

International AS/A Levels

Modular qualifications for
globally minded students



 SCAN ME

Choosing Pearson Edexcel as your school's International AS/A Level (IAL®) partner

Equipping your students to reach the world's best universities and compete for global employment opportunities will happen throughout their school life, but is even more key when it comes to choosing their International A Levels. We want to reassure you that with Pearson as your qualifications partner, you can be certain both you and your students are setting yourselves up for future success.

In this guide, you'll learn more about who we are, the recognition and progression our Pearson Edexcel International qualifications enjoy, and the International Advanced Level options (including onscreen assessment and the Extended Project Qualification) available to your learners.

We wish you the best of success for your International Advanced Level journey!

IAS – International Advanced Subsidiary.
IAL® – International Advanced Level.
IAL is a registered trademark of Pearson Education Ltd in the UK and other countries.

Pearson Edexcel IAL® qualifications are available to students attending International Schools (outside the UK) and any students attending Online Schools. They are not available to schools in the UK, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or in British Armed Forces schools overseas.



Inside this guide

Contents

- 2 Welcome to Pearson
- 3 Modern, progressive International A Level qualifications
- 4 Qualifications for globally minded learners
- 5 Recognised worldwide for academic excellence
- 6 Modular assessment
- 8 Building transferable skills
- 10 Pearson Edexcel Extended Level 3 Project Qualification (EPQ)
- 12 Onscreen or paper-based assessments
- 14 Pre and post exam support for your educators
- 16 A wide range of teaching and learning resources
- 17 International A Level subjects at a glance

Key International Advanced Level highlights



Onscreen assessment

In addition to traditional paper-based exams, we also offer the choice to take exams onscreen for International A Level English and English Literature with new subjects being added.

[See page 12](#)



Additional resources

In addition to our existing range of Student Books, from December 2024, curriculum-matched Student Books in Psychology, IT, English Language and Geography will be available for the first time.

[See page 16](#)



Modular approach

Learn about the popular modular approach to Pearson Edexcel International A Levels, which gives students the flexibility to sit examinations when they feel fully prepared and ready.

[See page 6](#)

Welcome to Pearson

We're pleased to meet you!

Pearson is the world's leading learning company. We provide world class qualifications, assessments, digital content and learning experiences to international schools all over the world to enable more effective teaching and learning and to help learners increase their skills and global employability prospects.

We partner with more than 6,500 schools, universities, and employers worldwide:

- **at school level**, to offer Pearson Edexcel International and UK qualifications to over 3.5 million students annually;
- **at university level**, to ensure Pearson Edexcel qualifications are recognised and accepted by universities all over the world;
- **and with employers**, by building 21st century skills into our qualifications at the outset, to ensure learners have transferable skills alongside the knowledge they need to progress into the careers of their choice.

Our qualifications heritage stretches back over 150 years

Pearson's qualifications heritage stretches back over 150 years, our qualifications are offered in over 100 countries worldwide and we mark over 10 million exam scripts per year on behalf of the UK Department for Education.

Pearson Edexcel is regulated by Ofqual, ensuring our curricula meet the highest standards and our exams follow carefully controlled procedures at every stage of their development, delivery, marking and reporting.

As the largest exam board in the UK, Pearson Edexcel regularly achieves the highest marking accuracy of all UK boards.

What this means for you

You can trust Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level qualifications. Thousands of students around the world take these same qualifications every year, progressing from our popular International GCSEs and on to the world's most respected universities.

“Cambridge Colleges welcome applications from those taking International A Levels... and these are recognised as equivalent to UK Board AS and A Levels.”

The University of Cambridge



Modern, progressive qualifications

For globally minded learners aged 16 – 19

Renowned across the world for academic excellence, Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Levels provide learners with the skills and knowledge they need to progress onto the most prestigious universities across the world.

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Levels are part of iProgress, our complete series of academic qualifications for 3 to 19 year-old learners at international schools following a UK curriculum.

At every stage, our iProgress continuum delivers a consistent learning journey with world class support, assessments and teaching and learning resources for students and teachers, everywhere in the world.



Qualifications for globally minded learners

Introducing Pearson Edexcel International AS/A Levels

Pearson Edexcel International AS/A Levels, also known as Advanced Subsidiary Level/Advanced Levels, have been developed in consultation with the international school community specifically for international learners.

They take the popular and flexible modular approach* where exams are taken at the end of each unit of study, throughout the programme of study when a student feels prepared and ready, or all together at the end of the course. This flexibility, together with exam series in January, June and October, for most subjects, means that students have more opportunities to get feedback to improve their performance and get the grade they need to progress.

Available in 21 popular subjects, they offer progression from International GCSEs, and are comparable to the linear UK A Level, equipping students for progression to university and employment.

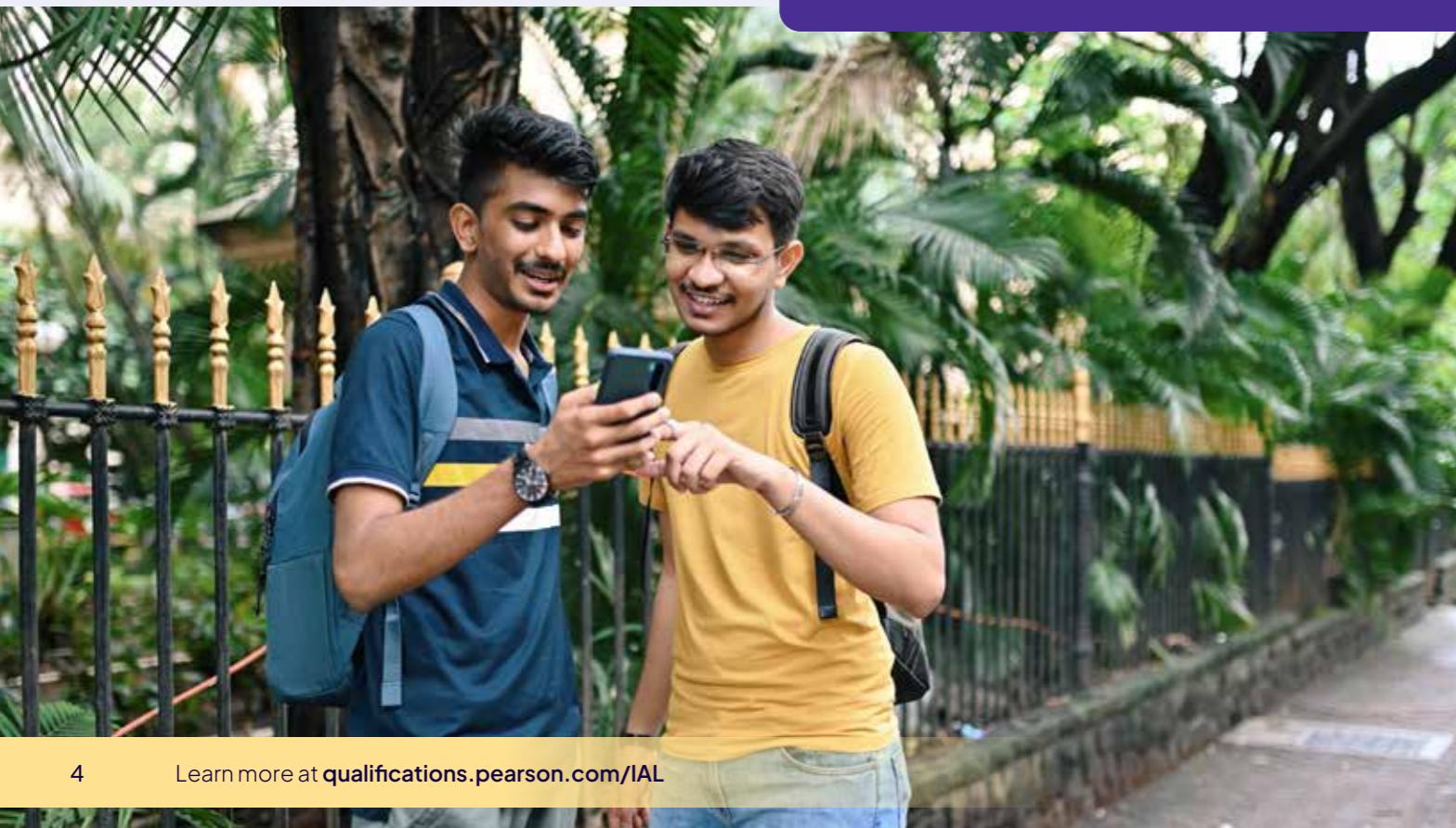
*for all subjects except Law

World class assessment design for international students

Pearson Edexcel qualifications go through a rigorous world class assessment design process, which ensures that the content is relevant for international learners, and that there is a clear and consistent relationship between command words, marks and skills. With logical progression of difficulty throughout and consistency in template and design, our question papers are clear and provide suitable challenge and support for students of all abilities.

“I wanted to study subjects that were relevant to a future career. Pearson Edexcel iAL provides learners with a firm knowledge base.”

Nasim Mirzajani, now studying Chemical Engineering at Yale University, USA



Recognised worldwide for academic excellence

Opening doors to the world's best universities

Pearson Edexcel sets the standard for worldwide recognised qualifications aligned to the British educational system. Accepted by over 650 higher education institutions across the world – including top universities such as Oxford, Cambridge, Columbia University and Yale University – and with 21st century skills embedded in the curriculum, you can be confident students will have qualifications, skills and knowledge that admissions teams and employers are looking for.

Comparability with GCE AS/A Level

International A Levels (IAL®) are comparable to the UK A Level, as confirmed by NARIC, the national agency responsible for providing information and expert opinion on qualifications and skills worldwide. See the table below for a comparison. The same rigorous standards are applied to all Pearson Edexcel qualifications.

	Pearson Edexcel GCE AS Level (UK AS Level)	Pearson Edexcel International AS Level (IAS)	Pearson Edexcel GCE A Level (UK A Level)	Pearson Edexcel International A Level (IAL®)
Structure	Linear (all exams taken at the end of a one year programme) Standalone qualification and no longer contributes to GCE A Level grades	Modular and flexible structure with all units examined Contributes 50% to the IAL grade or can be a standalone qualification	Linear (all exams taken at the end of a 2 year programme)	Modular and flexible structure with all units examined Typically studied over a 2 year period
Assessment	Mainly examination based* May/June examinations only	100% examination based Examinations in January, May/June and October	Mainly examination based* May/June examinations only	100% examination based Examinations in January, May/June and October
Grading	A – E		A* – E	
Regulator	Regulated by Ofqual	Regulated by Pearson and confirmed by UK NARIC to be comparable to UK AS standard	Regulated by Ofqual	Regulated by Pearson and confirmed by UK NARIC to be comparable to UK A Level standard

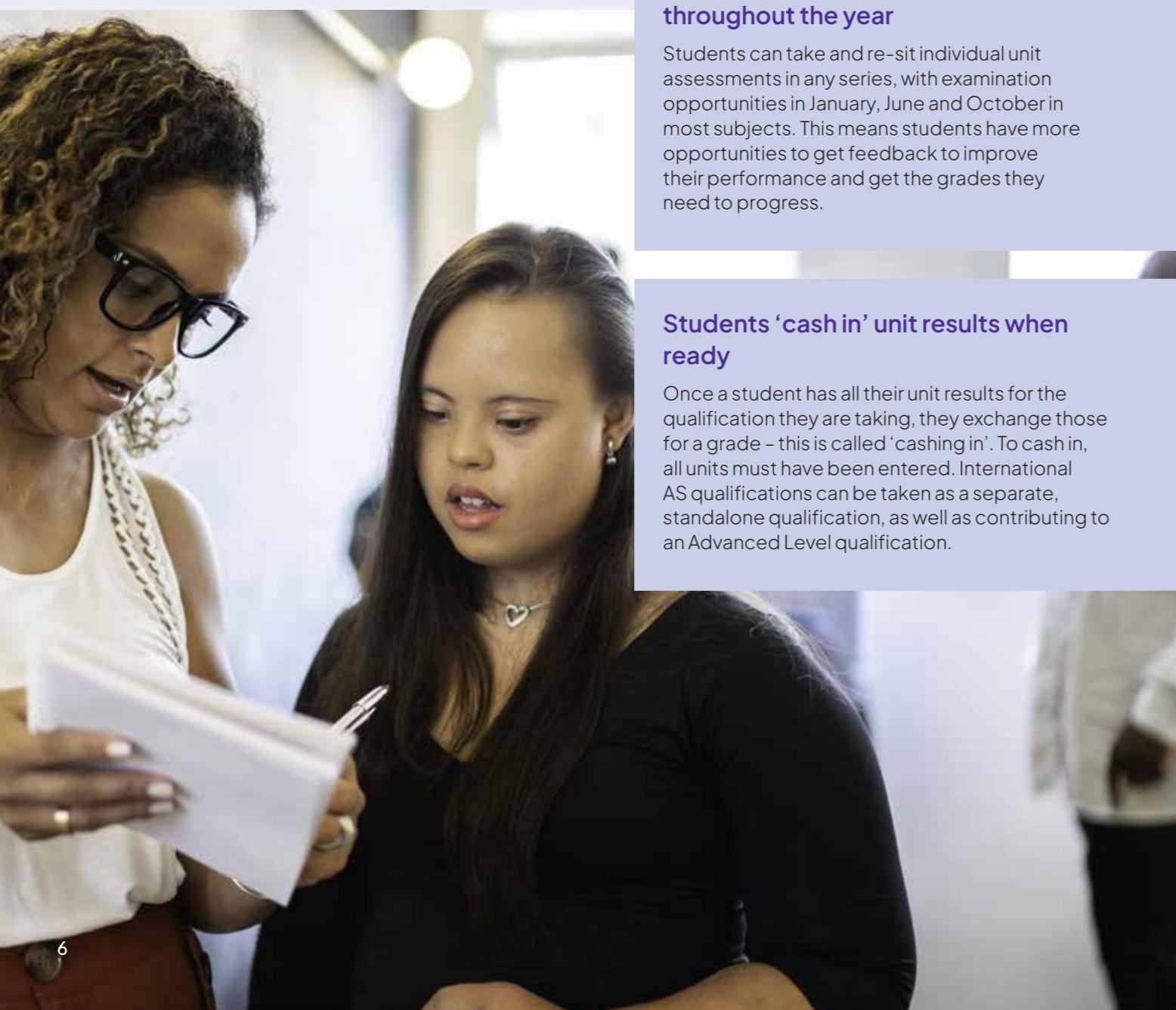
*Other types of assessment used only where needed to test essential skills.

Modular assessment

Why is the modular approach so popular?

The modular assessment structure offers students the flexibility to sit examinations when they feel fully prepared and ready. Once they have sat a unit exam and received a unit grade, that result is banked until they have completed all units. Students then 'cash-in' the completed unit exam results to receive an overall qualification grade.

The structure of Pearson Edexcel IAL qualifications allows teachers to construct a course of study that can be taught and assessed as either distinct modular units or a linear course assessed in its entirety at the end.



How the modular approach works

Bank robust and ongoing evidence of performance

This 'building blocks' approach means that students can 'bank' their unit exam results throughout their period of study. This provides robust evidence of their studies and performance, providing more options to obtain the grade they need to progress.

Multiple exam opportunities throughout the year

Students can take and re-sit individual unit assessments in any series, with examination opportunities in January, June and October in most subjects. This means students have more opportunities to get feedback to improve their performance and get the grades they need to progress.

Students 'cash in' unit results when ready

Once a student has all their unit results for the qualification they are taking, they exchange those for a grade – this is called 'cashing in'. To cash in, all units must have been entered. International AS qualifications can be taken as a separate, standalone qualification, as well as contributing to an Advanced Level qualification.

The benefits of a modular route

A modular approach allows students to take their exams when they feel ready and prepared. They benefit from more exam practice and familiarity. Unit exam results provide formal feedback earlier on in their studies, so students understand the standard required to reach the final level of achievement they are aiming for. This understanding motivates them to improve and builds a sense of ownership through bite-size, short-term goals.

The modular approach can help reduce the mental load and stress at exam time by allowing learners to focus on one year of curriculum content at a time and spread out their high stakes exams over two years and multiple exam series. Learners can also take advantage of multiple re-sit opportunities if needed.

A modular route provides teachers with rich mid-cycle data on learner performance. It offers international schools greater flexibility for exam administration across the school year. And where parents pay exam fees, it helps with budgeting by enabling families to spread their child's exam fees over two years.

The benefits of a linear route

Whilst the modular approach works well for students who want to spread the exam load and bank their performance throughout their studies, doing the exam all in one go at the end of the period of study suits others better.

This approach means assessments for all units are taken together in one exam series so students study all the content and then prepare for all the assessments at the end of their period of study, rather than a more continuous pattern of study and assessment.

“I like the modular nature of IAL, the fact that I can choose whichever core units I want to do, whichever applied units I want to do. It's very comprehensive. It opens up many doors to many international universities.”

Wang, Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level student from Sri Lanka, studying Chemistry, Biology, Physics, and Mathematics.



What this means for you

Pearson Edexcel were the first awarding organisation to introduce the modular International AS/A Levels, so can offer a wealth of experience and support for international schools. The modular approach is so popular with schools, teachers, parents, and students, that we now offer a modular approach for International GCSE which is great preparation for Pearson Edexcel International AS/A Level.

The choice is yours though! The structure of the Pearson Edexcel International A Level qualifications means you can choose the right assessment approach to benefit students and help create a compelling competitive advantage for your school.

Building transferable skills

The most in demand skills are human skills

In recent years, higher education institutions and employers have consistently flagged the need for students to develop a range of transferable skills to enable them to respond with confidence to the demands of undergraduate study and the world of work.

Education systems around the world also refer to transferable skills as:

Core Competencies

Generic skills

Critical skills

Higher order thinking skills

21st century skills

Creativity and innovation

Conceptual learning

Problem solving

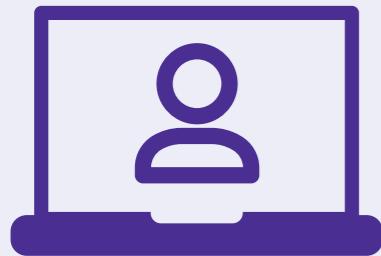
The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines skills, or competencies, as

“the bundle of knowledge, attributes and capacities that can be learned and that enable individuals to successfully and consistently perform an activity or task and can be built upon and extended through learning.”

“It’s really the more fundamental skills like teamwork and communication that seem to matter the most, that employers demand the most.”

Guy Berger, Chief Economist at LinkedIn

87% of companies say they have skill gaps, or expect to within a few years¹



The highest priority for skills training is analytical thinking, followed by creative thinking²



9/10 of the most in-demand skills are human skills³



¹ McKinsey & Company (2020) Available from: www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/beyond-hiring-how-companies-are-reskilling-to-address-talent-gaps

² World Economic Forum (2023) Future of Jobs Report [online]. Available from: www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs_2023.pdf

³ Pearson (2022) Pearson Skills Outlook: Power Skills [online]. Available from: plc.pearson.com/en-GB/news-and-insights/pearson-skills-outlook-powerskills



Qualifications mapped to the National Research Council framework

To support the design of our qualifications, the Pearson Research Team selected and evaluated seven global 21st century skills frameworks and identified the National Research Council’s framework as the most evidence-based and robust. The framework includes cognitive, intrapersonal and interpersonal skills.

Cognitive Skills

Core skills that your brain uses to think, learn and reason – used to carry out any task.



Intrapersonal skills

This is emotional intelligence, the ability to know, understand and manage your own emotions and learning.



Interpersonal Skills

The life skills we use every day to communicate and interact with other people, both individually and in groups.



What this means for you

If you follow Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level specifications, or your students are using our International Advanced Level textbooks, you’ve already started integrating transferable skills into your teaching.

That’s because they are embedded and signposted in the specifications and schemes of work, with accompanying skills mapping and transferable skills definitions for every subject.

Transferable skills are also developed as part of activities in the Student Books. These are clearly labelled, so you and your learners can easily identify the skills they are building.

Our world-class qualifications and resources instil and embed these skills, helping children grow into resilient, curious and globally connected young adults.

Pearson Edexcel Extended Level 3 Project Qualification (EPQ)

Give students the edge when applying for university and help them stand out from the crowd

Pearson Edexcel Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is an optional, standalone Level 3 qualification, taken alongside core International A Level subjects, that develops the independent learning and research skills demanded by universities and employers.

It gives students the opportunity to:

- Explore an area that interests them, aligned to an area of the curriculum or a hobby or interest.
- Research a subject that might not be available through other qualifications, whilst developing valuable independent research and project management skills.
- Become future-ready by developing transferable skills valued by universities and employers.
- Earn additional UCAS points (up to 28 points for an A*, the equivalent of an International AS Level) which makes university applications stand out.

How does it work?

You work with your students to agree the suitable project topic/area of interest. From there, it's very straightforward to deliver EPQ. The teacher provides guidance on planning and research activities but does not need to be a specialist in their students' chosen project topic. The key objective is for students to develop their independent research skills and then apply what they've learnt in the creation of an original piece of work.

Clear assessment criteria

Learners are assessed on their ability to plan, manage, complete and review their project. They complete a project proposal form and activity log which are assessed internally by the EPQ tutor using clear assessment objectives and criteria, and externally moderated. Teachers mark the process, not the content.

Comprehensive support

We provide a wealth of project-based learning resources including teacher and student guides, teacher plans, extensive exemplars, assessment guidance, and on-demand training, making delivery of the qualifications easier for teachers and more accessible and impactful for learners.

Group work option

Pearson Edexcel EPQ offers the option of group work (for example, working as part of a team to create a short film), which helps students develop valuable collaboration skills. In these cases, each learner must have a clearly distinguished role and produce their own individual evidence for the entire project which can be assessed independently of others' contributions.

Extended Project Qualification structure and content summary

Duration	120 Guided Learning Hours. (80 hours project-based and 40 hours teacher-led). Normally completed over 1 or 2 years. Express 3-6-month option available: Learn more. 
Content	Learners complete 1 Unit from a choice of 4: 1. Dissertation A theoretical written project on any topic presenting an argument. e.g. research into a biological, historical or environmental issue. 2. Investigation A practical investigatory project involving the collection of data. e.g. a scientific investigation, a geographical study of erosion, a biological study of pollution, a statistical survey. 3. Performance Development of practical skills resulting in an audience-focused performance. e.g. performing music, drama or sport. 4. Artefact Creating a personal response to a client focused brief. e.g. creating a painting or sculpture, designing a piece of furniture or a garment, creating a website, solving an engineering/construction problem, producing a piece of graphic design.
Assessment	100% coursework. Tutor-assessed. No examination. There are four Assessment Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• AO1 Project Management• AO2 Use of Resources• AO3 Development and Realisation• AO4 Review

EPQ is easy to deliver, results in additional UCAS points and equips students with the skills necessary to excel at the next stage of their learning journey. It's no surprise that entries have doubled in the past year worldwide.

“The skills that students develop through the Extended Project are excellent preparation for university level study.”

The University of Manchester

“We welcome the EPQ and would encourage applicants to take one as it will help to develop independent study and research skills valuable for higher education.”

University of Cambridge, UK

Good to know

Pearson Edexcel's Extended Project Qualification provides an excellent alternative to the IB's Extended Essay, developing similar skills and requiring comparable rigour and outcomes.

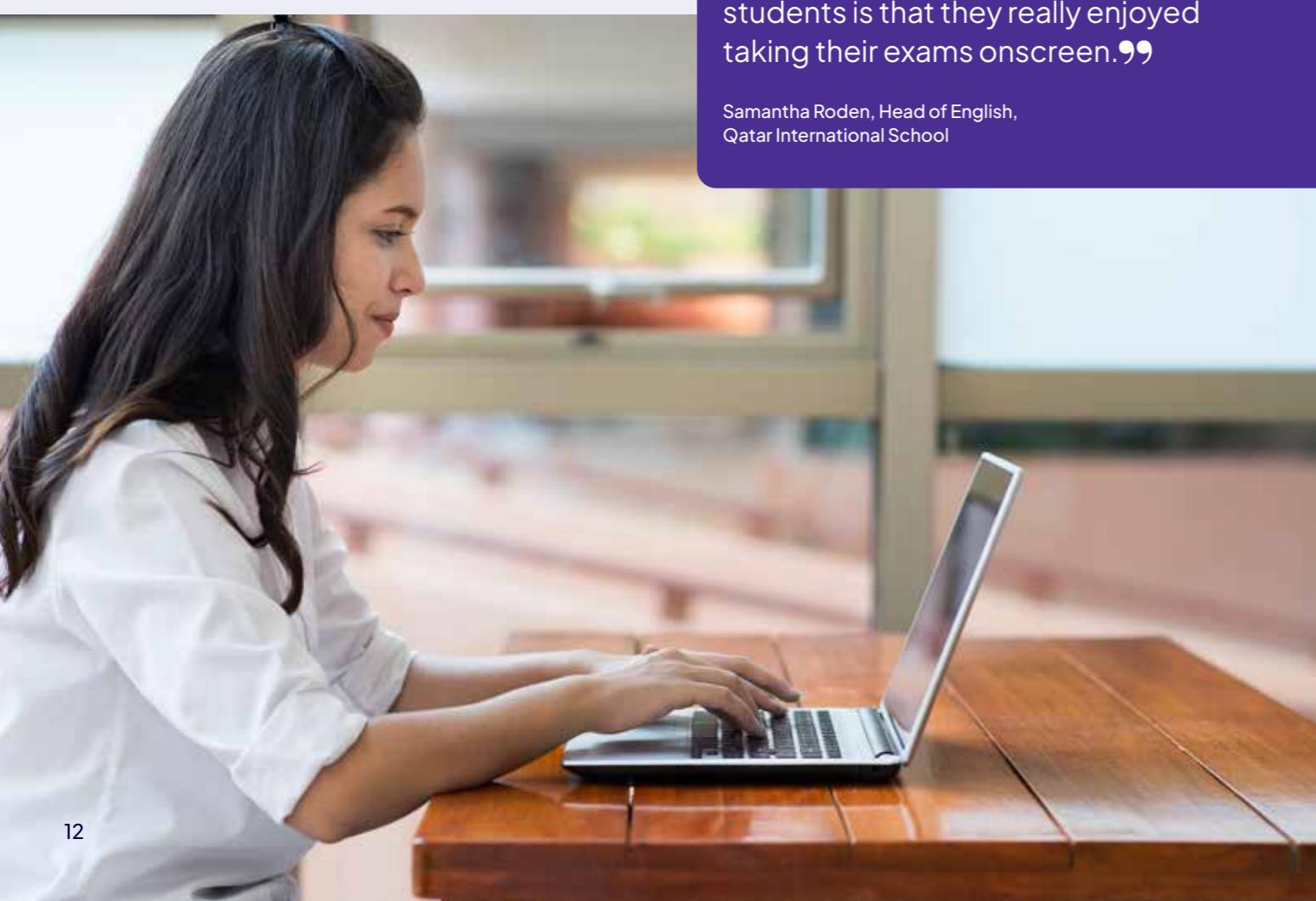
Onscreen or paper-based assessments

The first awarding organisation to offer onscreen exams

Pearson is proud to be leading the way in onscreen assessment for International GCSE and International A Level exams alongside traditional paper-based exams.

The natural choice for students

Onscreen assessment is the natural evolution in a world where so much teaching and learning is onscreen. Students love sitting their exams in a format that is familiar to them. Offering students the choice to sit either onscreen or paper exams ensures the best possible outcomes, preparing them for the workplace and further education.



“The overwhelming response from students is that they really enjoyed taking their exams onscreen.”

Samantha Roden, Head of English,
Qatar International School

Students love it

90% of students who sat their exams onscreen in 2022 said they wanted their school to offer more onscreen exams in the future.

- “I had more time to plan”
- “I could write more”
- “I felt more confident in the exam”

Teachers love it

100% of teachers who registered students for onscreen exams in 2022 registered students for the 2023 onscreen exam series too.

- Easy to organise and manage
- Boosts student confidence
- Excellent support from Pearson



Deliver with confidence

The technology, processes, and tools used stem from the successful worldwide delivery of millions of onscreen assessments in the last 10 years, in more than 115 countries. We have been delivering Onscreen Assessment for UK curriculum qualifications since 2022.

So far in 2024 we have seen the number of schools offering exams onscreen triple. This has led to a five-fold increase in students choosing to take onscreen assessment for their International GCSE and International A Level exams across 7 different subjects.

Onscreen exams availability

Available for onscreen assessment from 2024:

- International A Level English Literature
- International A Level English Language

Available for onscreen assessment from 2026:

- International A Level Business
- International A Level History
- International A Level Economics

What this means for you

We have a wealth of experience of developing and delivering onscreen high stakes assessments at scale in a range of educational settings, from our International GCSE and International A Level qualifications, the Pearson Test of English – a certification of language proficiency – and our partnership with the Egyptian Ministry of Education which sees us delivering more than 14 million assessments to over 1.6 million students each year. This means our onscreen platform is tried and tested. It's a platform you can trust.



Pre and post exam support for your educators

Supporting you every step of the way – for free

As a Pearson Edexcel centre, you will have free access to a full range of integrated support services, tools and resources to support the delivery of your International A Levels. Unlike some awarding bodies, with Pearson Edexcel there are no additional costs for the following support:

- Easy, all year-round access to our specifications, sample assessment materials and teaching resources.
- **Teacher training** in-person and online 'Welcome to Pearson' sessions to help your educators make the most of our qualifications.
- **Expert subject advisors** on hand to help with any subject-specific queries you may have and available to support your educators throughout the year.
- **examWizard**: a huge bank of past papers and mark schemes to create topic tests and revision activities in minutes.
- **ResultsPlus**: our popular online results analysis tool, which also includes an insightful group analysis service.
- **Access to Scripts**: our service that allows you to view your candidates' marked exam papers for free online or as downloaded PDFs, providing a rich source of information to inform future teaching plans and approaches.
- Plus, local, experienced Pearson Regional Development Managers who are there to support you every step of the way.

Additional paid for support options

Professional development

Enhanced training combining the qualification framework, support and feedback mechanisms with teaching and learning strategies, is available in most subjects.

Mocks Service

We provide exam papers for your students to sit in mock examinations. Marked by Pearson examiners, results are uploaded to ResultsPlus for item level analysis.

“...I must admit I had originally thought of it as 'time out' to catch up on my own CPD, but it turned out to be much more than that and have now returned with new connections, renewed energy and a much better idea of how we can – and should – work more closely together going forward.”

Martin Wigget, Kings Group of International Schools

A valued support partner

“One of the good features of ResultsPlus is that it provides the top ten questions that students scored poorly in, so we as the lecturers can actually identify the topics that students found difficult and can incorporate a different approach when teaching our current students.”

Dr Khong Yoke Kum, A Levels Department, HELP Academy, Malaysia

“Because of ResultsPlus, students can learn about their mistakes and rectify.”

Kanagambigai, Chief Counsellor, A levels Department, HELP Academy, Malaysia commenting on the ResultsPlus mocks service.

“I used the website with its course outlines, past papers, summaries of key points, revision notes and mark schemes... they provide great tips about possible exam questions and how you could answer them.”

Alexia Kattavenos, student, The Nicosia Grammar School, Cyprus



What this means for you

We will support you to deliver an outstanding teaching and learning experience for every student taking Pearson Edexcel International A Levels.

With examWizard, they will be able to prepare topic tests and revision activities based on past exam questions to help prepare students for their final assessments, and using ResultsPlus, they will be able to analyse their mock results to pinpoint where they may need further support and can then tailor their teaching to support them.

Post-exams, our Access to Scripts service will allow your educators to review students' exam papers for free, providing greater visibility and a deeper understanding of individual students' exam performance and helping them identify skills gaps to tailor teaching plans for future cohorts.



A wide range of teaching and learning resources

Written specifically to support our qualifications

The print and digital resources for Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Levels are written for the specifications, so you can be confident that you are providing your students with the best chance of succeeding.

With appropriate international content, all resources include a strong focus on progression, recognition and transferable skills, enabling learning in a local context to a global standard.

Resources include Student Books, ActiveBooks (eBooks) and Lab Books to support many of our International A Level qualifications. From December 2024, curriculum matched Student Books and ActiveBooks in Psychology, Information Technology, English Language and Geography will be available for the first time.

Online Teacher Resource Packs provide a range of curriculum-matched planning, teaching and assessment resources, to save you valuable time. Resources vary according to subject, but most include practice exam papers, exam practice PowerPoints, practice summative assessments, and mark schemes.

International A Level subjects at a glance

Find out more about each qualification

International Advanced Levels are available for 21 subjects, outlined below.

Subject	Curriculum and qualification support	Student Books and ActiveBooks	Online Teacher Resource Packs	Onscreen assessment*
Accounting	✓	✓	✓	
Arabic	✓		✓	
Biology	✓	✓	✓	
Business	✓	✓	✓	NEW for 2026
Chemistry	✓	✓	✓	
Economics	✓	✓	✓	NEW for 2026
English Language	✓	✓		✓
English Literature	✓		✓	✓
French	✓		✓	
Further Mathematics	✓	✓	✓	
Geography	✓	✓	✓	
German	✓		✓	
Greek	✓			
History	✓		✓	NEW for 2026
Information Technology	✓	✓	✓	
Law	✓		✓	
Mathematics	✓	✓	✓	
Physics	✓	✓	✓	
Psychology	✓	✓	✓	
Pure Mathematics	✓	✓	✓	
Spanish	✓		✓	

*Year in which onscreen assessment is or will be available for this qualification as an alternative to the current assessment format.

About Pearson

Pearson's qualifications heritage stretches back over 150 years and our qualifications are offered in more than 110 countries worldwide. We also mark over 10 million exam scripts per year on behalf of the UK Department for Education.

Pearson Edexcel is regulated by Ofqual, the UK's qualifications regulator, ensuring our curricula meet the highest standards and our exams follow carefully controlled procedures at every stage of their development, delivery, marking and reporting. As the largest awarding organisation in the UK, Pearson Edexcel regularly achieves the highest marking accuracy of all UK boards.

Learn more about our qualifications at quals.pearson.com

Pearson for International Schools

Whether you're a teacher inspiring achievement in the classroom, a parent supporting your child's learning journey, or a school owner seeking the best outcomes for your students, we can support you with our inspiring and proven international curriculum, qualifications and published resources.

Learn more about how we support international schools at pearson.com/international-schools



SCAN ME