



Syllabus

Cambridge O Level Tamil 3226

Use this syllabus for exams in 2028.

Exams are available in the June series.

This syllabus is **not** available in all administrative zones.

Please check the syllabus page at www.cambridgeinternational.org/3226 to see if this syllabus is available in your administrative zone.

A white speech bubble icon with a slight shadow, containing the Tamil word 'தமிழ்' (Tamil) in a white, rounded font. The icon is centered within a large, thin red curved line that forms a heart shape on the page.

Why choose Cambridge?

We work with schools worldwide to build an education that shapes knowledge, understanding and skills. Together, we give learners the confidence they need to thrive and make a positive impact in a changing world.

As part of the University of Cambridge, we offer a globally trusted and flexible framework for education from age 3 to 19, informed by research, experience, and listening to educators.

With recognised qualifications, high-quality resources, comprehensive support and valuable insights, we help schools prepare every student for the opportunities and challenges ahead.

Qualifications that are recognised and valued worldwide

From the world's top-ranked universities to local higher education institutions, Cambridge qualifications open doors to a world of opportunities.

Setting a global standard

With over 160 years of experience in delivering fair, valid and reliable assessments to students worldwide, we offer a global, recognised performance standard for international education.

Your path, your way

Schools can adapt our curriculum, high-quality teaching and learning resources and flexible assessments to their local context. Our aligned offer helps Cambridge schools support every learner to reach their potential and thrive.

Learning with lasting impact

Cambridge learners build subject knowledge and conceptual understanding, and develop a broad range of skills, learning habits and attributes to help make them ready for the world.

Improving learning outcomes through data-led insight and action

Our trusted baseline and diagnostic assessments, together with our insights and evaluation service, help schools turn data into knowledge and actionable insights, to inform teaching decisions and improve learner outcomes.

Bringing together a community of experts

We bring together the collective knowledge of experts and our diverse community of educators worldwide, supporting them to learn from one another and share ideas and information.

Tackling the climate crisis together

We believe that education is key to tackling the climate crisis. Together with Cambridge schools, we can empower young people with the skills and knowledge to take action on climate change, helping them be ready for the world.

School feedback: 'We think the Cambridge curriculum is superb preparation for university.'

Feedback from: Christoph Guttentag, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, Duke University, USA

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment September 2025

Cambridge International Education is the name of our awarding body and a part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, which is a department of the University of Cambridge.

Cambridge University Press & Assessment retains the copyright on all its publications. Registered centres are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use. However, we cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within a centre.

Contents

Why choose Cambridge?	2
1 Why choose this syllabus?	4
2 Syllabus overview	7
Aims	7
Assessment overview	8
Assessment objectives	9
3 Description of papers	10
Paper 1: Composition	10
Paper 2: Translation and Reading Comprehension	10
4 What else you need to know	11
Before you start	11
Making entries	12
Accessibility and equality	12
After the exam	14
How students and teachers can use the grades	14
Changes to this syllabus for 2028	15

Important: Changes to this syllabus

The latest syllabus is version 1, published September 2025. There are no significant changes which affect teaching.

Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2017 are still suitable for use with this syllabus.



1 Why choose this syllabus?

Key benefits

Cambridge O Level is typically for 14 to 16 year olds and is an internationally recognised qualification. It has been designed especially for an international market and is sensitive to the needs of different countries. Cambridge O Level is designed for learners whose first language may not be English, and this is acknowledged throughout the examination process.

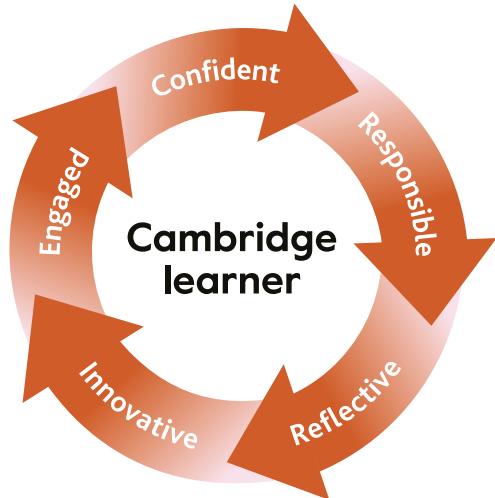
Our programmes promote a thorough knowledge and understanding of a subject and help to develop the skills learners need for their next steps in education or employment.

Cambridge O Levels are established qualifications that keep pace with educational developments and trends. The Cambridge O Level curriculum places emphasis on broad and balanced study across a wide range of subject areas. The curriculum is structured so that candidates attain both practical skills and theoretical knowledge.

Cambridge O Level Language qualifications are accepted by universities and employers as proof of knowledge and understanding of a language. Successful candidates gain lifelong skills including:

- the ability to communicate clearly, accurately and effectively in writing
- the ability to use a wide range of vocabulary, and correct grammar, spelling and punctuation
- a personal style and an awareness of the audience being addressed.

Candidates are also encouraged to read widely, both for their own enjoyment and to further their awareness of the ways in which the language can be used. Cambridge O Level Language qualifications also develop more general analysis and communication skills such as synthesis, inference, and the ability to order facts and present opinions effectively.



School feedback: 'Cambridge O Level has helped me develop thinking and analytical skills which will go a long way in helping me with advanced studies.'

Feedback from: Kamal Khan Virk, former student at Beaconhouse Garden Town Secondary School, Pakistan, who went on to study Actuarial Science at the London School of Economics

Qualifications that are recognised and valued worldwide

Cambridge qualifications prepare and equip learners with the skills they need to thrive at university and beyond. The world's best higher education institutions recognise our qualifications and value the critical thinking skills, independent research abilities and deep subject knowledge that Cambridge learners bring.

We continually work with universities and colleges in every part of the world to ensure that they understand and accept our qualifications. Cambridge O Level provides a springboard to the Cambridge Advanced stage, as well as other post-16 routes. The combination of knowledge and skills in Cambridge O Level Tamil gives learners a solid foundation for further study. Candidates who achieve grades A* to C are well prepared to follow a wide range of courses.

Many universities require a combination of Cambridge International AS & A Levels and Cambridge O Levels or equivalent to meet their entry requirements.

Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition

Supporting teachers

We believe education works best when teaching and learning are closely aligned to the curriculum, resources and assessment. Our high-quality teaching support helps to maximise teaching time and enables teachers to engage learners of all backgrounds and abilities.

We aim to provide the following support for each Cambridge qualification:

- Syllabus
- Specimen question papers and mark schemes
- Specimen paper answers
- Schemes of Work
- Example candidate responses
- Past papers and mark schemes
- Principal examiner reports for teachers

These resources are available on the School Support Hub at www.cambridgeinternational.org/support, our secure online site for Cambridge teachers. Your exams officer can provide you with a login.

Additional teaching & learning resources are also available for many syllabuses and vary according to the nature of the subject and the structure of the assessment of each syllabus. These can include ready-built lesson materials, digital resources and multimedia for the classroom and homework, guidance on assessment and much more. Beyond the resources available on the Schools Support Hub, a wide range of endorsed textbooks and associated teaching and learning support are available from Cambridge at www.cambridge.org/education and from other publishers. Resources vary according to the nature of the subject and the structure of the assessment of each syllabus.

You can also contact our global Cambridge community or talk to a senior examiner on our discussion forums.

Sign up for email notifications about changes to syllabuses, including new and revised products and services, at www.cambridgeinternational.org/syllabusupdates

Professional development

Find the next step on your professional development journey.

- **Introduction courses** – An introduction to Cambridge programmes and qualifications. For teachers who are new to Cambridge programmes or new to a specific syllabus.
- **Focus on Teaching courses** – These are for teachers who want to explore a specific area of teaching and learning within a syllabus or programme.
- **Focus on Assessment courses** – These are for teachers who want to understand the assessment of a syllabus in greater depth.
- **Marking workshops** – These workshops help you become more familiar with what examiners are looking for, and provide an opportunity to raise questions and share your experiences of the syllabus.
- **Enrichment Professional Development** – Transform your approach to teaching with our Enrichment workshops. Each workshop focuses on a specific area of teaching and learning practice.
- **Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications (PDQs)** – Practice-based programmes that transform professional learning for practicing teachers. Available at Certificate and Diploma level.

For more information visit www.cambridgeinternational.org/support-and-training-for-schools

Supporting exams officers

We provide comprehensive support and guidance for all Cambridge exams officers.

Find out more at: www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide



2 Syllabus overview

Aims

The aims describe the purposes of a course based on this syllabus.

The aims of the syllabus are the same for all candidates. The aims are set out below and describe the educational purposes of a course in a language other than English for the Cambridge O Level examination. They are not listed in order of priority.

Following a course based on this syllabus will:

- enable students to communicate accurately, appropriately and effectively in writing
- enable students to understand and respond appropriately to what they read
- encourage students to enjoy and appreciate the variety of language
- complement the students' other areas of study by developing skills of a more general application (e.g. analysis, synthesis, drawing of inferences)
- promote the students' personal development and an understanding of themselves and others.

We are an education organisation and politically neutral. The contents of this syllabus, examination papers and associated materials do not endorse any political view. We endeavour to treat all aspects of the exam process neutrally.



Assessment overview

All candidates take two components. Candidates will be eligible for grades A* to E. Dictionaries may **not** be used in the examination.

All candidates take:

Paper 1	1 hour 30 minutes
Composition	45%
45 marks	

Section A – 15 marks

One composition of about 120 words from a choice of three topics.

Section B – 30 marks

One essay of about 200 words from a choice of four topics.

Externally assessed

and:

Paper 2	1 hour 30 minutes
Translation and Reading Comprehension	55%
55 marks	

Section A – 30 marks

Two translations, one from the target language into English and one from English into the target language.

Section B – 25 marks

Open-ended comprehension questions on one set passage.

Externally assessed

Information on availability is in the **Before you start** section.

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) are:

A Continuous Writing

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- 1 articulate experience and express what is felt and what is imagined
- 2 order and present facts, ideas and opinions
- 3 communicate effectively and appropriately
- 4 demonstrate an awareness of the conventions of paragraphing, sentence structure, punctuation and spelling
- 5 express thoughts, feelings and opinions in order to interest, inform or convince
- 6 demonstrate adequate control of vocabulary, syntax and grammar, punctuation and spelling.

B Writing for a Specific Purpose

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- 1 understand and adequately convey information
- 2 understand, order and present facts, ideas and opinions
- 3 evaluate information and select what is relevant to specific purposes
- 4 articulate experience and express what is felt and what is imagined
- 5 communicate effectively and appropriately
- 6 show a sense of audience and an awareness of register and style in both formal and informal situations.

C Language Usage/Reading Comprehension

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- 1 exercise control of appropriate structures
- 2 understand and employ a range of apt vocabulary
- 3 recognise implicit meaning and attitude
- 4 evaluate information and express it in their own words.

3 Description of papers

Dictionaries may **not** be used in the examination.

Paper 1: Composition

1 hour 30 minutes, 45 marks

Section A: Letter, report or speech, dialogue (15 marks)

From a choice of three topics, candidates must write one composition of about 120 words in the target language. The choice of topics will allow candidates to demonstrate ability in using the written language to:

- communicate by letter
- compose a report or speech
- compose a dialogue.

Section B: Essay (30 marks)

From a choice of four topics (narrative, descriptive or argumentative), candidates must write one essay of about 200 words in the target language.

Paper 2: Translation and Reading Comprehension

1 hour 30 minutes, 55 marks

Section A: Translation (30 marks)

Candidates must:

- translate a passage from the target language into English (10 marks)
- translate a passage from English into the target language (20 marks).

Section B: Reading Comprehension (25 marks)

Candidates must answer a variety of questions testing their understanding of a set passage.

Faculty feedback: ‘Understanding how and why our climate is changing and providing the knowledge and skills to explore the challenges plays a key role in every student’s education.’

Feedback from: Dr Amy Munro-Faure, Head of Education and Student Engagement of Cambridge Zero

4 What else you need to know

This section is an overview of other information you need to know about this syllabus. It will help to share the administrative information with your exams officer so they know when you will need their support. Find more information about our administrative processes at www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

Before you start

Previous study

We recommend that learners starting this course should have studied a broad curriculum such as the Cambridge Lower Secondary programme or equivalent national educational framework.

Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge O Level syllabuses to require about 130 guided learning hours for each subject. This is for guidance only. The number of hours a learner needs to achieve the qualification may vary according to each school and the learners' previous experience of the subject.

Availability and timetables

All Cambridge schools are allocated to one of six administrative zones. Each zone has a specific timetable. Find your administrative zone at www.cambridgeinternational.org/adminzone. This syllabus is **not** available in all administrative zones. To find out about availability check the syllabus page at www.cambridgeinternational.org/3226

You can view the timetable for your administrative zone at www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables

You can enter candidates in the June exam series.

Check you are using the syllabus for the year the candidate is taking the exam.

Private candidates can enter for this syllabus. For more information, please refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*.

Combining with other syllabuses

Candidates can take this syllabus alongside other Cambridge International syllabuses in a single exam series. The only exceptions are:

- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

Cambridge O Level, Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) syllabuses are at the same level.

Making entries

Exams officers are responsible for submitting entries. We encourage them to work closely with you to make sure they enter the right number of candidates for the right combination of syllabus components. Entry option codes and instructions for submitting entries are in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*. Your exams officer has access to this guide.

Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as administrative zones. We allocate all Cambridge schools to an administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable.

Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

Support for exams officers

We know how important exams officers are to the successful running of exams. We provide them with the support they need to make entries on time. Your exams officer will find this support, and guidance for all other phases of the Cambridge Exams Cycle, at www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

Retakes

Candidates can retake the whole qualification as many times as they want to.

Learn more about retake entries, including definitions and information on entry deadlines, at www.cambridgeinternational.org/retakes

To confirm what entry options are available for this syllabus, refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries* for the relevant series. Regulations for carrying forward component marks can be found in the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment at www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

Language

This syllabus and the related assessment materials are available in English only.

Accessibility and equality

Syllabus and assessment design

At Cambridge we recognise that our candidates have highly diverse socio-economic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and may also have a variety of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics include special educational needs and disability (SEND), religion and belief, and characteristics related to gender and identity.

We follow accessible design principles to make our syllabuses and assessment materials as accessible and inclusive as possible. We review language accessibility, visual resources, question layout and the contexts used in questions. Using this approach means that we give all candidates the fairest possible opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding.

Access arrangements

Our design principles aim to make sure our assessment materials are accessible for all candidates. To further minimise barriers faced by candidates with SEND, illness or injury, we offer a range of access arrangements and modified papers. This is the principal way in which we comply with our duty to make 'reasonable adjustments', as guided by the UK Equality Act 2010.

Important:

Requested access arrangements should be based on evidence of the candidate's barrier to taking an assessment and should also reflect their normal way of working. For Cambridge to approve an access arrangement, we need to agree that it constitutes a reasonable adjustment and does not affect the security or integrity of the assessment. This is explained in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

Applying for access arrangements

- Details of our standard access arrangements and modified question papers are available in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide
- Centres are expected to check the availability of access arrangements and modified question papers at the start of the course. Check the *Cambridge Handbook*, the assessment objectives listed in the syllabus document and, where applicable, any access arrangement restrictions listed in the syllabus document.
- Contact us at the start of the course to find out if we can approve an access arrangement that is not listed in the *Cambridge Handbook*.
- All applications should be made by the deadlines published in the *Cambridge Handbook*.

Some access arrangements are not allowed in this syllabus because they affect the assessment objectives:

- candidates must **not** use voice-activated software to dictate their written work
- candidates must **not** use word processing technology which uses word prediction and/or phrase prompting including spell check and grammar check
- candidates must **not** use a human reader.

Please note that we cannot provide braille papers for this syllabus. We can only provide braille papers for languages which use the Roman alphabet.

After the exam

Grading and reporting

Grades A*, A, B, C, D or E indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge O Level.

A* is the highest and E is the lowest. ‘Ungraded’ means that the candidate’s performance did not meet the standard required for grade E. ‘Ungraded’ is reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate.

In specific circumstances your candidates may see one of the following letters on their statement of results:

- Q (PENDING)
- X (NO RESULT).

These letters do not appear on the certificate.

On the statement of results, Cambridge O Level is shown as GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION ORDINARY LEVEL.

On certificates, Cambridge O Level is shown as General Certificate of Education.

How students and teachers can use the grades

Assessment at Cambridge O Level has two purposes:

- 1 to measure learning and achievement

The assessment confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus.

- 2 to show likely future success

The outcomes help predict which students are well prepared for or likely to be successful in a particular course or career.

The outcomes help students choose the most suitable course or career.

Changes to this syllabus for 2028

The syllabus has been updated. This is version 1, published September 2025.

You must read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme. We review our syllabuses regularly to make sure they continue to meet the needs of our schools. In updating this syllabus, we have made it easier for teachers and students to understand, keeping the familiar features that teachers and schools value.

There are no significant changes which affect teaching.



Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2017 are still suitable for use with this syllabus.

Syllabuses and specimen materials represent the final authority on the content and structure of all of our assessments.

With a Customer Services team available 24 hours a day, 6 days a week, and dedicated regional teams supporting schools in 160 countries, we understand your local context and are here to guide you so you can provide your learners with everything they need to prepare for Cambridge O Level.



Quality management

We are committed to providing exceptional quality. In line with this commitment, our quality management system for the provision of international education programmes and qualifications for students aged 5 to 19 is independently certified as meeting the internationally recognised standard, ISO 9001:2015. Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/about-us/our-standards/

We are committed to making our documents accessible in accordance with the WCAG 2.1 Standard. We are always looking to improve the accessibility of our documents. If you find any problems or you think we are not meeting accessibility requirements, contact us at info@cambridgeinternational.org with the subject heading: Digital accessibility. If you need this document in a different format, contact us and supply your name, email address and requirements and we will respond within 15 working days.

Cambridge International Education, The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
t: +44 (0)1223 553554 email: info@cambridgeinternational.org www.cambridgeinternational.org