



# Pre-U and Pearson A Level in Chinese Comparison Grid

Although not exhaustive, this grid is designed to give a comparative overview of the *Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Chinese (spoken Mandarin/Cantonese)* and the discontinued *Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate in Mandarin Chinese*.

At Pearson, we have a comprehensive support package in place to help you navigate our qualifications, plan effective teaching and learning strategies, and ultimately enable students to achieve the outcomes of which they are capable.

	<b>Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate in Mandarin Chinese</b>	<b>Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Chinese (spoken Mandarin/Cantonese)</b>
<b>Language</b>	Only available in Mandarin, simplified characters	Available in Mandarin and Cantonese, traditional and simplified characters
<b>Themes and Topics</b>	<b>6 Topic areas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family</li> <li>• Young people</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• The media</li> <li>• Work and leisure</li> <li>• Equality of opportunity</li> </ul>	<b>4 Themes (with 2 sub-themes each):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in contemporary Chinese society</li> <li>• Chinese culture</li> <li>• Evolving Chinese society</li> <li>• The impact of reform and opening up in 1978 on China</li> </ul>
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<p>Approx. 1500 words are included in the core vocabulary list, inclusive of prior learning vocab and Grammar list.</p> <p>Approx. 200 terms are included in the topic-specific vocabulary sections.</p> <p>A separate Chengyu list is included in the syllabus.</p> <p>Characters outside of the vocab list may appear on the question papers but will not be tested explicitly. Where these appear, they will be glossed in English.</p>	There is no set vocabulary list but a grammar list is provided.
<b>Grammar</b>	Incorporated into the vocab list.	Comprehensive and separate to vocab list.



Breakdown of Papers	
<b>Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate in Mandarin Chinese</b>	<b>Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Chinese (spoken Mandarin/Cantonese)</b>
<p><b>4 papers:</b></p> <p>Paper 1: Speaking (20%)            Paper 2: Listening, reading and translation (30%)            Paper 3: Paper 3 Writing and usage (25%)            Paper 4: Paper 4 Chinese culture (25%)</p>	<p><b>3 papers:</b></p> <p>Paper 1: Listening, reading and translation (40%)            Paper 2: Written response to works and translation (30%)            Paper 3: Speaking (30%)  <u>Note:</u> Chinese culture is integrated in the papers</p>
Listening, reading and translation paper	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 hours 30 minutes</li> <li>• 60 marks</li> <li>• 30% weighting</li> <li>• 4 sections</li> <li>• <b>Section 1:</b> Listening, 30 minutes (20 marks)</li> <li>• <b>Section 2:</b> Reading, 45 minutes (18 marks)</li> <li>• <b>Section 3:</b> Chinese sayings (Chengyu), 15 minutes (6 marks)</li> <li>• <b>Section 4:</b> Translation, 60 minutes (16 marks)</li> <li>• Questions on the listening and reading passages are written and answered in English</li> <li>• Dictionaries are permitted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 hours</li> <li>• 80 marks</li> <li>• 40% weighting</li> <li>• 3 sections</li> <li>• <b>Section A:</b> Listening, approx. 50 mins (30 marks)</li> <li>• <b>Section B:</b> Reading, approx. 50 mins (30 marks)</li> <li>• <b>Section C:</b> Translation into English, approx. 20 mins (20 marks)</li> <li>• Questions on the listening and reading passages are written and answered in English</li> <li>• Dictionaries are not permitted</li> </ul>
Writing paper	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 hours</li> <li>• 60 marks</li> <li>• 25% weighting</li> <li>• 3 sections</li> <li>• <b>Section 1:</b> Radical and stroke order skills, 5 minutes, and use of grammar markers, aspect markers and measure words, 10 minutes (10 marks)</li> <li>• <b>Section 2:</b> Letter writing, 30 minutes (20 marks)</li> <li>• <b>Section 3:</b> Opinion essay, 1 hour 15 minutes (30 marks)</li> <li>• Dictionaries are permitted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 hours 40 minutes</li> <li>• 120 marks</li> <li>• 30% weighting</li> <li>• 3 sections</li> <li>• <b>Section A:</b> Translation into Chinese, approx. 30 mins (20 marks)</li> <li>• <b>Section B:</b> Written response to works (literary texts) (50 marks)</li> <li>• <b>Section C:</b> Written response to works (films) (50 marks)</li> </ul> <p><u>Note:</u> Students may either answer two questions from Section B or alternatively one question from Section B and one from Section C (1 hr 10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions are written in both Chinese and English. Students must write their answers in Chinese.</li> <li>• Dictionaries are not permitted</li> </ul>



### Speaking paper

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approx. 15 minutes</li> <li>• 60 marks</li> <li>• 20% weighting</li> <li>• 2 sections</li> <li>• <b>Section 1:</b> Prepared topic and topic conversation (5–7 mins), based on research on a topic of candidate’s choice.</li> <li>• <b>Section 2:</b> General conversation (6-8 mins)</li> <li>• Dictionaries are not permitted</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximum 23 minutes, including 5 minutes prep time</li> <li>• 72 marks</li> <li>• 30% weighting</li> <li>• 2 tasks</li> <li>• <b>Task 1:</b> Discussion on a Theme (6–7 mins)</li> <li>• <b>Task 2:</b> Independent research presentation (2 mins) and discussion (8–9 mins), based on a topic of candidate’s choice</li> <li>• Dictionaries are not permitted</li> </ul> |
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### Assessment Objectives and Grading

	Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate in Mandarin Chinese	Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Chinese (spoken Mandarin/Cantonese)
<b>AO1</b>	<b>33%</b> Understand and respond to written texts and spoken material	<b>20%</b> Understand and respond: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in speech to spoken language including face-to-face interaction</li> <li>• in writing to spoken language drawn from a variety of sources</li> </ul>
<b>AO2</b>	<b>32%</b> Manipulate the target language accurately in spoken and written forms to demonstrate a capacity to choose appropriate examples of lexis and structures.	<b>30%</b> Understand and respond: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in speech to written language drawn from a variety of sources</li> <li>• in writing to written language drawn from a variety of sources</li> </ul>
<b>AO3</b>	<b>12%</b> Select information and present it in the target language and in English, organising arguments and ideas logically	<b>20%</b> Manipulate the language accurately, in spoken and written forms, using a range of lexis and structure
<b>AO4</b>	<b>23%</b> Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of aspects of Chinese society.	<b>30%</b> Show knowledge and understanding of, and respond critically and analytically to, different aspects of the culture and society of countries/communities where the language is spoken.
<b>Grading</b>	Nine-grade scale: Distinction 1, 2, 3 Merit 1, 2, 3 Pass 1, 2, 3	Six-grade scale from A* to E, in addition to unclassified grade U



## Summary of Comparison

- The Assessment for the A Level is governed by the Department for Education and is comparable to other major language A Levels.
- The A Level caters to a wider range of learners, covering Cantonese speakers and traditional characters in addition to Simplified Mandarin Chinese.
- Culture of Chinese-speaking communities is integrated into the teaching and assessment material in the A Level.
- The A Level assumes prior knowledge of the GCSE vocabulary list.
- The A Level includes a separate Grammar list which is comprehensive for assessment purposes.
- Like the Pre-U, the A Level requires candidates to respond in English to listening and reading assessment questions.
- Like the Pre-U, the A Level speaking paper entails an independent research element and discussion. The A Level Speaking assessment is slightly longer with a higher overall weighting. Candidates would complete the discussion on a theme before their independent research presentation.
- The A Level Writing paper contains more optionality than the Pre-U, with candidates required to study two of a choice of 8 works (comprising 4 literature texts and 4 films), in addition to a choice on which questions to answer for each set work. In the Pre-U, a choice of 3 works is given, of which candidates would choose one.
- The A Level Writing paper has a higher emphasis on response to Chinese-speaking film and literature, and does not focus on accuracies in the technical side of writing (e.g. radicals and stroke order skills). A levels require students to critically analyse set works.
- Chengyu are not assessed as a separate component in the A Level.
- The use of dictionaries is not permitted in any part of the A Level Chinese assessment.