

Pearson Edexcel International AS/A levels

A guide for schools

Modern qualifications for globally minded students

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

We know you want to equip your students with the knowledge and skill they need to reach the world's best universities and compete for global employment opportunities. Choosing their International A Levels is a key part of that journey. 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 A Level options (including onscreen assessment and the Extended Project Qualification) available to your learners.

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



Our international qualifications and resources deliver results

See what our schools and learners say. Scan the QR code or search 'success stories' at **pearson.com/international-schools**.

Inside this guide

Contents

2 Welcome to Pearson
3 Modern, progressive International A Level qualifications
4 Flexible 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 A Level highlights



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



Onscreen assessment

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

See page 12



Additional resources

Curriculum matched Student Books in Psychology, IT, English Language and Geography are now available alongside our existing and comprehensive range of Student Books to support your learners.

See page 16

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.

Welcome to Pearson

As the world's leading learning company, our mission at Pearson is to help people realise the life they imagine through learning.

We offer international qualifications and assessments designed specifically for international students, that are recognised and accepted by universities all over the world and provided to your international school by a trusted and respected awarding body with a long history of qualifications provision.

We work together with international schools around the world to make a positive difference to learners' lives and we believe the best part of working in education is seeing learners progress.

Let's make a difference to your learners' futures, together.

- Our qualifications heritage stretches back **over 100 years**
- More than **3.5 million students** take our qualifications globally each year
- Our Pearson Edexcel international and UK qualifications are offered in **more than 115 countries worldwide**
- We mark **over 10 million exam scripts** per year on behalf of the UK Department for Education
- Our international and UK qualifications are **recognised and accepted** by universities all over the world

We are with you, for you

When you partner with us, you join thousands of schools around the world who have done the same and are enjoying the benefits for their educators and learners.

The international schools we work with value our innovation, our world renowned curriculum content and qualifications and they benefit from the choice and flexibility we offer. They trust us and work closely with their local Pearson consultants who share their vision and work every day to help them achieve it.

This trusted partnership ensures learners receive the very best educational support and educators benefit from the assurance that they are backed by a dedicated team invested in their success.

> "I chose Pearson Edexcel qualifications because they are internationally recognised and provide a clear, structured curriculum. The assessment style suited my way of learning, and I felt that the qualifications would best prepare me for studying abroad at a top university. Studying IAL Economics and Mathematics strengthened my ability to think critically and apply concepts to real situations. These qualifications also played an important role in helping me gain admission to LSE."
>
> Taehyun Kang, London School of Economics undergraduate (BSc Economics)



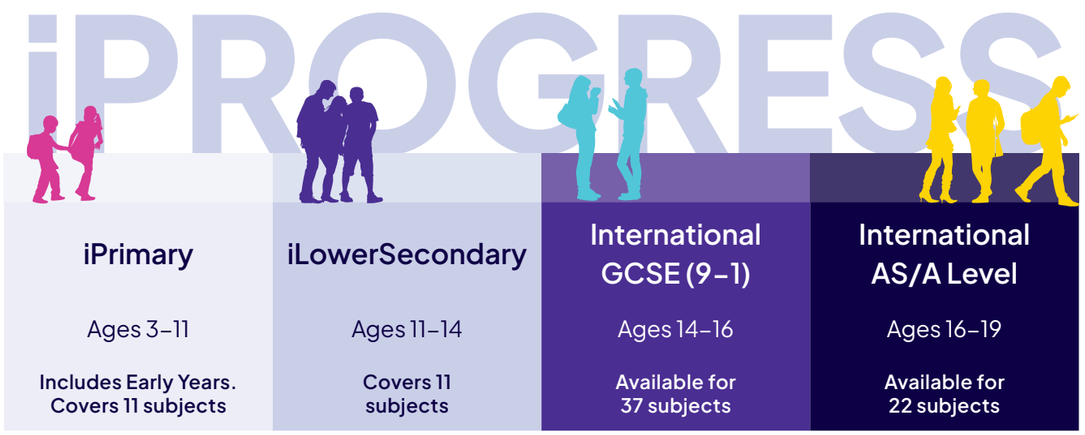
Modern, progressive International A Level qualifications

For globally minded international 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.



Flexible 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 22 popular subjects, they offer progression from International GCSEs, and are comparable to the linear GCE A Level, equipping students for progression to university and employment.

*for all subjects except Law

World class assessments 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.

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.

> "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.

Close to 1,500 universities across the world formally recognise Pearson Edexcel international qualifications, including the world's top 20 universities, all UK universities, 260 universities in the US and leading universities in 56 other countries – 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 GCE A Level, as confirmed by ECCTIS (formerly UK NARIC), the designated United Kingdom national agency for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills.

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 ECCTIS to be comparable to UK AS standard	Regulated by Ofqual	Regulated by Pearson and confirmed by ECCTIS to be comparable to UK A Level standard

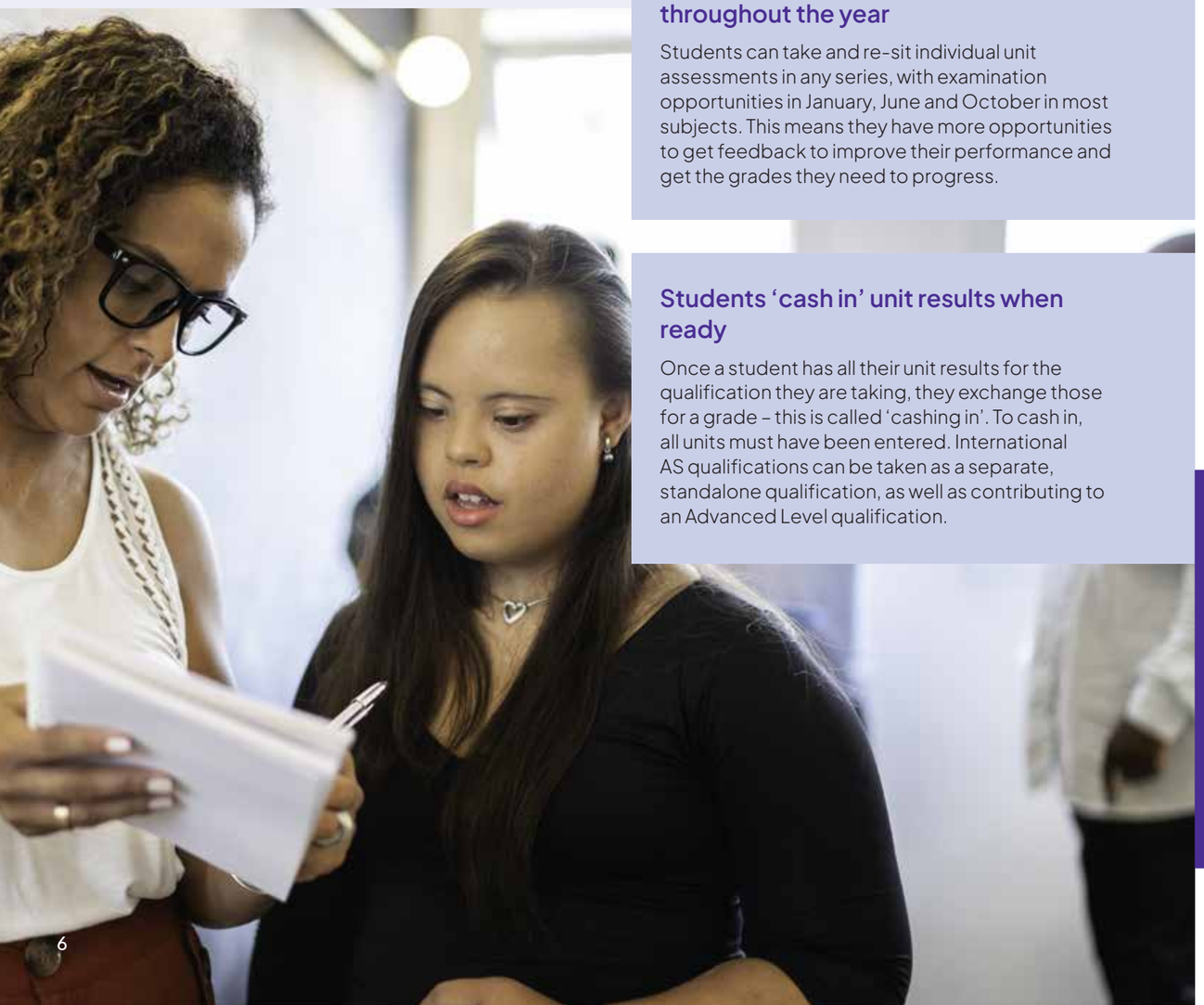
*Other types of assessment used only where needed to test essential skills.

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

Students 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 they 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.

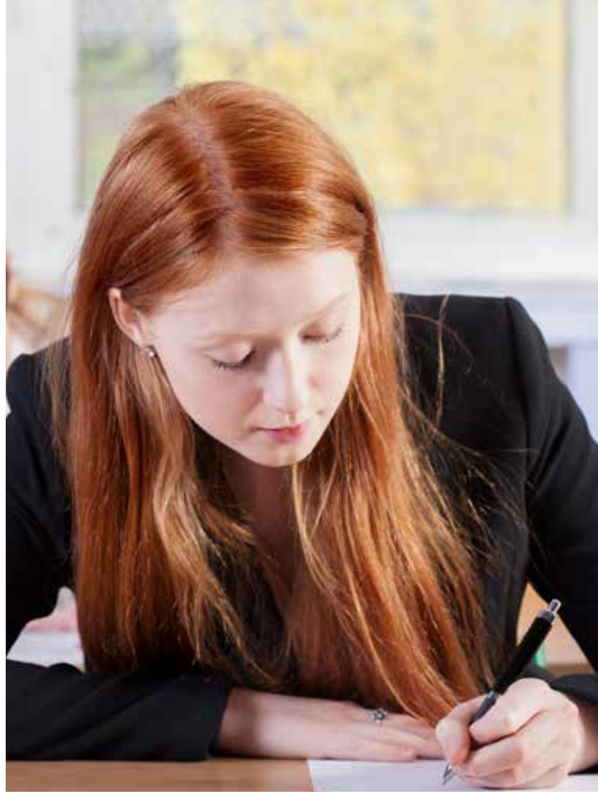
The benefits of a linear route

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 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.

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 years[1]

The highest priority for skills training is analytical thinking, followed by creative thinking[2]

9/10 of the most in-demand skills are human skills[3]

[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.

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

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.

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: • 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 Manchestere

> "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.

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.

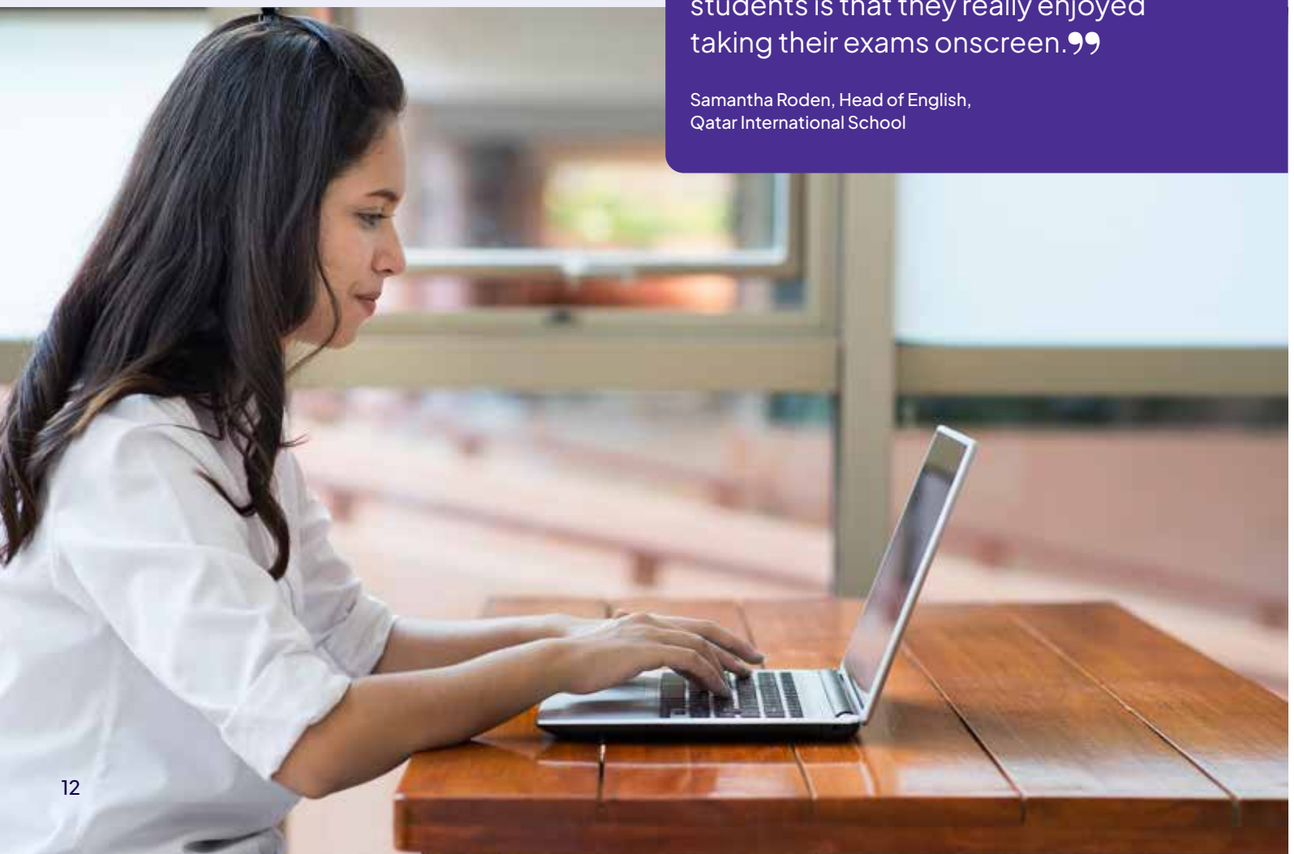
- "I had more time to plan"
- "I could write more"
- "I felt more confident in the exam"

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

> "The overwhelming response from students is that they really enjoyed taking their exams onscreen."
>
> Samantha Roden, Head of English, Qatar International School





Deliver with confidence

We have been delivering onscreen assessment for our British curriculum qualifications since 2022, however 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.

The number of students sitting onscreen exams has seen a five-fold increase in the last year and the number of schools onboarding has more than tripled. By the examination series in 2026 there will be 14 subjects available for international schools to take as onscreen exams.

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 History

Available for onscreen assessment from 2027:

- International A Level Computer Science

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 Consultants** 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 A 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.

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

Pearson Edexcel International A Levels are available for the subjects outlined below.

Subject	Curriculum and qualification support	Student Books and ActiveBooks	Online Teacher Resource Packs	Onscreen assessment*
Accounting	✓	✓	✓	
Arabic	✓		✓	
Biology	✓	✓	✓	
Business	✓	✓	✓	
Chemistry	✓	✓	✓	
Computer Science	✓	✓	✓	NEW for 2027
Economics	✓	✓	✓	
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 100 years and our qualifications are offered in more than 115 countries worldwide. We also mark over 10 million exam scripts per year on behalf of the UK Department for Education. Our international curricula meet the highest standards and our exams follow carefully controlled procedures at every stage of their development, delivery, marking and reporting.

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 the QR code to complete our expression of interest form

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