

Achieve

Autumn 2014



CAMBRIDGE ASSESSMENT



Welcome to *Achieve*

The latest news from Cambridge Assessment, the University's international exams group.

Why 'risky' fieldwork is a good thing

How we should be taking chances with learning outcomes. see page 5

Countdown to the election

OCR stimulates debate at the UK political party conferences. see page 3

The world comes to Cambridge for international education debate

An international education used to be the preserve of a wealthy elite, but it is now something that parents the world over want for their children, a major conference has heard.

More than 140 experts from across the globe met for a lively and constructive clash of ideas at the seventh biennial Cambridge Assessment Conference, *International Education: Interpretation, Importance and Impact*.

Cambridge Assessment Group Chief Executive Simon Lebus opened the day of discussion by saying that if a similar event had been staged 25 years ago it would have been unlikely to attract much interest, but globalisation, technology and the spread of the English language had seen an 'international education' rise up the agenda of governments and become expected by parents around the world.

Throughout the day the conference welcomed participants from India, South Africa, Argentina and Mexico via video link and Mr Lebus' views were echoed by delegates who joined live from Egypt, saying international education was the "system of choice" for thousands of parents. Dr Omneya Kassabgy, Managing Director at the British School of Egypt, said that "as the world becomes

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Delegates from Egypt joined the seventh biennial Cambridge Assessment Conference live to discuss the concept of an 'international education'.



Guy Claxton, Emeritus Professor of the Learning Sciences at the University of Winchester and Visiting Professor of Education at King's College London.

Resilience isn't just a skill, it's an attitude

It's a 'Google world' in which students need to be taught a sceptical attitude towards knowledge claims. The traditional approach to textbook teaching, which presumes the textbook is an unimpeachable source of authority, is inadequate in the 21st century.

There's a lot of good, well-expressed knowledge available on the web as well as the dubious stuff. Whether young people are reading something on Wikipedia or watching TV, they should have a natural deep-seated inclination to say, 'How do we know this is true?', 'Where could we go to check?' and 'Who is good on this?'. Schools also need to engage children with questions, the answers to which are not Googleable.

A key skill learners need in our media age is the ability to control their own concentration. Google is designed to make you distracted, but being able to stay focused on something without being easily distracted is something you can learn. It's a mental muscle you can exercise. Schools need to prepare youngsters with the skills and attitudes they need to cope with difficulty. School should be teaching that the joy of learning is to be found in the struggle with difficult things. Everyone should be feeling confused and stupid much of the time because that's what real learning requires. We need to be building the emotional tolerance for difficulty – the patience to stay with things – in order to discover the deep pride and satisfaction that comes only on the other side of having struggled as intensively as you can with something tricky.

Developing positive learning dispositions is crucial. With a lot of learning skills or thinking skills training, students learn to mobilise those skills only when they are prompted by their teacher. They don't become dispositional or habitual, which is what we need to help youngsters develop, as we are not always going to be there saying: 'This is the time to wheel out your imagination or your concentration or your resilience.' That distinction is really important. Resilience isn't just a skill, it's an attitude – it's the way you meet the world and it's that that we have to try to cultivate in youngsters; not just something that's merely technical.

At a university interview, students are often thrown unpredictable questions to see if they can think on their feet. When someone is asked 'Why are manhole covers round?', if they can take a deep breath then give their thoughts, they are more likely to get in than someone who's got the same qualifications but is struck dumb.

Professor Guy Claxton is the keynote speaker at the 2014 Cambridge Schools Conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 4–5 December.

NEWS IN BRIEF

New date for results day

From next year, students taking Cambridge International A and AS Levels in November will receive their results earlier, in a move that will help students meet university admission deadlines.

The announcement was made by Cambridge Assessment Group Chief Executive Simon Lebus at two Cambridge International Examinations Principals Forums in Cape Town and Johannesburg.

The results for the November 2015 exam series will be released on 13 January 2016. This will benefit many students applying to university, particularly in



the southern hemisphere. The news was met with a positive reaction from the Principals who heard the announcement at the events in South Africa.

Mr Lebus said: "We greatly value our relationship with Cambridge schools in the southern hemisphere. I believe bringing forward the results of Cambridge International AS and A Levels will bring benefit to a large number of students applying to university."

Chartered Banker Institute invests in OCR qualification

The Chartered Banker Institute has developed a specialist qualification for those working at the frontline of business banking.

The Chartered Banker Institute has worked with OCR to create a Level 2 Award in Business Banking, which has been designed to develop those in, or aspiring to, a frontline service support role in business banking, possibly within an apprenticeship scheme for level 2 'providing financial services'.



The qualification will develop candidates' understanding of the principles of business banking, the sector and the different types of business customer and their needs. It will also provide the learner with an insight into regulatory and legal requirements, as well as ethical and sustainability considerations, and it also focuses on the importance of good customer service.

This development follows on from a suite of professional services qualifications that OCR has already introduced with key employers to create meaningful qualifications that will support workforce development.

Innovative approach to digital education launched in China

A partnership designed to set a new standard in digital education – enabling schools to provide a more dynamic and personalised approach to teaching and learning – has been launched by Cambridge Assessment's Group Chief Executive Simon Lebus in China.

Cambridge University Press and the Group have joined forces with CollegePre Education to develop Cambridge ClassServer – an innovative new approach that provides

full support to develop ground-breaking digital schools. The software and technology is being developed to provide schools with high quality Cambridge content and assessment together with a learning platform and enhanced data analysis that will help them achieve the highest possible standards. Focusing initially on English language courses in China, it is also expected to develop materials for other subjects in the near future.



More algebra will help solve the equation, say researchers

The breadth of Cambridge research has been on show at a major London event.

Eight researchers presented papers at the British Educational Research Association annual conference.

In their paper, Nicky Rushton and Frances Wilson explained how they found that many teenagers are embarking on Maths A Level courses with an inadequate grasp of algebra. Teachers reported that pupils could achieve B or even A grades at GCSE with little algebraic understanding, with most schools and colleges then having to compensate by laying on extra catch-up classes in the subject. The researchers noted, however, that reforms to maths GCSEs – being introduced by the UK government next September – will include more algebraic problem-solving work.

"It was great to present the research at BERA and to discuss the findings with other researchers and professionals interested in mathematics education," Dr Wilson said. "The presentation generated an interesting discussion about the purpose of GCSE mathematics for different students."



Nicky Rushton



Frances Wilson

Elsewhere at BERA, Tom Benton presented his research on the influential Programme in Student Assessment (PISA) tests. Dr Benton's analysis raised questions about the extent to which performance in PISA can be used to assess the quality of teaching in England and specifically whether any supposedly 'poor performance' or 'stagnation' can be attributed to the quality of teaching in England.

Cambridge Assessment has the largest research capability of its kind in the world, with more than 70 researchers who pioneer the latest techniques and evaluate current assessments. It has taken part in the the BERA annual conference for many years and its researchers regularly contribute to the BERA programme across a wide range of themes. Like BERA, it believes that educational research plays a vital role in the continuous improvement of educational and assessment policies and practices.

And you can read more about the Group's research here: www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/our-research/

The world comes to Cambridge for international education debate

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increasingly connected, international education is recognised as a key driver of future prosperity”.

A fascinating overview of the economic drivers behind the growth of international education was provided by David Smith, the Sunday Times' Economics Editor. He said that countries around the world viewed education as one of the most obvious routes out of the global financial crisis. “Education is very important now in the globalisation story and I don't see any prospect of that going into reverse,” he said.

The conference then heard from Marc S. Tucker, a leader in the movement for standards-based school reform in the United States. The President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Center on Education and the Economy said that America had “paced the rest of the world in attainment” from the 1850s right through to the 1970s, being arguably the first country to provide universal primary and secondary school education. But he said attainment growth ground to a halt in the 1970s, despite substantial investment in education. He said the US needed to pursue a new educational model, based on top-performing countries.



More than 140 experts from across the globe met for a lively and constructive clash of ideas.

“Cambridge-style education is the wave of the future,” he said. “Not just for a small minority of schools that are going to train a nation's leaders. Countries will survive and prosper only if they provide for almost all their kids a kind and quality of education that up to now they have provided only to their elites.”

In her presentation, Isabel Nisbet, former Regional Director of Education, South East Asia, for Cambridge International Examinations, asked whether education could be both national and international. Ms Nisbet, the Executive Director of the newly formed A Level Content Advisory Board, said that she felt that the two should sit alongside in an interactive relationship.

Delegates went to lunch with a host of ideas to debate, and returned in the afternoon to a presentation from educators including Stephen Spurr, former Head Master of Westminster School. Dr Spurr, who is Managing Director Europe of Reddam House group – an expanding network of high-performing schools in South Africa and Australia – said it was sobering to see how advanced pupils in high-performing jurisdictions were compared to their counterparts in the UK. He called for a “creative fusion” of Socratic and Confucian approaches to learning.

The audience was then given an insight into how an international education could become available to all, with a presentation by Dino Varkey, Group Executive Director at the GEMS Education Group. He said there was no reason to fear private sector involvement in international education, saying it could respond much more quickly to growing demand – providing a good education for as little as three dollars a month in some parts of India.

“We don't have time to engage in the traditional intellectual and political debates of public versus



Isabel Nisbet, Executive Director of the A Level Content Advisory Board, and former Regional Director of Education, South East Asia, for Cambridge International Examinations, spoke about the need for international and national education to interact.

private that seem to occupy so much time and resource in the developed world,” he said.

The day's discussions and presentations culminated in a lively 'Big Debate' from the floor, chaired by presenter Sian Jones, before Tim Oates, Group Director of Assessment Research and Development, provided the closing remarks. He said that, while he was not going to attempt to summarise a day which was so full of ideas, it had shown that “very complex relations and forces play out in complex ways”.

“However, it's a truism just to say 'it's complex' and so often conferences and discussion reach that conclusion,” he said. “Today we've gone beyond simply saying that – we've said we can examine how that complexity plays out in different circumstance, how historical processes are unfolding, and that's important”.

Delegates and speakers then retired to continue the debate over refreshments. And true to the spirit of such an international debate, the discussion continued long after on social media.

To view all the videos from the day visit www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk

Countdown to the election

The Group has made its voice heard at the UK political party conferences this year, the last major events before the election in 2015.

Our UK exam board OCR held events at each of the three main party conferences, in partnership with the magazine FE Week.

Co-chaired by OCR's Skills & Employment Director Charlotte Bosworth, the events attracted a range of FE stakeholders and interested parliamentarians. The panel was invited to share its views on what the sector needed from the party manifestos.

A range of issues came up, including the need for good quality information, advice and guidance, a need for fair funding and an understanding of the importance of English and maths – but a recognition that a one-size-fits-all approach to GCSE is not the right policy. Contributions from the National Union of Students (NUS) highlighted the learner's perspective on the impact of reform and the need for parity of esteem for Further Education.

Charlotte Bosworth said: “We're acutely aware of the breadth of issues affecting the sector. However, we think there is a bigger more systemic problem. The short-term nature of British governments has led to an ever-increasing myriad of initiatives that, while

seeking to redress issues with the system, have had the adverse effect – making it more complex and impenetrable to learners, parents and employers”.

OCR's contribution to the debate and the Skills Manifesto, to be published later this year, is to call for a re-examination of the education and skills system to create a clear explanation and common understanding of the purpose of different types of institutions and what pathways for young people they secure.

At the Labour conference, the panel welcomed Shadow Skills Spokesperson Lord Young of Norwood Green and Shadow Minister for Transport Gordon Marsden MP. At the Conservative party event, it welcomed Skills Minister Nick Boles MP and at the Liberal Democrat event, Apprenticeship Ambassador, Gordon Birtwistle MP. Sector bodies including the Association of Colleges, the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, the 157 Group and the NUS were represented on each panel, which ensured that these meetings were the 'go-to' events for those interested in FE and skills at the party conferences.

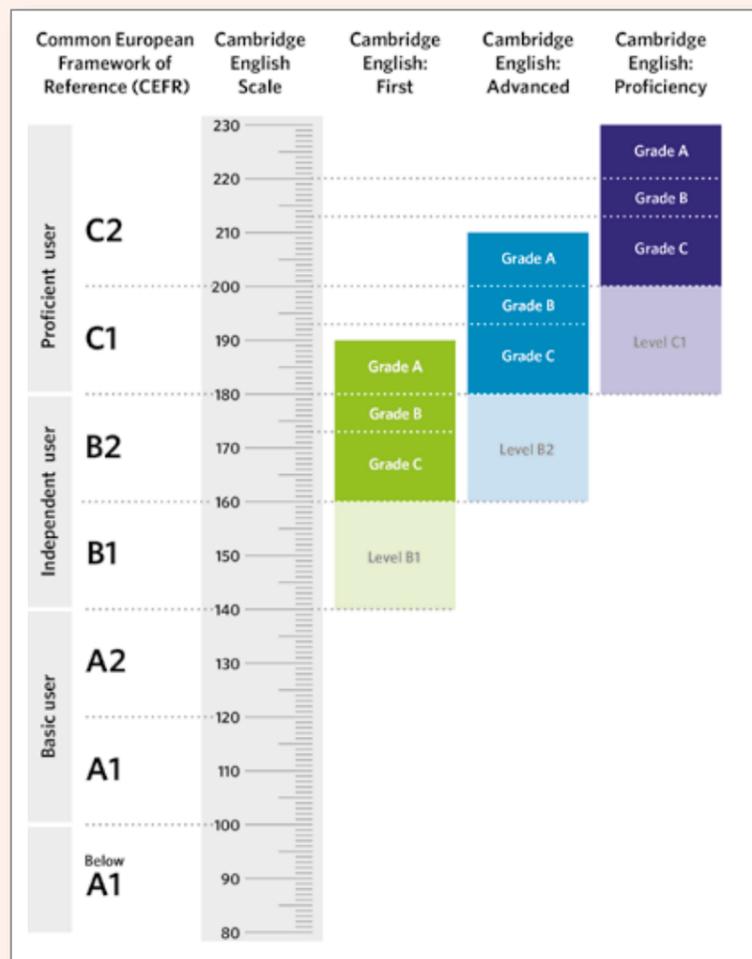


OCR Skills & Employment Director Charlotte Bosworth



Skills Minister Nick Boles MP

A better way to report English ability



"The new scale will provide a clearer picture to candidates on their overall performance."

The new Cambridge English Scale

An enhanced approach to reporting results for Cambridge English exams will be launched from next year.

The Cambridge English Scale – a single range of scores used to report results – will be launched for Cambridge English: First, First for Schools, Advanced and Proficiency in January. It will be phased in for Cambridge English: Key and Preliminary from August 2015 and Cambridge English: Business Certificates from September 2015.

Ron Zeronis, Assistant Director at Cambridge English, said:

"The new scale will provide a clearer picture to candidates on their overall performance. They'll also be able to see how their achievement relates to internationally recognised standards and other Cambridge English exams."

Cambridge English Scale scores will replace the current candidate profile and standardised score, although Grades and Common European Framework of Reference for Languages levels will be retained.

Assessment of science practical work – time to try harder?

One of the most hotly contested issues in science education – the role and place of practical learning – has been debated at a Cambridge Assessment Network conference.

In one of a series of seminars designed to stimulate debate on matters at the heart of education and training, a large and appreciative audience heard Professor Sir John Holman spell out his views on GCSE and A Level Science reform in England. He said he felt that changes which will mean science practicals no longer contribute to students' A Level grades could be damaging.

"I think schools and colleges will conclude that [practical science] is irrelevant for university, and history suggests we should be cautious. There's a risk here – we don't know what's going to happen – it could be good, but it could be bad," he said.

Sir John went on to say that he had canvassed opinion from universities about the new system – under which students will be given a separate pass/fail for science experiments – and comments included: "students are likely to come to university having been taught not how to do practical work, but how to avoid it".

Glenys Stacey, Chief Executive of Ofqual, attended the event, making a powerful case for the changes to A Level and the proposed changes to GCSE, the latter which will be subject to further consultation.

Taking questions from the audience after Sir John's speech, she said "no decision has been more difficult than this one – it has been very testing indeed."

"I think schools and colleges will conclude that [practical science] is irrelevant for university, and history suggests we should be cautious. There's a risk here – we don't know what's going to happen – it could be good, but it could be bad."

She continued: "It has been a very interesting discussion and I'm very glad to be here. We need to have more of these conversations in order to inform the option or options that we put in a future consultation.

"We are optimistic – many teachers have been really punching the air about the opportunity to teach practical science and practical skills, which gives us some cause for hope at least."

Earlier, Tim Oates, Cambridge Assessment's Group Director of Assessment Research and Development, had introduced Sir John with a short speech of his own. He said practical work was vital and it should

"We are optimistic – many teachers have been really punching the air about the opportunity to teach practical science and practical skills, which gives us some cause for hope at least."



Professor Sir John Holman

remain an important educational outcome, but that the current system put teachers in an untenable position.

"Teachers are expected to achieve annual improvements in grade outcomes, while acting as awarding body proxies regarding consistent, fair marking," he said.

The Department for Education has stated that the changes will see practical work play a far bigger part in Science A Level than it currently does.

In a separate development, OCR's Dr Steven Evans was part of a panel that gave evidence to UK MPs on practical science. Dr Evans, Head of Science Development, helped advise the Commons Science and Technology Committee in September.

Trailblazing teachers

A group of teachers in Uruguay became the first in the country to complete the Cambridge International Diploma in Teaching with ICT.

The teachers received their certificates at an event at the Presidency in Montevideo, attended by senior figures in Uruguayan education. Speakers commented on the quality of the Diploma programme, its practical and reflective nature and how it fostered collaborative learning among the trainees and their tutors.

In Uruguay, the Diploma programme is supporting Plan Ceibal, the country's innovative and widely praised initiative to provide a laptop for every child.

The Diploma programme is being run by the Consejo de Formación en Educación (CFE), Uruguay's national teaching training agency. CFE has gained approval for it to be a recognised postgraduate diploma in Uruguay so it is already attracting a growing number of teachers.

Cambridge International Examinations has recently introduced new Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications. It is working with CFE and Plan Ceibal to design their programme around the new Certificate and Diploma in Teaching with Digital Technologies so that the qualifications help as many Uruguayan teachers as possible over the next few years.



Cambridge and Tokyo link up for Olympic Games

Cambridge English is helping the Tokyo Metropolitan Government with its goal of raising students' English language proficiency ahead of the Tokyo Olympic Games in 2020.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government Board of Education is using the Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT) from Cambridge English to evaluate the skills of specially selected teachers prior to their departure for training in the US and Australia. TKT is also being used to help raise skill levels among Tokyo's English teachers, thereby improving the language ability of their students. The overseas teacher training project will contribute towards the goal of raising English language proficiency ahead of the Games in 2020.

TKT is an internationally recognised qualification from Cambridge English which gives formal recognition of teaching experience while also helping teachers to develop new skills and build confidence. The 140 selected teachers will be taking TKT Module 3, focusing on how to manage the teaching and learning process, and some will also take a practical TKT course. The teachers will travel to the University of California, Irvine, and to the University of New South Wales, for three month training courses scheduled to take place between September 2014 and March 2015

15-year-olds successfully trial new exams model



Every grade 9 pupil in Portugal has taken a Cambridge English exam at no cost to them, their parents or the government – thanks to an innovative government programme which secured funding from major companies within the country's financial, publishing and communications sectors.

The English language arm of Cambridge Assessment developed the *Key for Schools Portugal* programme by working with the national exams authority IAVE since 2012. The board, Cambridge English Language Assessment, recently completed the marking of over 117,000 school students who are typically 15-years-old and took the tests in schools throughout the Portuguese mainland, Madeira and the Azores.



Cris Betts, who led the project at Cambridge English, said: "This is one of the largest programmes we have ever managed. We worked with IAVE to help them identify the test that best met the needs of their students, and to train hundreds of teachers who took part in administering and marking the tests. We were able to provide a highly economical funding solution, which will be of huge benefit to students across Portugal. This is an innovative and far-sighted initiative by the Portuguese government and it provides an excellent model which other countries will want to study very closely."

The project was funded by a consortium of four leading companies in Portugal: investment bank BPI, healthcare workflow solution provider Connexall, information technology specialist Novabase and publisher Porto Editora.

Why 'risky' fieldwork is a good thing

A Level geography students in the UK should be encouraged to embrace 'risky' fieldwork – taking chances with learning outcomes – in preparation for success at university and in their future careers. This was the strong message from Nick Laphorn, of the Field Studies Council, at an OCR Geography Forum attended by teachers and representatives from the Geographical Association, the Royal Meteorological Society and the British Antarctic Survey



Nick Laphorn – "Learning to cope with getting the unexpected helps to build resilience in student learning."

Mr Laphorn said: "We often go out to collect data about the world around us with preconceived ideas about what we are expecting to find. There is fundamentally no big problem with this, as this is how 'hypothesis testing' in science works, but the issue comes when we actively search out locations and data that help to reinforce our preconceived ideas; when we look for data that fits the hypothesis. Getting the answers we expect is seen as 'success' and not getting what we expect is then considered as a 'failure'.

"We often go out to collect data about the world around us with preconceived ideas about what we are expecting to find."

"Learning to cope with getting the unexpected helps to build resilience in student learning. Study at university requires students to be able to tackle learning in an independent way; questioning prior learning, ways of undertaking tasks and to an extent challenging and questioning received information."

With the help of Mr Laphorn, OCR is rolling out a series of one day training events for teachers to develop confidence and expertise in fieldwork, and encourage them to 'think outside the box'.

Czech mates for Cambridge English

An impressive number of major Czech businesses – including one of the country's largest brewers – have formally recognised Cambridge exams as proof of the English skills required in an international workplace. Staropramen and Plzensky Prazdroj, together with Czech construction giant Metrostav, now use Cambridge English qualifications, as well as global players who operate in the Czech Republic including HSBC, E&Y and Vodafone, UK retailer Marks & Spencer, and commercial real estate giant Cushman and Wakefield.



English skills have become an important asset within Czech businesses, reflecting the country's increasingly international economy and the number of English-speaking companies with a presence in the Czech Republic. Cambridge qualifications are now often cited as a requirement for job applicants, and are also used by companies as promotion incentives. As a

result, the exams have become a popular choice for those wishing to improve their skills and enhance their CV with an internationally recognised English language qualification.

Cambridge English: First, Advanced and Proficiency qualifications are among those recognised by Czech companies. These qualifications develop

the full range of language skills expected in a workplace context, testing ability in speaking, listening, reading and writing as well as grammar and vocabulary. In addition, many Czech companies also recognise the Cambridge English: Business Certificates, which develop those English skills most relevant to an international business context.

OCR aims to put students in pole position

A competition to design a "better, faster, 'cooler' Formula 1 car" is being used in conjunction with an OCR Cambridge National qualification.

The challenge, open to students the world over, is run by not-for-profit organisation F1 in Schools. It aims to engage students in STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) subjects, allowing them to use key skills including communication, presenting and team work, within a real life project. Linking it to the Cambridge National in Engineering Level 1/2 qualification means teachers will be able to offer students a holistic approach to the subject through a number of units within the course, including design briefs, product analysis and 3D design realisation.

Mara Bogdanovic, OCR's Head of Business Engagement for Skills and Employment, said: "With this competition teachers can not only structure a programme of learning that is engaging for the students and shows them how the skills they are learning can be used holistically across the working environment, but they can also highlight just how exciting careers in this area can be".

There are a number of developments in this sector, with an Engineering Level 3 Cambridge Technical available for first teaching in September 2015 and a brand new University Technical College (UTC), the WMG Academy for Young Engineers, opening in Coventry, offering Cambridge Nationals in Engineering.



Migrants left voiceless by lack of national ESOL strategy

DEMOS

One size does not fit all

Around 700,000 migrants are being “left voiceless” due to the UK Government’s lack of a national strategy to teach English, according to a major report.

A study by the think-tank DEMOS – sponsored by Cambridge Assessment and its exam board Cambridge English – reveals a widening gap between the 850,000 migrants who at the last UK census said they could not speak English well or at all, and the 150,000 currently registered in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes.

The report states that England needs an ESOL strategy that better fits the needs of migrants, whether that is measured in social or economic terms. The study shows that the English language is a critical skill that helps improve economic and social outcomes for migrants, and by extension, wider society.



Ally Paget,
researcher at
Demos.

It highlights not only how other countries overcome language barriers for migrants, but the failures of successive UK governments to do so. It says the current split of responsibilities for ESOL policy between multiple government departments, constraints on funding and a failure to construct policy around key educational principles – such as realistic levels of attainment and an understanding of migrant needs – mean value-for-money for taxpayers is not being provided and the aspirations of learners are not being met.

This report concludes with a set of imaginative initiatives to help rectify the situation and provide positive outcomes for ESOL learners and taxpayers, while meeting higher standards of educational practice. The report author, Ally Paget, said:

“Unfortunately, our current ESOL system is not up to the task. Current policy suffers from fragmentation, lack of clarity about the aims and intended outcomes of learning, and the tendency to take a short-term view.

“We need to have a more coherent national strategy for ESOL in England, bringing us up to speed with other comparable countries.”

I welcome the DEMOS report, because you can’t have a ‘one-size fits all’ approach to teaching English to migrants. Just saying “Well, here’s the proficiency level you have to get to,” is not an effective way of approaching this complex task.



Policy-makers need to consider the varying needs of all groups of migrants, and to tease apart what kinds of support are needed in different cases. This will enable clearer eligibility criteria to be established and ensure that where government funding is made available it reaches the intended targets.

Putting a language learning strategy for migrants coming to the UK in place is not simply about English language skills needed to cope in education or workplace settings. It must go further than this and consider, for instance, migrants who come to the UK as spouses, or for their retirement. These people may never enter the workplace – and may live predominantly within their family or a monolingual community – but they will nevertheless still need the ability to interact with speakers of English, even in a limited way.

We’re fortunate in this country to have excellent provision of courses and specialised English language teachers, as well as community support workers who really understand the needs of migrants as language learners. Their expertise will be key to developing an effective national strategy, both for newcomers and for long-term residents seeking to improve their communication skills.

Dr Nick Saville, Director of Research and Validation at Cambridge English Language Assessment.

The History Top 10, revealed

New research has thrown a light on the topics studied by A Level History students in the UK.

Russian Dictatorship (1855–1992) proved the most popular, offered by more than a third of schools and colleges surveyed. It was followed by Civil Rights in the USA (1865–1992) in second and Dictatorship & Democracy in Germany (1933–1963) in third.

The top 10 emerged in a study by the Group’s Assessment Research and Development Division. Researchers Simon Child, Ellie Darlington and Tim Gill looked at how schools were using the range of choices available to them on our UK exam board OCR’s A Level History courses.

Writing in the Cambridge Assessment publication Research Matters, they found that schools generally favoured modern history over medieval and early modern, although ‘traditional’ topics such as Tudor history still proved popular. The study of one of Britain’s most influential Prime Ministers, Sir Winston Churchill, came in at number five. The full top 10 is published below.

Dr Child said: “History is one of the most popular subjects at A Level, and the figures show it is increasing in popularity. We set out to explore how schools use the options available to them, and found that offering a wide range of choices does not necessarily lead to historical or geographical breadth.”

A Levels are currently being reformed, with new History A Levels being taught from September 2015.

OCR’s draft new A Level in History includes the chance to tackle new topics, including Alfred the Great, Genghis Khan and pre-colonial African kingdoms.

Mike Goddard, OCR’s Head of History, said: “It’s sometimes said that Hitler and the Henrys can dominate school history. That is why here at OCR we are giving schools the opportunity to embrace a broader focus – with the extra help and support to do so.”

To read the analysis in full, please see the latest edition of Research Matters here: www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/news/our-publications/research-matters/

Top 10 OCR A Level History topic choices offered by schools and colleges in 2013

- I. Russian Dictatorship (1855–1992)
- II. Civil Rights in the USA (1865–1992)
- III. Dictatorship & Democracy in Germany (1933–1963)
- IV. Mid-Tudor Crises (1536–1569)
- V. Churchill (1920–1945)
- VI. Rebellion & Disorder Under the Tudors (1485–1603)
- VII. Henry VIII to Mary I (1509–1558)
- VIII. Democracy & Dictatorship in Germany (1919–1963)
- IX. The Origins & Causes of the French Revolution (1774–1795)
- X. From Pitt to Peel (1783–1846)

TOP
10



THE
education
WORLD FORUM

A global gathering

The largest gathering of education and skills ministers in the world takes place in the UK early next year.

The Education World Forum will be held in London from 18 to 21 January 2015. Last year more than 90 countries were represented at the event, which brought together more than 500 delegates to address key issues and to share the education system challenges they face, the solutions they have found, their learning and the successes they have achieved.

Cambridge International Examinations and Cambridge English Language Assessment are delighted to be sponsoring this year's event.

For more information go to www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/events/

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The secret to inspiring teaching and learning

More than 200 delegates from over 30 countries visited the Cambridge Schools Conference to explore a theme of inspiring teaching and learning.

The first day of the event at Homerton College in Cambridge focused on teaching. Keynote speaker Professor Chris Husbands, Director of the Institute of Education in London, talked about great schools and inspiring teaching – and how to get them.

The speech was streamed live on the Cambridge International Examinations website, and was watched by viewers in countries across the world, including India, Indonesia and South Africa.

The second day of the conference explored elements of inspiring learning. The keynote speaker was Guy Claxton, Visiting Professor of Education at King's College, London (read his thoughts in the *View From...* column on page 2).

Throughout the two days, delegates contributed to a range of workshops and panel discussions. These included sessions on developing active learners and how to be a creative, reflective professional.

For the first time, an app was produced for conference delegates, with information about the programme, speakers and venue. It also gave delegates a platform to comment on sessions and share their ideas. At the end of the conference one delegate described himself as "fired up like dynamite". Another said: "I can't wait to share all these wonderful teaching ideas with our teachers. What a privilege! I know we can inspire teachers to inspire students!"

A second Cambridge Schools Conference on the same theme will take place in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 4–5



More than 200 delegates from around the world attended the Cambridge Schools Conference.

December. The Chief Guest of Honour will be the High Commissioner of Sri Lanka.

A range of material from the Cambridge conference, including videos, podcasts and presentations, has been published on the Cambridge International Examinations website at www.cie.org.uk/csconf14.

A warm welcome in Malaysia

An in-depth study of the learning, teaching and assessment of English in Malaysian schools was discussed on a visit to the country by a group from Cambridge.

A team led by Group Chief Executive Simon Lebus met with Malaysia's Minister of Education II, Dato' Seri Idris Bin Jusoh, to discuss current and recent projects, including the recent benchmarking exercise carried out by Cambridge English Language

Assessment in partnership with the Ministry. The study is part of a programme which aims to ensure that every child is proficient in Bahasa Malaysia and English and is endorsed by a Malaysian Education Blueprint for 2013–2025.



Pictured from left to right: Ng Kim Huat, Senior Schools Development Manager, Cambridge International Examinations Malaysia; Angela French, Director Operations, South and South East Asia, Cambridge English Language Assessment; Dato' Seri Idris Bin Jusoh, Minister of Education II, Malaysia; Simon Lebus, Group Chief Executive, Cambridge Assessment; Dr Ranjit Singh Gill, Director, English Language Teaching Centre (ELTC).