

Introducing Cambridge Pre-U in Modern Foreign Languages

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Who am I?

Maureen Landívar

- senior examining experience
- extensive teaching experience



Origins of Cambridge Pre-U

Consultation with schools and universities

- Schools:
 - Re-take culture
 - Loss of teaching time
 - Cognitive fragmentation
- Universities:
 - Lack of readiness for HE
 - Knowledge gap
 - Loss of synoptic understanding
 - Lack of generic skills
 - » Independent work
 - » Research skills



Cambridge Pre-U recognition

- nationally recognised qualification
- QCA 2008 (Ofqual)
- funding for state schools
- HE and UCAS



Grading subjects

Distinction	D1	← <i>Top of A* grade</i>
	D2	
	D3	← <i>A/B boundary</i>
Merit	M1	
	M2	
	M3	
Pass	P1	← <i>E/U boundary</i>
	P2	
	P3	

*Reports achievement beyond A**

Finer differentiation

Accessible to all who currently achieve pass at A Level

UCAS tariff for principal subjects

Band	Pre-U Grade	Pre-U Tariff	A level equivalent grade	A level equivalent tariff
Distinction	D1	tbc	n/a	n/a
	D2	145	(A*)	140
	D3	130	A	120
Merit	M1	115		
	M2	101		
	M3	87		
Pass	P1	73		
	P2	59		
	P3	46	E	40



Cambridge Pre-U MFL qualification

The Cambridge Pre-U Certificate in Modern Foreign Languages is assessed through four compulsory components. The assessments all take place at the end of the two-year course and a single grade is awarded.

Available in French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish

Accessible to the full range of candidates.



Advantages of assessment after two years

- **more time for learning**
 - time to ‘find voice’ in subjects
 - time to make transition into Sixth Form life
 - time to link ideas, concepts, themes
 - less emphasis on examination culture
- freedom for teachers to build exciting, innovative study programmes
- exams designed to assess student progress over two years



Cambridge Pre-U MFL scheme of assessment

Component	Name	Duration	Weighting	Type of Assessment
1	Speaking	16 mins	25%	Externally assessed oral
2	Listening & Reading	2 ¼ hrs	25%	Externally set and marked written paper
3	Writing & Usage	2 ¼ hrs	25%	Externally set and marked written paper
4	Topics & Texts	2 ½ hrs	25%	Externally set and marked written paper



Cambridge Pre-U MFL general topic areas

Teachers are free to explore the topic areas in any way they choose.
The following list is a useful guide to planning courses:

- human relationships: family, generation gap, young people
- patterns of daily life; urban and rural life; the media; food and drink; law and order; religion and belief; health and fitness
- work and leisure; equality of opportunity; employment and unemployment; sport; travel and tourism; education; cultural life/heritage
- war and peace; the developing world
- medical advances; scientific and technological innovation
- environment, conservation, pollution
- contemporary aspects of the country and countries where the language is spoken



Examination papers

Paper 1 – Speaking (16-20 mins)

- a) Discussion of article & related themes
- b) Personal topic

Conducted and assessed by a visiting examiner



a) Discussion of article and related themes

- choice of discussion
- 20 minutes' preparation time
- overview
- discussion
- extension



b) Discussion of personal topic

- Presentation (1 minute)
- Discussion of 5-8 topic headings
- Candidates should present their introduction ‘naturally’, even if pre-learnt;
- be ready to lead the discussion and talk freely about their topic;
- show interest in, and personal engagement with, their topic;
- show evidence of research and support opinions with evidence



Paper 2 Reading and listening comprehension

Reading

- Passage 1 - answers in TL
- Passage 2 – answers in English
- Passage 3 – Retranslation exercise (into TL)

Listening

- Passage 1 – answers in TL
- Passage 2 – answers in English
- Passage 3 – Summary exercise (100 words in English)



Paper 3 - Writing and usage

a) Writing:

- Discursive essay of between 350 – 450 words (1 hour 30 minutes advised)
- 24 marks for accuracy and linguistic range and 16 for development and organisation of ideas
- 5 topics to choose from



b) Usage:

- Exercise 1 - tests ability to use correct verb forms
(5 marks)
- Exercise 2 - tests ability to manipulate language
(5 marks)
- Exercise 3 - comprehension of current affairs article with a cloze exercise to test comprehension – multiple choice answers
(10 marks)



Paper 4: Topic and texts

a) Cultural Topics (1 hour 15 mins)

- Candidates prepare TWO texts or films within the same topic
- Answer one question in the TL
- 350-500 words on the texts or films combined
- Choice of two essays on each topic
- Emphasis on broad cultural knowledge of the topic studied rather than on literary or film criticism.



Paper 4: Topic and texts

b) Literary Texts (1 hour 15 mins)

- Candidates prepare ONE text
- Answer one question in English
- 450-600 words on their chosen text
- Choice between a commentary and two essay titles
- Emphasis on literary appreciation through detailed textual analysis



Short course

Component	Name	Duration	Weighting	Type of Assessment
1	Speaking	8-10 mins	25%	Externally assessed oral
2	Listening Reading Writing	2 ½ hours	75%	Externally set and marked written paper



- ‘The course delivered the **challenge and depth** for which we had hoped’.
- ‘Our students have relished the opportunity to shine and **access higher grades** than the traditional A Level could offer.’
- ‘One of our big success stories has been those students who are **not natural high fliers.**’
- ‘Having **two years to cultivate skills and understanding**, and the released extra teaching time available, more than compensates for the challenge of making the leap from Year 11 work.’
- ‘Above all, there was a sense that the **candidates had enjoyed their set texts.**’



Resources available

- specimen papers
- 2010/2011 papers, with Questions papers/ Mark schemes
- subject Reports
- book of example candidate responses in each language
- teachers' guide
- inset programme



Additional resources

- coursebooks
- reference works
- vocabulary lists
- self-help study
- radio
- television
- websites
- cultural stimuli
- literature



Cambridge Pre-U subject community

- Puts teachers in touch with each other to:
 - Discuss teaching ideas and issues
 - Share lesson plans and classroom resources
 - Share recommendations for and experiences of teaching Cambridge Pre-U
- Cambridge can contribute to, edit and monitor posted materials



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Any questions?



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