

New innovations and support
See inside!

International GCSE

English as a Second Language



Choosing Pearson Edexcel as your school's International GCSE partner

Helping your students select their International GCSE options is a key moment in their schooling; it's an important time in learners' lives and we want to reassure you that with Pearson as your qualifications partner, you can be sure 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 we'll take a closer look at International GCSE English as a Second Language.

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



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International GCSE English as a Second Language highlights



Teaching Hub

Teaching Hubs is the ultimate, end-to-end programme for teaching and learning excellence at International GCSE ESL, providing teachers with the support and tools to teach International GCSE ESL consistently, creatively and with complete confidence.

See page 16

"It is like a global passport - it offers me worldwide recognition and I can go anywhere with my Edexcel qualifications...I would definitely recommend Edexcel."

Nikita Jha, Edexcel International GCSE student at Sayfol International School, Malaysia

New qualification!

First teaching from September 2023, first examination June 2025.

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 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 awarding organisation 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 GCSE qualifications; thousands of students around the world take these same qualifications every year, progressing onto our popular modular International A Levels (IAL®), International BTECs or the IB Diploma, and to the world's most respected universities.





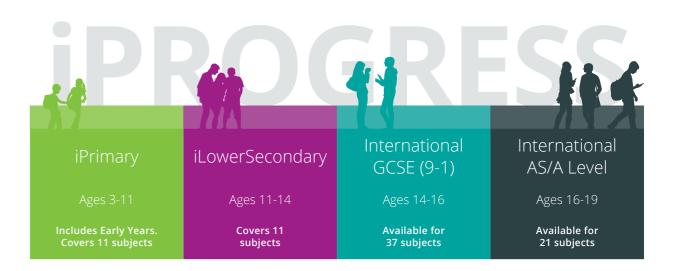
GCSE qualifications

For globally minded learners aged 14-16

Renowned across the world for academic excellence, Pearson Edexcel International GCSEs provide learners with the skills and knowledge they need to progress to International A Levels (IAL®) and onto the most prestigious universities across the world.

Pearson Edexcel International GCSEs are part of iProgress, our complete series of academic qualifications for 3 to 19 year-olds 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.



About the 9-1 grading scale

In 2014, the UK Government introduced a nine-point grading scale (9–1) to raise standards and recognise top-performing students. This replaced the traditional A*–G grading. After consultation with international schools, Pearson Edexcel chose to follow the 9–1 grading scale to ensure comparability for our international students.

Since then millions of GCSEs and International GCSEs are awarded each year using the 9–1 grading scale, making it the most used and recognised grading scale for this qualification worldwide.

What this means for you

Because our Pearson Edexcel International GCSE qualifications are equivalent to and benchmarked, grade for grade, against UK GCSEs, you can be confident that they are recognised and respected across the world. They offer increased differentiation for your top learners (a grade 9 represents a higher level of attainment than A*) and will deliver the progression for your learners that you want to see.

"I not only recommend the International GCSE system because of their 9-1 grading scale due to having an extra grade to differentiate the top tier students, but also because this system is recognized globally therefore it opens up more opportunities for students to study at university abroad."

John Andrew Tampubolon, International GCSE (9-1) student at Al Yasmina School, Abu Dhabi.

GCSE (9-1) grading structure	Old GCSE grading structure	
9	A*	
7	Α	
6	В	
4	С	
3	D	
2	E	
	F	
•	G	
0	U	

Recognised worldwide for academic excellence

Designed for global learners

Pearson Edexcel International GCSEs are globally recognised qualifications for learners aged 14 to 16 with academic content and assessment designed specifically for international learners. We continually review the content of our specifications – adding international topics and examples using local contexts where possible – to ensure the content of our qualifications is ever more relevant and engaging for students around the world and to enable learning in a local context to a global standard.

Equipping learners with transferable skills and knowledge

Opportunities to develop transferable skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, leadership and collaboration, are integrated throughout each of our Pearson Edexcel International GCSE qualifications to ensure learners have the skills and knowledge they need to progress onto International A Level, the next level of study.

Suitable and accessible for ESL learners

Our International GCSE qualifications have been designed in collaboration with subject experts, teachers and university professors, to ensure that the content and assessment methods are appropriate and will enable successful progression for learners, including those for whom English is not their first language.



From International GCSE to flexible, modular A Levels, BTECs or the IB Diploma

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE qualifications are excellent preparation for Pearson Edexcel International A Levels (IAL®), International BTECs, our popular, careerfocused qualifications developed in partnership with employers, or the IB Diploma.

As the next step up from International GCSEs, International A Levels are designed for students aged 16–18 who want to progress to the best universities around the world. They use the popular and flexible modular approach, which means exams are taken at the end of each unit of study or throughout the programme of study when students feel prepared and ready.

We work closely with higher education institutions around the world to secure recognition for our qualifications and are proud to confirm that International A Levels are recognised and accepted for entry to more than 650 leading universities worldwide.

What this means for you

Pearson Edexcel International GCSEs are excellent preparation for Pearson Edexcel International A Levels, International BTECs or the IB Diploma, and progression onto the world's top universities. Over 650 higher education institutions worldwide recognise and accept Pearson Edexcel International A Level qualifications for entry onto undergraduate degree courses and with the twenty first century skills your learners will develop as part of their International GCSE curriculum, you can be confident they will have qualifications, skills and knowledge that admissions teams and employers are looking for.

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English as a Second Language qualifications

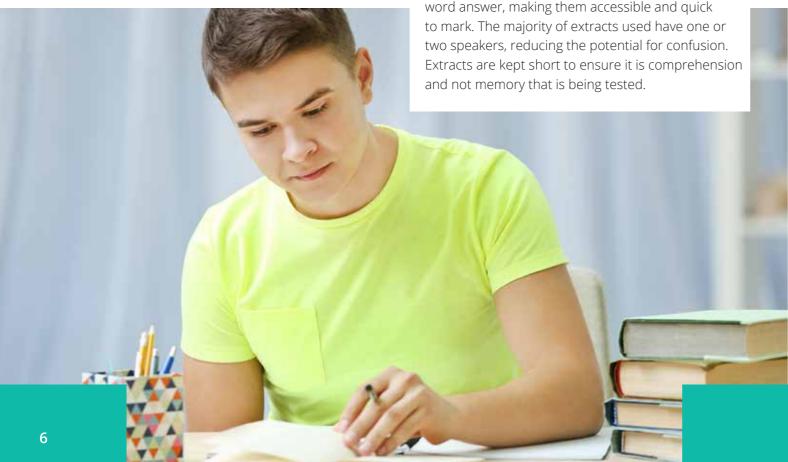
English Language skills for life, mapped to the CEFR

CEFR alignment

We have benchmarked our qualification to the Council of Europe's Common European Framework Reference for Languages (CEFR), providing you with a widely recognised measure of competence. We also used The Global Scale of English (GSE) to extend the CEFR mapping which gives us more granular scale for four skills (reading, listening, writing, and speaking). Accurate mapping will help student differentiation, and learners will be able to accurately choose their progression and next steps. High achievement (grades 7–9) in this qualification is broadly equivalent to many descriptors of Levels B1 to B2 of the CEFR.

Skills tested independently

Each of the four key language skills (reading, listening, writing, and speaking) are now assessed separately with each paper covering a different skill. Speaking is now a mandatory component.



Diverse, international and relevant topics

Topics have been selected both to engage learners and to equip them to use their language proficiency in a range of real-life situations, from socialising and travelling to education and employment.

We have included a diverse range of international topic options. The brand-new optional subtopics will enable teachers and learners to select subtopics they find most engaging.

Clear and straightforward question papers

Our question papers are clear and accessible for learners of all abilities and learning styles. Our mark schemes are straightforward so that the assessment requirements are clear.

For example, open questions in the listening paper encourage lateral thinking but require only a single word answer, making them accessible and quick



list of about 2000 words, and a grammar list, both mapped to the CEFR, which will provide teachers and learners with confidence that they are well prepared for the assessment. Careful consideration has been paid to diversity, equity and inclusion as well as cultural sensitivity when compiling the list.

Broad and deep development of learners' skills

The design of the revised International GCSE aims to extend learners' knowledge by broadening and deepening skills. Learners broaden their ability to:

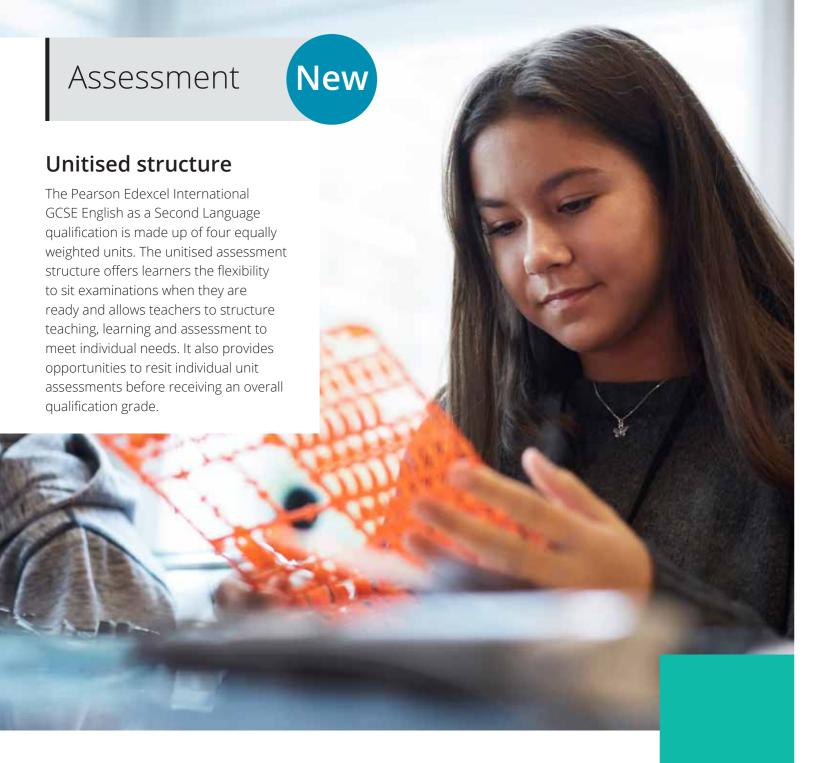
- read for both gist and detail
- listen to an argument or discussion, understand the overall message and identify attitudes and opinion
- write in response to a given situation
- deliver a topic talk, as well as participate in extended discussion.

Progression

Learners can progress from this qualification to:

- Level 3 academic and vocational qualifications delivered in English (for example, International A Level)
- Pearson Test of English (PTE Academic)

Evidence of achievement in this qualification may also be used as proof of English Language competence for the purpose of Higher Education admission (at institutional discretion). Through our world-class qualification development process, we have consulted with further / higher education organisations and establishments or similar to validate the appropriateness of this qualification, including content, skills and assessment structure.



How the assessment works

Bank evidence of performance

Once students 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.

Multiple exam opportunities throughout the year

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

Exams can be taken in one go

Doing the exams all in one go at the end of the period of study suits some better. All units can be taken together in one exam series so students study all the content and then prepare for all the assessments at the end.

Four equally weighted papers

There are four core components, each focusing on a different skill and worth 25% of the total grade.

1. Reading	Understand and provide a response in English to a variety of types of written English language
2. Listening	Understand and provide a response in English to a variety of types of spoken English language
3. Writing	Communicate, respond to, and use written English language while using a range of vocabulary and grammar structures
4. Speaking	Communicate, interact and use spoken English language using a range of vocabulary and grammar structures

Learners will study English through immersion into five topics:

Topic 1: Myself & Others • Hobbies & leisure time • Homes • Family, friends & relationships Topic 2: Travel & Tourism • Tourist activities • Travel destinations & reason for travelling Topic 3: Education • School life • Future education plans • ICT (Information and communication technology) Topic 4: Employment • Part-time & voluntary work • Future employment plans • Job applications	Topics	Subtopics
Travel & Tourism • Tourist activities • Travel destinations & reason for travelling Topic 3: • School life • Future education plans • ICT (Information and communication technology) Topic 4: • Part-time & voluntary work • Future employment plans	Myself &	• Homes
 Future education plans ICT (Information and communication technology) Topic 4: Employment Part-time & voluntary work Future employment plans 	Travel &	Tourist activitiesTravel destinations & reason for
• Future employment plans		Future education plansICT (Information and communication
	•	Future employment plans
Topic 5: Choose one from the following: • Environment • Media • Equality		 Environment Media

Learn more at pearsoninternational-schools.com/internationalgcse

English as a Second Language: A closer look

Exam structure and content summary

Paper 1: Reading

Externally assessed Written examination: 1 hour 25% of the total International GCSE

Availability: November and June series

50 marks

First assessment: June 2025

Assessment overview

- Single tier of entry.
- This paper assesses reading skills.
- The paper will include a range of texts covering content taken from the compulsory subtopics in Topics 1–4 on the previous page.
- Passages will cover a broad range of text types, including information, explanation, opinion, and narrative texts. The texts will include a range of professional writing styles.

Paper 2: Listening

Externally assessed

25% of the total International GCSE Written examination: 45 minutes

Availability: November and June series

50 marks

First assessment: June 2025

Assessment overview

- Single tier of entry.
- This paper assesses listening skills.
- The paper will include a range of recordings covering content taken from the compulsory subtopics in Topics 1–4 on the previous page.
- Recordings will cover a broad range of extracts including information requests, explanations, opinions, monologues, dialogues and narration. The recordings will include a range of styles.



Paper 3: Writing

Externally assessed 25% of the total International GCSE Written examination: 1 hour 15 minutes Availability: November and June series 50 marks First assessment: June 2025

Assessment overview

- Single tier of entry.
- This paper assesses writing skills, including spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG).
- Tasks will relate to all 5 Topics listed on page 9. The paper will include a range of the compulsory subtopics from Topics 1–4 and the learner's chosen optional subtopic from Topic 5.
- Learners will be required to write a range of text types including informative texts, explanatory text, discussions of opinions written, and advantages and disadvantages.
- There will be a written summary task. Tasks will prompt learners to make use of a range of informal, formal and professional writing styles.

Paper 4: Speaking

Externally assessed	25% of the total
Oral examination: 22-23 minutes	International GCSE
Availability: November and June series	
50 marks	
First assessment: June 2025	

Assessment overview

- Single tier of entry.
- This paper assesses speaking skills including spontaneity, fluency and pronunciation.
- Tasks will relate to all 5 Topics listed on page 9. The tasks will cover a range of the subtopics from Topics 1–4 and the learner's chosen subtopic from Topic 5.
- Learners will be required to relate factual information, to deliver a speech, to discuss opinions or advantages and disadvantages, and to ask questions.
- There will be a pre-prepared topic talk task where learners will be required to speak in relation to their chosen subtopic for Topic 5.
- Tasks will prompt learners to use a range of speaking styles.
- The speaking exam between the learner and teacher / examiner will be recorded and delivered to Pearson via Learner Work Transfer (LWT) for marking.

Supporting you at every stage

We provide an unparalleled level of support services, tools, resources and training alongside our qualifications, making teachers and students lives easier at every stage.

At a glance: support for you at every stage

FREE resources and support	Planning, teaching & learning	Exam preparation and assessment	Results support
Getting started guide	✓		
Training events (face-to-face and online) [†]	✓		
Subject advisor support	1	1	1
Schemes of work	1		
Lesson Plans	1		
Skills mapping	1		
Sample assessment materials	1	1	
Examiner reports	1	1	1
Exemplar marked responses	1	1	
Past papers		1	
examWizard		1	
Mark schemes		1	
ResultsPlus		1	✓
Access to Scripts service (ATS)			✓

Additional paid for resources					
Curriculum-matched Student Books with ActiveBooks	✓	✓			
Teaching Hub	1	1			





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 GCSEs. 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 including '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.

Your free subject support

Our subject advisors provide fast, reliable, expert help and aim to answer all emailed questions within 48 hours and resolve 90% of issues phoned in on the first call.

Email teachinglanguages@pearson.com or call +44 (0) 344 463 2535

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

"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



"examWizard is an excellent resource to **support preparation** for learner exams."

Andrew Frost, Tresham College of Further and Higher Education

What this means for you

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We will support your educators to deliver an outstanding teaching and learning experience for every student taking Pearson Edexcel International GCSEs.

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 results to identify areas for further improvement.

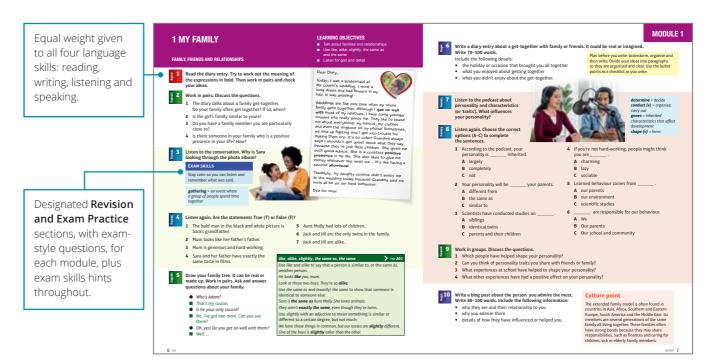
Post exams, our Access to Scripts service will allow your educators to review students' exam papers for free, providing greater visibility and a deeper understanding of individual students' exam performance and helping them identify skills gaps to tailor teaching plans for future cohorts.

Teaching and Learning Resources New

Written specifically to support our qualifications

Developed for the English as a Second Language qualification (2023) and written by highly experienced ESL teachers and authors, the student book provides comprehensive coverage of the specifications and is designed to support students with the best preparation possible for the examination.

- Full coverage of all three options in Topic 5 (Global Issues)
- Includes Grammar Reference & Practice, complete Audio Scripts and Glossary of key ESL terminology





The Student Book provides 3 year access to an ActiveBook, a digital version of the Student Book, which can be accessed online, anytime, anywhere supporting learning beyond the classroom.

ISBN International GCSE ESL Student Book 978 1 29272 6 70 0 (2nd Edition)

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Find out more about our resources at pearsoninternational-schools.com/internationalgcse

Teaching Hub New

Unlock teaching and learning excellence with the International GCSE ESL Teaching Hub

Teaching Hub is the ultimate, end-to-end programme for teaching and learning excellence at International GCSE ESL. The course contains meticulous, step-by-step lesson plans, media-rich resources and carefully curated assessment tools, providing teachers with the support and tools to teach International GCSE ESL consistently, creatively and with complete confidence.

Built-in excellence

Created by the experts at Pearson, the lesson plans cover the full curriculum, including appropriate and timely assessment preparation and practice.

Consistent

Teachers use the same framework and lessons ensure a unified and high standard of education.

Engaging

Rich teaching and learning resources help deliver effective and engaging lessons, including quizzes, videos, animations and interactive questions and worksheets.

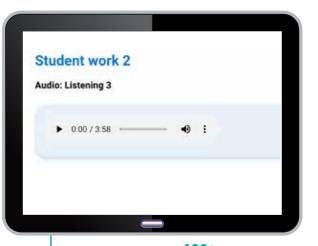
Convenient

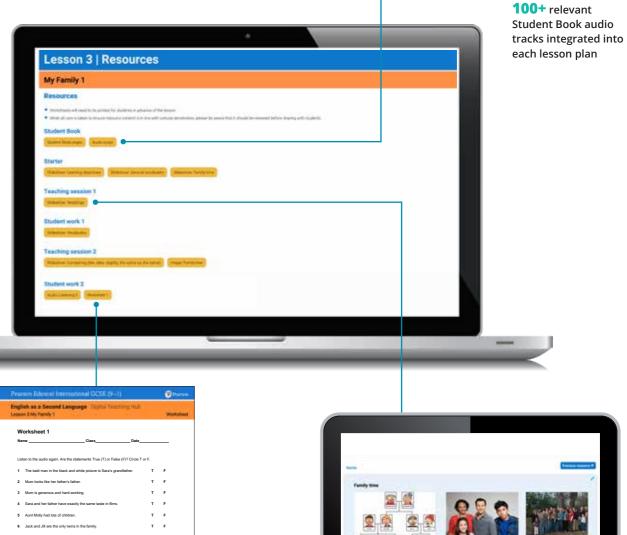
Everything in one easy-to-use digital platform.



Hundreds of rich teaching and learning lesson resources at the click of a button

A huge range of resources for effective and engaging lessons. All relevant resources are clearly indicated within each lesson plan and all hyperlinked to save you time searching.





180+ downloadable worksheets and homework sheets

600+ fully illustrated teaching slideshows, featuring

activities and (grammar) explanations



Thank you for choosing Pearson

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Sign up to our newsletters

e pearsoninternational-schools.com/emailsign-up

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- in Pearson UK and International Schools
- W blog.pearsoninternationalschools.com





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