



Syllabus

Cambridge IGCSE™ World Literature 0408

Use this syllabus for exams in 2025, 2026 and 2027.
Exams are available in the June and November series.



Why choose Cambridge International?

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

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

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

Our mission is to provide educational benefit through provision of international programmes and qualifications for school education and to be the world leader in this field. Together with schools, we develop Cambridge learners who are confident, responsible, reflective, innovative and engaged – equipped for success in the modern world.

Every year, nearly a million Cambridge students from 10 000 schools in 160 countries prepare for their future with the Cambridge Pathway.

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

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

Quality management



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

Contents

Why choose Cambridge International?	2
1 Why choose this syllabus?	4
2 Syllabus overview	7
Aims	7
Content overview	8
Assessment overview	9
Assessment objectives	10
3 Subject content	11
Set texts for examination in 2025	12
Set texts for examination in 2026	13
Set texts for examination in 2027	14
4 Details of the assessment	15
Component 1 Coursework	15
Paper 2 Unseen Poetry	22
Paper 3 Set Text	22
Command words	24
5 What else you need to know	25
Before you start	25
Making entries	26
Accessibility and equality	26
After the exam	27
How students and teachers can use the grades	28
Grade descriptions	28
Changes to this syllabus for 2025, 2026 and 2027	29

Important: Changes to this syllabus



For information about changes to this syllabus for 2025, 2026 and 2027, go to page 28.

The latest syllabus is version 2, published December 2022. There are no significant changes which affect teaching.

1 Why choose this syllabus?

Key benefits

Cambridge IGCSE is the world's most popular international qualification for 14 to 16 year olds, although it can be taken by students of other ages. It is tried, tested and trusted.

Students can choose from 70 subjects in any combination – it is taught by over 4500 schools in over 140 countries.

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

Cambridge IGCSE World Literature provides learners with lifelong skills, including the ability to:

- read, interpret and evaluate literary texts from different countries and cultures
- develop an understanding of literal and implicit meaning, relevant contexts and of the deeper themes or attitudes that may be expressed
- present an informed, personal response to literary texts they have studied
- explore wider and universal issues and gain skills of empathy, promoting students' better understanding of themselves and of the world around them.

Our approach in Cambridge IGCSE World Literature encourages learners to be:

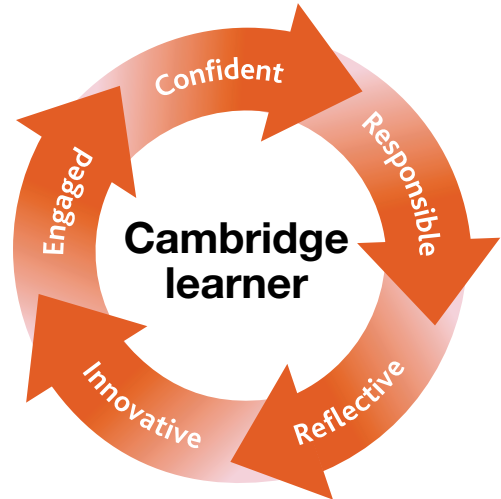
confident, exploring texts and ideas, and beginning to form personal insight

responsible, committing to their learning and developing approaches to analysis to better understand ideas of culture, context and the community

reflective, considering literary ideas that are presented in a range of ever-changing context

innovative, approaching tasks and texts with flexible thinking

engaged, recognising the role literature plays in matters of personal, social and global significance.



School feedback: ‘The strength of Cambridge IGCSE qualifications is internationally recognised and has provided an international pathway for our students to continue their studies around the world.’

Feedback from: Gary Tan, Head of Schools and CEO, Raffles International Group of Schools, Indonesia

International recognition and acceptance

Our expertise in curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment is the basis for the recognition of our programmes and qualifications around the world. The combination of knowledge and skills in Cambridge IGCSE World Literature gives learners a solid foundation for further study. Candidates who achieve grades A* to C are well prepared to follow a wide range of courses including Cambridge International AS & A Level Literature in English.

Cambridge IGCSEs are accepted and valued by leading universities and employers around the world as evidence of academic achievement. Many universities require a combination of Cambridge International AS & A Levels and Cambridge IGCSEs or equivalent to meet their entry requirements.

UK NARIC*, 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 IGCSE and found it to be comparable to the standard of the GCSE in the UK. This means students can be confident that their Cambridge IGCSE qualifications are accepted as equivalent to UK GCSEs by leading universities worldwide.

* Due to the United Kingdom leaving the European Union, the UK NARIC national recognition agency function was re-titled as UK ENIC on 1 March 2021, operated and managed by Ecctis Limited. From 1 March 2021, international benchmarking findings are published under the Ecctis name.

Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition

School feedback: ‘Cambridge IGCSE is one of the most sought-after and recognised qualifications in the world. It is very popular in Egypt because it provides the perfect preparation for success at advanced level programmes.’

Feedback from: Managing Director of British School of Egypt BSE

Supporting teachers

We provide a wide range of resources, detailed guidance, innovative training and professional development so that you can give your students the best possible preparation for Cambridge IGCSE. To find out which resources are available for each syllabus go to our School Support Hub.

The School Support Hub is our secure online site for Cambridge teachers where you can find the resources you need to deliver our programmes. You can also keep up to date with your subject and the global Cambridge community through our online discussion forums.

Find out more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/support

Support for Cambridge IGCSE			
Planning and preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schemes of work Specimen papers Syllabuses Teacher guides 	Teaching and assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endorsed resources Online forums Support for coursework and speaking tests 	Learning and revision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example candidate responses Past papers and mark schemes Specimen paper answers 	Results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidate Results Service Principal examiner reports for teachers Results Analysis

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We support teachers through:

- Introductory Training – face-to-face or online
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- Enrichment Professional Development – face-to-face or online

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- Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications

Find out more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/profdev



Supporting exams officers

We provide comprehensive support and guidance for all Cambridge exams officers.

Find out more at: www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide


2 Syllabus overview

Aims

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

The aims are to enable students to:

- enjoy the experience of reading literature from around the world
- understand and respond to literary texts in different forms (poetry, prose, and drama) and from different countries and cultures
- communicate an informed personal response appropriately and effectively
- appreciate different ways in which writers achieve their effects
- experience literature's contribution to aesthetic, imaginative and intellectual growth
- explore the contribution of literature to an understanding of areas of human concern
- build a firm foundation for further study of literature.



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

Content overview

Cambridge IGCSE World Literature provides learners with the opportunity to gain further knowledge and understanding of international poetry, prose and drama as they study all three forms.

A range of inspiring international set texts have been carefully selected to offer a breadth and depth of literary study and to encourage lively and stimulating classroom discussion.

Learners study two texts for their coursework: one prose text and one drama text. For Paper 2, they prepare for one unseen poetry text. In Paper 3, they study at least one set text, and have the option to study a further text if they wish to.

Throughout the course, learners are encouraged to practise their skills of close reading through the study of literary extracts, unseen texts and whole texts. They develop skills in analysis and interpretation of texts, and are encouraged to express their personal response. Learners explore the conventions of genres of texts and the contexts in which works have been written, read and received.

These are highly transferable skills and can help learners in other subject areas, as well as equipping them for progression to further study.

Assessment overview

All candidates take three components. Candidates will be eligible for grades A* to G.

All candidates take:

Component 1

Coursework 38.5%
50 marks
Candidates submit two written assignments.
Internally assessed and externally moderated

and:

Paper 2

1 hour 15 minutes
Unseen Poetry 23%
30 marks
Candidates answer two questions on one
unseen poem.
Externally assessed

and:

Paper 3

1 hour 30 minutes
Set Texts 38.5%
50 marks
Candidates answer two questions: one from
each section.
Externally assessed

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

Check the samples database at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples for submission information, forms and deadlines for Component.

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) are:

AO1

Show detailed knowledge of the content of literary texts in the three main forms (poetry, prose and drama), supported by reference to the text.

AO2

Understand the meanings of literary texts and their contexts, and explore texts beyond surface meanings to show deeper awareness of ideas and attitudes.

AO3

Recognise and appreciate ways in which writers use language, structure and form to create and shape meanings and effects.

AO4

Communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to 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 IGCSE %
AO1	25
AO2	25
AO3	25
AO4	25
Total	100

Assessment objectives as a percentage of each component

Assessment objective	Weighting in components %		
	Component 1	Paper 2	Paper 3
AO1	25	25	25
AO2	25	25	25
AO3	25	25	25
AO4	25	25	25
Total	100	100	100

3 Subject content

In preparation for Component 1 Coursework, learners read and understand two texts selected by you: one drama text and one prose text. Examples of texts suitable for coursework can be found in section 4 Details of the assessment.

In preparation for Paper 2 Unseen Poetry, learners should study a range of poems of different types.

In preparation for Paper 3 Set Text, learners study **one** set text and answer **two** questions about it in the examination: **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B of the question paper. (It is possible for learners to study two set texts for this paper and answer each question on a different text, but this is an optional approach to the paper.)

The set text list for each year of examination includes a range of international poetry, prose and drama options; you are encouraged to choose the most appropriate text(s) for your learners.

Set texts regularly rotate on the syllabus and 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 examinations.

For some texts we specify which edition to use. Where the edition is not specified, candidates may use any edition of the set text, provided it is not an abridged or simplified version.

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 suitable subject contexts, 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.

Set texts for examination in 2025

The set texts listed below are for examination in **2025**.

Samanta Schweblin	<i>Fever Dream</i>
Ama Ata Aidoo	<i>Anowa</i>
Fabio Geda	<i>In the Sea There are Crocodiles</i>
Anton Chekhov	<i>The Cherry Orchard</i>

Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2

A selection from *Songs of Ourselves (Cambridge International Examinations Anthology of Poetry in English) Volume 2* (Cambridge University Press). The following 14 poems from *Part 2: Birds, Beasts and the Weather*:

Judith Wright	<i>Australia 1970</i>
Thomas Carew	<i>The Spring</i>
Philip Larkin	<i>Coming</i>
Thomas Hardy	<i>The Darkling Thrush</i>
Ruth Pitter	<i>Stormcock in Elder</i>
Stevie Smith	<i>Parrot</i>
Vivian Smith	<i>At the Parrot House, Taronga Park</i>
Alice Oswald	<i>Eel Tail</i>
Peter Reading	<i>Cetacean</i>
David Constantine	<i>Watching for Dolphins</i>
William Barnes	<i>The Storm-Wind</i>
Kofi Awoonor	<i>The Sea Eats the Land at Home</i>
Allen Curnow	<i>You Will Know When You Get There</i>
Robinson Jeffers	<i>The Stars Go Over the Lonely Ocean</i>

Stories of Ourselves, Volume 2

A selection from *Stories of Ourselves: The University of Cambridge International Examinations Anthology of Stories in English, Volume 2* (Cambridge University Press). The following 10 stories:

Katherine Mansfield	<i>The Doll's House</i>
Raj Anand Mulk	<i>The Gold Watch</i>
Anna Kavan	<i>A Visit</i>
Carol Shields	<i>Words</i>
Jamaica Kincaid	<i>A Walk to the Jetty</i>
Ruth Praver Jhabvala	<i>In the Mountains</i>
Jhumpa Lahiri	<i>Mrs. Sen's</i>
Henrietta Rose-Innes	<i>Promenade</i>
Ovo Adagha	<i>The Plantation</i>
Ken Liu	<i>The Paper Menagerie</i>

Set texts for examination in 2026

The set texts listed below are for examination in **2026**.

Samanta Schweblin	<i>Fever Dream</i>
Ama Ata Aidoo	<i>Anowa</i>
Fabio Geda	<i>In the Sea There are Crocodiles</i>
Anton Chekhov	<i>The Cherry Orchard</i>

Songs of Ourselves, Volume 1

A selection from *Songs of Ourselves (Cambridge International Examinations Anthology of Poetry in English) Volume ** (Cambridge University Press). The following 14 poems from *Part 5: Poems from the 19th and 20th Centuries (III)*:

Frances Cornford	<i>Childhood</i>
Emily Dickinson	<i>Because I Could Not Stop for Death</i>
Elizabeth Bishop	<i>One Art</i>
Alfred Lord Tennyson	<i>Song: Tears, Idle Tears</i>
Stephen Spender	<i>My Parents</i>
Fleur Adcock	<i>For Heidi with Blue Hair</i>
Grace Nichols	<i>Praise Song for my Mother</i>
Seamus Heaney	<i>Follower</i>
Charlotte Mew	<i>The Trees are Down</i>
Philip Larkin	<i>The Trees</i>
Ruth Pitter	<i>Time's Fool</i>
Charlotte Mew	<i>A Quoi Bon Dire</i>
Robert Browning	<i>Meeting at Night</i>
A E Housman	<i>Because I Liked You Better</i>

Stories of Ourselves, Volume 2

A selection from *Stories of Ourselves: The University of Cambridge International Examinations Anthology of Stories in English, Volume 2* (Cambridge University Press). The following 10 stories:

Walter Scott	<i>Death of the Laird's Jock</i>
Charles Dickens	<i>George Silverman's Explanation</i>
Oscar Wilde	<i>The Nightingale and the Rose</i>
Arthur Conan Doyle	<i>The Copper Beeches</i>
Margaret Oliphant	<i>A Story of a Wedding Tour</i>
Walter Besant	<i>The Shrinking Shoe</i>
Saki, (Hector Hugh Munro)	<i>Gabriel-Ernest</i>
M R James	<i>A Warning to the Curious</i>
P G Wodehouse	<i>Indian Summer of an Uncle</i>
Virginia Woolf	<i>Lappin and Lapinova</i>

Set texts for examination in 2027

The set texts listed below are for examination in **2027**.

Chinua Achebe	<i>A Man of the People</i>
Lilian Hellman	<i>Little Foxes</i>
Fabio Geda	<i>In the Sea There are Crocodiles</i>
Anton Chekhov	<i>The Cherry Orchard</i>

Songs of Ourselves, Volume 1

A selection from *Songs of Ourselves (Cambridge International Examinations Anthology of Poetry in English) Volume ** (Cambridge University Press). The following 14 poems from *Part 5: Poems from the 19th and 20th Centuries (III)*:

Frances Cornford	<i>Childhood</i>
Emily Dickinson	<i>Because I Could Not Stop for Death</i>
Elizabeth Bishop	<i>One Art</i>
Alfred Lord Tennyson	<i>Song: Tears, Idle Tears</i>
Stephen Spender	<i>My Parents</i>
Fleur Adcock	<i>For Heidi with Blue Hair</i>
Grace Nichols	<i>Praise Song for my Mother</i>
Seamus Heaney	<i>Follower</i>
Charlotte Mew	<i>The Trees are Down</i>
Philip Larkin	<i>The Trees</i>
Ruth Pitter	<i>Time's Fool</i>
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P G Wodehouse	<i>Indian Summer of an Uncle</i>
Virginia Woolf	<i>Lappin and Lapinova</i>

4 Details of the assessment

Component 1 Coursework

50 marks

Candidates submit two written assignments: one critical essay and one empathic response.

Candidates must study one drama text and one prose text, each equivalent in scope and demand to the set texts listed for Paper 3. Texts must be drawn from different countries/cultures. Each assignment should focus on one text only; there is no requirement to compare texts.

The title of each assignment must be phrased to allow scope for the assessment of all four assessment objectives.

Candidates do not have to produce written assignments under examination conditions.

This component is internally marked and internally moderated (if applicable) by the centre and externally moderated by Cambridge International.

The Coursework component as a whole is marked out of 50. Candidates will be awarded a mark out of 25 for each written assignment.

1 Critical essay

- 800–1200 words (including quotations but not references/bibliography). Note that assignments which go beyond the advised word count may be self-penalising.
- The critical essay must be based on one text.*
- The text must not be on the set text list (Paper 3) or be the same text used for the empathic response (written assignment 2).

(*In cases where a text is a selection of short stories, the essay must cover at least two stories.)

2 Empathic response

- 600–1000 words.
- The empathic response assumes the voice of one character in a novel or a play.
- The task prescribes a particular moment in the text (which may be the end of the text).
- The text must not be on the set text list (Paper 3) or be the same text used for the critical essay (written assignment 1).
- Short stories should not be used for this task.
- Empathic assignments will test knowledge, understanding and response but give candidates the opportunity to engage more imaginatively with a text by assuming a suitable 'voice' (i.e. manner of speaking for a specific character) at a particular moment in their chosen novel or play.
- The full wording of the task, including the character name and chosen moment for assignment 2, must be included at the start of the assignment.

Coursework guidance notes

The following notes provide guidance that teachers should give candidates on creating and presenting coursework, as well as guidance on internal marking and internal moderation.

For more detailed information, including dates and methods of submission of the coursework marks and sample, please refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* and samples database

www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples

Format

- Candidates must submit two coursework assignments, each on a different text from world literature.
- One assignment must be on a prose text and one assignment must be on a drama text.
- Texts must be drawn from different countries/cultures.
- One assignment must be a critical essay and one assignment must be an empathic response.
- Assignments may be written by hand or word processed.
- The assignments must be securely fastened and clearly marked with the candidate's name, number and the centre number. Do not send the assignments in folders, plastic wallets or ringbinders.
- An Individual Candidate Record Card must be completed for each candidate.
- The centre's sample must include a completed Coursework Assessment Summary Form. For more information please refer to the samples database at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples**

General

- Candidates can complete their written assignments at any time during the course, usually following a programme of study undertaken by a teaching group. Candidates should undertake more than two assignments so that they have a choice of assignments to submit. Although assignments are selected by the candidate, it is recommended that the teacher and candidate discuss which are the best assignments to submit.
- Candidates should remember to proofread their work carefully.

Texts

- The texts must be of a quality appropriate for study at Cambridge IGCSE. Examples of appropriate texts follow.
- Candidates within a centre do not have to submit assignments on the same text.
- Assignments must show that the candidate has studied and understood the whole text.
- If short stories are used for assignment 1, candidates must cover a minimum of two short stories. Candidates are not required to compare stories within the assignment, as it is assumed that the assignment is based on the study of a wider selection of stories broadly equivalent to a set text.
- Texts must not be simplified or abridged editions.

Examples of suitable texts for coursework

Texts that have been used for Paper 3 in previous years are considered suitable for coursework, including those listed below. Teachers wishing to use a text which is not on this list must ensure it is of similar demand and level to those on the set text list. Candidates who work with very short texts are unlikely to have enough material with which to adequately demonstrate their understanding, and therefore may struggle to access the upper bands of the mark scheme. You must **not** use a text which is currently on the set text list for Paper 3 (see section 3 Subject content).

PROSE: examples of suitable texts for coursework

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie	<i>Purple Hibiscus</i> (Nigeria)
Alain-Fournier [Henri Alban Fournier]	<i>The Lost Estate</i> [Le Grand Meaulnes] (France)
Willa Cather	<i>My Ántonia</i> (USA)
Charles Dickens	<i>Great Expectations</i> (England)
Merle Hodge	<i>Crick Crack, Monkey</i> (Trinidad)
Witi Ihimaera	<i>The Whale Rider</i> (New Zealand)
Tsitsi Dangarembga	<i>Nervous Conditions</i> (Zimbabwe)
Naguib Mahfouz	<i>Midaq Alley</i> (Egypt)
Kamala Markandaya	<i>Nectar in a Sieve</i> (India)
Haruki Murakami	<i>The Elephant Vanishes: Stories</i> (Japan)
Per Petterson	<i>Out Stealing Horses</i> (Norway)
Miles Franklin	<i>My Brilliant Career</i> (Australia)
Shen Congwen	<i>Selected Stories</i> (China)

Stories of Ourselves:

Teacher's own selection of 10–12 short stories within *Stories of Ourselves: The University of Cambridge International Examinations Anthology of Short Stories in English Volume 1* or *Volume 2* (international selection)

DRAMA: examples of suitable texts for coursework

Bertolt Brecht	<i>Mother Courage and Her Children</i> (Germany)
Lorraine Hansberry	<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> (USA)
Federico Garcia Lorca	<i>The House of Bernarda Alba</i> (Spain)
August Strindberg	<i>Miss Julie</i> (Sweden)
Ngũgĩwa Thiong'o and Ngũgĩwa Mirĩĩ	<i>I Will Marry When I Want</i> (Kenya)
William Shakespeare	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> (England)
Sophocles	<i>Antigone</i> (Ancient Greece)
Jean Tay	<i>Boom</i> (Singapore)

Recording and submitting candidates' marks and work

Please refer to the samples database at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples for information, dates and methods of submission of candidates' marks and work.

You should record candidates' marks for Component 1 on the Individual Candidate Record Card and the Coursework Assessment Summary Form which you should download each year from the samples database at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples. The database will ask you for the syllabus code (i.e. 0408), after which it will take you to the correct forms. Follow the instructions on the form to complete it.

The marks on these forms must be identical to the marks you submit to Cambridge International.

Marking

Teachers must mark each assessment out of a total of 25, in accordance with the assessment criteria. The assessment criteria set out in this section must be used for each assignment. If a candidate submits no assignment, a mark of zero must be recorded.

Moderation

If more than one teacher in your centre is marking internal assessments, you must make arrangements to moderate or standardise your teachers' marking so that all candidates are assessed to a common standard. (If only one teacher is marking internal assessments, no internal moderation is necessary.) You can find further information on the process of internal moderation on the samples database at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples

You should record the internally moderated marks for all candidates on the Coursework Assessment Summary Form and submit these marks to Cambridge International according to the instructions set out in the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment.

Cambridge International will externally moderate all internally assessed components.

- You must submit the marks of all candidates to Cambridge International.
- You must also submit the marked work of a sample of candidates to Cambridge International.

The sample you submit to Cambridge International should include examples of the marking of each teacher. The samples database at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples explains how the sample will be selected.

The samples database at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples provides details of how to submit the marks and work.

External moderators will produce a short report for each centre with feedback on your marking and administration of the assessment.

Authenticity

It is the centre's responsibility to make sure all assessed work is the candidate's original work. If plans and first drafts are completed under teacher supervision, you can be sure of the authenticity of the final coursework. You should not mark, correct or edit draft coursework. Candidates can draft and redraft work, but you should only give brief summative comments on progress during this drafting phase. A general discussion on the progress of coursework is a natural part of the teacher–candidate relationship, as it is for other parts of the course.

Where appropriate, candidates should provide references to any secondary source material used, listing these at the end of the assignment.

Avoidance of plagiarism

Candidates must understand that they cannot submit someone else's work as their own, or use material produced by someone else without citing and referencing it properly. You should make candidates aware of the academic conventions governing quotation and reference to the work of others, and teach candidates how to use them.

A candidate taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as his or her 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

At the time of submission, the candidate must sign a statement confirming that they are submitting their own work. You countersign it to confirm that you believe the work is theirs. Centres should use the cover sheet on the samples database for this purpose, and it must appear on or before the title page of the document.

Guidance on using levels-based mark schemes

Marking of work should be positive, rewarding achievement where possible, but clearly differentiating across the whole range of marks, where appropriate.

The marker should look at each assignment and then make a judgement about which level statement is the best fit using the mark scheme that follows. In practice, work does not always match one level statement precisely so a judgement may need to be made between two or more level statements.

Once a best-fit level statement has been identified, use the following guidance to decide on a specific mark:

- If the candidate's work **convincingly** meets the level statement, award the highest mark.
- If the candidate's work **adequately** meets the level statement, award the most appropriate mark in the middle of the range (where middle marks are available).
- If the candidate's work **just** meets the level statement, award the lowest mark.

Assessment criteria for Component 1 Coursework

All assessment objectives in the marking criteria are equally weighted, and all are considered in assessing each assignment.

Level	Level descriptor	Marks
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates knowledge by incorporating well-selected reference to the text skilfully and with flair (<i>or seamlessly uses well-selected textual detail in an empathic task</i>) (AO1) sustains a critical understanding of the text showing individuality and insight (AO2) responds sensitively and in considerable detail to the way the writer achieves her/his effects (<i>or sustains an entirely convincing voice for the character in an empathic task</i>) (AO3) sustains personal and evaluative engagement with task and text (AO4) 	23–25
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates knowledge by integrating much well-selected reference to the text (<i>or integrates much well-selected textual detail in an empathic task</i>) (AO1) shows a clear critical understanding of the text (AO2) responds sensitively and in detail to the way the writer achieves her/his effects (<i>or sustains a convincing voice for the character in an empathic task</i>) (AO3) sustains a perceptive, convincing and relevant personal response (AO4) 	20–22
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates knowledge by supporting with careful and relevant reference to the text (<i>or supports with careful and relevant textual detail in an empathic task</i>) (AO1) shows a clear understanding of the text and some of its deeper implications (AO2) makes a developed response to the way the writer achieves her/his effects (<i>or develops a generally authentic voice for the character in an empathic task</i>) (AO3) makes a well-developed, detailed and relevant personal response (AO4) 	17–19
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates knowledge by showing some thoroughness in the use of supporting evidence from the text (<i>or shows some thoroughness in the use of supporting textual detail in an empathic task</i>) (AO1) shows understanding of the text and some of its deeper implications (AO2) makes some response to the way the writer uses language (<i>or uses suitable features of expression suitable for the character in an empathic task</i>) (AO3) makes a reasonably developed relevant personal response (AO4) 	14–16
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates knowledge by using some supporting textual detail text (<i>or uses some supporting textual detail in an empathic task</i>) (AO1) shows some understanding of meaning (AO2) makes a little reference to the language of the text (<i>or begins to assume a voice for the character in an empathic task</i>) (AO3) begins to develop a relevant personal response (AO4) 	11–13

continued

Level	Level descriptor	Marks
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates knowledge by making a little supporting reference to the text <i>(or makes a little supporting reference to the text in an empathic task)</i> (AO1) makes some relevant comments (AO2) shows a basic understanding of surface meaning of the text and language <i>(or shows a basic understanding of character and voice in an empathic task)</i> (AO3) attempts to communicate a basic personal response (AO4) 	8–10
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates knowledge by making a little reference to the text <i>(or makes a little reference to the text in an empathic task)</i> (AO1) makes a few straightforward comments (AO2) shows a few signs of understanding the surface meaning of the text and language <i>(or shows a few signs of understanding of character in an empathic task)</i> (AO3) some evidence of a simple personal response (AO4) 	5–7
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates knowledge by limited textual reference <i>(or makes limited reference to the text in an empathic task)</i> (AO1) shows some limited understanding of simple/literal meaning (AO2) shows a little awareness of surface meaning of text and language <i>(or shows a little awareness of surface meaning of character and voice in an empathic task)</i> (AO3) limited attempt to respond (AO4) 	1–4
0	<i>No answer / Insufficient to meet the criteria for Level 1.</i>	0

Paper 2 Unseen Poetry

Written paper, 1 hour 15 minutes, 30 marks

Candidates answer **two** compulsory questions on one poem. Both questions carry equal marks (15 marks each).

The questions ask candidates for a critical commentary on and appreciation of a previously unseen poem or extract of a poem printed on the question paper. The material will be taken from writing either originally in English or in English translation.

There are **no** set texts for this paper.

Candidates should spend around 20 minutes reading the questions and planning their answers before starting to write.

All questions test all four assessment objectives. Candidates will have to demonstrate:

- their knowledge of the content of the poem – through reference to detail and use of quotations (AO1)
- an understanding of characters, relationships, situations and/or themes (AO2)
- an understanding of the poet's intentions and methods – response to the poet's use of language (AO3)
- a sensitive and informed personal response to the poem (AO4).

Paper 3 Set Text

Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes, 50 marks

Candidates answer **two** questions in total: **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B. Both questions carry equal marks (25 marks each).

Questions will be set on a range of poetry, prose and drama texts originally written in English or in English translation.

The question paper is divided into:

- Section A: extract-based questions
- Section B: essay questions.

There will be two compulsory questions: one extract-based question (in Section A) and one general essay question (in Section B).

Candidates may choose to respond to both questions on the same set text, or they may choose to answer on two different set texts they have studied.

Section A

Extract-based questions focus on one section of the chosen text. Candidates must re-read a specific extract from the set text before answering. The extract will be printed on the question paper.

Section B

Essay questions require a more general approach to the set text as a whole, or a significant element/character within it.

Questions in both sections of the paper encourage an informed personal response and test all four assessment objectives. Candidates will have to demonstrate:

- their knowledge of the content of the text – through reference to detail and use of quotations (AO1)
- an understanding of characters, relationships, situations and themes (AO2)
- an understanding of the writer’s intentions and methods – response to the writer’s use of language (AO3)
- a sensitive and informed personal response to the text (AO4).

This is a ‘closed book’ paper: set texts may **not** be taken into the examination room.

Set texts for this component are listed in section 3 Subject content.

Set texts regularly rotate on the syllabus and 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 examinations.

There may be several different translations/editions of set texts available and so a particular edition is usually nominated. Centres are not obliged to use the nominated edition (unless this is stated to be a **specified** edition, e.g. in cases where differences between editions are known to be particularly significant), but it should be noted that it will be the one used as the basis for setting the passage printed on the question paper.

Command words

Command words and their meanings help candidates know what is expected from them in the exams. The table below includes command words used in the assessment for this syllabus. The use of the command word will relate to the subject context.

Command word	What it means
Explore	write in detail about particular aspects.

Phrases such as ‘How does the writer convey ...?’, ‘In what ways does the writer ...’ and ‘What do you find particularly memorable ...?’ may also be seen in the assessment for this syllabus.

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. Find more information about our administrative processes at www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

Before you start

Previous study

We recommend that learners starting this course should have studied an English curriculum such as the Cambridge Lower Secondary programme or equivalent national educational framework such as the Key Stage 3 programme of study within the National Curriculum for England.

Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge IGCSE syllabuses to require about 130 guided learning hours for each subject. This is for guidance only. The number of hours a learner needs to achieve the qualification may vary according to each school and the learners' previous experience of the subject.

Availability and timetables

All Cambridge schools are allocated to one of six administrative zones. Each zone has a specific timetable.

You can view the timetable for your administrative zone at www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables

You can enter candidates in the June and 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 Literature in English (0475)
- Cambridge IGCSE Literature (Spanish) (0488)
- Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Literature in English (0992)
- Cambridge O Level Literature in English (2010)
- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

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

Group awards: Cambridge ICE

Cambridge ICE (International Certificate of Education) is a group award for Cambridge IGCSE. It allows 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 ICE at www.cambridgeinternational.org/cambridgeice

Making entries

Exams officers are responsible for submitting entries to Cambridge International. We encourage them to work closely with you to make sure they enter the right number of candidates for the right combination of syllabus components. Entry option codes and instructions for submitting entries are in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*. Your exams officer has a copy of this guide.

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.

Support for exams officers

We know how important exams officers are to the successful running of exams. We provide them with the support they need to make your entries on time. Your exams officer will find this support, and guidance for all other phases of the Cambridge Exams Cycle, at www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

Retakes

Candidates can retake the whole qualification as many times as they want to. This is a linear qualification so candidates cannot re-sit individual components. Information on retake entries is at www.cambridgeinternational.org/retakes

Language

This syllabus and the related assessment materials are available in English only.

Accessibility and equality

Syllabus and assessment design

Cambridge International works to avoid direct or indirect discrimination. We develop and design syllabuses and assessment materials to maximise inclusivity for candidates of all national, cultural or social backgrounds and candidates with protected characteristics; these protected characteristics include special educational needs and disability, religion and belief, and characteristics related to gender and identity. In addition, the language and layout used are designed to make our materials as accessible as possible. This gives all candidates the fairest possible opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding and helps to minimise the requirement to make reasonable adjustments during the assessment process.

Access arrangements

Access arrangements (including modified papers) are the principal way in which Cambridge International complies with our duty, as guided by the UK Equality Act (2010), to make ‘reasonable adjustments’ for candidates with special educational needs (SEN), disability, illness or injury. Where a candidate would otherwise be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to a candidate with no SEN, disability, illness or injury, we may be able to agree pre-examination access arrangements. These arrangements help a candidate by minimising accessibility barriers and maximising their opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding in an assessment.

Important:

- Requested access arrangements should be based on evidence of the candidate’s barrier to assessment and should also reflect their normal way of working at school; this is in line with the *Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide
- For Cambridge International to approve an access arrangement, we will need to agree that it constitutes a reasonable adjustment, involves reasonable cost and timeframe and does not affect the security and integrity of the assessment.
- Availability of access arrangements should be checked by centres at the start of the course. Details of our standard access arrangements and modified question papers are available in the *Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide
- Please contact us at the start of the course to find out if we are able to approve an 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 are not allowed to use voice-activated software to dictate their written work
 - candidates are not allowed to use word processing technology which uses word prediction and/or phrase prompting
 - candidates are not allowed to use human readers.]

[Please note that we are unable to provide Braille papers for this syllabus; we can only provide Braille papers for languages which use the Roman alphabet.]

After the exam

Grading and reporting

Grades A*, A, B, C, D, E, F or G indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge IGCSE.

A* is the highest and G is the lowest. ‘Ungraded’ means that the candidate’s performance did not meet the standard required for grade G. ‘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 IGCSE is shown as INTERNATIONAL GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION (IGCSE).

How students and teachers can use the grades

Assessment at Cambridge IGCSE 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, to the levels described in the grade descriptions.

- 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.

Grade descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give an indication of the standards of achievement candidates awarded particular grades are likely to show. Weakness in one aspect of the examination may be balanced by a better performance in some other aspect.

Grade descriptions for Cambridge IGCSE World Literature will be published after the first assessment of the syllabus in 2022.

Changes to this syllabus for 2025, 2026 and 2027

The syllabus has been updated. This is version 2, published December 2022.

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, published December 2022

- Changes to assessment**
- On page 9, the component assessment weightings have been updated. The marks for each component remain the same.
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Changes to version 1, published September 2022

- Changes to syllabus content**
- The set texts have changed from 2025 onwards. See section 3 for the lists of set texts for examination in 2025, 2026 and 2027. Set texts: please ensure you consult the set text list for the relevant year of examination as texts can change from year to year.
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Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2022 are still suitable for use with this syllabus.



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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