 1 has changed to Writing and Translation • The name of Paper 2 has changed to Reading and Translation • The Assessment Objectives have changed
Changes to assessment (including changes to specimen papers)	The assessment model has changed: • The number of marks for the papers, the paper weighting and the duration of the exams have changed: Paper 1 – 50 marks, 50%, 1 hour and 45 minutes Paper 2 – 50 marks, 50%, 1 hour and 45 minutes • The number of questions and the number of marks per question have changed **Paper 1 Writing and Translation** • The number of sections has changed; there are now three sections: Section A – there are two questions, candidates choose one Section B – there are three questions, candidates choose one Section C – a translation exercise from English into Modern Standard Chinese has been added • In sections A and B, the questions on the question paper will be written in Modern Standard Chinese only **Paper 2 Reading and Translation** • Candidates now answer five questions • Candidates read three separate texts • There are new types of question: a multiple-choice task, two comprehension tasks and a language task • There is one translation exercise from Modern Standard Chinese into English • New specimen materials have been created for both papers • The mark schemes for both papers have been revised

In addition to reading the syllabus, you should refer to the updated specimen assessment materials. The specimen papers will help your students become familiar with exam requirements and command words in questions. The specimen mark schemes show how students should answer questions to meet the assessment objectives.

Syllabuses and specimen materials represent the final authority on the content and structure of all of our assessments.

Quality management

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

We are committed to making our documents accessible in accordance with the WCAG 2.1 Standard. We are always looking to improve the accessibility of our documents. If you find any problems or you think we are not meeting accessibility requirements, contact us at **info@cambridgeinternational.org** with the subject heading: Digital accessibility. If you need this document in a different format, contact us and supply your name, email address and requirements and we will respond within 15 working days.

Cambridge International Education, The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
t: +44 (0)1223 553554 email: info@cambridgeinternational.org www.cambridgeinternational.org

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment September 2025