



# CAMBRIDGE

International Education

## Syllabus

# Cambridge International A Level French 9869 for centres in Mauritius

Use this syllabus for exams in 2028, 2029 and 2030.

Exams are available in the November series.



Français

Version I

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

---

<b>Why choose Cambridge?</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>1 Why choose this syllabus?</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Key concepts .....	5
<b>2 Syllabus overview</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Aims .....	8
Content overview .....	9
Assessment overview .....	10
Assessment objectives .....	11
<b>3 Subject content</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Skills .....	13
A Level topics .....	14
<b>4 Details of the assessment</b> .....	<b>18</b>
Paper 1 – Reading .....	18
Paper 2 – Writing .....	19
Paper 3 – Literature .....	20
Set texts .....	21
List of grammar and structures .....	23
<b>5 What else you need to know</b> .....	<b>26</b>
Before you start .....	26
Making entries .....	26
Accessibility and equality .....	27
After the exam .....	28
How students, teachers and higher education can use the grades .....	29
Changes to this syllabus for 2028, 2029 and 2030 .....	30

## **Important: Changes to this syllabus**

**For information about changes to this syllabus for 2028, 2029 and 2030, go to page 30.**



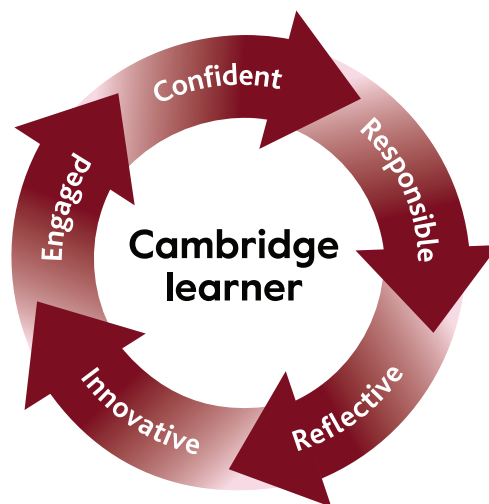
# 1 Why choose this syllabus?

## Key benefits

The best motivation for a student is a real passion for the subject they are learning. Cambridge International AS & A Level give schools flexibility to offer a broad and balanced curriculum with a choice of over 50 subjects. Students can select the subjects they love and that they are best at, enabling them to reach their potential and thrive.

Following a Cambridge International AS & A Level programme helps students develop abilities which universities value highly, including:

- a deep subject knowledge
- conceptual understanding and higher-level thinking skills
- presenting ordered and coherent arguments
- independent learning and research.



**Cambridge International A Level French** helps candidates continue to develop a set of transferable skills for understanding and communicating in French. It provides candidates with opportunities to use French with ever increasing levels of sophistication in both everyday situations and contexts requiring the ability to understand topics that are more abstract. Learners build on the essential linguistic skills and cultural insights acquired in previous study in order to prepare for progression to further studies or employment.

Our approach in Cambridge International A Level French supports the development of learners who are:

**confident**, understanding, critically evaluating and responding to a wide range of complex texts, arguments and ideas

**responsible**, developing and consolidating the skills required for understanding and communicating effectively for different purposes and in a wide range of cultural contexts

**reflective**, developing self-awareness and learner independence through critically evaluating their own work, and building abilities to understand and express complex and abstract concepts in different cultural contexts

**innovative**, developing linguistic flexibility through dealing with a wide range of texts and building on the learning acquired to express ideas clearly and effectively

**engaged**, being inspired by their studies in French, to explore in depth and discover the variety of language and ideas around them and enrich their knowledge and understanding of French-speaking cultures.

**School feedback:** ‘Cambridge students develop a deep understanding of subjects and independent thinking skills.’

**Feedback from:** Principal, Rockledge High School, USA

## Key concepts

Key concepts are essential ideas that help students develop a deep understanding of their subject and make links between different aspects. Key concepts may open up new ways of thinking about, understanding or interpreting the important things to be learned.

Good teaching and learning will incorporate and reinforce a subject's key concepts to help students gain:

- a greater depth as well as breadth of subject knowledge
- confidence, especially in applying knowledge and skills in new situations
- the vocabulary to discuss their subject conceptually and show how different aspects link together
- a level of mastery of their subject to help them enter higher education.

Carefully introducing and developing key concepts at the right time will help to underpin the teaching. You may identify additional key concepts which will also enrich teaching and learning.

The key concepts for Cambridge International A Level French are:

- **Communication**  
Understanding written language and being able to write in a way that others can understand is central to language learning. Learners consolidate methods of understanding and conveying meaning in a range of formal and informal contexts. They develop strategies for expressing themselves in a variety of contexts and styles.
- **Language use**  
Understanding how a language works helps improve communication in the language and is intellectually stimulating. Language learners explore and analyse how vocabulary and grammar can be used in a range of contexts to enable their language to be more effective and varied and to enhance communication of meaning.
- **Cultural awareness**  
Learning French improves intercultural understanding. Learners gain an insight into the different cultures, customs and practices of everyday life in other French-speaking countries through the study of authentic materials. In their study of literature, language learners deepen their awareness of how cultural differences shape the language and the way authors convey meaning.

## 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. More than 2500 universities in over 90 countries formally recognise Cambridge qualifications, with many more accepting our qualifications on application.

UK ENIC, 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 International AS & A Level and found it to be comparable to the standard of AS & A Level in the UK. This means students can be confident that their Cambridge International AS & A Level qualifications are accepted as equivalent, grade for grade, to UK AS & A Levels by leading universities worldwide.

Cambridge International A Level French provides a foundation for the study of French or related courses in higher education. Equally it is suitable as part of a course of general education.

Visit **[www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition-search](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition-search)** and university websites for the most up-to-date higher education entry requirements.

Learn more: **[www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition)**

## Supporting teachers

### Support materials

We believe education works best when teaching and learning are closely aligned to the curriculum, resources and assessment. Our high-quality teaching support helps to maximise teaching time and enables teachers to engage learners of all backgrounds and abilities.

We aim to provide the following support for each Cambridge qualification:

- Syllabus
- Specimen question papers and mark schemes
- Specimen paper answers
- Schemes of Work
- Example candidate responses
- Past papers and mark schemes
- Principal examiner reports for teachers

These resources are available on the School Support Hub at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/support](https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/support), our secure online site for Cambridge teachers (username and password required). If you do not have access, speak to the School Support coordinator at your school.

[PM please delete Endorsed resources if there are no endorsed resources suitable for use with your syllabus.]

### Endorsed resources

We work with a range of publishers to provide a choice of high-quality resources to help teachers plan and deliver Cambridge programmes and qualifications. All Cambridge endorsed resources have been through a detailed quality assurance process to make sure they closely reflect the syllabus and provide a high level of support for teachers and learners. Textbooks endorsed to support [\[AS & A Level \[subject\]\]](#) are suitable for use with this syllabus.]

### 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.

Students following a course based on this syllabus will:

- develop French language proficiency required to communicate clearly, accurately and effectively
- explore, appreciate and engage with the culture, society and literature of countries and communities where French is spoken
- develop intercultural awareness, encouraging a positive, open and empathetic approach to other languages and cultures
- experience enjoyment, intellectual stimulation and curiosity to learn more
- continue developing the skills, language and attitudes required for higher education, work and leisure
- explore opportunities to learn independently
- further develop transferable skills for the future, such as communication, organisation, autonomy, resourcefulness, cognitive flexibility and cultural awareness.



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

The subject content is organised into six topic areas. These topics provide contexts for the acquisition of vocabulary and the study of grammar and structures. The study of these topic areas enables students to progress from the knowledge and skills developed at O Level. The topic areas listed are described in more detail in section 3:

- Culture
- Health and well-being
- Education and future plans
- Community and society
- Responsibility for the planet
- Science and technology.

A course based on this syllabus provides students with meaningful opportunities to enhance their French language skills. Through engagement with a variety of texts and exposure to a wide range of vocabulary and structures, students develop the confidence to communicate effectively with other users of French.

It is expected that, as part of any language course, students have the opportunity to develop and practise their spoken and written communication.

At A Level, students will be expected to read authentic texts on familiar topics regularly encountered in work, school and leisure contexts as well as some more abstract topics. Students will be required to demonstrate an understanding of ideas, emotions, opinions and attitudes, as well as distinguish between fact and opinion. Students develop skills in selecting and extracting relevant details and deducing the meaning of unfamiliar words from context.

Students develop their written skills and demonstrate their ability to use a wide range of grammatical structures and vocabulary accurately to communicate effectively. They write about topics which are both familiar and more abstract, explain viewpoints on topical issues and give reasons and explanations for opinions. Students develop a style of writing used in argumentative, discursive, descriptive and narrative writing tasks.

The A Level course includes a range of inspiring literature which has been carefully selected to offer a breadth and depth of literary study and to encourage lively and stimulating classroom discussion.

Throughout the study of literature, learners will be encouraged to develop skills in analysis and interpretation of texts and to give a personal response. Learners will explore the conventions of genres of texts and the contexts in which works have been written, read and received.

**School feedback:** ‘Cambridge International AS & A Levels prepare students well for university because they’ve learnt to go into a subject in considerable depth. There’s that ability to really understand the depth and richness and the detail of a subject. It’s a wonderful preparation for what they are going to face at university.’

**Feedback from:** US Higher Education Advisory Council

## Assessment overview

### Paper 1

Reading 2 hours  
40 marks

Candidates read four texts. They answer comprehension questions, write a summary and complete a phrase/sentence matching exercise.

Externally assessed

Approx. 33% of the A Level

### Paper 2

Writing 2 hours  
40 marks

Candidates complete two writing tasks: one argumentative/discursive and one narrative or descriptive.

Externally assessed

Approx. 33% of the A Level

### Paper 3

Literature 2 hours 30 minutes  
60 marks

Candidates answer three questions, each on a different text. One question from section A, one question from section B and one other question from either section A or section B.

Externally assessed

Approx. 33% of the A Level

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

There is one route for Cambridge International A Level French (9869):

Route	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3
<b>1 A Level</b> (Candidates take all components in the same exam series)	yes	yes	yes

Candidates are eligible for grades A\*–E.

## Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) are:

### AO1 Reading

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- R1: understand detailed information from a range of texts when expressed in standard or idiomatic language
- R2: identify emotions, opinions and attitudes which are stated or implied in texts
- R3: understand ideas, arguments and conclusions in discursive texts
- R4: demonstrate a good understanding of a wide range of vocabulary and language structures used in texts on general topics.

### AO2 Writing

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- W1: communicate information, opinions, arguments and creative ideas clearly and effectively, with support/justification
- W2: organise ideas into coherent text by using a range of cohesive devices and paragraphing where appropriate
- W3: use text conventions and register appropriate to the given purpose and audience
- W4: use a wide range of vocabulary and grammar effectively
- W5: use vocabulary and grammar accurately.

### AO3 Literature

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- L1: present a relevant, structured and supported response
- L2: demonstrate understanding of literary texts in a variety of genres, with an appreciation of relevant contexts and cultures
- L3: analyse ways in which writers create meaning and effects to engage the reader
- L4: produce personal opinions and interpretations of literary texts.

## 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 A Level %
AO1 Reading	30
AO2 Writing	37
AO3 Literature	33
Total	100

### Assessment objectives as a percentage of each component

Assessment objective	Weighting in components %		
	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3
AO1 Reading	90	0	0
AO2 Writing	10	100	0
AO3 Literature	0	0	100
Total	100	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.

This section describes the skills and topics required at A Level French. Students will be expected to demonstrate ability in these skills, which are developed using the topic areas outlined in this section.

### Skills

#### Reading

A Level French is designed to help candidates develop language proficiency required to communicate effectively at an advanced level. The length and level of sophistication of the texts used in the Reading paper will reflect an increased level of demand compared to syllabuses at O Level.

- Understand in detail extended, complex texts and abstract ideas on general and more specific topics.
- Identify and select relevant information and details in extended texts in a variety of text types.
- Identify finer points of detail including attitudes and stated or implied opinions.
- Understand ideas, arguments and conclusions in discursive texts and distinguish between fact and opinion.
- Understand a wide variety of longer texts written in different styles and for a wide range of purposes.
- Deduce the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions from the context in texts on a wide range of topics.
- Demonstrate an understanding of a wide range of vocabulary on general and more specific topics.
- Demonstrate an understanding of a wide range of complex language structures.

#### Writing

- Communicate facts, ideas, opinions and arguments on complex topics.
- Develop an argument, emphasising important issues, evaluating, expanding and supporting viewpoints with reasons and relevant examples.
- Develop detailed descriptions and narrations of real or imaginary events and experiences in an assured, personal, natural style.
- Organise ideas clearly into coherent and linked paragraphs using a wide range of cohesive devices to create a fluent argument, description and narration.
- Use appropriate register and style, following conventions of the genre, for the purpose of the text.
- Use a wide range of vocabulary, including idiom, related to both general and more specific topics, with a high level of accuracy.
- Use a wide range of grammatical structures, including complex structures, with a high level of accuracy.
- Produce texts with a high level of accuracy of spelling and punctuation.

## Literature

- Critically evaluate themes, characters, ideas and detail from the literary texts, in the context of conventions of the genre.
- Develop an argument, emphasising important ideas/themes, evaluating and supporting viewpoints with justifications and detailed examples from the texts.
- Give a clear personal response to the text, providing interpretation of the themes/characters and explaining their reaction to the text.
- Select and organise ideas clearly into coherent paragraphs using appropriate literary terminology.
- Analyse the choice of language and evaluate how the language is used to engage the reader.

## A Level topics

Learners will be required to show knowledge and understanding of the six broad topic areas listed below. These provide contexts for the acquisition of vocabulary and the study of grammar and structures. They also provide contexts for learners to engage with and produce written texts. Through the study of these broad themes, learners gain insight into French-speaking cultures and communities.

The sub-topics listed are provided with examples of what teachers may choose to focus on. These examples are not intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive and are for illustrative purposes only.

Topic areas	Sub-topics and examples
1 Culture	<b>Entertainment</b> For example:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• types of popular entertainment: cinema, TV/streaming, gaming, internet</li> <li>• the role of entertainment in our lives</li> <li>• celebrity culture: role models, idols, responsibilities</li> </ul>
	<b>Identity and culture</b> For example:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expressing identity through style and appearance, language, association with particular groups, fashion</li> <li>• preserving/respecting cultural heritage, sites/monuments, festivals, traditions</li> </ul>
	<b>The arts</b> For example:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• theatre, music, visual arts, dance, literature, film</li> <li>• access to the arts, funding (commercial/governmental), awards/prizes, representation/diversity</li> </ul>

Topic areas	Sub-topics and examples
2 Health and well-being	<b>Health and fitness</b> For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the role of sport in society, fair play, individual versus team sports, national sports events</li> <li>physical health, the importance of exercise/diet</li> <li>mental health and happiness, sleep, mental health awareness, self-esteem</li> <li>healthcare provision</li> </ul>
	<b>Nutrition</b> For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>different types of diet/eating habits</li> <li>environmental impact of food production, organic foods, food waste and shortage</li> <li>ethics of food production, fair trade, food labelling, government intervention</li> </ul>
	<b>Managing well-being</b> For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>school–life balance</li> <li>importance of leisure activities</li> <li>relaxation</li> </ul>
3 Education and future plans	<b>Life at school</b> For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>different education systems</li> <li>student issues: discipline, workload, time management, organisation of the school day/year</li> <li>school as preparation for future life</li> </ul>
	<b>Further/higher education</b> For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>access and barriers to further/higher education</li> <li>costs versus benefits of further/higher education</li> <li>alternatives to further/higher education: vocational education, apprenticeships, gap years</li> </ul>
	<b>Career/work choices</b> For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>different career options</li> <li>the world of work, different workplaces and working practices, employment and unemployment</li> <li>money versus job satisfaction, volunteering, working for charities</li> </ul>

Topic areas	Sub-topics and examples
4 Community and society	<b>Equality and diversity</b> For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>inclusivity, gender equality, social mobility</li> <li>prejudices within society: ageism, racism, classism</li> <li>migration and integration</li> </ul>
	<b>Lifestyle</b> For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>friends, family and relationships, generation gap, changing patterns of family life</li> <li>quality of life: where we live, differences between urban/rural/coastal life, changing patterns in where people live, overcrowding and its consequences, social isolation</li> <li>lifestyle choices: relationships, diet, fashion, self-expression, values, goals</li> </ul>
	<b>Society</b> For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>social organisation, law and order, local and national governance, communities</li> <li>national and global citizenship</li> <li>rights and responsibilities of individuals, governments</li> </ul>
5 Responsibility for the planet	<b>The environment</b> For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>global warming, climate change and pollution, possible solutions, governmental intervention, impact on the economy</li> <li>preserving biodiversity/ecosystems, treatment of animals</li> <li>impact of growing population</li> </ul>
	<b>Sustainable living</b> For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use of natural resources and recycling, waste disposal, consumerism/overconsumption</li> <li>sources and use of energy: fossil fuels, renewable energy, energy and geopolitics, impact of energy production on local environment and landscape</li> <li>reducing environmental impact, individual choices in housing, food, travel</li> </ul>
	<b>Protecting our world</b> For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>travel and tourism: sustainable tourism, benefits of travel</li> <li>global cooperation versus national agendas</li> <li>the role of individuals versus the role of industry/governments, environmental movements</li> </ul>



Topic areas	Sub-topics and examples
6 Science and technology	<b>Scientific and technological innovation</b> For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• medical advances, ethics of research</li> <li>• smart technology, privacy and security</li> <li>• artificial intelligence</li> </ul>
	<b>Social media</b> For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• digital media, benefits and dangers</li> <li>• communication technology</li> <li>• online communities</li> </ul>
	<b>Technology</b> For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to technology</li> <li>• technology in education</li> <li>• technology in the workplace</li> </ul>

**Faculty feedback:** ‘Understanding how and why our climate is changing and providing the knowledge and skills to explore the challenges plays a key role in every student’s education.’

**Feedback from:** Dr Amy Munro-Faure, Head of Education and Student Engagement of Cambridge Zero

## 4 Details of the assessment

### Paper 1 – Reading

Written paper, 2 hours, 40 marks

Candidates read four texts. They answer comprehension questions, write a summary and complete a phrase/sentence matching exercise.

The questions test comprehension of a range of text types (e.g. newspaper/magazine articles, blogs, brochures, reports, stories, correspondence, reviews).

#### Description of questions

##### Exercise 1

Assessment objectives	R1, R2, R3, R4
Task	Candidates read a text of approximately 350–400 words and answer a number of comprehension questions.
Total marks	10 marks

##### Exercise 2

Assessment objectives	R1, R2, R3, R4, W1, W2, W5
Task	Candidates read a text of approximately 275–300 words and write a summary of the key points, using their own words as far as possible.
Total marks	12 marks

##### Exercise 3

Assessment objectives	R1, R2, R3, R4
Task	Candidates read a text of approximately 400–450 words and answer a number of comprehension questions.
Total marks	10 marks

##### Exercise 4

Assessment objectives	R1, R2, R3, R4
Task	Candidates read a text of approximately 550 words, with eight missing phrases/sentences. Candidates identify the phrase/sentence that fits the eight gaps in the text. They choose the correct phrase/sentence from a choice of options.
Total marks	8 marks

## Paper 2 – Writing

Written paper, 2 hours, 40 marks

Externally assessed.

This paper consists of two writing tasks. Candidates answer Question 1 in Section A and **either** Question 2 **or** Question 3 in Section B.

Candidates are awarded marks in three categories for each response:

- Content
- Linguistic range and organisation
- Language accuracy.

### Description of questions

#### Section A: Question 1

Assessment objectives	W1, W2, W3, W4, W5
Task	<p>An argumentative/discursive essay (300–400 words).</p> <p>Question 1 may be phrased as an argumentative or a discursive question.</p> <p><b>Argumentative</b></p> <p>An argumentative piece of writing attempts to clearly present a strong position on a particular topic. Its purpose is to both educate and persuade the reader on a particular point of view.</p> <p><b>Discursive</b></p> <p>A discursive piece of writing presents a balanced examination of a subject. The response should present both sides of the discussion.</p>
Total marks	20 marks

#### Section B: Question 2 or Question 3

Assessment objectives	W1, W2, W3, W4, W5
Task	<p>Either a descriptive or a narrative essay (300–400 words).</p> <p>Candidates write one from a choice of two creative tasks.</p> <p><b>Descriptive</b></p> <p>A descriptive piece of writing describes a person, place or situation, creating an image with words so that the reader can picture it in their mind.</p> <p><b>Narrative</b></p> <p>A narrative piece of writing tells a story containing a sequence of connected events which may be real or imaginary.</p>
Total marks	20 marks

## Paper 3 – Literature

Written paper, 2 hours 30 minutes, 60 marks

Externally assessed.

Candidates answer three questions, each on a different text:

- one question from Section A
- one question from Section B
- one other question from **either** Section A **or** Section B.

Each question is marked out of 20 marks.

Candidates may **not** take set texts into the examination.

### Description of questions

#### Section A

Assessment objectives	L1, L2, L3, L4
Task	<p>For each text in this section there will be an extended passage taken from the text followed by a single question. This will not be a context passage (the location of the passage is given) but a stimulus to allow candidates to bring a focus to their answer.</p> <p>Candidates are asked to comment on particular aspects of the passage and/or to indicate how the passage reflects the book as a whole.</p> <p>The recommended response length is approximately 400–500 words.</p>

#### Section B

Assessment objectives	L1, L2, L3, L4
Task	<p>For each text there is a choice of two questions focusing on issues central to the text. Candidates are expected to display detailed knowledge of the text and to show awareness of how the author conveys the message of the work.</p> <p>The recommended response length is approximately 400–500 words.</p>

## Set texts

We regularly rotate set texts and they may change from one year of examination to the next. Before you begin teaching, check the set text list for the year in which your candidates will take their exam.

Students may use any edition of the set texts provided it is not an abridged or simplified version.

### Set texts for examination in 2028

#### Section A

Albert Camus	<i>La Chute</i>
Simone De Beauvoir	<i>Les Belles Images</i>
Irène Némirovsky	<i>Tempête en juin</i>

#### Section B

Victor Hugo	<i>Ruy Blas</i>
Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt	<i>Oscar et la dame rose</i>
Maylis De Kerangal	<i>Réparer les vivants</i>

### Set texts for examination in 2029

#### Section A

Albert Camus	<i>La Chute</i>
Simone De Beauvoir	<i>Les Belles Images</i>
Irène Némirovsky	<i>Tempête en juin</i>

#### Section B

Victor Hugo	<i>Ruy Blas</i>
Muriel Barbary	<i>L'Élégence du hérisson</i>
Maylis De Kerangal	<i>Réparer les vivants</i>

## Set texts for examination in 2030

### Section A

Andrée Chedid	<i>Le Message</i>
Simone De Beauvoir	<i>Les Belles Images</i>
Irène Némirovsky	<i>Tempête en juin</i>

### Section B

Victor Hugo	<i>Ruy Blas</i>
Muriel Barbary	<i>L'Élegence du hérisson</i>
Jean Racine	<i>Andromaque</i>

## List of grammar and structures

The list below is not exhaustive. Examples are given to indicate coverage.

<b>Articles</b>	definite	<i>le, la, l', les</i> with parts of body, e.g. <i>j'ai levé la main</i> with titles, ranks, etc., e.g. <i>le roi Henri</i> with <i>de</i> to become <i>du</i> ; with <i>à</i> to become <i>au</i> with geographical locations, e.g. <i>J'adore la France !</i>
	indefinite partitive	omission with jobs, etc., e.g. <i>ma mère est médecin</i> <i>du, de la, de l', des</i> <i>de</i> after expressions of quantity; <i>la plupart/encore des</i> <i>de</i> after negative verb forms <i>de</i> before plural adjective preceding noun
<b>Nouns</b>	gender singular and plural forms formation (nominalisation)	e.g. <i>lancer/lancement ; grand/grandeur</i>
<b>Adjectives</b>	agreement and position	
	possessive	<i>mon, ma, mes, etc.</i>
	demonstrative	<i>ce, cet, cette, ces</i>
	interrogative	<i>quel, quelle, quels, quelles ?</i>
	exclamatory	e.g. <i>quel beau temps !/que j'étais heureux !</i>
	indefinite	e.g. <i>autre, chaque, n'importe quel, plusieurs, quelques</i>
	comparative regular forms	e.g. <i>aussi, moins, plus, pas si ... que</i>
	comparative irregular forms	e.g. <i>meilleur, pire</i>
	superlative regular forms	e.g. <i>le/la plus ..., le/la moins ...</i>
	superlative irregular forms	e.g. <i>le/la meilleur(e), le/la pire, le/la moindre</i>
	use of adjectives as nouns	e.g. <i>les jeunes, les Français, les malades</i>
	used followed by a preposition	e.g. <i>prêt à, heureux de</i>
<b>Adverbs</b>	formation regular	ending in <i>-ment, -mment, ément</i>
	formation irregular	e.g. <i>bien, mal, gentiment</i>
	time and place	e.g. <i>aujourd'hui, demain, ici, là-bas</i>
	interrogative	e.g. <i>combien, comment, où, quand, depuis quand ?</i>
	common adverbial phrases	e.g. <i>de temps en temps</i>
	comparative regular forms	e.g. <i>aussi, moins, plus, pas si ... que</i>
	comparative irregular forms	e.g. <i>mieux</i>
	superlative regular forms	e.g. <i>le/la plus ..., le/la moins ...</i>
	superlative irregular	e.g. <i>le mieux</i>
	quantifiers and intensifiers	e.g. <i>assez, beaucoup plus/moins, bien, fort, (un) peu</i>
	inversion after some adverbs	e.g. <i>peut-être</i>

<b>Pronouns</b>	subject personal	e.g. <i>je, tu</i> , including <i>on</i>
	object direct and indirect	position and order use of <i>y</i> and <i>en</i>
	reflexive	<i>me, te, se</i> , etc.
	demonstrative	e.g. <i>ça, cela, celui, -ci, -là, de, qui/que/dont</i>
	interrogative	e.g. <i>qui ? que ? qu'est-ce que/qui ? lequel ? qui est-ce qui/que ? de/à qui parles-tu ? de quoi parles-tu ?</i>
	relative	e.g. <i>qui, que, dont, où, ce qui/que, lequel, auquel</i>
	emphasis	e.g. <i>ce qui est important, c'est que</i>
	disjunctive	e.g. <i>moi, toi, lui, elle, soi</i> , etc./ <i>moi/moi-même</i> , etc. after prepositions, e.g. <i>chez nous</i> emphasis, e.g. <i>moi, je n'aime pas</i> with positive imperatives, e.g. <i>donnez-moi</i>
	possessive	e.g. <i>le mien, la mienne</i> , etc.
	indefinite	e.g. <i>quelque chose, quelqu'un, chacun(e), certain(e)(s)</i>
	<i>Il est</i> and <i>c'est</i>	e.g. <i>il est possible de/que ... oui c'est possible/C'est un chien ; il est beau</i>
<b>Verbs</b>	regular and irregular forms	
	agreement with subject	
	modes of address	<i>tu, vous</i>
	forms and use of reflexives	
	negative forms and use	e.g. <i>ne ... pas, ne ... personne, ne ... jamais, ne ... que</i>
	interrogative forms – inversion	e.g. <i>veux-tu ?</i>
	imperatives	formation pronouns with imperatives, e.g. <i>lève-toi/ne te lève pas</i> use of infinitive in official notices, etc.
	impersonal verbs	e.g. <i>il faut, il reste, il semble que, il s'agit de</i>
	indicative tenses: formation and use	present, immediate future, future, conditional, imperfect, perfect, pluperfect, future perfect, conditional perfect, past historic
	compound tenses with <i>être</i>	
	agreement of past participle	including preceding direct objects
	present participle	including use after <i>en/tout en</i>
	past participle use	e.g. <i>une fois arrivés, ils .../après avoir fini, ils ...</i>
	verbs governing the infinitive, including <i>à</i> and <i>de</i> + infinitive	e.g. <i>aimer faire</i> <i>aider/encourager quelqu'un à faire</i> <i>décider/essayer de faire</i> <i>empêcher quelqu'un de faire</i> <i>permettre/interdire à quelqu'un de faire</i> <i>apprendre à quelqu'un à faire</i>
	modal verbs	e.g. <i>vouloir, devoir, pouvoir, savoir</i>
	verbs taking indirect object	e.g. <i>nuire à, obéir à, ressembler à</i>
	verbs taking <i>de</i> before object	e.g. <i>changer de, manquer de, se souvenir de</i>

continued



<b>Verbs</b> continued	use of <i>depuis</i>	also: <i>il y a/voilà ... que</i>
	use of <i>venir de</i>	
	will/shall/would/should	you will win (future tense) will you help me?/she would not reply ( <i>vouloir</i> ) I should leave now ( <i>devoir</i> ) in August, we would (used to) go abroad (imperfect)
	passive voice formation (all tenses)	also: avoidance by use of <i>on</i> or a noun or a reflexive
	subjunctive mood present and perfect tense	after verbs of wishing, fearing, emotion, judgement, possibility, obligation, doubt, etc. after various conjunctions, e.g. <i>bien que/pour que/sans que</i>
	dependent infinitives	e.g. <i>faire construire, laisser passer</i> after verbs of seeing, hearing and feeling
	use of infinitive	e.g. after <i>sans, pour/afin de, au lieu de, avant de vouloir, c'est pouvoir</i>
	inversion after speech	e.g. « ... », <i>a-t-il dit</i>
	indirect/reported speech	tenses used
	comparative constructions	e.g. <i>il vaut mieux rester que de partir</i>
<b>Conjunctions</b>	coordinating	e.g. <i>car, donc, ensuite, et, mais, ou, ou bien, puis</i>
	subordinating conjunctions	e.g. <i>quand, où, parce que, si, puisque, comme, lorsque</i> tenses used with <i>quand, dès que</i> , etc. ('logical future') tenses used with <i>si</i>
<b>Prepositions</b>	place	e.g. <i>chez, entre, devant, à côté de, près de, en face de</i>
	time	e.g. <i>avant, après, pendant, pour</i> <i>dans/en six mois</i>
	movement	e.g. <i>jusqu'à, vers</i>
	other	e.g. <i>contre, malgré, sans, sauf, selon</i>
	with various verbs	e.g. <i>penser à/de, croire à/en, jouer à/de</i>
	<i>de</i> following indefinites	e.g. <i>rien de plus simple, quelque chose de nouveau</i>
<b>Number</b>	all cardinals and ordinals	e.g. <i>un, deux ; premier, deuxième</i>
<b>Quantity</b>	expressions	e.g. <i>assez, trop, demi, moitié, peu, un peu, tant, autant</i>
<b>Time</b>	dates, years, time	including 24-hour clock
<b>Other</b>	<i>tout</i>	used as an adjective, noun and adverb
	<i>toujours</i>	used to mean always, continuation, still, at any rate
	dimensions	also distance, price, rate

## 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 completed a course in French equivalent to Cambridge IGCSE™ or Cambridge O Level.

#### Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge International A Level syllabuses to require about 360 guided learning hours. 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:

- Cambridge International AS Level French (8263)
- Cambridge International A Level French Language & Literature (9898)
- syllabuses with the same title 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 Cambridge International A Level as many times as they want to.

Learn more about retake entries, including definitions and information on entry deadlines, at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/retakes](http://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.

## Language

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

## 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](http://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](http://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.

## After the exam

### Grading and reporting

Grades A\*, A, B, C, D or E indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge International A Level. A\* is the highest and E is the lowest grade.

‘Ungraded’ means that the candidate’s performance did not meet the standard required for the lowest 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 and certificates, Cambridge International A Level is shown as a General Certificate of Education, GCE Advanced Level (GCE A Level).

**School feedback:** ‘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.’

**Feedback from:** Director of Studies, Auckland Grammar School, New Zealand

## How students, teachers and higher education can use the grades

### Cambridge International A Level

Assessment at Cambridge International A 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 a particular course or career and/or which students are more likely to be successful.  
The outcomes help students choose the most suitable course or career

## Changes to this syllabus for 2028, 2029 and 2030

The syllabus has been updated. This is version 1, published September 2025.

**You must read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.** We review our syllabuses regularly to make sure they continue to meet the needs of our schools. In updating this syllabus, we have made it easier for teachers and students to understand, keeping the familiar features that teachers and schools value.

---

### Changes to syllabus content

- Set texts  
The list of set texts has been updated for 2028, 2029 and 2030.
- 

Significant changes to the syllabus are indicated by black vertical lines either side of the text.

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/](https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/about-us/our-standards/)



**School feedback:** ‘While studying Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International A Levels, students broaden their horizons through a global perspective and develop a lasting passion for learning.’

**Feedback from:** Zhai Xiaoning, Deputy Principal, The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China

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