

Gulf English School

مدرسة الخليج الإنجليزية



# OPTIONS IGCSE

BOOKLET

2024 - 2026



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# Introduction

Dear Parents/Carers,

Your child is entering an important stage of his/her education. Good grades and success in their IGCSEs will play a very important part in determining their future opportunities, and will help them to succeed in a rapidly changing world of work and leisure. In their future, your child will require a good understanding of English and Mathematics. Your child will need to develop into a multi-skilled, adaptable and flexible learner who will probably change jobs several times during their working lifetime.

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Dear Students,

This booklet will help to provide you with the information you need to make an informed choice; please read it well and share the process of choosing option subjects with your parents and teachers. Once your options have been chosen and agreed, there is an obligation for you to study them for two years. This makes your choices very important. They must be the right choices for you. You will receive guidance from your tutors and teachers.

***\*All students will be required to enter for their IGCSE examinations for Maths, English, and their five options at the end of Year 11 – May/June 2026.***

# About Your Choices

It is essential that you know what requirements you need to fulfil. In all cases:

Kuwaiti students should make sure they understand the requirements of Kuwait Government Scholarships; which usually includes taking three science subjects (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) and completing at least two AS Levels if intending to study overseas.

All students wishing to travel to the UK to study Medicine or Dentistry are expected to take three A Levels or attend the foundation degree programme.

It is your responsibility to research the specific major and universities of your choice. Failure to do so may result in you not being accepted into the university or the major of your choice.

You should conduct your research as follow:

- a) Country – where will you be studying?
- b) University – which universities will you want to apply to?
- c) Major – what do you want to study at university?

\*University websites have the entry requirements for each major.

# Who to Contact

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# Core Subjects

## English

All students are required to take English at IGCSE.

Students can choose either –

English as a First Language **or** English as a Second Language

## Mathematics

All students are required to take Mathematics at IGCSE

## Arabic

In Year 10, all students follow the Ministry Arabic programme.

In Year 11, students have the option to:

- continue with Ministry Arabic
- take Edexcel GCSE Arabic as a Second Language
- take Cambridge IGCSE First Language Arabic

## Islamic

In Year 10 and 11, all students follow the Ministry Islamic programme. In Year 11, students will also be offered the opportunity to enter for IGCSE Islamiyat.

## Physical Education (non-examined)

All students must participate in one lesson of PE each week.

# Optional Subjects

Students are to select 5 different subjects from the subject list below.

**Art and Design**

**Biology**

**Business Studies**

**Chemistry**

**Computer Science**

**Economics**

**English Literature**

**French**

**Geography**

**History**

**ICT**

**Music**

**Physics**

**Psychology**

**Physical Education**

We advise students to follow the below guidance to help them make a decision:

- Choose subjects which you enjoy, are good at and are interested in
- Speak to your current class teachers and follow their advice. They will know if the subject is suitable for you
- Do not choose a subject just because a friend is doing it, or because of the teacher who might teach it
- Find out which subjects are necessary for particular majors at university and/or for particular careers

# Understanding Grading

For the majority of Cambridge IGCSE exams, you have a choice as to how you would like the awarded grade to be reported.

The table below compares the new 9 - 1 grading structure with the historic A\* - G grading structure. Generally, both are accepted globally, however do check with the Ministry of Education in your country for any local requirements.

<b>9 - 1 Grading Structure</b>	<b>A* - G Grading Structure</b>
9	A*
8	
7	
6	B
5	
4	
3	D
2	
1	
U	
	E
	F
	G
	U

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# English – First Language

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\* – G 0500  
9 – 1 0990

## **What you will study:**

This course is aimed to students who are confident in the mastery of their skills. It is a challenging course which prepares students to think critically and analytically. Learners are encouraged to read to further their awareness of the ways in which English is used. Candidates will have the opportunity to respond knowledgeable to a rich array of reading passages, writing in a range of text types for different audiences. They are encouraged to become appreciative and critical readers, writers, speakers and listeners. Candidates of this course are usually Fast Track students or students with top marks in English at the end of KS3, whose reading and writing abilities are exceptional. At the same time, since creative and analytical skills are used on a regular basis, students who also study English Literature as an optional course are most likely the candidates of this programme.

## **How you will be assessed:**

Paper 1 Reading (50% of overall grade)

Paper 2 Directed Writing and Composition (50% of overall grade)

*All exams are assessed externally.*

# English – Second Language

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\* – G 0510  
9 – 1 0993

## **What you will study:**

This course offers candidates the opportunity to develop practical communication skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing. It builds a solid foundation for the skills required for further study or employment using English as the medium. It also develops learners' awareness of the nature of language and language-learning skills and promotes personal development. Learners will be presented with a variety of stimuli that will build up their skills in reading and writing. They will learn to select relevant details, understand the difference between what is directly stated and implied, and practise writing for different purposes and audiences. Learners will listen to a range of spoken material to develop listening skills. They will engage in conversations on a variety of topics and develop their skills in responding to different situations and audiences with a degree of accuracy and clarity. This course will enable learners to become independent users of English, able to communicate in English effectively in a variety of practical contexts.

## **How you will be assessed:**

Paper 1 Reading and Writing (70% of overall grade)

Paper 2 Listening (30% of overall grade)

Paper 3 Speaking (Separately endorsed).

*All exams are assessed externally.*

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# Mathematics

**Exam Board:** Edexcel

**Syllabus Codes:** 9 – 4 4MA1 (Higher)  
5 – 1 4MA1 (Foundation)

## **What you will study:**

Students will study mathematical content in the following areas –

numbers and the number system;

equations, formulae and identities;

sequences;

functions and graphs;

geometry;

trigonometry;

vectors and transformation geometry;

statistics and probability.

## **How you will be assessed:**

Paper 1 (50% of overall grade)

Paper 2 (50% of overall grade)

*All exams are assessed externally.*

# Arabic – First Language

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\*– G 0508  
9 – 1 7184

## **What you will study**

This First Language syllabus develops learner's ability to communicate clearly, accurately and effectively. They learn how to employ a wide-ranging vocabulary, use correct grammar, spelling and punctuation. Learners are also encouraged to read widely, both for their own enjoyment and in order to develop an appreciation of literature

## **How you will be assessed**

Paper 1 Reading (50% of overall grade)

Paper 2 Writing (50% of overall grade)

*All exams are assessed externally.*

# Arabic – Second Language

**Exam Board:** Edexcel

**Syllabus Codes:** 9 – 4 1AA0 (Higher)  
5 – 1 1AA0 (Foundation)

## **What you will study**

The content of the exam and course looks at relevant contemporary and cultural themes, including: identity and culture; local area, holiday and travel; school; future aspirations, study and work; international and global dimension

## **How you will be assessed**

Paper 1 Listening and understanding in Arabic (25% of overall grade)

Paper 2 Speaking in Arabic (25% of overall grade)

Paper 3 Reading and understanding in Arabic (25% of overall grade)

Paper 4 Writing in Arabic (25% of overall grade)

*All exams are assessed externally.*

# Islamiyat

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\*– G 0493

## **What you will study**

The exam is assessed primarily in English language, and covers the following topics: Major themes of the Qur'an; the history and importance of the Qur'an; the life and importance of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH); the first Islamic community; major teachings in the Hadiths of the Prophet; the history and importance of the Hadiths; the Rightly Guided Caliphs; the Articles of Faith and the Pillars of Islam.

## **How you will be assessed**

Paper 1 Qur'an and Islam (50% of overall grade)

Paper 2 Hadiths and Islam (50% of overall grade)

*All exams are assessed externally.*

# Art and Design

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\* – G      0400  
                          9 – 1      0989

## **What you will study**

The art work you produce in Years 10 and 11 will represent 50% of the final grade you achieve. The course is designed to enhance your research skills, skills in drawing, painting, use of pastels, pen and ink, printmaking and collage. Students develop their knowledge and skills in a broad range of media, processes and techniques.

## **How you will be assessed**

Component 1 – Broad-based Assignment (50% of overall grade)  
8-hour practical examination.

Examination piece plus up to two sheets (four sides) of supporting work.

Component 4 – Coursework assignment (50% of overall grade)

One Final Outcome plus supporting portfolio.

Maximum size of outcome and portfolio is A2, up to four sheets (8 sides) of work in portfolio.

*All exams are assessed externally.*

# Biology

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\*– G    0610  
9 – 1    0970

## What you will study

Characteristics and classification of living organisms; organisation of the organisms; movement into and out of cells; biological molecules; enzymes; plant nutrition; human nutrition; transport in plants; transport in animals; diseases and immunity; gas exchange in humans; respiration; excretion in humans; coordination and response; drugs; reproduction; inheritance; variation and selection; organisms and their environment; human influences on ecosystems; biotechnology and genetic modification.

## How you will be assessed

Paper 1 (Core) or Paper 2 (Ext.) Multiple Choice (30% of overall grade)  
Paper 3 (Core) or Paper 4 (Ext.) Theory (50% of overall grade)  
Paper 6 Alternative to Practical (20% of overall grade)

*All exams are assessed externally.*



# Business Studies

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\* – G 0450  
9 – 1 0986

## **What you will study**

Learners develop understanding of business activity in the public and private sectors, and the importance of innovation and change.

Learners find out how the major types of business organisations are established, financed and run, and how their activities are regulated. Factors influencing business decision-making are also considered, as are the essential values of cooperation and interdependence.

Learners not only study business concepts and techniques but also enhance related skills such as numeracy and enquiry.

## **How you will be assessed**

Paper 1 Short answer and data response (50% of overall grade)

Paper 2 Case study (50% of overall grade)

*All exams are assessed externally.*

# Chemistry

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\* – G 0620  
9 – 1 0971

## **What you will study**

States of matter; atoms, elements and compounds; stoichiometry; electrochemistry; chemical energetics; chemical reactions; acids, bases and salts; the Periodic Table; metals; chemistry of the environment; organic chemistry; experimental techniques and chemical analysis.

## **How you will be assessed**

Paper 1 (Core) or Paper 2 (Ext.) Multiple Choice (30% of overall grade)

Paper 3 (Core) or Paper 4 (Ext.) Theory (50% of overall grade)

Paper 6 Alternative to Practical (20% of overall grade)

*All exams are assessed externally.*

# Computer Science

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\* – G    0478  
9 – 1    0984

## **What you will study**

Cambridge IGCSE Computer Science learners study the principles and practices of computing, whilst gaining confidence in computational thinking and programming. They learn to program by writing computer code and they develop their understanding of the main principles of problem solving using computers. Learners also apply their understanding to develop computer-based solutions to problems using algorithms and a high-level programming language. They also develop a range of technical skills, as well as the ability to test effectively and to evaluate computing solutions.

## **How you will be assessed**

Paper 1 Computer Systems (50% of overall grade)

Paper 2 Algorithms, programming and logic (50% of overall grade)

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# Economics

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\* – G    0455  
9 – 1    0987

## **What you will study**

Learners develop an understanding of economic terminology and principles of basic economic theory. Learners study the economics of developed and developing nations and how these interrelate. They also learn to handle simple data and undertake economic analysis, evaluate information and discriminate between facts and value judgments in economic issues. The syllabus also encourages a better understanding of the world in which learners live, and helps them play an active part in the decision-making process, whether as consumers, producers or citizens of the local, national and international community.

## **How you will be assessed**

Paper 1 Multiple Choice (30% of overall grade)

Paper 2 Structured questions (70% of overall grade)

*All exams are assessed externally.*

# English Literature

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\* – G 0475  
9 – 1 0992

## **What you will study**

This course is mainly aimed at students who like reading, who are passionate for literature and can get easily lost in a book. It involves spending a lot of time analysing a text, reading bibliography and critics. Cambridge IGCSE English Literature offers candidates the opportunity to read, interpret, evaluate and respond to a range of literature in English. The range includes drama, prose and poetry from the works of William Shakespeare to contemporary literature. This course enables learners to deepen their understanding and appreciation of the ways in which writers use English to express meaning and achieve effects. Cambridge IGCSE English Literature will stimulate candidates to read for pleasure and to explore wider and universal issues, promoting a better understanding of themselves and the world.

## **How you will be assessed**

Paper 1 Poetry and Prose (50% of overall grade)  
Paper 3 Drama – open text (25% of overall grade)  
Paper 4 Unseen (25% of overall grade)

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# French

**Exam Board:** Edexcel

**Syllabus Codes:** 9 – 4 1FR0 (Higher)  
5 – 1 1FR0 (Foundation)

## What you will study

There are five topic areas which cover both tiers of the examination. Each topic area is developed in conjunction with the linguistic structures, the minimum core vocabulary and the knowledge, skills and understanding requirements of the specification. The topics covered are identity and culture; local area, holidays and travel; school; future aspiration, study and work; international and global dimension.

## How you will be assessed

Paper 1 Listening and understanding in French (25% of overall grade)

Paper 2 Speaking in French (25% of overall grade)

Paper 3 Reading and understanding in French (25% of overall grade)

Paper 4 Writing in French (25% of overall grade)

*All exams are assessed externally.*

# Geography

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\* – G    0460  
9 – 1    0976

## **What you will study**

The aim of the IGCSE Geography course is to develop an understanding of location on a local, regional and global scale. To have an awareness of the contrasting opportunities and constraints presented by different societies. Students must be able to understand an appreciation of and concern for the environment and support this with an appreciation of the earth including its people, places, landscapes, natural processes and phenomena. IGCSE Geography is divided into three themes which have been designed to develop an understanding of both the natural and the human environment. These are Population and Settlement, the natural environment and economic development.

## **How you will be assessed**

Paper 1 Geographical Themes (45% of overall grade)

Paper 3 Geographical Skills (27.5% of overall grade)

Paper 4 Alternative to Coursework (27.5% of overall grade)

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# History

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\* – G      0470  
9 – 1      0977

## What you will study

The course offers the opportunity to study world history from the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twenty-first century. It encourages learners to raise questions and to develop and deploy historical skills, knowledge and understanding in order to provide historical explanations. Learners explore history from a diversity of perspectives, including social, economic, cultural and political. Students can gain a greater understanding of international issues and inter-relationships and learn how to present clear, logical arguments. Students will study topics ranging from the end of the First World war, examining and investigating reasons for the consequences of certain events that have taken place over time. For example, the Cuban Missile Crisis, The Cold War, The Berlin Wall and the collapse of the USSR. For the Depth Study - students will look at the First world war (1914-1918), the causes of the war, and the effects of the war in Europe and around the world up to the 1920s.

## How you will be assessed

Paper 1 Extended answer (40% of overall grade)

Paper 2 Source paper (33% of overall grade)

Paper 4 Alternative to coursework (27% of overall grade)

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# ICT

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\* – G 0417  
9 – 1 0983

## **What you will study**

The course encourages learners to develop lifelong skills, which will be useful to them in their work across the curriculum and prepare them for future employment. Students will develop an understanding of the implications of technology in society, including social, economic and ethical uses and awareness of the ways ICT can help in home, learning and work environments. The course also combines theoretical and practical studies focusing on the ability to use common software applications to solve problems, including word processors, spreadsheets, databases, interactive presentation software, web browsers and website design. Students will also analyse, design, implement, test and evaluate ICT systems, ensuring that they are fit for purpose. The course will increase students' knowledge on new and emerging technologies and allow students to consider the impact of current and new technologies on methods of working in the outside world and on social, economic, ethical and moral issues.

## **How you will be assessed**

Paper 1 Theory (40% of overall grade)

Paper 2 Practical Exam (30% of overall grade)

Paper 3 Practical Exam (30% of overall grade)

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# Music

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\* – G 0410  
9 – 1 0978

## What you will study

Candidates develop an understanding of music through the three skills of listening, performing and composing, and seven areas of study:

1. Baroque music
2. Classical music
3. Romantic music
4. Music and words
5. Music for dance
6. Music for small ensemble
7. Music for stage and screen

## How you will be assessed

Paper 1 Listening (40% of overall grade)

Component 2 Performing (30% of overall grade)

Component 3 Composing (30% of overall grade)

*All exams are assessed externally.*

# Physical Education

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\* – G 0413  
9 – 1 0995

## What you will study

Learners develop:

- knowledge, skills and understanding of a range of relevant physical activities
- an ability to plan, perform and evaluate physical activities
- an understanding of effective and safe performance
- an understanding of the role of sport and physical activity in society and in the wider world
- an excellent foundation for advanced study
- an enjoyment of physical activity.

Students will study:

1. Anatomy and physiology
2. Health, fitness and training
3. Skill acquisition and psychology
4. Social, cultural and ethical influences

## How you will be assessed

Paper 1 Theory (50% of overall grade)

Component 2 Coursework (50% of overall grade)

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# Physics

**Exam Board:** Cambridge

**Syllabus Codes:** A\*– G 0625  
9 – 1 0972

## **What you will study**

Motion, forces and energy; thermal physics; waves; electricity and magnetism; nuclear physics; space physics.

## **How you will be assessed**

Paper 1 (Core) or Paper 2 (Ext.) Multiple Choice (30% of overall grade)

Paper 3 (Core) or Paper 4 (Ext.) Theory (50% of overall grade)

Paper 6 Alternative to Practical (20% of overall grade)

*All exams are assessed externally.*

# Psychology

**Exam Board:** Edexcel

**Syllabus Codes:** 9 – 1 1PS0

## **What you will study**

Students are given an opportunity to learn an array of topics in the field of psychology. Students will gain an understanding of the self and how they interact with others; develop moral, social and ethical issues within the subject. Throughout the course students are taught scientific skills including understanding psychological data and analysis of statistics. Students studying GCSE Psychology will be taught a wide and engaging number of topics that will be beneficial throughout the rest of their academic life.

Topics include development; memory; psychological problems; the brain and neuropsychology; social influence; criminal psychology; the self; perception; sleep and dreaming; language, thought and communication; research methods.

## **How you will be assessed**

Paper 1 Section A Themes (55% of overall grade)

Paper 2 Section B Themes (45% of overall grade)

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