



CAMBRIDGE

International Education

Syllabus

Cambridge International AS Level Tamil Language 8689 for centres in Mauritius

Use this syllabus for exams in 2027.

Exams are available in the November series.

A red speech bubble containing the Tamil word 'தமிழ்' (Tamil) in white. The speech bubble is centered within a larger red shield-shaped frame.

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

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Important: Changes to this syllabus

For information about changes to this syllabus for 2027, go to page 21.



1 Why choose this syllabus?

Key benefits

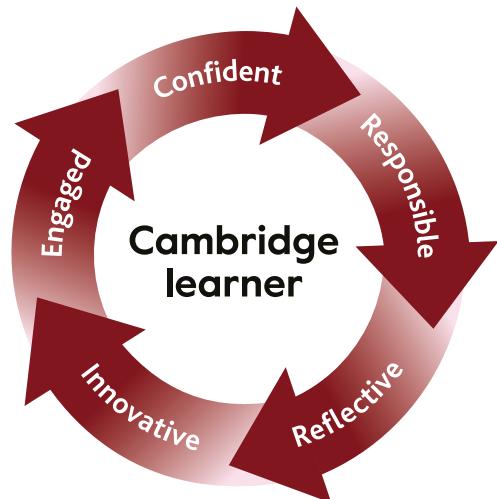
The best motivation for a student is a real passion for the subject they are learning. By offering students a variety of Cambridge International AS & A Levels, Cambridge International AS & A Level give schools flexibility to offer a broad and balanced curriculum with a choice of over 50 subjects. Students 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 AS Level in Tamil is accepted by universities and employers as proof of linguistic ability and understanding. Successful language students gain lifelong skills, including:

- the ability to communicate confidently and clearly in Tamil
- a sound understanding of the nature of language and language study, and of the skills and abilities required for further study and leisure
- insight into the culture and contemporary society of countries where Tamil is spoken
- better integration into communities where Tamil is spoken
- positive attitudes towards language learning, towards the speakers of other languages, and towards other cultures and societies
- skills which can be used in other areas of learning, such as analysis and memory skills.



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

Feedback from: Principal, Rockledge High School, USA

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, and help them to succeed at university.

We continually work with universities and colleges in every part of the world to ensure that they understand and accept our qualifications. From the world's top-ranked universities to local higher education institutions. Cambridge qualifications open doors to a world of opportunities. More than 2220 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.

A choice of assessment routes

Cambridge International AS & A Level offers a choice of assessment routes with staged assessment available in many subjects: Cambridge International AS Level can be offered as a standalone qualification or as part of a progression to Cambridge International A Level.

Cambridge International AS Level Tamil Language makes up the first half of the Cambridge International A Level course in Tamil and provides a foundation for the study of Tamil at Cambridge International A Level. The AS Level can also be delivered as a standalone qualification. Depending on local university entrance requirements, students may be able to use it to progress directly to university courses in Tamil or some other subjects. It is also suitable as part of a course of general education.

For more information about the relationship between the Cambridge International AS Level and Cambridge International A Level see the 'Assessment overview' section of the Syllabus overview.

Visit www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition-search and university websites for the most up-to-date higher education entry requirements.

Learn more: www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition

Supporting teachers

Support materials

We believe education is most effective when curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment are closely aligned. We provide a wide range of resources so that you can give your students the best possible preparation for Cambridge International AS & A 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 Cambridge International AS Level Tamil syllabus aims to:

- develop the ability to understand Tamil in a variety of registers
- enable students to communicate confidently and clearly in Tamil
- form a sound base of skills, language and attitudes required for further study, work and leisure
- develop insights into the culture and civilisation of the countries where Tamil is spoken
- encourage positive attitudes to language learning and a sympathetic approach to other cultures and civilisations
- support intellectual and personal development by promoting learning and social skills.

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



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.

Assessment overview

Centres and candidates can choose to take an assessment at

- Advanced Subsidiary (AS) Level

Note: The use of dictionaries is **not** permitted in any assessment.

Scheme of assessment summary

Where a component is common to two or more qualifications, grading of each qualification is carried out separately.

	Component 2 Reading and Writing		Component 3 Essay	
	duration	weighting	duration	weighting
AS Language	1 hour 45 mins	70%	1 hour 30 mins	30%

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

Assessment objectives

The examinations are designed to assess candidates' linguistic competence and their knowledge of contemporary society. In the exams, candidates will be expected to:

- understand and respond to texts written in Tamil, drawn from a variety of sources such as magazines, newspapers, reports, books and other forms of extended writing
- manipulate Tamil accurately in spoken and written forms, choosing appropriate examples of lexis and structures
- select information and present it in Tamil
- organise arguments and ideas logically.

3 Topic areas

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 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.

All textual material used in the examinations will be drawn from the topic areas below, with reference to the country or countries where Tamil is spoken. More guidance on the topic areas is given in section 5.

- Human relationships
- Family
- Generation gap
- Young people
- Patterns of daily life
- Urban and rural life
- The media
- Food and drink
- Law and order
- Philosophy and belief
- Health and fitness
- Work and leisure
- Equality of opportunity
- Employment and unemployment
- Sport
- Free time activities
- Travel and tourism
- Education
- Cultural life/heritage
- War and peace
- Social and economic development
- Scientific and medical advances
- Technological innovation
- Environment
- Conservation
- Pollution
- Contemporary aspects of the country or countries where Tamil is spoken

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 Description of components

Component 2: Reading and Writing

1 hour 45 minutes, 70 marks

Two passages in Tamil are set which deal with related themes.

Candidates answer specific and general comprehension questions on the two passages, and respond to a task requiring a summary or comparison of issues raised. Tamil will be used for all questions and answers.

The passages will have been written during the last twenty years, and will reflect the international scene. In addition:

- the two passages, taken together, will not exceed 750 words
- on the first passage, two tests (5 marks each) will cover vocabulary recognition and grammatical manipulation. These will be followed by a series of comprehension questions (15 marks for Content and 5 marks for Quality of Language)
- on the second passage, there will be a series of comprehension questions (15 marks for Content and 5 marks for Quality of Language)
- the last question will require candidates to write about 140 words, drawing information from both passages and adding their own opinions, (10 marks for information drawn from the passages, 5 marks for personal response to the material, and 5 marks for Quality of Language).

Component 3: Essay

1 hour 30 minutes, 40 marks

A list of five topics, selected from the topic areas in section 3, is published below. The list changes every year. A question will be set on each of the five topics; candidates choose **one** question and write an essay in Tamil of 250–400 words. Of the 40 marks available, 24 are for the Quality of the Language and 16 for the Content (see section 6, Mark Schemes).

Set topics for examination in 2027:

- 1 Law and order
- 2 Health and fitness
- 3 Travel and tourism
- 4 Scientific and medical advances
- 5 Pollution

5 Topics areas – further guidance

Teachers can explore the topic areas **in any way they choose**. The following examples (which are not prescriptive) are a useful guide to planning courses. All these suggestions, and other themes chosen by the teacher from within the topic areas, should be studied with reference to countries/communities where Tamil is spoken.

Human relationships – family – generation gap – young people

- family activities; new patterns of family relationships; the status of the elderly and responsibility for their care
- generation gap; conflicts in the family circle; young people and the older generation; attitudes of young people to the family environment
- young people; young people and their peer group; young people as a target group for advertisers and politicians

Patterns of daily life – urban and rural life – the media – food and drink – law and order – philosophy and belief – health and fitness

- daily routine; school; the individual's way of life; living conditions
- advantages and disadvantages of urban and rural life; transport and communications; shopping; housing
- the role and influence of the media; the power of advertising
- healthy eating; fast-food; national traditions of eating and drinking
- violence and crime; drug-related crime; the role of the police; law-enforcement
- the role of philosophy and belief in a local, national and an international context; attitudes towards different beliefs and philosophical issues; philosophical and religious practices/groups; values and morality
- healthy living; exercise; dieting; drugs; health care provision; stress; AIDS

Work and leisure – equality of opportunity – employment and unemployment – sport – free time activities – travel and tourism – education – cultural life/heritage

- women in society and in the workforce; equality of opportunity for minority groups
- preparation for work and job opportunities; career plans; qualifications and job routines; plight of the unemployed, areas of high unemployment; demise of traditional industries; possible solutions, immigrant workers
- individual and team sports; amateur and professional sport
- value of leisure; balance between leisure and work; planning leisure time
- tourism as a modern phenomenon; friction between tourists and local inhabitants; holidays and foreign travel
- education systems and types of school; patterns of curriculum; relationship between education and training; further and higher education provision; examinations
- the world of the arts; significant figures and trends in the arts; the place of culture and the arts in the life of the nation

War and peace – social and economic development

- conflicts in the world: ethnic, religious, ideological
- positive and negative aspects of social and economic development; recent and predicted trends

Medical advances – scientific and technological innovation

- advances in the treatment of disease; ethical issues of medical and other technologies
- cloning; genetic modifications; modern communications systems

Environment – pollution – conservation

- the individual in his/her surroundings; effect of environment on individuals; protest action to protect one's locality; ways of contributing to environmental awareness
- global warming; acid rain; air pollution; water pollution; noise pollution; destruction of rain forests; damage to animal world; solutions and cost implications
- saving endangered species and landscapes

Contemporary aspects of the country/ies where Tamil is spoken

- e.g. political, regional, social issues

6 Mark schemes

Component 2: Reading and Writing

Quality of Language – Accuracy (Questions 3, 4 and 5)

5 Very good

Consistently accurate. Only very few errors of minor significance. Accurate use of more complex structures (verb forms, tenses, prepositions, word order).

4 Good

Higher incidence of error than above, but clearly has a sound grasp of the grammatical elements in spite of lapses. Some capacity to use accurately more complex structures.

3 Sound

Fair level of accuracy. Common tenses and regular verbs mostly correctly formed. Some problems in forming correct agreement of adjectives. Difficulty with irregular verbs, use of prepositions.

2 Below average

Persistent errors in tense and verb forms. Prepositions frequently incorrect. Recurrent errors in agreement of adjectives.

0–1 Poor

Little or no evidence of grammatical awareness. Most constructions incomplete or incorrect. Consistent and repeated error.

Additional marking guidance for Quality of Language – Questions 3 and 4

The five marks available for Quality of Language are awarded **globally** for the whole performance on each set of answers.

A concise answer, containing all mark-bearing components for Content is scored on the full range of marks for language, i.e. length does not determine the Quality of Language mark.

Answers scoring 0 for Content cannot contribute to the overall Quality of Language mark.

Identify the answer(s) scoring 0 for Content in the whole set of answers. Then add together the number of Content marks available for each of these questions and reduce the Quality of Language mark according to the following table:

Total Content marks available on questions where a candidate scores 0	Reduce Quality of Language mark by:
2–3	1
4–5	2
6–7	3
8–14	4
15	5

Note: A minimum of one mark for Quality of Language should be awarded if there are any Content marks at all (i.e. 0 Quality of Language marks only if 0 Content marks).

Response to the passage (Question 5)

This should be marked as a mini-essay according to the variety and interest of the opinions and views expressed, the candidate's response to the original text stimulus, and their ability to express a personal point of view. Additional guidance on marking specific questions will be given to examiners.

5 Very good

Varied and interesting ideas, showing an element of flair and imagination, a capacity to express a personal point of view.

4 Good

Not the flair and imagination of the best candidates, but work still shows an ability to express a range of ideas, maintain interest and respond to the issues raised.

3 Sound

A fair level of interest and ideas. May concentrate on a single issue, but there is still a response to ideas in the text.

2 Below average

Limited range of ideas; rather humdrum. May disregard the element of response to the text, and write a largely unrelated free-composition.

0–1 Poor

Few ideas to offer on the theme. Banal and pedestrian. No element of personal response to the text. Repeated error.

Component 3: Essay

Language (24 marks)	Content (16 marks)
21–24 Very good Confident use of complex sentence patterns, generally accurate, extensive vocabulary, good sense of idiom.	14–16 Very good Detailed, clearly relevant and well illustrated; coherently argued and structured.
16–20 Good Generally sound grasp of grammar in spite of quite a few lapses; reads reasonably; some attempt at varied vocabulary.	11–13 Good Sound knowledge and generally relevant; some ability to develop argument and draw conclusions.
10–15 Adequate A tendency to be simple, clumsy or laboured; some degree of accuracy; inappropriate use of idiom.	7–10 Adequate Some knowledge, but not always relevant; a more limited capacity to argue.
5–9 Poor Consistently simple or pedestrian sentence patterns with persistent errors; limited vocabulary.	3–6 Poor Some attempt at argument, tends to be sketchy or unspecific; little attempt to structure an argument; major misunderstanding of question.
0–4 Very poor Only the simplest sentence patterns, little evidence of grammatical awareness, very limited vocabulary.	0–2 Very poor Vague and general, ideas presented at random.

7 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 Tamil equivalent to Cambridge IGCSE™ or Cambridge O Level.

Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge International AS Level syllabuses to require about 180 guided learning hours for each Cambridge International AS Level. 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 syllabuses in a single exam series. The only exceptions are:

- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

In addition, where a component contributes to different awards, candidates may not take more than one of those awards in the same examination series:

- Cambridge International A Level candidates may **not** take a Cambridge International AS Level qualification in the same language in the same series.
- Cambridge International AS Level candidates may **not** take the Cambridge International A Level qualification in the same language in the same series.

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 AS Level as many times as they want to. Information on retake entries is 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.

Language

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

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.

Important:

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. This is explained in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

- 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.
- 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. All applications should be made by the deadlines published in section 1.3 of the Cambridge Handbook www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide
- Contact us at the start of the course to find out if we can approve an access arrangement that is not included in the list of standard access arrangements.
- Candidates who cannot access parts of the assessment may be able to receive an award based on the parts they have completed.

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, b, c, d or e indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge International AS 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 or 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 International AS Levels are shown as General Certificates of Education, GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level (GCE AS Level).

On the certificates, Cambridge International AS Levels are shown as General Certificate of Education.

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 AS Level

Assessment at Cambridge International AS 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

The outcomes help decide whether students part way through a Cambridge International A Level course are making enough progress to continue

The outcomes guide teaching and learning in the next stages of the Cambridge International A Level course.

Changes to this syllabus for 2027

The syllabus has been updated. This is version 1, published September 2024.

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

- The topics for Component 3: Essay have been updated.

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/



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.