

Glossary

Active learning

Learning which engages students and challenges their thinking, using a variety of activities.

Assessment for learning

Essential teaching strategies during learning to help teachers and students evaluate progress in terms of understanding and skill acquisition, providing guidance and feedback for subsequent teaching and learning.

Backwash effect

The impact of an examination on teaching and learning, by influencing the design of the learning programme and activities.

Balanced curriculum

A school curriculum with a complementary range, combination and weighting of subjects. This normally includes mathematics, languages, sciences, technology, humanities, creative arts and physical education.

Benchmarking

Measuring performance against an established standard.

Bilingual education

Teaching and learning in two or more languages, developing both subject and language knowledge and skills.

Broad curriculum

Every student experiences a wide range of different subjects and learning activities.

Cambridge community

Schools using Cambridge educational programmes [currently about 10,000 schools worldwide, located in approximately 160 countries].

Cambridge Handbook

The official document detailing the regulations for running Cambridge examinations and assessments. It details the responsibilities of Centres and forms part of the customers' contract with Cambridge.

Co-curriculum

Valued educational activities that support learning beyond the school curriculum, which the school encourages and supports.

Component

A component is an assessable part of a subject examination, not certificated as a separate entity, e.g. a written paper or a practical.

Concept

A mental representation of a class of things. A concept may refer to concrete or abstract things.

Content and language integrated learning (CLIL)

In a CLIL approach to bilingual education, students develop their subject knowledge and language skills at the same time using specific teaching and learning strategies.

Core subject

A subject which is an essential part of the curriculum, typically English, Mathematics and Science.

An alternative meaning is a subject (like Global Perspectives) which becomes a focus of learning in other subjects enhanced by interdisciplinary approaches and connections with other subjects.

Coursework

Classroom assignments undertaken by learners as prescribed in the syllabus. Normally assessed by the learner's teacher according to criteria set by Cambridge. The work is moderated within the school and then by Cambridge.

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Creative development

Enabling learners to develop their imagination and original thinking in solving problems and producing ideas, images, artefacts, performances and actions which have value to themselves and others.

Critical thinking

The ability, underlying all rational discourse and enquiry, to assess and evaluate analytically particular assertions or concepts in the light of either evidence or wider contexts.

Curriculum

An overall description of the aims, content, organisation, methods and evaluation of the learning programme and the factors influencing the quality of learning.

The term curriculum is often used in different contexts and different ways (please see page 5 for examples).

Curriculum framework

The systematic structure of the curriculum as set out in document(s) specifying the way in which learning and assessment is to be organised.

Curriculum mapping

Documents all the interrelationships within the curriculum, e.g. what is to be learned, how and when.

Differentiated learning

Adapting one's teaching to suit the needs of different learners for their current level of understanding and performance, by providing appropriate learning activities, support, and assessment, so that all students in the group can learn effectively (see 'Scaffolding learning').

Directed study

Learning in which the teacher as expert authority sets out and transmits the knowledge to be learned.

Distributed leadership

Builds capacity in schools by giving teachers the responsibility for leading in areas of pedagogy, curriculum development and the social and emotional wellbeing of learners.

Dual qualifications

Cambridge and national qualifications.

Educational aims

Statements of the broad purposes or intentions of the curriculum or learning programme.

E-learning

Learning that takes place using electronic media, for example online.

ESOL

English for speakers of other languages.

Exams officer

The person appointed by the principal to act on behalf of the school with responsibility for the day-to-day administration of its Cambridge examination cycle.

Experienced curriculum

What students actually learn from their whole educational experience, including both planned and unintended outcomes, as a result of all their activities in the learning environment.

First language

The language that the learner mainly uses, from childhood and at home.

Formal assessment

Planned and structured measurement of learning.

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Formative assessment

Provides students with developmental feedback on their progress during the learning programme and informs the design of their next steps in learning.

Guided learning hours

The average amount of teacher-learner contact time a school typically needs to allocate for students to be well-prepared for a qualification.

Higher education

Courses in universities and colleges beyond upper secondary school, e.g. degrees.

Impact

The effect that one thing has on another thing. In schools, this could be the effect a new marking technique has on student progress.

Inclusion

Refers to integrating learners in the regular school system (and class) as opposed to placing a learner in a special school or class. Learners with special educational needs are provided with the technical, assistive or personal supports needed.

Interpersonal skills

Skills used to interact effectively with people on a day to day basis, e.g. communication, empathy

Intrapersonal skills

Skills used to reflect on, manage and develop your own thinking, behaviour and progress.

Long-term planning

Preparation for learners' progress and development over a year or more.

Management cycle

An iterative process in which school leaders set goals, implement actions, monitor and evaluate progress and outcomes in relation to the school's strategic plan.

Metacognition

In simple terms, metacognition is being aware of and in control of one's own mental processes.

Mission statement

A formal statement of the education purpose of the school.

Moderation

The process of checking that assessment standards have been applied correctly, consistently and fairly, and making adjustments if necessary to ensure that all assessments are aligned to the standards.

Multi-levering

Assessments specifically targeted at different levels of ability.

Multilingual curriculum

Specifies subjects that will be taught in either English or the native language(s).

Non-staged assessment

All the assessment components are taken in one examination session.

Partnership in learning

Active and sustained cooperation between individuals and between institutions to achieve clear shared aims and objectives.

Pedagogy

The theory and practice of teaching and learning.

Pre-university qualifications

Provide the preparation and recognition for entry into higher education, e.g. Cambridge International A levels.

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Professional development (PD)

Teachers continuously and systematically reflect on and improve their professional thinking and practice, engaging in appropriate learning opportunities to improve and upgrade their knowledge and skills.

Programme of study

A planned schedule of teaching and learning activities, relating to the curriculum framework and qualification.

Progression route

Movement of the student from one stage of learning to another in a systematic and planned sequence.

Psychomotor development

Learning and developing skills incorporating physical movement and coordination.

Qualification

The formal certificated recognition of a student's achievement at the end of a particular course, based on successful performance demonstrated through assessed evidence.

Reflective practice

The process through which the teacher continuously learns from the experience of planning, practice, assessment and evaluation and can improve the quality of teaching and learning over time.

Scaffold learning

The teacher provides appropriate guidance and support to enable students to build on their current level of understanding progressively to acquire confidence and independence in using new knowledge or skill.

Scheme of assessment

The set of examination components through which a learner's achievement in relation to a particular qualification is determined.

Scheme of work

A set of planned units of learning relating to a topic, subject or stage.

School curriculum

Refers to the combination of subjects studied within a school year and in sequential years as the learner moves through the educational system provided by the school.

Second language

A language other than the national or official language of a country.

Self-regulation

The ability to monitor and control our own thoughts, emotions and behaviour.

Shared subject curriculum

Students study selected subjects in both the first language and in English which could lead to the awarding of both national and Cambridge qualifications.

Spiral approach

Areas of learning are revisited systematically within a planned curriculum so that the learner can engage in more depth and detail and acquire related knowledge and skills.

Split curriculum

Students study two curricula, some subjects are studied as part of the national curriculum and others as part of an international curriculum.

Staged assessment

Assessments are arranged throughout the period of learning.

Student-centred learning

In designing the learning activities, the teacher focuses on the needs, abilities and interests of the learner in relation to the learning outcomes.

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Subject curriculum

The content and skills contained within a syllabus applied across sequential stages of student learning. These stages normally refer to school year levels, and therefore a particular age of learner.

Teacher Support

The framework of courses, resources and guidance that Cambridge provides to help teachers develop their understanding of and practice with Cambridge programmes.

Timetable

A schedule listing the times and durations of lessons across a specific period of time, often a week. This is sometimes referred to as the teaching schedule.

Vision

The school's vision is a compelling sense of the future direction of the school that should be widely shared and inspire commitment.

Zone of proximal development

The difference between what a learner can achieve when they receive expert support and what they can achieve independently.