



**Pearson**  
**Edexcel**

# Studying Pearson Edexcel International A Levels

**A parents guide**



## Modular qualifications for globally minded students

Congratulations! Your child's school has chosen to offer Pearson Edexcel International A Levels, providing a world-class education, access to the latest teaching, learning, and assessment methods and equipping your child with a globally recognised qualification. They will have the knowledge and skills they need to progress in their careers and thrive throughout their life.

**"I would definitely recommend Pearson Edexcel International A Levels as a way to enjoy your subjects better."**

Karl, International A Level Student,  
Academia International School, Zurich, Switzerland

**"My learning journey studying for Pearson Edexcel qualifications has definitely showed me a lot of new sides of maths and has helped explain concepts in biology and history in an interesting and engaging way."**

Malenka, International A Level Student,  
Academia International School, Zurich, Switzerland



## About this guide

### Introducing Pearson Edexcel International AS/A Level (IAL®) qualifications

You want the world's best universities and global employment opportunities to be within reach of your child. Making the right choices around International A Levels can facilitate that.

In this guide, you'll learn more about Pearson Edexcel International A Level qualifications, the recognition and progression they enjoy and the International A Level options (including onscreen assessment and the Extended Project Qualification) available.

We wish you and your child all the best with the next stage of their education journey!

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# Welcome to Pearson

## We're pleased to meet you!

Pearson is the world's leading learning company. We provide world class qualifications, assessments, and learning resources to international students all over the world to enable your child to progress to university and open up their 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 your child has the 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 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, the qualifications and exams regulator in the UK, ensuring your child's exams follow carefully controlled procedures at every stage of development, delivery, marking and reporting, and retain their integrity and value.

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 A Level qualifications; thousands of students around the world take these same qualifications every year, progressing onto the world's most respected universities.

We're excited to support your child alongside their teachers as they take the next step in their education journey.



## Modern, progressive International A Level qualifications

### About International A Levels

Pearson Edexcel International AS/A Levels, also known as Advanced Subsidiary Level/Advanced Levels, are designed specifically for international learners aged 16 - 19.

They are benchmarked, grade for grade, against UK A Levels, which are mainly taken by students in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

International AS qualifications can be taken separately as a standalone qualification, or used as a stage on the way to completing an International A Level qualification. Results of the IAS qualification can contribute to the overall IAL grade. This provides learners with greater choice and flexibility to meet their needs and aspirations.

Available in 21 popular subjects, the qualifications offer progression from International GCSEs, and onto university and employment.

### Assessment options

Our International A Levels use the proven and popular modular approach to assessment.\*

A modular approach means that exams can be taken and resat in any exam series, giving students more exam practice and more opportunities to receive feedback to improve their performance.

Popular with students, onscreen assessment is available in addition to paper-based exams for a growing number of qualifications. We have a wealth of experience of developing and delivering onscreen high stakes assessments at scale in a range of educational settings, so you can feel confident that our onscreen platform is tried and tested.

\* Apart from IAL Law, which is only available as a linear qualification.

# 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.

**"It's been my dream to attend a world-renowned university. Pearson Edexcel IALs have given me a solid academic foundation for further studies."**

Fei Xue, Student, University College London, UK

**"I wanted to study subjects that were relevant to a future career. Pearson Edexcel IAL provides learners with a firm knowledge base."**

Nasim Mirzajani, studying Chemical Engineering at Yale University, USA

**"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, UK

**"I didn't want to follow the normal Gymnasium route of study over four or six years, so with Pearson Edexcel, I am able to get the qualifications I need to progress within three years, to then start university at 19 or 20."**

Karl, International A Level Student, Academia International School, Zurich, Switzerland

**"With Pearson International A levels I can literally do anything. You can study in hundreds of countries and it always counts."**

Malenka, International A Level Student, Academia International School, Zurich, Switzerland

# Building transferable skills

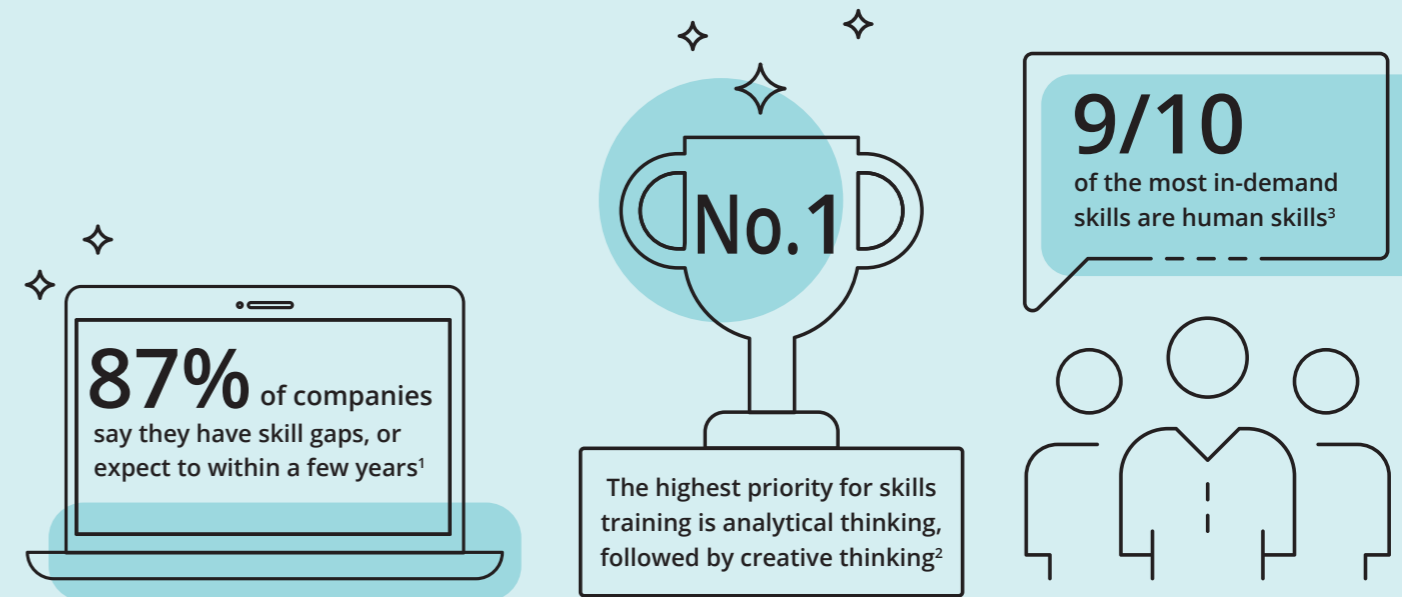
## The most in demand skills are human skills

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.

Transferable skills – sometimes referred to as soft skills or 21st century skills – are those such as problem solving, critical thinking, leadership and collaboration.

**"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

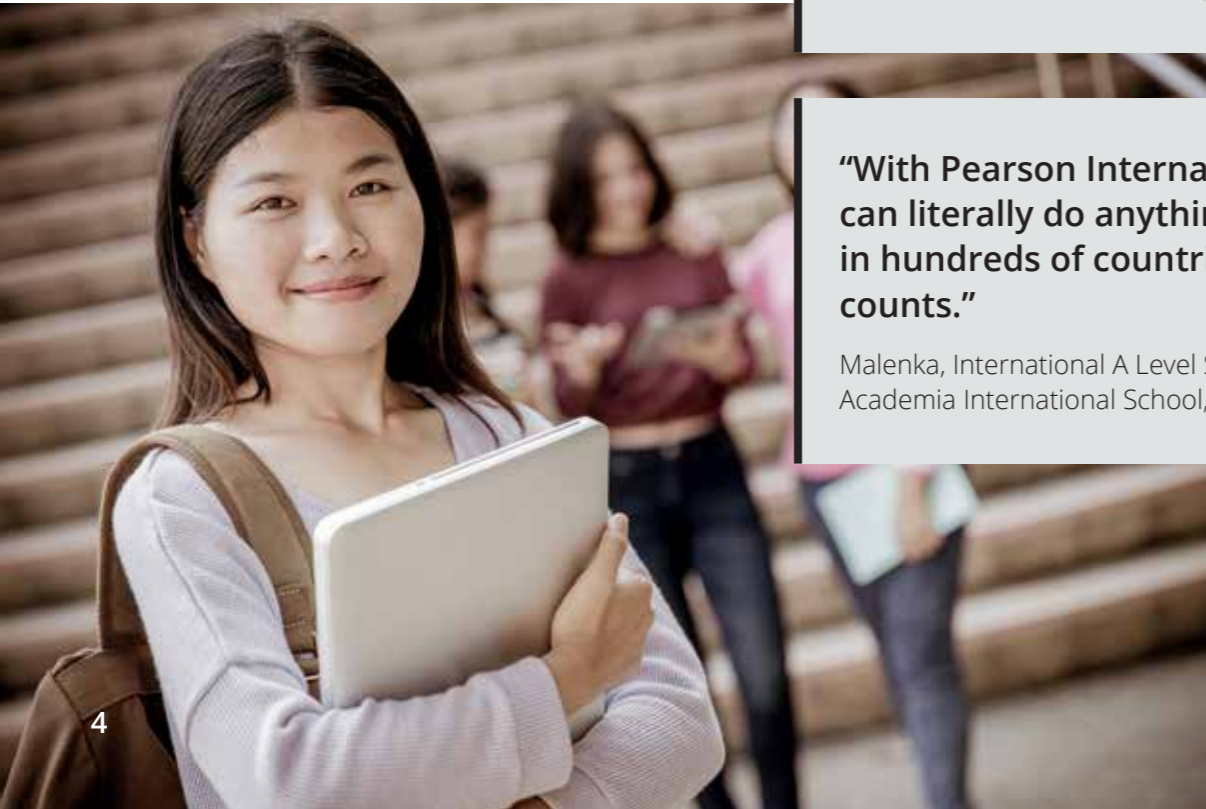


## Supporting the development of your child's transferable skills

Pearson Edexcel International A Level qualifications are designed to instil and embed the skills that help children grow into resilient, curious and globally connected young adults.

Opportunities to develop transferable skills are integrated throughout each of our qualifications to ensure learners have the skills and knowledge they need to progress onto university and succeed in the world of work.

<sup>1</sup> 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](http://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/beyond-hiring-how-companies-are-reskilling-to-address-talent-gaps)  
<sup>2</sup> World Economic Forum (2023) Future of Jobs Report [online]. Available from: [www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Future\\_of\\_Jobs\\_2023.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs_2023.pdf)  
<sup>3</sup> Pearson (2022) Pearson Skills Outlook: Power Skills [online]. Available from: [plc.pearson.com/en-GB/news-and-insights/pearson-skills-outlook-powerskills](http://plc.pearson.com/en-GB/news-and-insights/pearson-skills-outlook-powerskills)



# Your child's International A Level curriculum

## Qualifications designed for international learners

The Pearson Edexcel International A Levels your child will be studying are globally recognised qualifications for 16 to 19-year-olds with academic content and assessment designed specifically for international learners.

Extensive research has gone into the development of our qualifications to ensure they meet the needs of learners and equip them with the skills they need to make progress in their lives.

This includes continually reviewing the content of our specifications – adding international topics and examples using local contexts where possible – to ensure the content is ever more relevant and engaging for students around the world and to enable learning in a local context to a global standard.

## Fully integrated teaching and learning resources

Every Pearson Edexcel International A Level qualification is also backed up by fully integrated curriculum support and teaching and learning resources – often including high quality student books, in print and digital formats to best suit the individual needs of the learner, and lab books to support science practicals.

## Pre- and post-exam support

In addition, your child's teachers will have access to a full range of integrated support services, tools and resources from us to support their teaching.

This includes training and pre-exam support to ensure they have all they need to prepare your child for success. Our post-results services will allow them to understand exactly how each student performs in their assessments, so they can tailor their teaching to help all students achieve their full potential.

### What this means for you

You child's teachers will be supported all the way by Pearson to deliver an outstanding teaching and learning experience for every student taking Pearson Edexcel International A Levels.

They will be able to prepare topic tests and revision activities based on past exam questions to help ensure your child has the best preparation possible for their final assessments, and 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, all of which will help ensure your child achieves their full potential.

**“With Pearson, it's always very organised. You get a timetable for your exams so you know exactly when and where you need to be. Also, the student books are well organised which makes it easier to learn and to find the right information for the right question – it really helps.”**

Malenka, International A Level Student, Academia International School, Zurich, Switzerland

# International A Level subjects

## Find out more about each qualification

The Pearson Edexcel International A Level subjects available for your child to choose are detailed in the table below. Find out more about each of these qualifications on the next few pages.

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# International A Level: Business subjects

Find out more about each qualification

## Business

### Why choose this qualification?

Students will develop a multitude of skills, including numeracy, communication and an understanding of research methodology. They will read sources to interpret and evaluate business information, write extended responses, respond appropriately to a range of question types, develop an understanding of business concepts and apply these concepts to real-life situations.

There are two examination papers for the IAS, and two further to achieve the IAL.

Onscreen assessment will be available for this qualification from 2026 as an alternative assessment format.

### What will you study?

- Marketing and people
- Managing business activities
- Business decisions and strategy
- Global business

## Accounting

### Why choose this qualification?

Learners will have an opportunity to carry out problem solving, analysis and interpretation. They will understand ethics and present a true and fair representation of information, and develop the inter-personal skills required to obtain data, work within a team, discuss outcomes and make recommendations.

There is one examination paper for the IAS, and one further to achieve the IAL.

### What will you study?

- The Accounting System and Costing
- Corporate and Management Accounting



# International A Level: Economics & Law

Find out more about each qualification

## Economics

### Why choose this qualification?

Learners will read sources to interpret and evaluate economic information, write extended responses, respond appropriately to a range of question types, develop an understanding of economic concepts and apply these concepts to real-life situations.

There are two examination papers for the IAS, and two further to achieve the IAL.

Onscreen assessment will be available for this qualification from 2026 as an alternative assessment format.

### What will you study?

- Markets in action
- Macroeconomic performance and policy
- Business Behaviour
- Developments in the global economy



## Law

### Why choose this qualification?

Students who successfully study for this qualification will have a good knowledge and understanding of the principles, concepts and techniques of English law. This qualification lays a secure foundation for further study. In addition, it provides a worthwhile course for students who will end their study at the IAL stage.

The IAL in Law is a linear qualification, consisting of two compulsory externally-examined papers that must be completed in the same examination series. There is no AS Level for Law.

### What will you study?

- Underlying principles of Law and the English Legal System
- The Law in Action

# International A Level: Sciences

Find out more about each qualification

## Biology

### Why choose this qualification?

The content is relevant for students who have achieved a GCSE in Biology and who want to study this subject at a higher level. Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of their subject by applying the concepts in the specifications to a range of different problems, set in a variety of contexts.

Problems require the application of mathematical skills. Core practical activities are embedded throughout the course, allowing students to link theoretical knowledge and understanding to practical scenarios.

There are three examination papers for the IAS, and three further to achieve the IAL.

### What will you study?

- Molecules, Diet, Transport and Health
- Cells, Development, Biodiversity and Conservation
- Energy, Environment, Microbiology and Immunity
- Respiration, Internal Environment, Coordination and Gene Technology
- Practical Skills

## Chemistry

### Why choose this qualification?

The content is relevant for students who have achieved a GCSE in Chemistry and who want to study this subject at a higher level. Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of their subject by applying the concepts in the specifications to a range of different problems, set in a variety of contexts.

Problems require the application of mathematical skills. Core practical activities are embedded throughout the course, allowing students to link theoretical knowledge and understanding to practical scenarios.

There are three examination papers for the IAS, and three further to achieve the IAL.

### What will you study?

- Structure, Bonding and Introduction to Organic Chemistry
- Energetics, Group Chemistry, Halogenoalkanes and Alcohols
- Rates, Equilibria and Further Organic Chemistry
- Transition Metals and Organic Nitrogen Chemistry
- Practical Skills

# International A Level: Sciences & Psychology

Find out more about each qualification

## Physics

### Why choose this qualification?

The content is relevant for students who have achieved a GCSE in Physics and who want to study this subject at a higher level. Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of their subject by applying the concepts in the specifications to a range of different problems, set in a variety of contexts.

Problems require the application of mathematical skills. Core practical activities are embedded throughout the course, allowing students to link theoretical knowledge and understanding to practical scenarios.

There are three examination papers for the IAS, and three further to achieve the IAL.

### What will you study?

- Mechanics and Materials
- Waves and Electricity
- Further Mechanics, Fields and Particles
- Thermodynamics, Radiation, Oscillations and Cosmology
- Practical Skills

## Psychology

### Why choose this qualification?

Students will develop a critical perspective on psychology by analysing the way psychological theory and research can be critically evaluated. They will also develop the ability to work autonomously, and learn how to engage with others to discuss and debate psychological explanations of human behaviour and the issues surrounding the use of psychology within society.

There are two examination papers for the IAS, and two further to achieve the IAL.

### What will you study?

- Social and cognitive psychology
- Biological psychology, learning theories and development
- Applications of psychology
- Clinical psychology and psychological skills



# International A Level: English

Find out more about each qualification

## English Language

### Why choose this qualification?

Students will study English Language in a global context, including the influence of other languages on the development of English.

There are two examination papers for the IAS, and two further to achieve the IAL.

Onscreen assessment is available for this qualification as an alternative assessment format.

### What will you study?

- Language: Context and Identity
- Language in Transition
- Crafting Language (writing)
- Investigating Language

## English Literature

### Why choose this qualification?

Students will study works from a selection including Dickens, Bronte and Shakespeare, pre-1900 poetry as well as post-2000 poetry and prose, together with a range of texts with a wide international appeal, including *The Kite Runner* and *White Tiger*.

There are two examination papers for the IAS, and two further to achieve the IAL.

Onscreen assessment is available for this qualification as an alternative assessment format.

### What will you study?

- Post-2000 Poetry and Prose
- Drama
- Poetry and Prose
- Shakespeare and Pre-1900 Poetry

# International A Level: Maths

Find out more about each qualification

## Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Pure Mathematics

### Why choose this qualification?

There are three different International AS/A Level awards available, Mathematics, Further Mathematics and Pure Mathematics.

Students study a variety of units, following pathways to their desired qualification. There are three examination papers for each IAS, and three further to achieve each IAL.

Students will develop responsibility for their own learning and mathematical development. They will use their knowledge and skills to apply mathematics to real-life situations, solve unstructured problems and use mathematics as an effective means of communication.

### What will you study?

- Pure Mathematics
- Further Pure Mathematics
- Mechanics
- Statistics
- Decision Mathematics





# International A Level: Information Technology

Find out more about each qualification

## Information Technology

### Why choose this qualification?

Students will engage with web and database design in a practical, externally-assessed examination, discover how to plan and implement an IT project, and learn about key areas such as emerging technologies, the online environment and systems analysis and design.

There are two examination papers for the IAS, and two further to achieve the IAL.

### What will you study?

- IT systems
- Coding for the web
- Relational databases



# International A Level: Humanities

Find out more about each qualification



## History

### Why choose this qualification?

Learners will develop their interest and enthusiasm for history and understand its intrinsic value and significance. They will gain the ability to critically evaluate past events, construct an argument and work in a team. The qualification focuses on both breadth and depth of history.

There are two examination papers for the IAS, and two further to achieve the IAL.

Onscreen assessment will be available for this qualification from 2026 as an alternative assessment format.

## Geography

### Why choose this qualification?

This qualification enables students to develop their knowledge of locations, places, processes and environments, at all geographical scales from local to global. They will also develop independent thinking and critical thinking skills.

There are two examination papers for the IAS, and two further to achieve the IAL.

### What will you study?

- Global Challenges
- Geographical Investigations
- Contested Planet
- Researching Geography

### What will you study?

- Depth Study with Interpretations
- Breadth Study with Source Evaluation
- Thematic Study with Source Evaluation
- International Study with Historical Interpretations

# International A Level: Languages

Find out more about each qualification

## French, German & Spanish

### Why choose these qualifications?

Our International AS/A Levels in French, German and Spanish are relevant and engaging to students, including topics such as lifestyle, travel, education, and technology. As well as developing language skills, students will gain knowledge and understanding of native-speaking cultures.

Achievement in this qualification is benchmarked against the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, commonly used by higher education institutions and future employers to indicate an individual's ability.

There are two examinations for each IAS, and two further to achieve each IAL. Each level has a spoken assessment as well as a written paper that assesses listening, reading and writing.

### What will you study?

- Spoken expression and response
- Understanding and written response
- Understanding and spoken response
- Research, understanding and written response

## Arabic & Greek

### Why choose these qualifications?

Our International AS/A Levels in Arabic and Greek are for students who are studying the language in order to enhance their future educational or employment prospects. Contexts and settings will be those that students are likely to encounter, such as school and the media. Culturally sensitive and authentic reading texts are used throughout.

Achievement in this qualification is benchmarked against the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, commonly used by higher education institutions and future employers to indicate an individual's ability.

There is one examination paper for each IAS, and one further to achieve each IAL. Speaking and listening skills are not directly assessed but will be developed by studying these qualifications.

### What will you study?

- Understanding and Written Response
- Writing and Research

# Pearson Edexcel Extended Level 3 Project Qualification (EPQ)

## Stand out from the crowd

To give your child the edge when applying for university, they can choose the Pearson Edexcel Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), an optional, standalone qualification, taken alongside core International A Level subjects.

The EPQ 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.

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

The University of Manchester, UK



**"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

## How does it work?

Teachers work with students to agree the suitable project topic/area of interest. The teacher provides guidance on planning and research activities. 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, which could be a dissertation, an investigation, a performance or an artefact.



## About Pearson Qualifications

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

**[quals.pearson.com](https://quals.pearson.com)**

## Supporting you and your child

As a parent supporting your child's learning journey, we can support you with our inspiring and proven international curriculum, qualifications and published student resources.

**[pearson.com/international-schools](https://pearson.com/international-schools)**