CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Syllabus

Cambridge International A Level Food Studies 9336 for centres in Brunei and Mauritius

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



Version 2

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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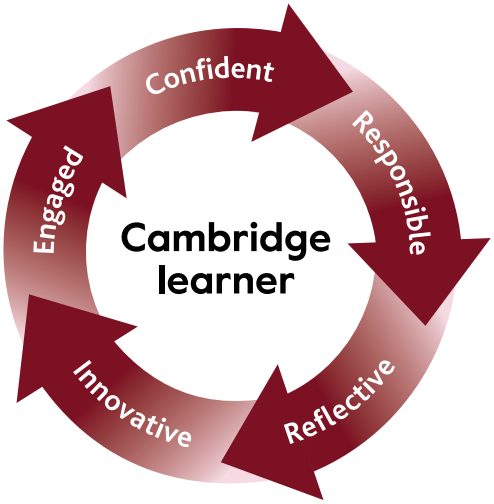
For information about changes to this syllabus for 2028, 2029 and 2030 go to page 33.

Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2022 are still suitable for use with this syllabus.

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 Food Studies is accepted by universities and employers as proof of essential knowledge and ability.

Candidates following the Cambridge International A Level Food Studies syllabus study both the theoretical and practical aspects of nutrition, food, and food preparation. They develop their knowledge and understanding of the composition of foods, digestion, and of the food manufacturing and service industries.

Candidates also improve their practical skills, learning how to produce a variety of healthy meals designed to meet different nutritional requirements. As a result of their studies, students also develop an analytical and critical approach to decision-making and problem-solving.

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.

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.

A choice of assessment routes

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

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 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**, 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.

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 A Level Food Studies 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

This syllabus aims to stimulate, encourage and develop:

1 a scientific knowledge and understanding of the composition of foods and of the structure, nature, digestion, absorption and use of nutrients in the body
2 an understanding of the relationship between diet and health
3 an awareness of the dietary needs and eating patterns of different ages and groups within society
4 an appreciation of the environmental, cultural and socio-economic factors affecting food choice
5 a scientific knowledge and understanding of food processing practices used within the home and in the food manufacturing and service industries, together with knowledge and understanding of the changes brought about within foods by these processes
6 an awareness of national mandatory policies relating to the provision of a safe food supply
7 the knowledge and skills required to produce healthy meals for the family with regard to safety, effective organisation and management of family resources, and the needs and lifestyles of family members
8 investigative skills and an analytical and critical approach to decision making and problem solving
9 the ability to communicate these abilities in both written and practical activities.

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

For the Cambridge A Level Food Studies, candidates take three compulsory components: Paper 1 Theory, Paper 2 Practical Test and Paper 3 Coursework Investigation. Candidates will be eligible for grades A* to E.

Paper 1 Theory **3 hours**

Written theory paper testing knowledge of theory and practice.

Two questions to be answered from each section.

Section A: the science of food and nutrition

Section B: the practical application of food science to food handling and preparation

50% of total marks

Paper 2 Practical Test
2 hours 30 minutes (plus 30 minutes Preparation)
with Planning Session of 2 hours 30 minutes

Candidates select **one** from a choice of three practical tests.

Each practical test links to the nutritional aspects of the subject and includes nutritional calculations. The preparation of the dishes chosen for the Practical Test should show manipulative skills and competent use of equipment.

Full details are given in Section 4.

40% of total marks

Paper 3 Coursework Investigation

A written report of an investigation undertaken by the candidate towards the end of the first year of study and completed during the second year of the examination course.

The investigation must be a personal study linked to the course as a whole and there must be both theoretical and practical application of nutrition throughout the piece of work.

Full details are given in Section 5.

10% of total marks

The Education Authority, Ministry or centre(s) should be satisfied that there are appropriate facilities and equipment for the practical component of the assessment. Each candidate should have sole use of a European-type cooker or stove, a range of basic cooking equipment and access to labour-saving equipment during the Practical Test.

Basic Equipment Bowls, scales, measuring equipment, various knives for different purposes, various spoons and spatulas, baking tins, cake tins, greaseproof paper, etc.

Specialised Equipment Hand whisk, draining spoons, graters, pressure cookers, etc.

Desirable Equipment (not essential) Electric mixers, liquidisers/blenders, etc.

It is expected that candidates will have access to refrigerators and freezers.

Practical Examiners must be qualified to teach this subject at this level.

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

Check the timetable at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables** for the test date window for Paper 2.

Check the samples database at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples** for submission information, forms and deadlines for Papers 2 and 3.

Assessment objectives

Candidates should be able to:

1 demonstrate knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the syllabus, with the ability to express this knowledge using relevant and correct scientific and technical vocabulary and terminology

2 demonstrate the ability to recall, select and apply knowledge and understanding to specific situations and problems

3 make and justify choices in relation to preparing and cooking meals for different occasions and situations

4 plan and carry out a course of action demonstrating the ability to manage time, money, energy/effort, materials, equipment and tools, and interests according to the stated criteria for a given situation

5 handle food safely and hygienically, demonstrating a variety of manipulative skills to a high standard of execution, and the use of a range of utensils and appliances

6 carry out nutritional analyses using food tables

7 identify and justify an area of the syllabus to be investigated and successfully plan, research and evaluate the findings of this investigation.

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.

Section 1: Composition and functions of nutrients

1.1 Chemical structure and nature of proteins, carbohydrates and lipids

(a) Proteins:

- Amino acids, primary, secondary and tertiary structure of proteins
- Simple or conjugated and globular or fibrous proteins
- Denaturation by heat, acids, alkalis, mineral salts, agitation
- Enzymes, enzymic hydrolysis, enzymic browning
- Protein quality: essential and non-essential amino acids, protein complementation

(b) Carbohydrates:

- Structure and examples of available carbohydrates: monosaccharides, disaccharides, oligosaccharides, polysaccharides (starch)
- Structure and examples of unavailable carbohydrates: non-starch polysaccharides (NSP)/dietary fibre (insoluble and soluble)
- An understanding of the terms: simple sugars, intrinsic sugars, extrinsic sugars, non-milk extrinsic sugars
- The effect of moist and dry heat on sugars and starches: caramelisation, dextrinisation, gelatinisation (role of amylose and amylopectin in gel formation, and pectin gels in jam making), the Maillard reaction (non-enzymic browning)

(c) Lipids:

- Composition of triglycerides (lipid oils and fats)
- Fatty acids: saturated and unsaturated (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated), cis- and trans-fatty acids, omega fatty acids
- Rancidity: hydrolytic and oxidative
- Plasticity in fats
- Melting and smoke points, decomposition
- Emulsification

continued

Section 1: Composition and functions of nutrients continued

1.2 Digestion, absorption and assimilation of proteins, carbohydrates and lipids

(a) Structure of the digestive system:
- Role of the mouth, oesophagus, stomach, pancreas, gall bladder, liver, duodenum and ileum in digestion
- Digestion of starch, disaccharides, proteins and lipids: sites of hydrolysis, specific enzymes and end products

(b) Absorption:
- Structure of intestinal villi
- Passive absorption (osmosis and diffusion), active transport, endocytosis
- Absorption of monosaccharides, amino acids, lipids

(c) Absorption of other substances:
- Water, minerals and vitamins
- Calcium: factors hindering absorption, the role of vitamin D
- Iron: factors affecting absorption, the role of vitamin C
- Defective absorption: cystic fibrosis, lactose intolerance, coeliac disease, phenylketonuria

(d) Assimilation and use of absorbed nutrients in body cells:
- Glucose
  - role of the liver and pancreas in maintaining blood sugar levels
  - cellular respiration to release energy
  - glycogen formation
- Amino acids
  - synthesis of body tissues: structural and functional proteins
  - deamination: energy release
  - transamination
- Lipids
  - lipogenesis
  - reformed triglycerides and adipose tissue: energy storage, insulation

1.3 Micronutrients

(a) Vitamins:
- Fat-soluble vitamins: A, D, E, K
- Water-soluble vitamins: B vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, folate, cobalamin), vitamin C
- The functions of vitamins including their role as antioxidants
- Good food sources for vitamins
- Effects of deficiency and excess

(b) Mineral elements:
- Calcium, iron, phosphorus, potassium, sodium, fluoride, chloride, iodide
- The functions of minerals
- Good food sources for minerals
- Effects of deficiency and excess
- The main roles of the trace elements cobalt, copper, manganese, selenium, zinc

(c) The effect of storage, preparation, cooking and preservation on micronutrients

continued

Section 1: Composition and functions of nutrients continued

1.4 Water

- Water balance
- Sources of water: from food, drink, metabolic water
- Dehydration
- Functions of water in the body

1.5 Energy needs

- Measurement of energy: kilojoules (kJ) or kilocalories (kcal)
- Energy produced by: 1 g glucose, 1 g protein and 1 g fat
- Use of energy in the body: growth, movement, warmth, stored chemical energy, electrical energy
- Individual energy needs: basal metabolic rate (BMR) and energy for daily activities
- Factors affecting BMR and overall energy needs
- Energy balance
- Protein-energy malnutrition

Section 2: Nutritional needs

2.1 Basic nutritional guidelines

- Recall of the proportion of daily energy needs to come from fats (saturated and polyunsaturated)
- Dietary and serum cholesterol levels, both high-density lipoproteins (HDL) and low-density lipoproteins (LDL), and their association with coronary heart disease (CHD)
- Importance of reducing the intake of sugars and increasing the intake of starch; importance of the slow release of glucose from starch; the problems of dental caries, obesity, increased risk of diabetes
- Recall appropriate daily contributions to the diet and nutritional guidelines relating to the intake of:
  - NSP
  - sodium (salt)
  - water
- Knowledge of local provisions for nutritional education

2.2 Average recommended dietary intake of nutrients for different individuals

- Terminology describing recommended dietary intakes, e.g. Dietary Reference Value (DRV) and Reference Daily Intake (RDI)
- How average figures for recommended dietary intakes are obtained and how they should be used
- Factors affecting the needs of different individuals during:
  - pregnancy and lactation
  - infancy
  - childhood
  - adolescence
  - adulthood
  - old age
  - illness and convalescence

Section 3: Food commodities

3.1 Classification and nutritional content of foods

- Knowledge of the classification and nutritional content of:
  - cereals and cereal products
  - meat, meat-analogues, fish, eggs, dairy products
  - fruit and vegetables
  - fats and oils
- Choice of these commodities related to quality, freshness, cost and use

3.2 Food production

- Milling of cereals and production of cereal products
- Milk: heat treatments, homogenisation, preserved milk products
- Production of simple curd and hard cheeses
- Fats and oils: refining of cooking oils, hydrogenation to produce margarines, production of animal fats, white cooking fats and low-fat spreads
- Soya products, including the production of TVP and other protein foods, e.g. mycoproteins
- Functional foods, including pre- and probiotics, stanols and sterols

3.3 Food supply, demand and trade

- Self-sufficiency, cash crops, exports/imports, fair trade
- Problems associated with local and global food and water supplies and possible solutions

3.4 Decomposition and deterioration of foods

- Ripening and autolysis, effect of bacteria, yeasts, moulds, pest damage
- Care of food during transport, storage, distribution and in the home
- Food preservation:
  - commercial freezing methods: accelerated freeze-drying, canning, curing, dehydration, irradiation, modified atmosphere packaging, smoking, vacuum packaging
  - domestic preservation: traditional methods of drying and smoking, jam and pickle making, freezing
  - cook-chill processing

3.5 Use of additives and food labelling

- Functions of additives and evaluation of their use
- Antioxidants, colourings, emulsifiers, flavour enhancers, flavourings, preservatives, stabilisers, sweeteners
- Additives used as production aids, such as flour improvers, humectants and bulking agents
- Local legislation for the use of additives
- Food labelling: information found on labels, reasons for it

3.6 Comparison of convenience and homemade foods

- Types of convenience foods
- Advantages and disadvantages
- Intelligent use of these foods

Section 4: Meals for the family

4.1 Food choice and knowledge of local nutritional practices

- Local nutritional practices and food choices as influenced by:
  - racial and religious backgrounds
  - environmental factors, including carbon footprint
  - ethical considerations, including genetic modification of foods (GM), factory farming, organic farming, fair trade
  - food availability and cost

4.2 Meal planning

- Consideration of factors affecting meal planning such as:
  - medical conditions linked to diet
  - food intolerance and allergies
  - religious beliefs
  - income
  - cooking facilities
  - time available
  - cooking skills
  - season
  - lifestyle choices
  - personal preferences, including vegetarianism
  - special dietary requirements (see section 2.2)
- The use of food tables and relevant computer software in practical and theoretical work to determine the nutritional composition and energy value of meals, dishes and portions, together with the ability to compare these with recommended dietary intakes

Section 5: The kitchen

5.1 Kitchen planning

- Layouts and factors to consider for efficiency, hygiene and safety, including the work triangle
- Choice, cost and care of kitchen equipment

5.2 Food storage

- Food contamination by food-poisoning bacteria: *Bacillus cereus*, *Campylobacter*, *Clostridium botulinum*, *Clostridium perfringens*, *Escherichia coli*, *Listeria*, *Salmonella*, *Staphylococcus aureus*
- Chemical contamination of foods and naturally occurring plant toxins
- Prevention of cross-contamination
- Kitchen, food and personal hygiene
- Control of microbial action by temperature
- Storage of dried and canned foods
- Storage of food to prevent decomposition by light

Section 6: Preparation and cooking of food

6.1 Cooking food

- Reasons for cooking food
- The effect of cooking on food
- Safety, efficiency and economy when cooking
- Methods of heat transfer
  - Conduction, convection and radiation, with reference to different cooking methods
  - Production of heat within food by microwave radiation
- Presentation of food

6.2 Basic methods and mixtures

- Sauces
  - blended
  - egg custard
  - hollandaise
  - mayonnaise
  - purée
  - roux (bechamel, velouté, espagnole)
- Pastries
  - choux
  - flaky
  - hot-water crust
  - puff and rough puff
  - shortcrust
- Scone, biscuit (cookie) and cake mixtures
  - one-stage
  - creamed
  - melted
  - rubbed-in
  - whisked
- Yeast mixtures
- Batters (coating and pouring)
- Raising agents
  - air
  - steam
  - carbon dioxide produced chemically (heating or adding acid to sodium hydrogencarbonate) and biologically (fermentation using yeast)
- The functions of the ingredients in these mixtures

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 Practical Test

Allocation of marks	
A Planning session	44
B Manipulative skill and method of working	26
C Results and serving	30
Total	**100**

A Planning session

Maximum 44 marks

Section A of the Practical Test is assessed by an external examiner using the three Preparation Sheets completed by each candidate. The total of 44 is divided as follows:

(a)	Recipe choice	10
(b)	Time plan	16
	Sequence	5
	Methods	5
	Oven temperature and cooking time	5
	Shopping list	1
(c)	Written answer	18

B Manipulative skill and method of working

Maximum 26 marks

Section B of the Practical Test is assessed internally by the centre. A *Practical Test Working Mark Sheet* must be completed for each candidate. The 26 marks must be allocated as follows:

(a)	General approach	6
(b)	Manipulation	5
(c)	Judgement of consistencies	5
(d)	Hygiene and economy	5
(e)	Cooker management	5

Mark scheme for Manipulative skill and method of working:

(a) General approach *6 marks*

- This is an impression mark which takes into account the candidate's ability to work tidily and methodically and organisational skills.
- The most successful candidates will be business-like and confident; poorer candidates will make constant reference to recipe books and time plans and be unsure of themselves.
- Everything required for the preparation and cooking of each dish should be ready before the work begins.
- At each stage the table should be tidied and washing up either stacked or completed.
- Rubbish and food waste should be disposed of appropriately.
- Tables should be wiped down or washed with a clean cloth.
- Hot, soapy water should be prepared in advance and should be replaced frequently.
- Washing up need not be done after the preparation of each dish; three times during the test will probably be enough. The last few pieces of equipment can be washed after all of the dishes have been served.
- It is not expected that equipment from other work areas be used if the candidate's equipment needs to be washed. The equipment needed at each stage should have been anticipated at the planning stage.
- At the end of the Practical Test all unwashed equipment must be stacked; judge the amount of washing up remaining.
- Spilt food must be wiped or mopped up, sinks should not be cluttered; the work table should be left clean.

(b) Manipulation *5 marks*

- One mark is available for each of the main dishes.
- Each dish should demonstrate a fair degree of skill.
- The candidate should be familiar with the techniques used.
- Quick work and dextrous manipulation should be demonstrated.
- Basic skills should be well performed.
- The method followed should be suitable for the dish.
- Tools and equipment (whisk, blender, electric mixer, knives, etc.) should be used appropriately.
- Quick 'short-cut' methods (e.g. one-stage method) should not be marked down if the results prove to be good – the results are the determining factor.
- Accept methods which save time and energy and the use of labour-saving equipment.

(c) Judgement of consistencies *5 marks*

- One mark is available for each of the main dishes.
- The correct consistencies for pastries, cakes, bread and biscuits should be observed at all stages from preparation to serving.
- Sauces and batters should be the appropriate consistency for their use – smooth and either pouring or coating.
- Vegetables should be neatly cut and diced; they should have been tested before serving.
- Candidates should test consistencies and make appropriate adjustments.
- Candidates should check the consistency of, for example, whisked mixtures before the addition of flour; shortcrust pastry before rolling out; or yeast dough before rising.

(d) Hygiene and economy *5 marks*

- This is an impression mark, taking into account the points below. Candidates are expected to show hygienic methods and to demonstrate a high level of personal hygiene. They should also be economical in the use of fuel and food throughout the Practical Test.
- *Hygiene*
  - clean apron and head covering
  - regular washing of hands – no nail varnish
  - no licking fingers or spoons
  - regular cleaning of work area
  - hot, soapy water for washing dishes – replaced frequently
  - clean dish-cloth and tea towel
  - tea towel not used to dry hands
  - throwing away or washing anything dropped on the floor
  - covering food when not being used
  - using a refrigerator to store perishable foods
  - different equipment and surfaces for raw and cooked food
- *Economy*
  - not preparing more ingredients than required
  - not scraping out all the mixture from bowls, e.g. cake mixture, cream
  - not throwing away large pieces of food
  - not peeling vegetables thickly or discarding too many outer leaves
  - leftover ingredients and garnishes not left on food trays
  - using all of the pastry prepared
  - gas or electricity switched off when not in use
  - water not wasted
  - preheating the oven for an appropriate length of time
  - lids for pans
  - appropriate size of pans for hotplates
  - cupboards, drawers and dustbins should be checked at the end of the test for leftovers

(e) Cooker management *5 marks*

- This is an impression mark, taking into consideration the points below:
- The candidate is expected to be able to control the heat on the top of the stove.
- Knowledge of the correct oven temperature and the positioning of each dish in the oven is expected.
- Wherever possible, more than one dish should be cooked in the oven at the same time.
- Candidates are expected to change the position of oven shelves to suit their requirements.
- The oven should be preheated for an appropriate length of time.
- Use should be made of residual heat wherever possible.
- The marks awarded should reflect the amount of work carried out in the test. Candidates who do very little cooking cannot expect to score well in this section.

C Results and serving

Maximum 30 marks

Section C of the Practical Test is internally assessed by the centre. A *Practical Test Working Mark Sheet* must be completed for each candidate.

1 Each dish must be marked out of six marks. The full range of marks should be used. No half marks may be awarded. There is no separate serving mark.

2 If a candidate omits part of the test or does not make one or more of the dishes planned, a nil score must be entered on the *Practical Test Working Mark Sheet* for that dish. Marks cannot be transferred to other dishes. Dishes added after the Planning Session must not receive a mark.

3 Where the preparation of dishes shows insufficient skill or a repetition of skills, the mark awarded must be lower.

4 Each dish must be judged on:
- quality
- taste
- appearance.

5 The following should be taken into consideration:
- appetising and well-flavoured food
- correct consistency, texture, temperature and quantity
- correct size of serving dish
- the temperature and size of the serving dish
- attractive presentation
- tasteful garnishing and decorating
- cleanliness of serving dishes
- cleanliness of tablecloth
- correct use of doilies and dish papers.

6 A hard copy of a good quality colour photograph of each candidate's serving table and completed dishes, labelled with the candidate's name and number, is required for submission to the external examiner.

Completion of the Preparation Sheets and *Practical Test Working Mark Sheet*

1 Preparation Sheets for each candidate and the instructions for completion **must** be downloaded from **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples**. A copy must be made of each Preparation Sheet completed by the candidate, one for the external examiner and one for use by the candidate in the Practical Test.

2 A *Practical Test Working Mark Sheet* must be used by the centre for each candidate. The centre should complete parts B and C. The *Practical Test Working Mark Sheet* and the instructions for completion **must** be downloaded from **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples**

3 A hard copy of a good quality colour photograph of each candidate's serving table and completed dishes, labelled with the candidate's name and number, must be submitted in **hard copy** with each candidate's Preparation Sheets and *Practical Test Working Mark Sheet*.

5 Coursework Investigation

Guidelines for teachers and candidates

Work submitted for this paper must be a personal/individual investigation, which is linked to the course as a whole. There must be emphasis on both theoretical and practical application of nutrition throughout the piece of work.

This component carries 10 per cent of the total marks so candidates should not spend a disproportionate amount of time on the work.

The study must **not** exceed 4500 words. An accurate word count must be clearly stated. Any work beyond the 4500 word maximum will not be assessed. It should be remembered that quantity does not always equate with quality; candidates receive credit for presenting their reports succinctly. Labelling and annotations alongside photographs, graphs, pie charts, etc., can convey information concisely and effectively.

The following items are **not** to be included in the total number of words and maybe included in an appendix, where appropriate:

- copies of questions used in interviews
- copies of letters or emails written to obtain information or to request interviews and visits
- copies of any questionnaires or surveys used in the study
- tables, graphs, pie charts, labelled diagrams and flow charts
- photographs
- a diary of activities.

Although the execution of the work should be unsupervised, teachers should discuss different ways of approaching the work before it begins. Candidates should be aware of different investigative procedures they can use, and of the marks allocated to different aspects of the work. Teachers should also check the suitability of titles and, if necessary, advise candidates if a proposed investigation is outside the syllabus, beyond their capabilities or impractical because of lack of particular resources within the school or community. It should not be necessary for candidates to travel long distances or spend large sums of money in conducting investigations and compiling reports.

For further information about supervising coursework, see the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment at **http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

Each piece of work should demonstrate that candidates are able to:

- identify an area to investigate, justify their choice and discuss relevant factors
- collect, select and interpret information and data relevant to the investigation
- plan, justify and implement a course of action relevant to the investigation being undertaken (e.g. tests, experiments, comparisons, visits, observations, surveys, interviews, questionnaires)
- record and present their findings concisely (using tables, annotated graphs, pie charts, photographs, labelled diagrams, flow charts and written summaries)
- analyse their findings, draw conclusions and make recommendations
- evaluate their conclusions and identify areas for further investigation
- evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the investigation itself.

Any sources used by candidates, including photographs and diagrams, must be clearly recorded in a **source list**.

A candidate taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as their own is an example of plagiarism. It is your responsibility as a teacher to prevent plagiarism from happening and to detect it if it does happen. For more information, search for 'Preventing plagiarism – guidance for teachers' on our website at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/teachingandassessment**. Cambridge International has robust systems in place to detect, investigate and address plagiarism once work has been submitted.

Candidates should show respect and good ethical practice when carrying out their investigation and in their use of any data, particularly personal data, that they collect.

Suggested sequence of work

1 Candidates should select an area of study which interests them. They should undertake research to build on the knowledge which they already have of this area, and then they should select one aspect to investigate further.

   It is helpful to the candidates to formulate the title of their investigation as a question. This will limit the scope of their work, preventing the content from becoming vast and unwieldy. Teachers should check the suitability of titles.

   Information gained from discussion(s) or collected from sources such as books, the internet and government reports does not have to be recorded in detail. A brief summary leading to the identification of the precise area to be studied can form part of the introduction.

   Questions for interviews and questionnaires and the planning of experiments or other practical work will reflect the knowledge and understanding that has been gained.

   It is important that **all** sources of information, including photographs and diagrams, should be included in a source list. Teachers can be used as sources of information.

2 After stating the main question to be answered by the investigation, candidates should select and discuss factors that are relevant to the investigation. It is often helpful to write down a series of sub-questions which evolve from the main questions and which can form the basis of the investigation.

3 It is important that candidates plan a complete course of action that they intend to follow. They should clearly state how they intend to collect, select, summarise and apply data relevant to the objectives of their investigation. This plan could include the following activities:
   - making visits
   - devising and using questions in interviews
   - using questionnaires and surveys
     - Questionnaires should not contain too many questions, and they should be carefully phrased to generate responses that can be collated, analysed and reported on effectively. The number of people taking part in the survey need not be vast, but the size of the sample should be stated.
   - experiments with food recipes
   - If recipes are tried they should be evaluated by tasting panels and, if relevant, a breakdown of nutritional content should be given.
   - book and internet research.

4 There should be evidence in the investigation that the plan has been implemented. Any changes to the original plan should be indicated and the reasons for the changes stated. Implementing a course of action should demonstrate a candidate's ability to communicate, test, compare, measure, observe and record.

5 The evidence/data collected should be presented as clearly and concisely as possible. Tables, pie charts, graphs and photographs, as well as concisely written accounts, are all acceptable. Computer programmes that present information graphically may be used.

6 All information collected, analysed and presented should be evaluated. Conclusions should be drawn and their relevance and application discussed. Candidates should also comment on their investigation as a whole, pointing out its strengths and weaknesses, suggesting any improvements which could have been made, and further areas of study worth pursuing.
7 The source list should include all written sources, and sources of photographs and diagrams, including websites, the names and positions of people interviewed and places that have been visited.
8 A contents list can be usefully drawn up after the study has been completed.

Presentation of the investigation

This should be simple and must be the candidate's own work. There is no need for elaborate book binding as it is time consuming and expensive to produce and to post. Card or plastic covers are adequate. The front cover should clearly show the following information:

- candidate's name and candidate number
- centre name and centre number
- title of the investigation
- subject and paper code (9336/03)
- word count.

Reports may be typed or handwritten in the candidate's own words.

The report must be the candidate's own work; plagiarism is unacceptable and will be penalised.

Any sources used by candidates, including photographs and diagrams, must be clearly recorded in a **source list**.

Submitting the investigation

The work should be sent to Cambridge International immediately after the Practical Test period but **separate** from the Practical Test documents.

Please refer to the samples database at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples** for more information.

Using the samples database

The samples database refers you to key information about administering coursework for this syllabus.

Use the database to find out:

- when and how to submit your candidates' work
- which forms to complete and return with your candidates' work.

The samples database at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples** will ask you for:

- The qualification type (e.g. Cambridge International AS & A Level, Cambridge IGCSE and O Level, Cambridge Checkpoint Global Perspectives)
- Your country / territory
- The series (e.g. June, November)
- The syllabus code (i.e. 9336 for this syllabus).

The samples database will then take you to the information you need, including dates and methods of submission of candidates' marks and work, as well as any forms you may need to complete.

Assessment scheme for the Coursework Investigation

Process	Indicators	Mark Range	Max. Mark
Choice and justification	The chosen area of study is appropriate to the syllabus and well justified (four reasons), with a title that sets well-defined parameters and leads to an investigation with the use of a variety of investigative techniques (four to five main methods), using a wide range of resources.	4–5	5
	The chosen area of study is appropriate and the choice is satisfactorily justified (two to three reasons). Title is not as well-phrased, so parameters of study are less well defined, leading to the use of fewer investigative techniques (two to three) and a smaller range of resources.	2–3	
	The chosen area of study is appropriate but less well justified or not justified at all, and the title does not lead to a well-structured or well-executed investigation. It is possible that only one main investigative technique is used. With weaker studies it is likely that the complete report is based solely on book or internet research.	1	
	The choice of topic is outside the syllabus – the candidate is penalised here for this error, and the work that follows is then assessed as if the choice were correct.	0	
Planning	The main aims and objectives of the research are clearly stated, together with the key sub-questions, and these are followed by a comprehensive plan of action listing the investigations to be carried out, the methodology to be used (how, when, where and with whom) and a description of how the results will be collated. Appropriate diagrams, such as Gantt charts, may be included. Sample questionnaires, interview questions, letters and emails are included.	11–15	15
	The main aims are clearly stated, but with fewer sub-questions to be answered. The plan of action is incomplete and details of the methodology are lacking. Sample questionnaires etc. are included.	6–10	
	The main aim of the investigation is stated, but without sub-questions to be answered. The evidence of initial planning is the format of the study itself only. Sample questionnaires etc. are included.	1–5	

Process	Indicators	Mark Range	Max. Mark
Theoretical research	A succinctly presented and comprehensive summary, in the candidate's own words and style, of the theoretical information which forms the basis of the subsequent investigation. The information presented has been correctly and efficiently used. Information is collected from a variety of reliable sources which are correctly recorded in a source list.	11–15	15
	The information is mostly relevant to the investigation, but is not a succinct summary of the main facts. There may be a mixture of the candidate's own words and quotations from texts. Information is collected from a limited range of sources which may lack validity or reliability. Sources are generally correctly recorded in a source list. A satisfactory attempt has been made to use most of the information in the subsequent investigation.	5–10	
	A lengthy discourse on the subject area, but some important points may have been overlooked and others may be irrelevant. The information is not used to any great extent in the subsequent investigation. Information is collected from a very limited range of sources and may be unreliable. Sources may not be correctly recorded in a source list.	1–5	

Process	Indicators	Mark Range	Max. Mark
Investigative skills and data handling	• The candidate has used a range of investigative techniques (four to five), and has executed these efficiently and economically using a good range of resources to gather quantitative and qualitative evidence which is relevant and can be readily collated. • The methodology used demonstrates the candidate's ability to be objective and to use quantitative data, e.g. in the analysis of nutritional intakes. There is evidence that questionnaires and interview questions were tested before use in the investigation. • Evidence relevant to the main aims and objectives of the investigation has been presented clearly, accurately and succinctly by a variety of methods. • Illustrations and graphics are fully labelled and annotated, to facilitate analysis.	25–40	40
	• The candidate has used two to three investigative techniques to a satisfactory standard, but has used fewer resources. There is little or no evidence of quantitative data. • Questionnaires and interview questions are not so well thought out and are more subjective in approach, resulting in information that cannot be so readily collated. • Most of the evidence presented is relevant to the aims and objectives of the investigation. There is a satisfactory standard of accuracy and clarity, but the potential for some improvements. • Some relevant evidence may have been omitted. There may be repetition, with some data being presented in two or more different ways.	11–24	
	• The candidate has demonstrated ability in only one investigative technique, with very limited use of resources. • Questionnaires and interview questions are badly structured, with no quantitative data analysis possible, and little useful information has been gleaned by the research. • Very little evidence has been presented and possibly by one method only. The evidence presented lacks detail and accuracy.	1–10	

Process	Indicators	Mark Range	Max. Mark
Conclusions	The candidate has made a detailed analysis of the findings, has drawn conclusions based on the presented evidence and has made recommendations which are relevant and practicable.	11–15	15
	The candidate has been repetitive in analysing the data and drawing conclusions. Recommendations are made but these tend to be idealistic and impracticable.	6–10	
	A very limited analysis of findings and few conclusions drawn. There is a high degree of repetition and few, if any, recommendations. Conclusions may be presented in the general text of the report, rather than at the end of the study. Conclusions may be confused with evaluation points.	1–5	
Evaluation	The entire report has been reviewed, starting with the main aims, objectives and plan of action. The assessment is comprehensive in its coverage, dealing with the strengths and weaknesses of the methodology used and the validity of the conclusions drawn.	4–5	5
	The candidate may not have referred back to the original aims, objectives and plan of action, but there will be a reasonable attempt to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the work and the validity of the conclusions drawn.	2–3	
	Evaluation points may be mixed in with conclusions. Points may be limited in their number and coverage of the work, and presented in an illogical way.	1	
Presentation	An attractive, interesting and logically presented record of the work undertaken which is typed or handwritten in the candidate's own words and style, and within the word limit.	4–5	5
	Similar to the above, but the candidate has less work to record. The order of presentation may not be sequential, and parts may not be written in the candidate's own words and style.	2–3	
	Reports at this level are likely to be random pieces of work which are loosely connected, rather than logically and sequentially fulfilling the aims and objectives of the investigation. Very little work is presented in the candidate's own words and style.	1	

6 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 Food & Nutrition equivalent to Cambridge IGCSE™ or Cambridge O Level.

Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge International AS & A Level syllabuses to require about 180 guided learning hours for each Cambridge International AS Level and about 360 guided learning hours for a Cambridge International A 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 cannot 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 IGCSE Food & Nutrition (0648)
- Cambridge O Level Food & Nutrition (6065)
- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

Group awards: Cambridge AICE Diploma

Cambridge AICE Diploma (Advanced International Certificate of Education) is a group award for Cambridge International AS & A Level. It encourages schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum by recognising the achievements of learners who pass exams in a range of different subjects.

Learn more about Cambridge AICE Diploma at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/aice**

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 and carrying forward marks

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**.

Candidates cannot resubmit, in whole or in part, coursework from a previous series for remarking. For information, refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide]**

Coursework marks can be carried forward by making entries for the following option:

- the A Level entry option, where the marks for 9336/03 Coursework Investigations are carried forward and the candidate takes the exam(s) for 9336/01 Theory and 9336/02 Practical Test.

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 and the related assessment materials are available in English only.

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*.

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 2, published October 2026.

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 version 2 of the syllabus, published October 2026.

Other changes	• A weblink on page 28 has been updated.

Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2022 are still suitable for use with this syllabus.

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.

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