
OPTION INTERNATIONALE DU BACCALAURÉAT (OIB)

**The International Option of the French
*Baccalauréat***

**Examinations Handbook for the British Option
2019 edition**

**Administered by Cambridge Assessment International Education
in cooperation with the *Ministère de L'Éducation Nationale***

| This Handbook applies to the examinations to be held in Summer 2019

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**Cambridge Assessment
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FOREWORD AND FURTHER INFORMATION

This introduction to the British version of the International Option of the French *baccalauréat* is intended to provide information for teachers, examiners and inspectors, for students and their parents, and for admissions officers in institutions of higher education.

- Readers unfamiliar with the French *baccalauréat* should start at chapter 1; those who wish to find information exclusively about the International Option should start at chapter 2.
- University admissions officers may wish to read chapter 3 as well as the preceding chapters. The UCAS website and Handbook on International Qualifications offers a concise description of the OIB under 'International Qualifications'. Please see below for more details of this information. This Handbook provides complementary information.
- More detailed information about the individual subjects that form the International Option can be found in chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9 for Language and Literature, and in chapters 10 and 11 for History-Geography.
- General information about administering and marking the examination is to be found in chapters 4 and 5.

The convention of italicising French words has been employed: these are used in the text where translation is inappropriate. The French term *baccalauréat* is used throughout to avoid any confusion with other examinations, such as the International Baccalaureate or the European Baccalaureate which have no connection with the French national examination. Reference is made to French conventions for naming classes: *1ère* is equivalent to British year 12 or lower sixth, *terminale* to British year 13 or upper sixth.

Abbreviations used in this handbook and useful websites

Readers may wish to consult the following websites in connection with the OIB, the French *baccalauréat* and Cambridge Assessment International Education. This list also provides a key for abbreviations used throughout this handbook:

- Cambridge Assessment International Education : www.cambridgeinternational.org
- The site of the French *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale* : www.education.gouv.fr
- Direction des relations européennes et internationales et de la coopération (DREIC) : <http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid1181/direction-des-relations-europeennes-et-internationales-et-de-la-cooperation.html>
- Direction générale de l'enseignement scolaire (DGESCO) https://lannuaire.service-public.fr/gouvernement/administration-centrale-ou-ministere_171987
- *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale* pages on international sections and the OIB: <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid45720/examens-et-diplomes.html> & http://cache.media.eduscol.education.fr/file/Europe_et_international/82/4/2015_juillet_brochure_e_nsc0_HDEF_504824.pdf
- The site of *Le Centre international d'études pédagogiques (CIEP)*: www.ciep.fr
- The site of the *Service Interacadémique des Examens et Concours (SIEC)* www.siec.education.fr
- The UCAS website: www.ucas.com
- *The ASIBA site (Association des Sections Internationales Britanniques et Anglophones)*: <http://www.asiba.fr>
- *The AEFÉ site (Agence pour l'Enseignement Français à l'Étranger)*: <http://www.aefe.fr/>

This handbook is updated annually. All suggestions for additions and amendments should be made directly to Cambridge Assessment International Education (info@cambridgeinternational.org).

INFORMATION FOR SCHOOLS WISHING TO PREPARE CANDIDATES FOR THE OIB

Only schools approved by the *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale* may undertake the Option internationale du Baccalauréat. Schools wishing to prepare candidates for the British OIB must in all cases contact the *DREIC* (the department responsible for OIB within the *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale*) as well as Cambridge International and ASIBA, to request their approval.

DREIC (Direction des Relations Européennes et Internationales et de la Coopération)

Myriam Grafto
Cheffe de département
DREIC
110, rue de Grenelle
75357 PARIS
Tel. + 33 1 55 55 05 88

Cambridge Assessment International Education

Juliet Wilson
Director, Assessment
Cambridge Assessment International Education
The Triangle Building
CAMBRIDGE CB2 8EA
United Kingdom
Telephone: + 44 1223 553554
Email: info@cambridgeinternational.org

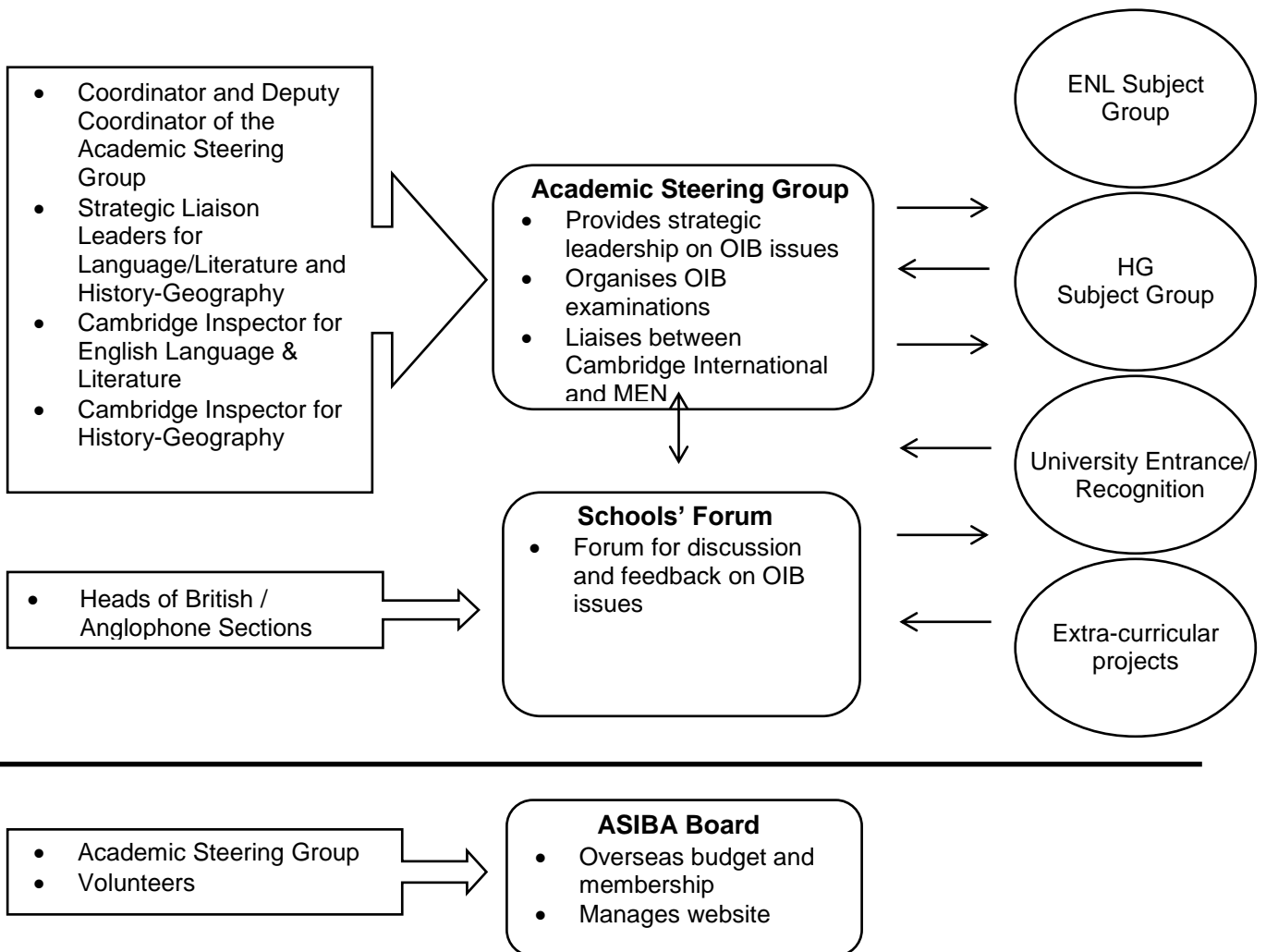
Under the aegis of ASIBA, a number of teachers carry out administrative functions for the British OIB. For descriptions of these roles, please see section 4.2. Currently these are as follows:

James Cathcart (British Section, Lycée International de St Germain-en-Laye) jcathcart@britishsection.fr	President and Coordinator of the Academic Steering Group
Shaun Corrigan (Section Anglophone de Fontainebleau) head@anglosection.com	Deputy Coordinator of the Academic Steering Group
Nick Baker (British Section, Lycée International de St Germain-en-Laye) nbaker@britishsection.fr	Subject and Strategic Liaison Leader, Language and Literature
Alan Geary (Anglophone Section, Cité Scolaire Internationale, Lyon) ageary@csianglo.org	Subject Leader, History-Geography
Catherine Sagne (Lycée International de St Germain-en-Laye) contact@asiba.fr	British OIB Schools & Exam Centres Administrative Coordinator

ROLES

Cambridge International designates the *Association des Sections Internationales Britanniques et Anglophones* (ASIBA) as the official interlocutor on their behalf for the British version of the *Option Internationale du Baccalauréat* (OIB). ASIBA plays an important role in supporting the British OIB and in liaising with the various departments of the *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale* on behalf of Cambridge Assessment International Education. Matters relating to policy and the administration of the assessments provided by Cambridge International must be approved by Cambridge International.

The organisation of ASIBA:



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PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. THE FRENCH *BACCALAURÉAT*

The French *baccalauréat* is the national examination that most French pupils take at the end of seven years of secondary education. The word has been used since the Napoleonic era to designate both a university entrance qualification and the examination itself.

There are three versions of the French *baccalauréat*: the *général*, the *technologique* and the *professionnel*. The *baccalauréat général*, the general, academic version, provides admission to university education, and is the only one treated in this Handbook, since the OIB is an option within it.

Please note that the French *baccalauréat* (FB) has no connection with the International Baccalaureate (IB) or with the European Baccalaureate (EB), the Welsh Baccalaureate or the English Baccalaureate.

1.1 French style and philosophy of teaching

At the age of 18, students in France study a broader spectrum of subjects than their peers in the UK.

Typically, French students in their *première* and *terminale* years (corresponding to the sixth form, or years 12 and 13 in the UK) attend at least 30 hours of class per week, and often more, in order to prepare for the *baccalauréat*. Some have classes on Saturday morning. All study at least six academic subjects for their final examination.

Teaching methods tend to reflect the large class sizes – with as many as 35 per class or more in the core subjects in the two final years. Some subjects are now taught in smaller groups for part of the week. There may be little oral participation in subjects taught in larger groups. Regular and frequent class tests enable teachers to monitor progress and to advise that a student repeat an academic year if necessary. Certain innovations in recent years have demonstrated a willingness to give some space to less traditional approaches. What is known as *Travaux Pratiques Encadrés* (TPE) is one such initiative, requiring students to research, write and present a short thesis on a topic involving two of the most important subjects in their version of the *baccalauréat*.

There are many positive aspects to this generally traditional approach. Both students and parents take education seriously, and students learn to work hard and to study effectively. As a result, the presentational and methodological aspects of academic work are well learned by *baccalauréat* candidates.

1.2 The national examination

The *baccalauréat* takes place each year in June, results being released in early July, and, as within the A Level session, written and oral examinations are spread over several weeks. All candidates take one subject or more one year early, at the end of their penultimate year of schooling (*1ère*). This is French Language and Literature, a demanding examination, the marks from which are carried forward to the main session the following year. Most papers are taken at the end of the final year. Each subject is marked on a scale of 0 to 20 and the result is then multiplied by a 'coefficient', as explained in section 1.3.

The French take pride in the fairness and objectivity of their examining and marking system. Scripts are anonymous and identified only by number. State-appointed examiners (who are all teachers) mark them. Oral examiners do not examine their own students. For OIB orals, candidates may have to travel to examination centres in other schools or be examined in their own school by external examiners if it is an examination centre.

It is important to remember that the *baccalauréat* delivers an overall average score out of 20. Individual subjects are marked out of 20 and a weighting is assigned to each according to the version of the *baccalauréat* taken. The overall score is determined mathematically and involves a range of subjects. Each subject contributes to the final result in proportion to its weighting. Marking standards are robust, and it is perceived to be very difficult for candidates to achieve marks above 16/20 in individual subjects. Because of the mathematics of the scoring system, it is even harder to obtain an overall *baccalauréat*

score of 16/20 or above. Occasionally marks of 19/20 or 20/20 are given in sciences or mathematics, but these are very rare in arts and social sciences. In a recent examination session, only one student in the whole of France was awarded a 20/20 in French language and literature. Marks below 10/20 are common, and in certain subjects the national average mark is 10/20 or below. Philosophy is a good example of such a subject. Because a student sits only one written paper in each subject, the marks in an individual subject examination can be considered not always to be a reliable indicator of a student's ability in that subject. The time given to teacher examiners for marking scripts is brief - about two weeks. Guidance on marking is given and *harmonisation* (standardisation) meetings take place, but there is no moderation practice as applied in the UK, or scaling of the marks awarded by an individual examiner. Results are made public after a *jury*, a meeting of all examiners for a given group of candidates. Here, all examiners may adjust their marks upwards if they feel there is reason to do so. At this stage they may consult a record of the candidate's marks during the final years of education in the *livret scolaire*.

1.3 The different *séries* of the *baccalauréat général*

There are three different kinds or *séries* of the *baccalauréat général*, enabling students to specialise to some degree. All contain certain common core subjects, but weightings applied to these subjects vary. The versions are:

<i>Baccalauréat L:</i>	(Literary)	Concentration on French and Philosophy
<i>Baccalauréat S:</i>	(Scientific)	Concentration on Sciences and Mathematics
<i>Baccalauréat ES:</i>	(Economic)	Concentration on Economics with Social Sciences and Mathematics

Regardless of which *série* they have chosen, all students are taught and examined in French, Philosophy, History-Geography (a single subject in the French system), Mathematics, at least one Foreign Language, and Physical Education. Two more subjects are added depending on the *série*.

The student who chooses a *série* must also choose a specialisation within it. One subject must be chosen as a 'specialism' (*spécialité*). The subjects which may be chosen are defined within each *série*. In *série S*, for example, one subject - selected from Mathematics, Physical Sciences or Life Sciences - must be chosen by the student as his/her specialism. This subject receives extra hours of teaching each week, and leads to an extended examination paper with a higher weighting.

The specialisation of the *série* is reflected in three additional ways:

1. In terms of weightings applied to examinations: subjects within each of the three *séries* are weighted by applying a multiplier to the raw score for the paper (a number out of 20). In French, this multiplier is called a *coefficient*. The *coefficient* to be applied to any subject determines the importance of that subject within the *série* chosen. It is also affected by choice of *spécialité* subject, as referred to above. The only exception to this is Physical Education (EPS), which has a coefficient of 2 regardless of the *série* chosen.

2. In terms of teaching and study, the subject syllabuses, general level of difficulty, and number of hours of tuition per subject vary according to the *série* chosen. For example, Philosophy is the key subject for the L *baccalauréat*, with 8 hours of teaching per week and a wide-ranging syllabus. Its *coefficient* in *série L* is 9 (a very high weighting) so as to reflect its importance in this version of the *baccalauréat*. Philosophy in *série S* is, on the other hand, taught for only two or three hours per week and has a comparatively low coefficient of 3.

3. Within each *série*, it is possible for students to take and be examined in a limited number of optional extra subjects, which earn bonus points for results over 10/20, in order to increase final marks.

1.4 The two subjects forming the International Option (OIB)

All versions of the OIB include the study of a *discipline non linguistique* (DNL). In the case of the British option and nearly all others this is History-Geography. Where more than one foreign language is taken, the first language (generally studied for seven years) is distinguished from the second and third languages (studied for 5 years or fewer).

To make up the *baccalauréat* with the International Option, study and examination of *histoire-géographie* and of the first foreign language, known as LV1 (*langue vivante 1*), are replaced respectively by a History-

Geography course taught bilingually in English and French and by a Language and Literature course taught in English. The latter is a course which, in the British version of the OIB, is based on the study of literature, although students are also examined on the fluency and accuracy of their spoken and written English. The course has equivalence with second year A Level English Literature in the UK. Both subjects have written and oral examinations.

Because only LV1 (first foreign language) and *histoire-géographie* are modified by the OIB structure, the student still takes a version of the *baccalauréat* which is largely the same as the standard L, ES or S version. S/he is said to be taking *série S*, or *série L*, etc. **with** the International Option. Nonetheless, the marking system gives extra weighting and therefore extra importance to these two subjects, and thus acknowledges both the extra degree of difficulty and the increased workload imposed by the OIB.

The *coefficients* of the two subjects that form the International Option are set out below.

	Lang-Lit		History-Geography		Approximate percentage of overall marks gained via OIB subjects
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	Written	Oral	Written	Oral	
<i>Baccalauréat L</i>	6	4	5	3	40%
<i>Baccalauréat S</i>	5	4	4	3	30%
<i>Baccalauréat ES</i>	5	4	5	4	40%

1.5 The *jury* and *baccalauréat* results

All candidates' marks are confirmed by regional *juries*. This is a final deliberation and review of marks to ensure consistency and fairness. The *jury* for each group of schools is chaired by a president appointed by the *rectorat* (the regional educational authority), and is made up of the examiners of the candidates being considered. Each *jury* is specialised: there are separate *juries* for every group of candidates taking the three main versions of the *baccalauréat* (L, ES and S) as well as for the International Option versions of these.

Subject marks of each candidate are always expressed as a mark out of 20. These are multiplied by coefficients (as explained above, the numbers by which the raw score in a subject is multiplied, to give a weighted score) which, when applied, give the comparative importance of the subject in the version of the *baccalauréat* in question. The figures thus gained are added together to produce the candidate's total raw mark. This is known as the total number of *points*. This is then divided by the total of the coefficients applied to give an overall, weighted average out of 20.

The following categories of overall pass mark are awarded. The first is a pass; the *mentions* are distinctions:

<i>passable:</i>	from 10/20 to 11.99/20
<i>mention assez bien:</i>	from 12/20 to 13.99/20
<i>mention bien:</i>	from 14/20 to 15.99/20
<i>mention très bien:</i>	from 16/20 upwards

Students' diplomas (the *baccalauréat* certificate) refer only to the category of results or the *mention* achieved. Marks for specific subjects which appear on the more detailed sheet issued by the jury – the *relevé des notes* - are not rounded up. A precise overall average score out of 20 is always given. If a student scores an average of higher than 17/20, the exceptional accolade of the '*félicitations du jury*' may be awarded. This is very rare indeed.

Very often, candidates' marks fall comfortably within one or other of the categories of *mentions*, and these results are confirmed formally by the *jury*. However, in cases where a candidate's marks are just below a higher *mention*, or just below the minimum pass mark for the *baccalauréat* as a whole, the president of the jury will review the marks given by examiners so as to award the candidate the *baccalauréat* or the *mention* if appropriate. The candidate's *livret scolaire* may be consulted; this contains a record of the student's work, average marks for the year, and teachers' comments for the final years of *lycée* education. A candidate's written paper may also be reconsidered during the course of the *jury*. Examiners present at the *jury* may be asked if they are willing to allow the candidate one extra point.

They do not have to agree - it may be that they feel the candidate has already been given the benefit of every doubt. Often, however, the *jury* considers awarding the marks that borderline candidates would need, for their results to go up, unless what is read in the *livret scolaire* about work and commitment leads them to feel that this would be unjustified.

1.6 Rattrapage

If a candidate has failed the *baccalauréat* narrowly, because his/her marks fall into the range 8/20 – 9.99/20, the examination gives him/her a further chance to succeed. The candidate whose overall mark falls in this range can choose to take supplementary oral examinations organised soon after the main *baccalauréat* results are made public. These orals, collectively known as *rattrapage*, must be taken in two core subjects chosen by the candidate. Core subjects are indicated by an asterisk on the official mark sheet given to the candidate as a record of his/her performance. Marks gained in the second oral examination in these two chosen core subjects replace the former written scores (in these subjects only) and may allow the candidate to achieve an overall passing mark. A candidate who has not achieved 8/20, but whose score is close to it, may still be granted the right of *rattrapage*, if the *jury* approves after scrutinising his/her *livret scolaire*.

Both International Option subjects fall into the category of core subjects in all three *séries*. They may therefore be taken as *rattrapage* subjects. Candidates may confer with their teachers on the day the results are issued to decide which subjects to take again as orals, in order to maximise the possibility of a substantially enhanced result. Since both International Option subjects yield oral and written marks, it is important to underline that the *rattrapage* orals replace the written mark in each case. Once a decision is made by the candidate about which subjects it is best to retake, the candidate signs up for these officially and this information is passed by the candidate's school to the centre where *rattrapage* orals are to be taken.

A new *jury*, reduced in numbers, is convened once the *rattrapage* orals are concluded, to receive the marks given by the examiners and to make new awards.

See chapter 5 for further information about *rattrapage* as it applies within the International Option.

1.7 The September session

Each year a September session of the *baccalauréat* is held for any candidates who could not sit the examination in June. OIB papers are set each year by the Inspectors for these September sessions.

The Ministry of Education texts defining access to these sessions mention candidates who can justify that their absence for the whole or a part of the June session was caused by factors over which they had no control. Illness, bereavement and accident are given as examples.

Candidates at the September session register for the session via their school and are accepted by their local *rectorat*. It is important that information on the candidates sitting this examination reaches the person who coordinates all information, Catherine Sagne.

Heads of OIB Sections must ensure this takes place. This should be done as early as possible: that is, by the date of the release of OIB final marks by juries, or, failing this as early as possible in the final week of August. This is so that arrangements can be made for

- Designating examiners
- Designating a central or regional examinations centre, where this is needed
- Ensuring that *convocations* are issued by SIEC and *rectorats* for candidates and for oral and written examiners
- Moderation and Signing off of final marks by the Inspectors
- Making arrangements for *rattrapage*

Where the number of candidates to be examined requires a certain amount of examiner travel, the Schools' Chair will request that some or all candidates are called to be examined in a regional or single central school. This is to limit expense and interruption to teachers' duties at the start of the school year as much as possible.

2. THE INTERNATIONAL OPTION

2.1 The origins of the International Option

The practice of offering a bilingual curriculum to students fluent in two languages has long been established in French international *lycées* and in other French schools serving international communities. These establishments have been in existence since the 1960s. The normal *baccalauréat* cannot, however, fully measure the attainment and potential of genuinely bilingual students, because its foreign language examinations are designed for students who begin the formal study of a language at 11, 13 or 15 years of age.

In 1981, the French government, responding to a growing demand among parents for more widespread bilingual education, and recognising a need to make additional provision for foreign nationals studying in France, proposed that specially designed 'international sections' be created. A number of foreign governments agreed to take part in the setting up of this structure, among them those of (what was then West) Germany, Italy, Denmark, Portugal, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the UK and the USA. In most of these countries, the relevant ministry of education took responsibility for creating and administering the International Option, the final examination towards which students in these international sections directed their studies. In the case of the UK, the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) was asked to set up and run the British option. UCLES, which had no financial interest in the examination, was chosen because of its considerable experience in A Level syllabus creation and examination and its long history of international examining. UCLES is now called Cambridge Assessment and the division which administers the British OIB is now called Cambridge Assessment International Education. Their role is to provide quality assurance for the OIB.

The British international sections were to be staffed by English-speaking teachers and were to offer tuition in English and in History-Geography for six hours per week. All other subjects were to be taught in French in the normal way. One important purpose of introducing these sections was to ensure that foreign nationals who wished to do so would be in a position to return to their countries of origin for higher education. Another was to offer to French nationals who had a very good practical mastery of a foreign language the right to study using this language as a vehicle for learning, alongside foreign nationals for whom it was a mother tongue. These objectives still hold good.

Some years after the formal founding of the international sections, the International Option of the *baccalauréat* was launched in several languages. The French government insisted that the International Option should possess three important characteristics.

1 It would have the same status and validity as all the other parts of the *baccalauréat général*, and thus contribute significantly to the candidate's overall marks;

2 The two subjects making up the International Options would obey the *principe de substitution*; that is, they would replace other subjects within the *baccalauréat* teaching and examination structure, rather than being added on to that structure. The OIB Language and Literature papers replace the first foreign language and the OIB History-Geography papers replace the normal, purely French, *histoire-géographie* examination;

3 The subjects included in the International Options would be taught and examined by foreign nationals who are native speakers, to a standard comparable to that of the equivalent examination in the 'home' country. With the recent growth of international sections within the French state system, French teachers with a high level of English competence and mastery have joined the pool of teachers who are native speakers.

For the OIB, subject Inspectors appointed by Cambridge International set and moderate the marking of the written papers, inspect a sample of the oral examinations (both directly and via Assistant Moderators who report to them), and scrutinise all oral marks with the help of Associate Inspectors. They provide a specification based on the official syllabuses issued by the Ministry, define works to be studied and ensure that examining standards and objectivity are maintained. They also prepare reports at the conclusion of each examination session which are sent to Cambridge International and to the French Ministry.

France was the first country to integrate syllabuses devised with foreign partners into its national system of university entrance level examinations. The result is a well-balanced academic qualification upon which a challenging curriculum for bilingual students is based. The examination structure also fosters international communication and understanding in an area where cooperation does not often – and not easily – exist.

2.2 The two subjects taught in English

Students studying the International Option take the two subjects most closely related to language and culture: *langue et littérature* and *histoire-géographie*. In the case of the British option, these two subjects have second year A level equivalence within the British A Level system. Detailed information about the two subject syllabuses can be found in chapters 6 and 10 of this Handbook.

Briefly, candidates studying Language and Literature have a choice of literary texts from four genres: drama, poetry, prose fiction, and Shakespeare's dramatic works. For the oral examination, they must prepare a Shakespeare play and then two further texts illustrating a synoptic topic based on a period or genre. For the written examination in this subject, they must study three texts, one from each of the first three genres. Texts studied for the oral examination may not be used for the written. They must also follow a Critical Appreciation course and be prepared to write on a previously unseen passage or passages of poetry or prose. Candidates must write three essays in the written examination and answer both general and detailed questions on their texts in the oral. Both the oral and written examinations are entirely in English.

In History-Geography, the teaching structure is bilingual, the programme of study being divided between French teachers and teachers from International Sections, and taught in parallel in two languages. In most schools, both History and Geography are divided in this way; in some schools, History is taught in English and Geography in French. In all cases, students have to answer written and oral questions in one language upon material which they may have learned in another. The History syllabus for the examination covers five Themes: Collective memory; Media and public opinion in the context of one political crisis; Great powers and world tensions from 1918 to the present; Levels of government from 1945 to the present; and, Study of Britain from the second half of the 20th century to the present. The Geography syllabus is a human geography programme comprising three Themes: Keys for understanding a complex world; Globalisation and development; and, Urbanisation and demographic issues. The written examination (4 hours) is divided into Sections A and B, each containing two essay questions and a structured document-based question. Candidates choose one Section and answer one essay and the document-based question, one being History and the other Geography or vice versa. Although candidates may choose to write in French, virtually all who sit the British OIB write in English. Choice of the language in which the OIB History-Geography paper is to be answered must be made by the candidate in November of the final year (*terminale*), at the point at which the candidate registers for the baccalauréat général in his/her lycée. The oral examination is based on 10 Key issues and 10 Key terms. There will be a set of four approved lists of Key issues and schools will be asked to select one of these lists for use with their candidates. The 10 Key terms are common to all schools in France. Schools outside France, where the orals are held earlier, have a different set of Key terms. The oral examination is always conducted entirely in English.

2.3 How are OIB subjects examined?

At the end of the course, candidates sit a four-hour written examination in each of the two subjects as well as an oral in each. In Language and Literature, students are tested on work done over a 2-year period; in History-Geography, material studied in the final year (*terminale*) is examined. Both oral examinations are conducted by two teacher-examiners. Candidates must deliver a presentation or talk at the beginning of each oral, using as their starting point a randomly chosen passage, selected by the examiners, from the Shakespeare play they have studied (for Language and Literature) or a Key issue chosen at random out of 10 previously agreed and announced (for History-Geography). Then follows a more general discussion about the Synoptic Topic (for Language and Literature), or a question and answer session on the chosen Key content (for History-Geography). Both the written and oral examinations are marked out of 20. More information about the marking standards of the written examinations and the conduct and assessment of the orals can be found in subsequent chapters.

3. COMPARISON WITH 'A' LEVEL FOR UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS

3.1 Preliminary considerations

Simple comparison between A Level and the French *baccalauréat* (with or without the OIB) is difficult. The former lays stress on specialisation, while the *baccalauréat* embodies the ideal of a broad curriculum. In addition, OIB candidates are not just highly fluent in at least two languages: every day they face the demanding task of working to native-speaking standard in those languages and balancing, from one hour to the next, the languages and perspectives of two cultures. This bicultural dimension is a key distinctive feature of the OIB and the International Sections that prepare students for it. Candidates have a heavier workload than most *baccalauréat* candidates. They forego the high mark that they would almost certainly have achieved if they took the ordinary *baccalauréat* foreign language (LV1) English examination. The qualities of flexibility, resilience, tolerance and independence they develop make them more than usually well prepared for the challenges of university study.

3.2 British university offers

Most OIB students have little difficulty entering British universities: Admissions Officers generally recognise the distinctive strengths they bring to an academic community. OIB candidates are well prepared for higher education in the UK: they have experienced a British style of pedagogy with a particular emphasis on dialogue, critical thinking and analysis, and developed a British approach to extended academic writing in English.

Making comparisons with A-Level

It is possible for admissions tutors to 'translate' A-Level grade combinations into OIB terms. These comparisons are based mainly on equating the achievements of the two national cohorts in their final examinations. A *Mention Bien* (14-15.99/20) is generally seen as the equivalent of AAA at A-Level in the UK.

The table below represents typical grade equivalencies between A-level grade requirements and OIB overall grade requirements:

A-Level grade requirement	OIB requirement
A*AA	16 overall
AAA	14-15 overall
AAB	14 overall
AAB/ABB	13 overall
BBB	12 overall

How should OIB entrance requirements be expressed?

- *Either* an overall mark out of 20 (e.g.13/20)
- *Or*, if appropriate, an overall mark out of 20 together with a specified mark level in a relevant subject (e.g. 13/20 with 13/20 in Mathematics for an Engineering applicant).

In setting offers, it should be remembered that high marks in the Baccalaureate are rare. For example, in the June 2017 session only 7.6% of all Baccalaureate candidates were awarded 16/20 or above.

In the same year 6.3% of candidates were awarded the *mention bien* (14/20-15.99/20). A mark between 14/20 and 15/20 might be regarded as equivalent to an offer of AAA.

The *mention assez bien* (12/20 – 13.99/20) is a good overall result, achieved by a further 12.1% of those who took the *baccalauréat* in 2017. It could be considered as equivalent to A-level grades between AAB and BBB.

Although the *mention passable* (10/20 to 11.99/20) may seem a more modest achievement, it is still a respectable result: an overall mark of 10/20 is sufficient to gain a place at most French universities.

University Admissions Officers often consider candidates' results in relevant individual subjects as well as the overall *baccalauréat* result or *mention* as the basis for offers. For example, an offer level of AAA at A-level might be expressed in OIB terms as a mark of 14/20 overall with 14/20 in one or two subjects relevant to the candidate's proposed university course. This approach is particularly useful in setting offers for courses requiring the A* grade at A-level, and thus seeking excellence in specific subjects in addition to strong overall achievement. In their OIB offers for such courses, universities might demand an

overall mark of 15 while requiring marks of 15 or 16 in the specific subject(s) for which the A* grade might be expected.

Some UK universities make more favourable offers for the OIB than for the 'classic' French Baccalaureate, recognising the fact that the OIB student has taken on a large extra workload in an examination system which already asks a lot of students in terms of breadth of study, course requirements and number of hours spent in class each week.

Predicted grades

Since high marks are rare, predicted grades within the French Baccalaureate tend to be conservative. It should be noted that many schools are reluctant to predict an overall mark in the OIB above 16 – partly because it represents the highest recognised 'grade', the *Mention Très Bien*, and partly because of the difficulty of predicting reliably above this point.

The OIB as proof of English Language competence

The British version of the OIB is widely taken by British universities as proof of English language competence, without the need for further proficiency tests. The linguistic demands of the English and History-Geography examinations focus on the **academic use of English**; this makes them an appropriate preparation for university study in any subject. Expected levels of language use for successful candidates are considered to be at to C1 or C2 level on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), or 'academically accomplished native speaker/writer'.

3.3 After admission to British university

Because OIB candidates have studied at least five academic subjects to examination level, they may have more difficulty than A Level students in making a choice of UK university courses. It is possible that the relatively unaccustomed academic freedom they will enjoy at a UK university will mean they will need a period of adaptation to a different way of working.

That said, these fully bilingual students are nonetheless likely to prove excellent prospects for British universities. They have something special to offer any department in cultural terms, and they have the advantage of having received a broad education. Moreover, they have been examined in ways that are different to the methods used in A Level. In Language and Literature, for example, they are required to prepare a commentary on an extract (given to them only 35 minutes before the oral examination) from the Shakespeare play they have studied and to defend their interpretations before two examiners - as well as answering both detailed and general questions on the synoptic topic they have prepared for the oral examination.

In addition, the *baccalauréat* maintains a tradition of displaying knowledge, understanding and higher-order skills such as analysis and interpretation via extended essays. In Language and Literature, there are three one-hour and 20 minute essays, and in History-Geography, each structured question includes a requirement for an extended essay of approximately one and a quarter hours.

4. ADMINISTERING THE BRITISH VERSION OF THE OIB

4.1 Roles and responsibilities of the Cambridge Inspectors

The two Cambridge Inspectors are appointed as consultants by Cambridge Assessment International Education to carry out the tasks as described in this Handbook. Their roles are unusual in combining several functions normally (within UK examinations) carried out by different personnel – those of chief examiner (setting papers and coordinating the work of the written and oral examiners; producing reports), and of principal moderator (sampling scripts and orals to ensure that standards are being maintained and that marking is consistent) and subject officer (ensuring that marks are accurately and appropriately transcribed, entered and communicated to relevant authorities).

An important limitation of their role is that, although they liaise with their counterpart Inspectors in the French *Ministère*, as consultants (not as staff members), they cannot speak for Cambridge Assessment International Education on any questions of OIB policy or administration beyond their immediate brief, unless asked or given permission by Cambridge International to do so.

An increasingly important role of the Inspectors is to liaise with the Subject Leaders over training, both of new teachers and of those with experience. It is essential that teachers in the OIB community are aware of any change in examination culture in the UK and of the need for the OIB to reflect, where appropriate, these changes. This can lead to significant modifications both to syllabus and assessment in both OIB subjects and to important changes in pedagogy within the schools that teach the OIB. Bi-annual OIB training sessions address these issues as well as written and oral examining procedures and assessment standards.

An *inspecteur général* (or an inspector of similar status) is designated each year by the French authorities as having responsibility for the British version of each OIB subject; and the Subject Inspectors work with their French counterparts on aspects of the examination including setting written papers.

4.2 The schools' administrative arrangements

All the sections preparing the British OIB cooperate in the running of the examination and all that is needed to underpin this. Meetings held in the autumn are designed to bring teachers together for the purposes of training and for the development of both the syllabuses and the examination.

The Schools' Chair and Deputy Schools' Chair with the two Subject Leaders and Cambridge Inspectors make up the OIB Steering Group. This group meets together via videoconference or face-to-face on a regular basis. It works together to supervise the planning, organisation, review and development of the examination (including the deployment of teacher-examiners across the various centres). The group also organises the annual meetings of OIB teachers and the Schools Forum (to which heads of OIB sections are invited), and engages in strategic forward planning. The Steering Group is an *ex-officio* part of the ASIBA board. It is responsible for liaison with British and French authorities. It also liaises with new schools wishing to prepare and sit this examination.

Cambridge Assessment International Education is responsible for strategic review and development of the examination via the Annual Review Meeting as well as for the editing, updating and publication of this Handbook, working with the Inspectors and the Steering Group, who propose new material and modifications.

Secretaries appointed for each annual meeting of teachers provide minutes for these under the guidance of the member of the Steering Group chairing the meeting. Subject Leaders work closely with the Subject Inspectors appointed by Cambridge International and, of course, with the Steering Group and with OIB teachers in their respective subjects.

The Subject Leaders propose to the Steering Group the schedule of oral and written teacher-examiners from among a list of teachers nominated by schools.

Schools are required to nominate as an examiner any teacher who teaches an OIB group in either subject in *1ère* or *Terminale*. It is important that all such teachers are nominated, so as to ensure that as many examiners as possible are put at the disposal of Subject Leaders.

Teacher-examiner nominations and all other important data and information are requested by and sent to the British OIB Schools & Exam Centres Administrative Coordinator, who collates and distributes summaries of information gathered as appropriate. A summary of OIB information to be sent to her is sent to sections at the start of each school year. This table is included as **APPENDIX 1**. All requests for information and other communications are sent via the ASIBA Schools Post email system: OIB heads of section and other staff must make sure they can receive these emails at the start of the school year, and open and return attachments. **Prompt return of requested data is essential; a deadline is always given and must be respected.**

Teacher-examiners mark the written papers, which are moderated by the Inspectors. They also conduct, in pairs, the oral examinations. Some teacher-examiners may volunteer or be asked to take both written and oral examining duties. The teacher-examiner schedule also names teachers who are appointed, with the Inspectors' approval, as Assistant Moderators (see section 5.4) and teacher-examiners for *rattrapage* examinations. Subject Leaders also nominate in July, or late August/early September, for the Inspector's approval, teacher-examiners required for the September session.

Candidates sit the written OIB examinations at their own schools, except in special circumstances. Oral examining takes place at centres which may group candidates from several schools, which are designated in the circular letter from the SIEC on the OIB (sent directly by the SIEC [*Service Interacadémique des Examens et Concours*] to all participating schools in the January or February preceding the examination). Responsibility for the running of the written examinations and for question-setting resides with SIEC. The SIEC also organises the running of the oral examinations. After receipt of the OIB circular from the SIEC, the Schools' Chair alerts British OIB Subject Leaders, Heads of Centre and schools to any significant changes in OIB procedures.

A single nationwide system of deploying examiners is used for written and oral examiners. The planning of all oral exams is carried out by Catherine Sagne and a single plan is sent to all concerned including the SIEC and the DGESCO. Teachers conduct oral examinations of candidates from another school either in their own school (if it is an OIB oral examination centre) or in another school. Many candidates and examiners have to travel to and arrange accommodation at examination centres. There may be other French entrance examinations during the same period as the OIB orals. Because of these factors the tightly co-ordinated national schedule must be respected by all involved. This allows all examiners and Assistant Moderators to do their work and to travel, if necessary, to other centres, to complete their mission. The schedule – for examining is approved by Cambridge International before distribution.

The OIB oral examination centres are each the responsibility of the head of the OIB section in that school, known as the Head of OIB Oral Examination Centre. Many duties attached to this role are carried out within the oral examination period in June, but preparatory liaison work with school administrators must take place well before this.

4.3 Responsibilities of Heads of OIB Oral Examination Centres

OIB Oral Examination Centres may be run by a Head of Section or a member of the French administration e.g. the Proviseur adjoint.

A key responsibility of Heads of OIB Oral Examination Centres is to work with all involved in the examining process to ensure that all candidates experience the same examination conditions, and are examined according to the same standards, as laid down by Cambridge International in this Handbook. In practice, this means:

1. Ensuring that examiners are equipped with and follow all written guidance on conduct of the exams, including this Handbook, its assessment criteria, and guidance on marking, and any special instructions on assessment and procedures, etc.
2. Taking action to inform OIB Subject Inspectors (liaising with Assistant Moderators if and when they are present), if the OIB Handbook and other guidance is not applied or consulted as necessary.
3. Ensuring that all assessment and reporting documentation is properly filled in, in accordance with this Handbook and other guidance which is sent by Inspectors, Subject Leaders or the Schools' Chair.
4. Taking any other actions necessary to safeguard and guarantee the equality of all candidates before the oral exam and the high quality, based on agreed standards and training, of OIB oral examining; consulting the Subject Inspector as necessary if any doubt subsists about the best course of action.

Other organisational and logistical responsibilities include:

- Establishing and providing to the Schools' Chair (or person designated by him/her, currently Catherine Sagne) as rapidly as possible and in reliable form all key dates applying to the Centre, including deadlines for the submission of marks to the *rectorat* and *jury* dates. (Because of the decentralised system based on *académies*, these are established locally and vary from region to region);
- Ensuring that all administrators in the OIB oral Centre understand and accept the fact that OIB orals are organised within a single national system, all aspects of which must be respected;
- Opening the school for all days on which OIB orals are scheduled to take place, including Saturdays;
- Devising and publishing timetables for oral examinations both for candidates and for teacher-examiners which respect the national plan communicated by the British OIB Schools & Exam Centres Administrative Coordinator (avoiding, for candidates, potential examination clashes with other orals and taking account of teacher-examiners' duties at other Centres, as Assistant Moderators and/or as written markers); issuing accurate and individual *convocations* to OIB candidates following the agreed format;

- arranging adequate rooming of oral examinations and dealing with all practical aspects of the setting up of examinations (according to the instructions in this Handbook and following any recommendations from Inspectors);
- co-ordinating the accommodation arrangements of teacher-examiners and Inspectors (see also below) and ensuring that information on hotels etc. is disseminated to all who will use the Centre, including candidates, in good time;
- arranging supervision of preparation rooms and checking the identity of candidates within those rooms;
- ensuring the provision of the personnel necessary for the welcoming, direction and supervision of candidates;
- dealing with hospitality/'housekeeping' arrangements for all those who will use the school site during the examination period;
- ensuring that oral marks and other data can be processed and sent off quickly, efficiently and securely by electronic means after scanning;
- ensuring that all means of communication are readily and easily available for use;
- dealing with situations that arise if a candidate is late for, or unavoidably absent from, a scheduled oral in accordance with the directions of this Handbook;
- planning and organising oral examination arrangements, as required, for the (few) candidates who could not sit the *baccalauréat* in June and are permitted by the French authorities to take it in the September session;
- arranging for the provisional marks established by oral examiners on the *fiches d'évaluation* to be scanned and sent to the Cambridge Inspectors via the British OIB Schools & Exam Centres Administrative Coordinator at the end of each day of examining or as requested;
- arranging for the timely submission of final marks approved by the Cambridge Inspectors to the appropriate authorities;
- completing and submitting any other official documentation such as bordereaux once the final marks have been confirmed by the Cambridge Inspectors.

Given the importance of long-distance as well as local communications, the provision of secure, confidential, efficient and reliable means for the sending and receipt (where relevant) of marks, marks-sheets, reports, etc. is of prime importance. Where oral examining in the Centre (or in other Centres that must send or receive marks) is to take place at a time when the *lycée* is normally shut – such as at the weekend – the opening of the school and provision of facilities (including electronic facilities for scanning and communication of mark sheets and *fiches*) by the school must be secured well in advance of the examination session.

If the Head of OIB Oral Examination Centre is in charge of a centre that will be visited by a Cambridge Inspector or an Associate Inspector or Assistant Moderator, he or she must ensure that transport, accommodation and work-space arrangements are available and of a suitable standard.

4.4 Security of provisional oral marks: the responsibility of the Head of the OIB Centre

It is very important that the Head of OIB Oral Examination Centre **ensures that all OIB marks which are submitted to and processed by the Centre remain totally confidential**. The sheets (*fiches d'évaluation*) used for recording provisional oral marks and examiners' comments must be stored securely between sessions and across breaks. Once they are completed by examiners, these sheets must be seen only by the Head of Centre and any administrative staff involved in their sending or receipt. These persons must be briefed on and fully accept the confidential nature of all marks. It should be noted that the *fiches d'évaluation* have the status of an exam script, and that the only official version is the one validated by the Cambridge Inspector. More details follow below. Oral as well as written marks for candidates are only finalised and may only be communicated by the *baccalauréat* jury. (The only exception to this concerns *rattrapage* candidates.)

Any infringement of the rule of confidentiality within the OIB Oral Examination Centre should be reported to the Schools' Chair. In particular, it is essential that marks awarded for a candidate or group of candidates are not released 'unofficially' – deliberately or by accident – to teachers, who may be present in the OIB Oral Examination Centre at the time of oral examination and/or at the time of the processing of the marks. **The processing, transcription and storage of marks must be conducted with due and careful regard for confidentiality at all times.**

The Head of the OIB Oral Examination Centre may be required to attend the *baccalauréat jury* in order to check that the marks for two OIB subjects have been correctly entered.

Where, following the deliberations of the *jury*, a candidate is admitted to the second group of orals (*rattrapage*) it is the duty of the Head of OIB Oral Examination Centre (or, if appropriate, the Head of the candidate's own OIB section) to ensure that advice is given to the student on the appropriate choices of subject for examination; that the relevant Language-Literature and/or History-Geography examiners are called upon for examining duty – if the student chooses one, or both, of these subjects – and that proper arrangements are made for this second round of orals. The Head of the OIB Oral Examination Centre must also ensure that these arrangements are clearly communicated to the candidate(s) and liaise with the person running the *baccalauréat* exam centre for *rattrapage* orals. Again, the Head of the OIB Oral Examination Centre may be required to attend the second (*rattrapage*) *jury*, and is, in any case, responsible for the administrative follow-up to the decision made after *rattrapage* (including communication of the mark sheets, etc. to the candidates). (Please see section below on *rattrapage*, section 5.8.) For History-Geography, Heads of OIB Oral Examination Centres must ensure that candidates are kept apart while *rattrapage* is going on.

It is not possible to ensure that all those who are in charge of the British OIB sections within schools acting as OIB Oral Examinations Centres will not themselves have teacher-examiner duties. Where the person who would normally act as the Head of the OIB Oral Examination Centre is to be absent for all (or part) of the examining session, he/she must delegate (and give instructions and briefing) to a person who is to discharge these responsibilities during the period of his/her absence. This person should be chosen and his/her name communicated to the Schools' Chair as far as possible in advance of the OIB oral examinations session.

4.5 Coordination among schools

Meetings of teachers in each of the two OIB subjects are held annually in the autumn. A number of important discussions and decisions, as well as training, take place at these meetings.

The Subject Leaders are in charge of arranging these annual subject meetings, negotiating dates and accommodation with the CIEP, drawing up the agenda and preparing detailed reports of proceedings, decisions and suggestions. The Cambridge Inspector is present. Among the matters discussed at the meetings are important issues such as syllabus content and changes to this, as well as examining practices and procedures. Assessment standards and assessment standardisation exercises, as well as the induction of new teacher examiners and the systematic training of all teacher-examiners are treated as priorities. Administrative procedures and logistics are also discussed. The meetings provide a forum for brief focused discussion of the Cambridge Inspector's report on the preceding examination session and for planning the following summer's examination. Significant amounts of time at these meetings are devoted to in-service training of new and existing teacher-examiners. Relevant French authorities (in particular, *Inspecteurs* in the relevant subjects) are invited. Each meeting nominates a secretary. Minutes are sent to the Schools' Chair and to the Cambridge Inspectors. Any suggestions for substantive changes to format, syllabus, procedures or administration arising from these subject meetings appear on the agenda of the Cambridge International Review Meeting and the Schools' Forum meeting in November or December.

The Annual Review Meeting is organised and hosted by Cambridge International. It is attended by Cambridge personnel, the Cambridge Inspectors, and the OIB Steering Group. The agenda, drawn up by Cambridge Assessment International Education after appropriate consultation, covers a review of the recent OIB session and all matters related to the strategic review and development of the British version of the OIB.

The Heads of Section have responsibility for coordinating all British Section teaching within their *lycée*, or in the case of privately funded Sections, have responsibilities very much like those of a British head teacher for all aspects of the running of their section.

All Heads of Section are invited to the ASIBA Schools Forum which is chaired by the Schools' Chair, who works with the OIB Steering Group and with all those invited to ensure that the agenda addresses a wide range of relevant educational issues as well as matters regarding the review and development of the OIB examination. Guest speakers and those with special expertise to offer on agenda items are invited to attend. The minutes of this meeting are taken by a secretary appointed by the chair and are forwarded to Cambridge International and the Cambridge Inspectors.

Any proposals for change emerging from the above meetings, whether they concern syllabus, examining practice or administration are, once approved by the examining authorities, inserted in this Handbook by the end of January. The Handbook is re-issued in February or March, having been edited by Cambridge International, (with input from the Steering Group and Cambridge Inspectors) for the June examination session. The French version is also updated and published by ASIBA for the March preceding the examination session. Both French and English versions in their most recent form are published on the ASIBA website.

4.6 How the written paper is set

The setting of OIB examination papers is co-ordinated by SIEC. In the second half of the autumn term, SIEC asks all OIB schools to submit proposed examination questions to be used in the OIB written papers. Question-setting teachers are asked to send questions directly to SIEC for a deadline in late November. These arrangements are communicated via a circular letter sent by the SIEC to *proviseurs* of the schools where the British OIB is taught. The circular often arrives in *lycées* in mid-October to early November. **OIB teachers are strongly advised to anticipate the arrival of the detailed instructions by starting work on the creation of questions in both subjects from the beginning of the autumn term.** Instructions and suggestions on issues connected with the wording and quality of questions to be submitted may be raised by the Cambridge Inspectors in examination reports, or at the autumn subject meetings or via specific instructions sent via the Subject Leaders before question setting. All questions submitted by teachers are scrutinised by the *Ministère*-appointed *Inspecteur* for that subject. Between January and March, meetings are held between the Cambridge Inspectors and the French *Inspecteurs* to compile the requisite number of papers.

From all the questions received, the Inspectors and *Inspecteurs* must select those which are most appropriate for the written paper. This involves several considerations including ensuring equivalence with A Level. Care is taken to try to ensure that the full range of the syllabus is covered and that questions are accessible to candidates from all schools. Questions must be clear and unambiguous and any documentary material needs to be able to be reproduced adequately. Questions may be edited by the Inspectors to remove linguistic ambiguities. The *Mission de Pilotage des Examens* ensures that the final version, signed off by the Subject Inspector, is not modified in any way and is reproduced accurately and without error.

It is worth emphasising that the Cambridge Inspector, working closely with their French counterpart, as stated above, usually sets six papers each year. As well as a main paper and a replacement paper for the June session, main and replacement papers must be set for the September session, which is held for any candidates who could not sit the examination in June because of illness or other emergency.

4.7 Selecting the oral passages/Key content

At the beginning of each oral examination in Language and Literature, the candidate is given a passage on which, after a period of preparation of 35 minutes, the candidate presents a commentary to the teacher-examiners conducting the oral. At the conclusion of this prepared presentation, more general discussion begins.

At the beginning of each oral examination in History-Geography, the candidate selects a Key issue and a Key term. After a preparation period of 20 minutes, the candidate presents a prepared talk on the Key issue to the teacher-examiners conducting the oral. At the conclusion of this talk, a question and answer session promoting discussion begins – first on the Key issue and then on the Key term.

In the case of the 30 minute Language and Literature oral, the passage is from the Shakespeare play the candidate has studied. A number of passages are proposed by the teacher-examiners and checked by the two members of the examining pair. The pair may refer the passages to the Subject Leader before the orals begin, and seek advice on any modifications necessary.

For the 15 minute History-Geography oral in 2016, a trial is taking place of an alternative approach for the selection of the ten Key issues (five in History and five in Geography). This year, instead of each school proposing its own list, there will be a set of four approved lists of Key Issues. Schools will select one of these lists, which are numbered 161 to 164 for convenience (ie 2016 list 1 etc). Ten Key terms (five in History and five in Geography) for all schools in France for the examination year are selected by the

Cambridge Inspector in consultation with the Subject Leader and Subject Developers. A different set of ten Key terms is selected for overseas schools, where oral examinations take place earlier. Approved Key content (Key issues and Key terms) is released to candidates by their schools on a published date which is approximately one month before the written examination.

For further details of the oral examinations, see the sections on individual subjects below.

4.8 Assistance to new schools

The OIB Steering Group and OIB teachers offer help to schools embarking on these courses, and in setting up an OIB teaching structure. Each school or section embarking on the preparation of candidates for the first time should seek to work with another established OIB section or school as a mentoring partner. Such mentors are able to offer advice about many practical matters, including the standards and requirements of the examination and approaches to teaching and assessment. Schools engaged in such a partnership should refer to this Handbook as relevant and useful. The mentoring partnership can last until after the first cohort of candidates in the new school or section has taken the examination, or longer, if useful. Standard materials for new and existing schools and sections are also available in written and/or recorded forms. Subject Leaders should be contacted for advice on accessing these. Schools new to the OIB structure may, at their request, be visited by a colleague designated by the OIB Steering Group. New schools are invited to attend the series of meetings outlined above as soon as possible (for example, when their first OIB cohort is in *2nde*), and are advised not to wait until they have candidates for the examination entering their final year. Attendance at these meetings is felt to provide the best induction for schools introducing the OIB.

5. EXAMINATION ARRANGEMENTS AND MARKING

5.1 General principles

When assessing a candidate, whether in the oral or the written part of the exam, OIB examiners:

- (i) mark positively, using a reward rather than a deficit model; that is, they seek to give credit for what a candidate knows, understands and can express well, rather than seeking to detect and penalise areas of ignorance;
- (ii) give credit to judgements and interpretations with which they might disagree, provided these are satisfactorily argued;
- (iii) do not penalise linguistic errors, except to the extent that, in sufficiently large numbers, they impair overall intelligibility (however, it is important to state that candidates achieving high marks are expected to show a high degree of fluency and accuracy);
- (iv) refer to – and employ consistently – the marking criteria set out later in this Handbook: the Key Point system for Language and Literature and the generic marking criteria (written) and mark framework (oral) for History-Geography, as well as any specific guidance given by Cambridge Inspectors.

For each examination session, each subject in the International Option has an Inspector appointed by Cambridge Assessment International Education as well as a team of teacher-examiners, nominated by the schools, deployed by the Subject Leaders and approved by the relevant Cambridge Inspector and the French *Ministère*.

The two Cambridge Inspectors and the Associate Inspectors, are present in France (and, on occasion, abroad) for a part of the examination session. Each Cambridge Inspector is usually physically present in at least two examination centres at the time of the oral examinations. They prepare reports on the general conduct of the examination in their subject, including its security, standards and fairness. They comment on performance in the written papers, which have been marked by teacher-examiners, and which they have moderated. Pairs of teacher-examiners who conduct the oral examinations prepare brief reports on the groups of candidates they examine, seeking to highlight helpfully strengths and weaknesses in the candidates' performance. Teacher-examiners of the written paper report briefly in writing to the Inspector

on each script (in Language and Literature) or on the totality of scripts they have marked (in History-Geography).

On occasion, an individual teacher-examiner may give a Cambridge Inspector cause for concern. In general, any comments about a teacher-examiner's performance are made by the Inspector directly to the individual concerned. Only in the most unusual circumstances is the teacher-examiner's school advised of this concern. Teacher-examiners who give cause for concern are expected to undergo training before examining again. Schools nominating teachers to act as examiners for the first time may be expected to provide evidence of their teaching and examining experience.

In History-Geography, teachers who may be included for the first time in the grid as written examiners are asked to undertake a small amount of trial marking in November/December as a familiarisation exercise and to help with standardisation.

Regular training of all examiners is part of the commitment of the British OIB sections to maintaining quality, parity and objectivity.

5.2 The written examination

The two OIB written papers are sat by candidates, generally but not always in their own school, on dates which are defined by the overall *baccalauréat* calendars for France and for overseas centres. These papers, like all other *baccalauréat* papers, are sat under the authority of the *chef de centre* of the *Lycée* where they are taken, generally the *proviseur* or the *proviseur adjoint*.

5.2.1 Communications with *Proviseurs*

A letter from Cambridge International outlining the arrangements applying to British OIB examinations is sent by the SIEC and the MPE to all *proviseurs* in April or May.

Heads of OIB sections are asked to ensure via effective liaison before the examination session that the arrangements set out in this letter are understood and followed in their school. This is especially important in schools where the British version of the OIB is new to the *chef de centre* and/or the school administration.

Occasionally questions arise on the day of the examination about subject papers and their format, wording, reproduction, etc. **Schools must not take any unilateral decisions or actions aimed at rectifying these or communicate on these with candidates in that school.** Instead, they should report the issue as rapidly as possible to the Head of the *baccalauréat* centre (normally the *proviseur* or an *adjoint*) who will contact the *Mission de Pilotage des Examens* (MPE). Decisions on actions to be taken to rectify problems will be transmitted by the MPE to all schools, thus maintaining parity and fairness. It may be that the only approach to such an issue is to take no action and thus to ensure that all candidates take the paper in the same conditions. The principle of ensuring all candidates take the examination under the same conditions must remain the priority. Subject Inspectors will issue instructions on how any problems in exam papers are to be taken account of in marking.

All British OIB scripts produced during the June session are now marked online using Neoptec's Viatique system. In order to assist moderation by the Cambridge inspectors, each candidate will be issued a Cambridge Candidate Number via the Head of OIB Section prior to the examination session, Candidates must write this on each page of their script. Schools are also required to submit estimated grades to the Cambridge Inspectors prior to the examinations. Scripts are randomly assigned to examiners in both subjects. Viatique is not currently used for the September session.

5.2.2 Nomination of Examiners

Examiners are nominated by the Cambridge Inspectors on the recommendations of the National Subject Leaders for OIB subjects, and validated by the SIEC and the MPE.

From 2017, all Language and Literature markers must be able to mark all scripts and therefore be prepared for all written set texts. This is because of the random allocation of scripts to markers.

Examiners do not, of course, mark candidates from their own school.

5.2.3 Training on *Viatique*

Online training, using guides, manuals and the marking interface, will be offered to examiners. Other forms of training may also be organised. Given the relatively short duration of the examination session, it is recommended that examiners build up speed and confidence in using *Viatique* in the period preceding examining, using the example scripts that will be supplied.

5.2.4 Communications with examiners: the pre-exam cycle

The *Mission de Pilotage des Examens* will issue individual login details to examiners to allow them to access the secure *Viatique* server during the month of May. Instructions about the system, and dates and deadlines for different phases of marking will also be despatched by email during the month preceding the exam.

Other preparatory materials will be sent by the Cambridge Inspectors. These will include instructions on how scripts should be annotated, text to enter for each level of performance as *appreciations*, and where and how to record component and overall marks within the *Viatique* system, as well as any directions regarding the mark-rounding built into the system.

Cambridge Inspectors may, before receipt of scripts by teacher-examiners or during the marking period, alert markers to any problems with sections of the paper or particular questions and give advice about the appropriate marking of these.

Communication from the MPE and Inspectors will also cover protocols for the use of *Viatique*'s internal messenger system, troubleshooting, technical support and sources of information, and how to take part in the trial marking exercise.

5.2.5 Processing of scripts after written exams

Following the written examinations, scripts will be scanned, anonymised and uploaded to the online *Viatique* platform. Scanning, which is carried out using dedicated high-speed scanners supplied by *Neoptec*, may take place in the school or at the '*rectorat*' depending on local circumstances. Scripts will then be randomly allocated to all markers already nominated for each OIB subject, each marker being allocated the correct number of scripts but receiving no indication about their origins.

5.2.6 The start of examining

Examiners will be able to access scripts on a set date, normally some 4-5 working days after the examination. Prior to marking their allocated scripts, all examiners will be required to mark three to four scripts chosen by the Cambridge Inspector as part of a '*phase d'entente*' (trial marking). The purpose of this exercise is to help ensure common standards of assessment are applied to all scripts i.e. as part of the moderation process.

As soon as examiners receive their allocated batch of online scripts, they must check them for missing scripts, pages, Cambridge numbers, etc.

Both teacher examiners and Subject Inspectors will have the necessary *Viatique* access codes, each having rights (respectively) to correct and annotate scripts and award marks or to moderate and then to approve and sign off final marks. Codes will be communicated so that marking and moderation can start as soon as possible after the exam session. Moderated, signed off final marks for scripts will be sent electronically to the *baccalauréat* servers in each *rectorat* and integrated into overall marks of each student for consideration by *juries*. A summative comment will be entered in line with final marks; this will be generic for each band of marks and will be closely based on assessment criteria. The moderated e-script with its finalised marks and summative comment (and with the annotations of the teacher examiner) will be considered as the original of the script and securely archived.

5.2.7 The main examining period

It is strongly recommended that the teacher-examiners of written papers be relieved of some of their other duties during the marking period, in order to undertake this work, and the Cambridge letter on OIB exams forwarded to schools by *SIEC* or the *DGESCO* asks that this should be the case. The teacher-examiner does not, of course, mark candidates from his/her own school, nor is he/she assigned to undertake the

oral examinations for candidates whose written scripts he/she marks. Teacher-examiners finish on line marking within a period of time which is defined by the Cambridge Inspector. This deadline is generally 10 days or so after the examination is taken by the candidates. The Cambridge Inspectors and their moderating assistants moderate a selection of scripts from all schools and from all teacher-examiners.

Teacher-examiners must, when they access scripts on line, check for missing scripts, batches, pages, Cambridge International numbers, etc. Details of the checking needed and possible within the new on line system will be covered in Cambridge International's letter to schools which will be received by all examiners.

Teacher-examiners must refer at all stages of their work to the marking instructions which follow in this Handbook. They are required to use the entire range of grades available. Good work is rewarded appropriately – with excellence attracting maximum marks. In many cases, there are no standard answers. Examiners should expect to respond to a range of qualities in an answer so that, inevitably, very different answers will attract the same grade for very different reasons.

Instructions on how to annotate scripts, including justifying the marks awarded, will be supplied by Inspectors and should be closely followed. The Inspectors will also keep in close touch with markers about mark-scheme and guidance, any problems encountered and how to address them, progress in marking, and best use of the statistical interface available in *Viatique* etc. Examiners should follow the standard advice on health and safety of IT users working on screen.

Teacher-examiners of written scripts communicate their marks via *Viatique* to the Subject Inspector in the UK (or to her assistant). They also identify and communicate on problem scripts via the systems built into *Viatique*.

Shortly after the written paper is held, the Cambridge Inspectors travel to different oral examination centres to moderate a sample of the oral examinations. Just before or during this period they conduct sampling and moderation of written marks. They confer with examiners to the extent and by whatever means the Inspectors consider appropriate. Moderation based on sampling takes place and intervention on the marks of individual scripts or groups of scripts is undertaken at the Inspector's discretion. The Inspectors provide final marks which they sign off after moderation via *Viatique*. An Associate Inspector is appointed to work with the Cambridge Inspector during the oral period and in the production of final written and oral marks.

5.2.8 At the end of the main examining period

Teacher-examiners must complete all allocated online marking within a period of time defined by the *MPE*. This deadline is generally 12-15 days or so after the examination is taken by the candidates. All arithmetic, annotation and comments should be checked carefully before marks are finalised and submitted.

5.2.9 Moderation

The moderation phase follows. This is a distinct phase and all marking must be finished before it starts. Moderation and scaling as necessary across markers and scripts takes place under the direction of the Inspectors.

At the end of this phase all marks are certified as final by the Inspectors, and overall comments on scripts are checked and modified if necessary to ensure they describe final marks. The marks are then validated and transferred to the main baccalaureat results systems in the various academies.

Care is taken about overseas juries and marks for these. As these sit early, it is important that all marking and moderation for these batches of scripts is finished by an early deadline.

5.2.10 Review phase

Review is conducted rapidly after the examining session and involves the views of examiners, moderators and Inspectors, as well as the Steering Group and French administrators. It is focused on what worked well and how the systems and routines could be improved. Cambridge International directs this review and communicates feedback to the *MPE*.

5.3 Conducting and marking the oral examination

This is a rigorous and demanding part of the examination. Two examiners are used for the purposes of standardisation and fairness, but this can, of course, add to the anxieties of the candidate. Everything is therefore done to help candidates give of their best in relation to both presentation or commentary and discussion or questions. In constructing the schedule of oral examiners, the Subject Leaders and Inspectors try, as far as is possible, to create male/female examiner pairs and to ensure that less experienced examiners are paired with more experienced colleagues. In the case of History-Geography, they also endeavour to create historian/geographer pairs, but this is not always possible. Neither of the teacher-examiners is from the candidate's own school and neither has marked the candidate's written papers. Samples of oral examinations are observed by the Cambridge Inspectors in the centres they are visiting and may be observed by the Associate Inspectors.

The presence of two or three unknown adults in the examination room is potentially a cause of anxiety to the candidate. When a candidate enters the room at the beginning of the oral, one teacher-examiner should introduce himself/herself, the other teacher-examiner, and any others attending, by name. He/She should make a point of adding, if there is an Inspector present, "Don't worry, Dr. X is here to check on us, not on you," (or words to that effect).

The examination for Language and Literature lasts for 30 minutes and for History-Geography, 15 minutes. Candidates have a preparation time of 35 and 20 minutes respectively.

On arrival at the designated examination area, for Language and Literature, examiners present each candidate with one of the pre-selected and approved passages which they have chosen from the Shakespeare play that the candidate has studied. The examiners ensure that the passage does not duplicate one that has already been used with a previous student at that centre. They also inform the candidate which poem he/she will discuss to introduce the Synoptic Topic. For History-Geography, the candidate selects at random one of ten numbers corresponding to the ten Key issues prepared by his/her school and one of five letters, A to E, corresponding to the Key terms prepared by all schools. These choices are made 'blind', using plain cards numbered on the underside. If the Key issue the candidate selects is in History, the Key term is taken from the list for Geography – and *vice versa*.

In both subjects, the candidate prepares a presentation or talk. This is of 7-8 minutes' duration in Language and Literature and 5 minutes' duration on the Key issue in History-Geography. The preparation is done in a secure room which is separate from the examining room. Rough paper is available in this room, and the candidate may take notes made during the preparation time into the examination. After the candidate's presentation or talk, the discussion becomes more general or focuses on other aspects of the syllabus or topic. In History-Geography, after five minutes' discussion about the Key issue, the Key term is introduced for discussion during the final 5 minutes.

The Head of the Oral Examination Centre must ensure that oral examination invigilators are constantly present in preparation rooms during the oral examinations. They should ensure that each candidate is marked on an attendance register and that his or her identity is checked. It is important that this is done before the candidate goes into the examination room, as such identity checks must not impinge on the time for the oral examination itself. Heads of OIB Orals Examination Centres should also ensure that candidates are issued with blank rough paper and that candidates are not left alone or unsupervised until collected by an oral examiner. Rooms should be scrutinised by invigilators periodically. While not distracting or helping candidates, invigilators should maintain a friendly demeanour, serving candidates water if requested.

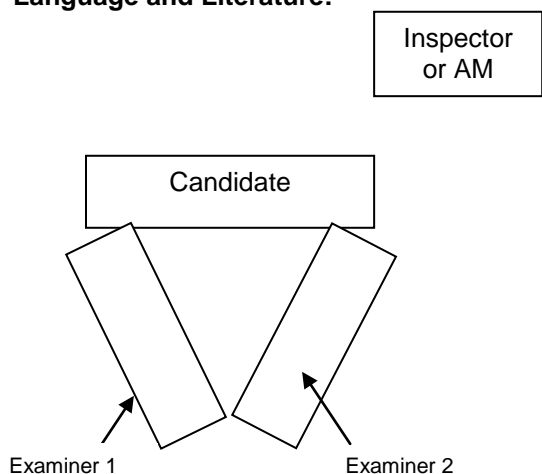
Teacher-examiners must be alert to any nervous disposition displayed by the candidate as he/she enters the room and do all they can to settle a candidate into the examination. In this regard:

- (i) Preliminary comments should help to put the candidate at ease and, where possible, give a sense of a relaxed atmosphere. The candidate should be addressed by his/her first name throughout.
- (ii) Examiners should not be intrusive, agitated, or dismissive. An even and pleasant tone and approach must be maintained throughout the exam.
- (iii) Examiners must not interrupt candidates, except to help clarify a point, move the discussion on, or 'rescue' a candidate who is in difficulty.

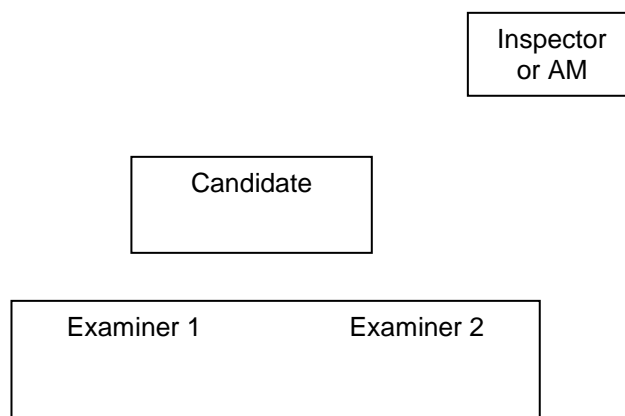
- (iv) Examiners must encourage rather than challenge candidates. This does not, obviously, preclude difficult or probing questions. The idea is to create conditions in which candidates respond to such questions without secondary aspects getting in the way.

The examination room may be arranged as shown in the following diagrams.

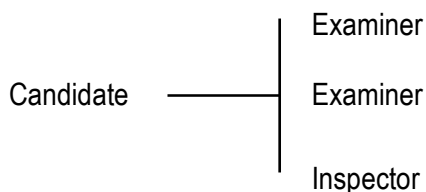
Language and Literature:



History-Geography:



The following arrangement of seats **must be avoided**:



If a representative of the French educational *Inspectorat* asks to attend the oral examination, as they have the right to, they should sit out of the candidate's line of sight, in a position similar to that of the Cambridge Inspector in the first diagram. A trainee teacher-examiner may observe an oral, provided that the presiding teacher-examiners give their agreement and provided that the number of non-candidates present does not exceed four. It is understood that the trainee must not have any teaching or other relationship to the candidate and is not allowed to participate in the oral in any way. Such observers should again be placed in a position similar to that of the Cambridge Inspector.

A supply of drinking water must be made available for all involved in the examination. Smoking is, in accordance with French law, strictly prohibited.

The following instructions to teacher-examiners address the issue of treating all candidates in the same way:

- (i) All those involved in the oral examination must ensure that the same procedures and standards are followed for all candidates across groups and regions.
- (ii) It is essential that teacher-examiners do not allow the examination to over-run the time allowed. Each candidate must be given equal time, and the next candidate must not be kept waiting. A clock must be placed in each examination room and must be visible both to examiners and the candidate.
- (iii) Teacher-examiners must give the same instructions and information to each candidate. They must explain to each candidate how the oral will be conducted, with special reference to the amount of time that will be devoted to each part of the oral. Examination timings, which are managed by examiners, must take into account the time needed to give this standardised information, which must be communicated clearly and concisely.

- (iv) In the interests of accuracy and equality of treatment of all candidates, teacher-examiners must check each *fiche d'évaluation* before submitting it. Checking must cover candidate names, candidate signature, content, marks awarded, the arithmetic total, examiner names, signatures and date. The conformity of all annotations with instructions is vital, and great care must be taken about these. The accuracy and clarity of *fiches d'évaluation* must be regularly checked across examining pairs by the Head of OIB Centre so that corrective action can be taken as necessary and errors avoided.
- (v) Candidates are told to leave behind any rough work or notes that they have used during the oral exam. These will be disposed of at once by the examiners, no reference being made to them during the discussion of the mark to be awarded to the candidate.
- (vi) In the event of a candidate arriving late or at the wrong time for an oral examination, the Head of the OIB Oral Examination Centre must be informed. He/she will then discuss with examiners and if necessary with the Cambridge Inspector or, if one is present at the Centre, the Assistant Moderator) the arrangements for rescheduling the oral. The Cambridge Inspector, (or Assistant Moderator) should be consulted when a change of day or of examining pair is rendered necessary. For candidates who are sick for an oral, the examination may be rescheduled only with the agreement of the Head of the OIB Oral Examination Centre.

Any candidate who seeks or demands a variation in the rules of the oral examination should be advised at once of the possible consequences. Obviously, these will vary according to the circumstances. If, for example, a candidate refuses to prepare a commentary on the passage or Key issue chosen, or refuses to speak in English for the oral, the candidate should be advised that a mark of zero will be awarded. Such incidents are, of course, extremely rare.

In general, the Inspectors or Assistant Moderators, if present, observe an oral examination in silence. They may intervene, however, if the session shows signs of over-running the time allotted, or if they feel the candidate is being probed beyond his/her level of knowledge to no purpose. They may also intervene if one of the teacher-examiners is dominating the questioning to the disadvantage of the other or of the candidate, if teacher-examiners are moving in an unstructured way from topic to topic, or if other problems with the conduct of the examination or with questioning are identified.

Teacher-examiners confer at the end of each oral to establish a 'working' mark. For Language-Literature, an initial five-minute period for such discussion is built in to the oral examining schedule, followed by a further ten minutes after each block of three or two orals throughout the day. Detailed instructions for the process by which a mark is agreed between the two Language and Literature examiners are given in Part II Section 9 below. After discussion and review, a proposed mark is recorded on the candidate's *fiche d'évaluation*. Where Cambridge Inspectors are present and have observed orals, they may be consulted by teacher-examiners. The Cambridge Inspectors may invite teacher-examiners to review their procedures and provisional marks in order to ensure comparability and consistency of standard and may moderate and modify marks received from teacher-examiners. All examiner pairs provide Cambridge Inspectors with their marks and comments via the *fiche*. However, they also keep their own notes and records of each candidate's performance, for reference by the Inspector, if required. At the end of each day, and as soon as the examining of a particular schools' candidates has ended, the complete *fiches* are transmitted to the OIB administrative officer at St Germain-en-Laye by the Head of the OIB Oral Examination Centre. The final marks submitted to the *jury* are, in all cases, determined by the Cambridge Inspector, who signs off the finalised mark sheets and the individual *fiches d'évaluation*. These are again transmitted back to Heads of Oral Examination Centres before the *jury* takes place. The Schools' Chair provides the Heads of OIB Oral Examination Centres with a list of contact numbers and other details of all schools acting as oral centres.

5.4 The role of Assistant Moderators in oral examining

With the growth of the OIB and the increasing number of OIB oral examination centres, for some years it has not been possible for the Cambridge Inspectors to inspect and moderate the oral examinations adequately on their own. For this reason, Assistant Moderators (AMs) are used. They report directly to the Cambridge Inspector. The Associate Inspector may also serve in the role of AM.

AMs are appointed by the Inspectors on behalf of Cambridge Assessment International Education in consultation with the Subject Leaders. The AMs are chosen from senior and respected members of the subject community. They assist the Inspectors in ensuring that the quality assurance processes, which are necessary to protect the interests of students, teacher-examiners and the OIB itself, are robust and effective. When visiting OIB oral examining centres for the purpose of moderating oral examinations, AMs should be afforded the same access to Heads of OIB Sections as is afforded to the Inspectors.

5.5 Terms of reference for Assistant Moderators (oral examinations)

The following points briefly describe the functions and responsibilities of Assistant Moderators.

- 1 Assistant Moderators (AMs) represent the Cambridge Inspectors when moderating on their behalf. Each applies common standards established prior to the oral examining period and is an oral examiner as well as an AM during the examination session.
- 2 The role of AMs is to observe and monitor the conduct of the oral examinations in the Centre(s) where they are present, to ensure that the regulations set out in the OIB Handbook are followed and that the interests of the candidates – and the standards of the examination – are safeguarded in all circumstances. This monitoring includes ensuring that the invigilation of the candidates before the oral examination is satisfactory and that all candidates have the proper time allowance for their preparation.
- 3 The AMs have access to the estimated oral grades for the candidates being examined at their Centre. These remain confidential and may not be disclosed to oral examiners. Access to the estimates enables them to investigate further and to alert the Inspector if the marking of any examiner pair, or the marks awarded to any group of students, appear to diverge significantly from the estimated grades.
- 4 The Inspectors may, at their discretion, ask the AMs to observe a particular candidate or candidates, if a special circumstances request makes it appropriate that they should do so, or if another specific need arises.
- 5 The AMs contact the Inspector immediately by telephone or electronic means if a situation arises of which they think the relevant Inspector should be advised.
- 6 The AMs themselves do not change any oral marks awarded or recommend scaling, though they should indicate any concerns about the accuracy or consistency of marking to the Inspector. If they have serious concerns about any marking that they observe, they contact the Inspector to discuss this immediately, without waiting for the end of the examining period at that Centre.
- 7 At the end of each day's oral examining, the AMs collect and check all mark sheets for completeness. They add an indication of which orals they observed and initial the mark sheets before they are sent on to the appropriate Inspector and Associate Inspector when working in France. They monitor the secure storage of mark sheets between and after oral sessions.
- 8 On completion of the examinations, the AMs write a brief report, confirming what they have observed and the level of their satisfaction with the oral examining processes. In this report they bring to the Inspector's attention any matters that may need including in the Annual Subject Report or may need referring to the Subject meeting or the Schools Forum meeting in the following autumn.

5.6 Estimated grades

Schools are required to submit estimated grades for all candidates, for both the written and oral components of each subject, as part of the formal procedures for the examination. Estimated grades for Language and Literature are given in the form of a Key Point (see the section in this Handbook on marking of the Language and Literature papers), not a mark.

Estimated grades are collated and sent to the Cambridge inspectors via ASIBA's administrative coordinator in April/May. They form an integral part of the moderation process undertaken by the Cambridge inspectors to ensure that the final marks awarded are fair and reliable. For example, they may be used:

- to check the accuracy of grading by comparing actual grades with estimated grades
- in instances where a student's script, or part of script, may have been lost
- in cases of special consideration.

Estimated grades must be a realistic prediction of what the student is expected to achieve in the examination based on all the evidence of the candidate's work during the OIB course and the teacher's knowledge of the OIB standards. It is important that each prediction is made as accurately as possible, without under-predicting or over-predicting the grade.

5.7 Special circumstances and arrangements

Schools are also asked to submit to the Cambridge Inspectors, via the Schools' Chair (or the person designated by him/her, currently Catherine Sagne of the British Section, St Germain), written information about any candidate or group of candidates who require special arrangements for special circumstances or need special consideration after the examination. Schools are asked to indicate in January, at the point of first declaration of entries for the British OIB, any candidates who are likely to have such rights or need such arrangements. The Schools' Chair writes to OIB schools in April to request the detailed information on each case be sent to him/her to be forwarded to the Inspectors in good time. The following categories are covered by these arrangements:

1 *Tiers temps*: all schools must forward to the Schools' Chair documented proof of any *tiers temps* (extra time) allowances given to individual candidates by the French educational authorities. The deadline for this is in early May. Schools are informed of the deadline by email. *Tiers temps* entitlements are decided by regional commissions that may sit very close to written examinations. **All candidates should be actively encouraged by schools and sections to request and establish *tiers temps* rights for candidates as early as possible.** All such information is routinely copied to the Head of the candidate's OIB oral examination centre after consideration by the Schools' Chair and Cambridge Inspectors, as it may involve modifications to oral timing.

2 Special circumstances forms are also provided by the Schools' Chair. These forms which are sent to Heads of Section by email, and available on the private pages of the ASIBA website, are used by schools to indicate any circumstances that predictably affect the candidate at the time of the exams. They are to be returned by an early May deadline. Chronic medical conditions should be indicated on these forms, as well as specific learning difficulties or other conditions which may affect the candidate at the time of the examinations. A candidate who has missed many lessons because of illness, or a candidate who has suffered a recent bereavement, would fall into this category. This would also apply to a group of candidates whose teacher was absent for a long period, or a group that had perhaps been deprived of a teacher through illness or accident. The Schools' Chair reviews these applications and, in consultation with the Cambridge Inspectors, decides what information will be passed on to the teacher-examiners and/or Heads of OIB oral examination centres. For example, there may be cases in which a candidate's circumstances are such that they need special care during the oral examinations. **Under no circumstances should a teacher or Head of Section contact Heads of OIB oral examination centres or examiners directly discuss candidates with special circumstances.**

3 Special consideration forms are provided to report problems and incidents that occur on the day of the examination – such as interruption to the examination because of noise, fire alarm or bomb scare, for example. Other matters in this category might include the sudden and temporary illness of a candidate. These forms are returned to the Schools' Chair as soon as possible after the examination which has been affected by the incidents or circumstances.

The Schools' Chair ensures that a log of all applications and information received in these categories is kept and updated regularly. This log is sent to the Inspectors as it is updated. The Schools' Chair also ensures that the original applications from schools are forwarded to the Inspectors by post.

During the process of moderation, the Cambridge Inspector may, in the light of such information, decide to adjust the mark of a candidate or candidates.

5.8 *Rattrapage*

The role of the *jury* in dealing with borderline candidates (those just below the pass mark, or just below a mark which would give them a better category of pass in the *baccalauréat*) was described in chapter 1, which also mentioned the situation of candidates who, even after being considered by the *jury*, remain below the pass mark. Candidates who score between 8/20 and 9.99/20 are entitled to *rattrapage*, a second oral examination in chosen core subjects, the result of which is substituted for the earlier result in the written examination. Candidates who score just below 8 may be granted *rattrapage* by the *jury*. A candidate must take two subjects in *rattrapage*, as described above.

Such a candidate is usually advised by his/her teachers to choose a subject (or subjects) in which improvement is realistically possible. If he/she chooses an International Option subject, his/her *rattrapage* is conducted solely by a teacher in that subject who has been approved by the Cambridge Inspector. No other teacher-examiner is present. The chosen teacher-examiner is never from the candidate's school. The candidate does not prepare a talk or commentary. If a Cambridge Inspector is present, he/she may conduct the *rattrapage*, but this would be an exceptional circumstance. In Language and Literature, the interviewer conducts a conversation involving all the texts a candidate has studied. In History-Geography, the conductor of the interview limits the portion of the syllabus to be examined and the content to be covered to two Key terms – one in History, one in Geography. They are chosen at the start of the *rattrapage* in a similar way as for the original oral examination, using the approved key terms for that year. Further information about *rattrapage* is found in the chapters on individual subjects.

The schedule of teacher-examiners produced in February by the Subject Leaders indicates which examiners are designated for *rattrapage*. *Rattrapage* dates are negotiated by the Heads of OIB oral examination centres: they are not aligned across the country. They may be fixed and communicated quite late in the examination session. All teachers designated for *rattrapage* are asked to bear in mind that they must be available for these duties (should OIB *rattrapage* be needed) – no matter how late in the baccalauréat session they may be placed. The date by which all *rattrapage* must be finished and the baccalauréat session closed nationally is indicated in the national calendar for baccalauréat examinations published in the *Bulletin Officiel*. *Rattrapage* examiners must ensure that they remain free for duty until this date.

Heads of OIB Oral Examination Centres are required – in conjunction with their school's *Proviseur* and their local *Rectorat* – to establish dates for OIB *rattrapage* in their centre as early as possible and to make sure that these are communicated as early as possible to both the *rattrapage* examiners and the Schools' Chair.

5.9 Enquiries about results

Once they have been validated by the *jury*, all marks are final; it is not possible to request a re-mark.

Candidates who feel that a mark does not reflect their ability may, however, request to see their examination script to check for arithmetical or administrative errors; for example, if the mark on the script does not match that on the *relevé de notes*. More information about this procedure can be found at: <http://www.siec.education.fr/votre-examen/bac-pro/reclamations#triple-mission>

All marks are held by the *Education nationale* and neither Cambridge Assessment International Education nor ASIBA are responsible for post-results services. Enquiries should not be addressed to the Inspector, whose role in the process technically ends with the submission of results for the consideration of the *jury*.

5.10 Examining in overseas centres (*lycées français à l'étranger*)

Arrangements are as follows:

Overseas Centres must make contact with ASIBA at the beginning of the academic year to arrange the administration of their oral examinations and ensure that funding has been arranged.

Details of the oral examination procedures for overseas centres are set out in the Overseas Oral Examining Protocol which is Appendix 2 at the end of this Handbook.

Other aspects of examining will remain as described elsewhere in this Handbook.

PART II: LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

6. SUBJECT DETAILS

6.1 Aims

The syllabus aims:

- (i) to encourage and develop the enjoyment and appreciation of literature in English, based on an informed personal response, and
- (ii) to develop the ability to analyse and discuss that response and the texts which produced it, in a cogent, organised manner

6.2 Objectives

The examination assesses the candidates' response to literature by allowing them to display:

knowledge	of the works studied and the historical and personal contexts in which they were written;
understanding	extending from simple factual comprehension to a recognition and conception of the nature and significance of literary texts and the issues and ideas which they raise;
analysis	the ability to develop and explain their response, and to identify and describe literary effects;
judgement	the capacity to make critical assessments and judgements of value based on close reading; the capacity to answer questions on specific aspects and features of a text by selecting relevant material for discussion;
cultural awareness	the ability to appreciate the character and significance of texts produced in a language and culture which may not be their own;
expression	the ability to express, in fluent and effective English, ideas, opinions and responses in organised and cogent essays on literary subjects - using the characteristics of a formal written register; demonstrating the ability to engage in an informed literary discussion.

6.3 Choice of works

Each year, in the meeting of subject teachers mentioned in chapter 3, a list of authors and set works to be available for choice by schools in the examination in two years' time is agreed between teachers and the Cambridge Inspector. The authors chosen will normally be British, American, Commonwealth or any others whose works were written originally in English. An effort is made to represent a variety of historical periods, with approximately half representing twentieth century writing.

The choices of set works fall into four categories:

Drama

Poetry

Prose Fiction

Shakespeare's works

The Cambridge Inspector reserves the right to introduce texts by authors not suggested by schools in the interest of appropriate syllabus balance. A work may stay on the list for up to two years.

For the written paper, three works in each of the first three categories are specified; teachers choose one work from each category for candidates to prepare. In the case of poetry, anthologies may be suggested, increasing the choices available. The Cambridge Inspector chooses a suitable range of poems for study for each poet or category of poetry, and it is with this range in mind that appropriate poetry questions for the written paper should be devised. Schools must complement the Inspector's list with their own choice of poems, but candidates will not be required in their answers to show knowledge of poems outside the original list.

For the oral examination, three Shakespeare plays, and two Synoptic Topics, with associated recommended texts of which candidates will study two, are specified. These works are not the same as those prescribed for the written examination. Each school selects a Shakespeare text from the three specified, and two other works from the list supplied as part of the Synoptic Topic.

Schools are required to declare the works they have chosen to prepare for the examination, including a list of all poems studied, in the autumn preceding the examination. Forms for these declarations are sent by the Schools' Chair.

The format of the oral examination will be as follows: there will be a Shakespeare text and a discussion of a Synoptic Topic – a literary theme or genre (selected by the school from a choice of two) where students will be able to discuss at least two related texts.

6.4 The written examination

4 hours; all answers written in English.

Please note that set texts may NOT be taken into the examination.

Part 1: Individual Works (2 hours 40 minutes)

Two questions, 1 hour 20 minutes each; two-thirds of the total marks.

A total of 18 questions are set, 2 on each prescribed text. Candidates are required to write answers to 2 questions, chosen from two out of the three following sections.

Section A Drama

Section B Prose Fiction

Section C Poetry

Part 2: Critical Appreciation (1 hour 20 minutes)

One question, 1 hour 20 minutes; one-third of the total marks.

Candidates must write a critical appreciation of previously unseen poetry or a passage of previously unseen prose. (Note that the prose extract is not necessarily from a work of fiction; it may be taken from non-fiction genres, such as travel writing, letters, diaries, essays, etc.) Suggestions are given in the question about possible areas of focus, and candidates are asked to analyse by what means the aspects or effects discussed are created or achieved. In each paper, one question will be on a single poem or passage of prose; the other will be a comparative question, requiring candidates to compare two poems, two passages of prose or one poem and one passage of prose.

6.5 The oral examination

30 minutes (after 35 minutes' supervised preparation); in English.

Part 1: Detailed commentary followed by discussion (approximately 15 minutes)

Candidates are required to give a commentary lasting 7 – 8 minutes on a passage (between 30-34 lines long) from the Shakespeare play that they have studied and to discuss it with the examiners. Passages are chosen by teacher-examiners and one of these is selected for the candidate who then spends 35 minutes preparing his/her commentary in a supervised preparation room. A question and answer session on the whole text follows the commentary. Time is divided equally between the prepared commentary and discussion.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic (approximately 15 minutes)

Candidates are invited to demonstrate an understanding and overview of a given topic area by reference to, and discussion of, a number of previously prepared texts, usually in at least two genres. Teachers choose one of two prescribed topics:

Writers and writing of the Romantic Age Postcolonial Writing.

For each topic a selection of five or six primary texts is listed; *teachers are expected to select at least two of these texts and to teach them in ways which will enable candidates to show their understanding of the topic by discussion of the texts.* The primary focus should always be on the topic, not on the texts as individual and free-standing poems, plays or works in prose. By way of introducing the topic, each candidate will be asked to talk briefly (2 or 3 minutes at most) about a prepared poem from a prescribed list of six poems, which teachers will have previously discussed with their students.

When candidates are given their Shakespeare commentary passage, they will also be told which poem they will be asked to introduce. At this time, however, they will not be given a copy of the poem, since the 35 minutes preparation time is intended for the Shakespeare commentary and, in any case, they should come already prepared to introduce any one of the six prescribed poems. Each candidate will be expected to talk for 2 or 3 minutes about the prepared poem from the prescribed list of poems. Candidates should introduce those thematic and stylistic features of the poem which shed light on the topic and may suggest ways in which these features connect with the texts they have studied.

7. INSTRUCTIONS TO EXAMINERS

7.1 Written examination

(1) Answers must be assessed on a twenty-point scale. For reasons which will become apparent below, five Key Points on this scale are defined by detailed marking criteria:

20	Work of Distinction / Very good
17	Very Good / Good
14	Good / Satisfactory
11	Passable / Basic
8	Elementary / Inadequate standard

These criteria are designed to permit accurate and consistent assessment within the range 7 - 20.

Marks in the range 0 - 6 ('Unclassified') should be awarded only for essays which are, to all intents and purposes, of a completely inappropriate standard for the examination. Answers falling within this range should be referred to the Inspector.

- (2) The criteria to be used are the following:
- (i) Relevance: adherence to the question and coverage of points raised by it.
 - (ii) Content: familiarity with, use of, and development of relevant ideas about the text.
 - (iii) Structure: organisation and logic of argument.
 - (iv) Expression: quality of language and style.

Naturally, it is expected that the content and relevance of what candidates say in the examination will reflect their firm engagement with the substance of the course. As a consequence, within the overall assessment of each piece of the candidates' work, content and relevance are given greater weight (in the approximate ratio of 2:1) than structure and expression.

- (3) The assessment profiles found in chapter 8 indicate typical characteristics of answers which it would be appropriate to situate at the five Key Points. All characteristics listed should be taken into account in the process of assessing, but it should be remembered that mixed profiles are likely to be common. The aim in marking is to find what is often known as the 'best fit'; that is to assign an answer to the Key Point with whose overall profile it most closely corresponds.

Examiners are instructed to apply Key Point criteria 'globally', considering relevance, content/demonstration, structure and expression together. They should not expect essays to fulfil all conditions for each Key Point. Such an approach requires them to be as familiar with each Key Point description as possible, and to refer to the descriptors continuously when marking.

- (4) Marking in a subject of this kind cannot ultimately be other than by impression. Examiners should therefore begin by expecting every answer to earn a mid-range mark (i.e. 14), and move upward or downward from that level according to the view they form as the answer progresses.
- (5) Examiners should be positive in their approach to assessment, looking for points to reward and highlighting such points with ticks. These ticks will help, in looking over an answer, to determine a mark for it.
- (6) In addition to ticks, answers should be sparingly annotated using the *Viatique* toolbox.
- (7) Each answer should have ascribed to it brief written comments describing its character in terms of the Key Point descriptors. These comments should be recorded on the separate standard form supplied to written examiners by the Schools' Chair. Comments such as 'Good' or 'Poor' should be avoided: they are of little use subsequently and, in any case, are implicit in the mark.
- (8) Examiners must make use of the entire mark range, where this is appropriate.
- (9) Fragmentary last answers should not be over-rewarded. (A candidate's ability to apportion his time satisfactorily is one of the skills that the examination tests.) The maximum mark for even the best answer entirely in note form should not exceed 11/20. Also see section on Key Point 5.
- (10) Generally speaking, the length of answers should not in itself be taken as indicative of their merit. The unduly brief answer will almost inevitably penalise itself by failing to treat the question in adequate depth; the unduly long essay may be poorly structured or lack a sharp enough focus on the question. An appropriate length for an essay is usually 800 – 1000 words.
- (11) Care should be taken not to over-value answers in which narrative – even very full, accurate and well-written narrative – predominates over discussion. An answer which is mainly narrative or fails to take account of the question set should not score higher than 11/20. At the same time, it is important to recognise the value of selective narrative touches whose relevance may have been allowed to remain implicit as a matter of technique.
- (12) It is possible that, during the marking of the written papers, examiners may find difficulty with a particular question. They should refer this question to the Cambridge Inspector.

- (13) Once the teacher-examiner has determined final marks for individual answers, the overall mark for the paper is calculated in the following manner:
- (i) The marks out of 20 for each answer are added, to give a mark out of 60.
 - (ii) This total mark is then divided by 3. (Wherever the result so obtained contains a fraction, Viatique will round it up to the nearest whole mark.). This produces the final mark to be awarded for the script as a whole.
- (14)
- (i) If, when the final mark for the entire script has been calculated, that mark is strongly felt by the teacher-examiner to be unrepresentative of the script's overall quality, then all three of the candidate's individual answers must be re-marked with close reference to the detailed criteria. Any modification(s) resulting from this review must be recorded next to the answer(s) in question in his/her report to the Inspector.
 - (ii) Under no circumstances should the overall mark for a script ever be adjusted on any other basis.
 - (iii) The final mark for the type of script outlined in 14) i) above is confirmed by the Cambridge Inspector. The teacher-examiner should highlight such scripts when marks and reports are sent to the Cambridge Inspector.

7.2 Oral Examination

Passages for the commentary

Teacher-examiners select a number of appropriate passages for detailed commentary on the Shakespeare play. These are approved via agreement between teacher-examiners (who always examine in pairs). The pair may refer chosen passages to the Subject Leader in case of doubt. No one except the relevant oral examiners (and the Subject Leader, if passages have been referred) knows which passages have been chosen and in which OIB oral examination centre they are to be used.

Where practical, enough different passages should be chosen to provide at least one per candidate. If this is not possible, each extract is to be used no more than twice consecutively. (Use across a lunch break, across any other kind of break, or overnight, is not counted as consecutive use.)

A passage should consist of between 30 and 34 lines of the Shakespearean text, including any opening or closing stage directions. Each extract chosen should be sufficiently central to the text, and contain sufficient variety of material, to provide comfortable scope for a commentary lasting up to eight minutes. An extract should take the form of a clean, well-presented photocopy of the relevant piece of text, placed in the centre of an A4 sheet, in a character size equivalent to 12 point, so as to allow the candidate room on all sides for his/her own annotation. Every fifth line of the extract should be numbered, for ease of reference, and all speakers should be identified.

The teacher-examiners should prepare three copies of the extract (two for each member of the examining pair and one for the candidate). As either the Cambridge Inspector or an Assistant Moderator will attend orals at each centre, a fourth copy should be made available.

When the candidate arrives for the oral examination, he/she is given the pre-selected passage. He/She is then allowed 35 minutes' supervised preparation time. The candidate is allowed access only to the photocopied passage and to a supply of rough paper. In the oral itself, he/she may refer to any notes he/she has made during preparation time. At the same time, the candidate should be notified which poem he or she will discuss to introduce the Synoptic Topic. A copy of the poem is to be given to the candidate in the examination room, after completion of the Shakespeare commentary and discussion.

Shakespeare: commentary and discussion

One of the two teacher-examiners conducting the oral will begin by asking the candidate to read the beginning of the selected passage aloud. The quality of the reading does not affect the mark in any way. If the passage is dialogue, one of the teacher-examiners may offer to read the smaller part himself/herself. If the reading is taking too long, the candidate is interrupted, thanked for reading, and invited to begin his/her commentary.

The commentary should last no more than eight minutes and be interrupted by teacher-examiners only if a candidate appears to be in difficulties and to require encouragement. If a candidate is still speaking after eight minutes he/she must be interrupted and told he/she has one minute to complete his/her presentation. After nine minutes he/she must stop speaking. Although there is no automatic penalty for overrunning, teacher-examiners will take this into account when deciding their mark. The remainder of the first half of the oral (approximately 8 minutes) is taken up with further questions either on the passage itself, or on the Shakespearean work from which it was taken, or both. Teacher-examiners should give candidates a chance to restate or correct comments that were unclear, inaccurate or weak, and prompt further details of promising aspects of the commentary. If a candidate's performance appears to be very good, teacher-examiners should probe to discover just how good.

Commentaries should not attempt to be exhaustive treatments of every possible aspect of the given passage. *Students are entitled to choose the aspects on which they want to focus and to indicate these in their introduction.* Teacher-examiners may ask questions about key aspects of the passage that have not been addressed (e.g. language, imagery, dramatic features etc.) in the discussion that follows the student's presentation.

The Synoptic Topic

The second half of the oral lasts approximately 15 minutes and takes the form of a discussion of the Synoptic Topic, introduced by the selected poem and then illustrated by reference to the two chosen texts.

A candidate who shows signs of talking for a disproportionate length of time about works not prescribed for the oral is brought tactfully back to them by means of a fresh and preferably related question.

At the end of the oral (which, in fairness to all concerned, must in each case be no more than the full 30 minutes) the examiners should always thank the candidate for taking part. They must, however, avoid at all costs making any remark which might be construed as implying an evaluative judgement, however vague, of the candidate's performance.

Starter-questions

Teacher-examining pairs should bring with them to the examination centre a range of reasonable starter-questions relating to the Synoptic Topic under discussion. A 'reasonable' question in this connection is one whose meaning is likely to be immediately apparent to an eighteen year-old student, and which will allow candidates genuine freedom to answer in their own manner. These questions may be discussed with the Subject Leader before the orals begin. A teacher-examiner should always be clear in his/her own mind, before deciding to ask a question, what sort of answer it may justifiably be expected to produce, but he/she must also be aware that it may very well elicit an excellent answer of an entirely unexpected kind. Starter-questions should allow a wide range of answers. They should, whenever possible, lead outwards from the poem with which the candidate has just been introducing the topic.

Whilst starter-questions of the kind just described can be decided upon in advance of the oral, it is clear that the course of the discussion which ensues will be largely unforeseeable. The examiner should, however, do his/her best to ensure both that his/her subsequent questions, although impromptu, are 'reasonable' in the sense defined above, and that in general they arise naturally from the candidate's own preceding remarks. It is hoped that, at the highest level of performance by the candidate, starter-questions will not be needed.

Conducting and assessing the oral

In general, the oral is to be conducted by the examiners, with the Cambridge Inspector, if present, intervening rarely, if at all. It is recommended that the responsibility for note-taking during the examination be assumed exclusively by one of the examiners, with a view to disconcerting the candidate to no greater extent than is absolutely necessary.

Teacher-examiners should be careful to ask candidates for evidence from the text(s) for the opinions they offer, rather than allowing candidates to speak in generalities. Copies of poems for the Synoptic Topic will be kept in the examination room, and the appropriate poem will be given to the candidate after completion of the Shakespeare commentary and discussion.

Each oral performance must be assessed on a twenty-point scale and on the same basis as the written paper, described earlier in this chapter. The sole criteria to be used are the following:

- (i) Relevance: coverage of points raised by the commentary and by the general discussion
- (ii) Content: familiarity with, use of, and ideas about the texts and Synoptic Topic.
- (iii) Structure: organisation and logic of argument
- (iv) Expression: quality of language and style.

The assessment profiles in chapter 9 indicate typical characteristics of oral performances which it would be appropriate to situate at the five Key Points. All listed characteristics should be taken into account in the process of assessment, but it should be remembered that mixed profiles are likely to be common. The aim in marking should be to assign a performance to the Key Point with whose overall profile it most closely corresponds.

As for the written examination, marking in a subject of this kind cannot ultimately be other than by impression. Examiners should therefore begin by expecting every candidate to earn a mid-range mark (i.e. 14), and move upward or downward from that level according to the view they form as the oral progresses.

As mentioned earlier, examiners should be positive in their approach to assessment, looking for qualities to reward, rather than seeking to detect and penalise areas of ignorance. In particular, full credit must be given even for judgements and interpretations with which an examiner happens personally to disagree, provided that they are satisfactorily argued. Occasional linguistic errors should not be penalised, except in so far as they genuinely impair intelligibility.

Both parts of the oral (i.e. the Shakespeare commentary and the general discussion of the other two texts) should be treated as equally influential in determining a candidate's overall mark. Examiners should resist the temptation, however, mentally to award a mark for the commentary before they have completed the second part of the interview.

The process of the two examiners coming to an agreed mark for a candidate's performance consists of two phases:

- (i) Once the candidate has left the room, the examiners confer, referring closely to the notes made during the oral and to the detailed Key Point descriptors. In the first instance they agree a Key Point mark of 8, 11, 14, 17 or 20. (See section 7.1 for performances falling in the below Key Point 8 range, and therefore not covered by the Key Point system.)
- (ii) Once a Key Point mark is firmly agreed, the examiners may, also by agreement, adjust this upward or downward by one mark out of twenty, but never more. This 'fine-tuning' brings the full mark range into play.

Please note that there is every likelihood that, while the phase (i) mark is still in the process of being negotiated, one or both of the markers may already have in mind an adjusted intermediate mark which he/she would ultimately wish to see awarded to the candidate. It is, however, essential to the method that no such mark be mentioned by either party until firm agreement exists on a Key Point placing.

The Cambridge Inspector may, in the light of all available evidence (including examiner/moderator reports, estimated key points, and a candidate's performance in the written paper), make adjustments to individual marks awarded, or to the marks of a range of candidates, if they appear seriously discrepant.

Rattrapage

In cases where a candidate has been granted *rattrapage* and where he/she has opted for OIB Language and Literature, a Cambridge-approved teacher-examiner, who is nominated at the point in the year when all teacher-examiners are named, conducts the *rattrapage* interview on his/her own. Because the result of *rattrapage* is a mark replacing the previous written mark, it is essential that it offers the chance of a rigorous examination of the candidate's knowledge and understanding. This is best achieved by a sustained conversation between the examiner and the candidate. The examiner is then free to concentrate entirely on the candidate and to guide the discussion logically and coherently without having to yield to another examiner the opportunity of questioning. In addition, a candidate is likely to be under less stress when faced by only one interlocutor.

The *rattrapage* interviewer conducts a conversation involving (potentially) **all** the works the candidate has studied, both those prepared for the oral and for the written examinations.

8. MARKING CRITERIA FOR THE WRITTEN EXAMINATION

Notes on the implementation of the Key Point descriptors

The marking criteria describe typical features of work at each Key Point. It is not expected that all the listed features of a given Key Point should be present in a piece of work in order for it to qualify for a mark within that Key Point. For example, an answer may exhibit some features that suggest Key Point 20 and others that suggest Key Point 17; its qualities should be balanced and it should be awarded the Key Point that offers the “best fit”.

The Key Point descriptors beginning on the next page relate to the assessment of complete answers. Incomplete or brief answers should be adjusted accordingly. For example, work displaying qualities that suggest Key Point 17 **potential** may receive Key Point 14 or less if it is insufficiently developed. Key Point 5 descriptors relate only to answers that are very brief, in note form or bullet points, usually a third answer.

KEY POINT 20: WORK OF DISTINCTION / Very good

General

A full, mature and imaginative response. Complex and subtle, yet clear. Knowledge of the set texts, or reading of the Critical Appreciation text, is secure enough to allow for well-developed analysis that is alert to the possibilities of the question. Response to literary qualities of the texts will be sustained and sensitive. Skills of writing, demonstration and close reading will be evident to a high degree.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Set Texts

Knowledge of the text is detailed and secure; use of it to discuss the issues raised by the question shows understanding and insight, often of a personal kind though supported by a sense of literary conventions and effects. Complex issues and ambiguities are likely to be handled gracefully and without reducing the text, and use of detailed reference is illuminating. Literary qualities and effects within the text will be discussed in relation to meaning. A sense of the contexts in which the works studied were written and understood may be evident.

Part 2: Critical Appreciation

Single text: Close reading and broad overview of the text are likely to be naturally combined into a sophisticated, coherent reading which is clear but not reductive. The candidate may offer and balance different possible readings, and will be at ease discussing suggestion or ambiguity. Response will reveal insight, often personal. Literary features of text – style, structure, devices, techniques, etc. – should be discussed in relation to their effects and their contribution to meaning. The candidate is likely to make confident, sensitive judgements of tone. The result is a full, complex reading in response to the guiding question. Breadth of reading may be apparent in the candidate's ability to offer context or awareness of different critical approaches.

Comparative: An impressive, astute discussion of the poems or prose passages, illuminating each – possibly in unexpected ways – by careful and effective comparison and close reading. The essay either moves confidently between the two texts throughout or, even if initially concentrating on one, moves to a complete comparison of the two. It shows a sophisticated and coherent understanding of, and response to, interpretative possibilities and, where relevant, ambiguity in each passage or poem; this is incorporated into a convincing overview of the material as a whole. Well-focused discussion of the effects of literary and stylistic features is fully integrated into the answer. Breadth of reading may be apparent in the candidate's ability to offer context or awareness of different critical approaches.

Demonstration

Structure will be clear, with logical progression and effectively linked and structured paragraphs; yet flexible enough to avoid reductive approach. Argument, discussion and evidence are probably woven naturally and inseparably together. Ability to prioritise central lines of argument, text and evidence, and to handle other areas deftly and appropriately, will be evident. In **Part 2: Critical Appreciation**, candidates should use the guiding question to make it a springboard for a full, subtle argument. Persuasive, engaging and perhaps exciting writing.

Expression *N.B. Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point*

Complex ideas are articulated with precision and clarity in an appropriate and effective style. Language gives a vivid sense of the candidate's response to the text, rather than simply being a means of transmitting ideas. Critical vocabulary is used appropriately. English should be consistently accurate, fluent and polished, with only very occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling. An extensive range of vocabulary is effectively used.

KEY POINT 17: VERY GOOD / Good

General

A response that demonstrates insight, thoroughness and sensitivity. Skills of writing, argument and close reading are secure, if occasionally lacking some finesse; sensitivity to nuances of language and ideas is also apparent. Where appropriate, the answer shows an awareness of some of the ways in which meaning and suggestion can be conveyed by style, structure, tone or literary devices, as well as by literal meaning of words. The question has been understood, considered and discussed in a reasonably balanced fashion.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Set Texts

Knowledge of the text is secure; use of it to answer the question is focused and selective. Some telling use of detail may be expected. Response to the text is likely to be personal, and the candidate shows clear understanding of central issues as well as some awareness of implicit meanings or suggestion – although more complex ideas may be handled in a slightly reductive fashion, and subtlety and finesse may be lacking. The candidate is likely to discuss literary features of the text in relation to their effects where this is appropriate.

Part 2: Critical Appreciation

Single text: A confident handling of the text, offering some close, detailed reading as well as a broader overview, and considering implicit meaning and suggestion where appropriate. The candidate attempts to discuss literary features of text – style, structure, etc. – in relation to their effects, and offers judgements of tone, language choice, etc. where appropriate. Response reveals understanding and insight, and perhaps some awareness of the telling detail: a thorough, proficient reading with some 'literary' sensitivity. At the same time, a minor misreading amidst good commentary should not prevent a candidate from being awarded this Key Point.

Comparative: A perceptive comparison of the poems or prose passages, either moving confidently between the two throughout the essay or, even if concentrating on one first, identifying, discussing and illustrating significant points and features of both. The essay will develop a strong comparative reading, based on detailed understanding of each text as well as a broader overview of the points of interest between them: paragraphs are not simply discrete units of analysis in their focus but offer evidence of a developing reading. Answers will focus, as appropriate, on effects of language and imagery; form, structure and narrative; rhetoric and tone. At the same time, a minor misreading amidst good commentary should not prevent a candidate from being awarded this Key Point.

Demonstration

Structure should be clear, with well-constructed paragraphs and effective linkage, even if the more complex or subtle ideas may be less well controlled or sequenced into the argument. Argument should be generally purposeful in establishing a view of the text and the question. Ideas are discussed and supported by evidence; but the candidate's thoroughness may mean that central issues and less important ones are given equal weighting and the 'forward thrust' of the argument is lost at certain points.

Expression *N.B. Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point*

Control of language is secure and often ambitious, with sentence structure and vocabulary effectively serving the expression of ideas. The candidate maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy, even if there may be a few errors (e.g. careless or second language slips). Choice of words should be careful enough to give some sense of the candidate's subjective as well as intellectual response. Critical vocabulary is used effectively where appropriate.

KEY POINT 14: GOOD / Satisfactory

General

An answer that displays sound understanding of the question, and which exhibits competence rather than flair. Basic skills of writing, analysis and attentive reading are evident, as well as a secure – if not especially subtle – knowledge and understanding of the set texts, even if this occasionally tends to the narrative rather than the analytical.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Set Texts

Sound knowledge and often thoughtful understanding of the text, even if the candidate tends to see it in terms of theme or character. There may be some appreciation of the literary qualities or strategies of the text, though these are not closely examined. Some sense of significant detail may be apparent, probably only intermittently. Response may be unimaginative but sound.

Part 2: Critical Appreciation

Single text: A reasonably coherent view of the text. Explicit meaning is understood; there is some awareness of implicit meanings or suggestions, though these may not be integrated into a coherent overall reading. Some evidence of close reading is visible: there is reference to details of the text, though these may not be fully discussed. There are likely to be signs of sensitive response to the text – judgement of tone, or an awareness of the strength of feeling expressed in a poem. The candidate's reading of the text should demonstrate a careful, possibly unimaginative approach to meaning and interpretation – even if there may be occasional misjudgements or misunderstandings. The answer may show some sense of the literary features of the text, though it is less likely to discuss the effects they create.

Comparative: There is reasonable understanding of the explicit themes and content of both poems or passages as well as a commitment to answering the question asked, though there may be moments of misunderstanding or misjudgement either of the texts or the question. Comparison may be mechanical though it is generally sound but does not lead to a coherent and complete comparative overview. Details of the texts are discussed and there may be some undeveloped insight into subtleties of tone and emotion. There may be some awareness of literary features but little sensitivity to effect.

Demonstration

Argument should at all times be reasonably clear, even if the clarity is reductive. Structure is likely to be coherent, though it may be unbalanced or list-like; and 'signposting' and logical progression are reasonably helpful to the reader. A tendency to narrate or describe, rather than analyse may be apparent, but some effective analysis should be expected. Evidence may be effectively used, though it may not be fully discussed, and possibly awkwardly woven into the candidate's writing.

Expression N.B. Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point

Control of language should be reasonably secure, if not ambitious: transmission of sense is not impeded and grammar, spelling and punctuation are generally accurate, despite occasional lapses or second language slips. Vocabulary and variety of sentence construction may be limited, but are adequate to the expression of the candidate's ideas. Some critical vocabulary may be used where appropriate.

KEY POINT 11: PASSABLE / Basic

General

An answer that shows some sufficient understanding at a basic level, but offers limited use of knowledge (for the set text questions), or little detail or development. There is some attempt at illustration and discussion, even if this is not sustained, or is in narrative form. Some sound moments, even if the answer as a whole lacks coherence or only provides it in a simplistic and mechanical response to both text and question. Control of written English may be flawed, but sufficient to ensure basic communication.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Set Texts

Some knowledge of the texts is demonstrated, though this may be superficial, or not used in an appropriately selective way to answer the question. Some understanding is evident, even if it is crude, or presented in the form of narrative, or limited to the more straightforward features of the text. Promising moments of analysis or of engagement in the language and issues of the text fail to develop or are unsupported. Response to the text is likely to be rigid and awkward rather than flexible or personal. Any discussion of literary features of the text – style, structure, devices, etc. – is likely to be out of context. Candidate writes a good essay but completely fails, even implicitly, to address the question set.

Part 2: Critical Appreciation

Single text: A reading is offered, though it may be inconsistent and superficial. There are some undeveloped moments of insight, analysis or understanding, but little sense either of subtleties or of a coherent overview of the text. Crude simplification is likely, as are some misreadings or distortion. There is some discussion of detail, though it may remain undeveloped. Literary features of the text – style, structure, devices, etc. – may be mentioned, but will probably be taken out of context, and not seen in terms of meaning or effect.

Comparative: A sometimes superficial and uneven response, including, possibly, moments of insight and understanding which remain inconsistently developed. It lacks a coherent overview and convincing exploration of details of the texts though some decontextualised elements may be commented on. Thus the texts are simplified and the comparison is reductive, which may lead to distortion and misreading. Comments on form and style, if they appear, are unrelated to meaning and effect: they may be presented as a list (rhyme scheme, number of stanzas). One poem/passage may be more successfully understood than the other.

Demonstration

Ideas may be stated clearly, even if not fully developed; logical progression is evident, though it is likely to lapse, and may be simplistic and assertive. The terms of the question may be only partially understood or referred to, and a genuine discussion of question and text should not be expected at this level. More description, paraphrase and unsupported assertion than analysis; some central issues are raised, but not developed. Evidence may be offered, but handled briefly or left undiscussed. The answer shows a certain insight into some aspects of the text, but a lack of coherence and development.

Expression N.B Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point

Control of language is adequate to a basic communication of thought, even if it is too approximate to convey ideas or response with clarity. Regular errors of grammar, syntax or usage will be evident. Critical vocabulary may be used with a variable degree of success, and is probably not available when needed.

KEY POINT 8: ELEMENTARY / Inadequate standard

General

Lack of knowledge and/or understanding prevents the candidate from answering the question with any clarity or coherence. Writing shows a struggle to organise thought, but argument and local progression can probably only be glimpsed. Where there is reference to the text, its purpose may not be clear. There is little sense of literary appreciation or engagement with the text.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Set Texts

Knowledge of the text is poor enough to prevent the candidate from answering the given question adequately, and is confined to primary level of meaning – plot and character, for example. Significant errors and confusion are likely. Understanding is similarly limited: there is little sense of literary appreciation or engagement with the text.

Part 2: Critical Appreciation

Single text: A reading is offered, though it is likely to be erratic and confused. There may be glimpses of understanding, but these involve simplification and may be entangled with misreading and distortions. Close reading should not be expected, but there may be some slight sense of engagement.

Comparative: There is limited response and understanding of each poem or prose passage and very limited comparison. Serious imbalance of understanding of texts is possible and one text may be ignored or misread. There is serious distortion or misreading. There is little or no evidence of close reading.

Demonstration

There may be some signs of an argument, but this lacks coherence; there may be an occasional sense of logical progression. Moments of analysis may be glimpsed, even if they are brief and unconnected. Evidence, if it is offered, is likely to be unexplained, or tangential to the point and question set.

Expression N.B. Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point

The candidate's struggle to make a clear statement is evident, though control of language is neither sustained nor precise, and the lack of coherent and fluent expression may make reading difficult. Vocabulary will be inadequate to the expression of anything but basic thought. The candidate is likely to make elementary mistakes frequently.

KEY POINT 5

In all cases where a Key Point 5 is awarded, examiners should alert the moderator to the script.

General

An answer that is brief (less than one side/one or two paragraphs), in note form or bullet points, usually a third essay where candidate seems to have run out of time. This is an essay paper and it is expected that candidates will be able to demonstrate their knowledge by writing three formal essays in the time allocated.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Set texts

Some limited knowledge of the text may be shown but it is fragmentary and often merely a series of unconnected thoughts.

Part 2: Critical Appreciation

Single text: A brief summary may be offered with a few quotations and mention of poetic devices; understanding, even at a primary level, is negligible.

Comparative: A brief summary of both texts may be offered with an outline of how a comparative essay might look. Understanding, even of basic ideas, is slight.

Demonstration

There may be the skeleton of an essay with some relevant ideas but the candidate has not left time to develop themes or construct a coherent answer.

9. MARKING CRITERIA FOR THE ORAL EXAMINATION

Notes on the implementation of the Key Point descriptors

As is the case with the written part of the examination, these describe *typical features* of work at each Key Point. It is not expected that *all* the listed features of a given Key Point should be present in an oral in order for it to qualify for a mark within that Key Point. For example, one part of an oral may exhibit some features that suggest Key Point 20 and others that suggest Key Point 17; its qualities should be balanced and it should be awarded the Key Point that offers the 'best fit'. If there is significant imbalance in the handling of the two elements of the oral examination (the Shakespeare commentary and the synoptic topic) this should be reflected in the mark awarded **and noted in the summative comment on the candidate's performance.**

Please note, however, the Key Point Descriptors must be used in conjunction with the marking grid on the *fiche d'évaluation*, to be completed for each candidate. This marking grid is shown overleaf, together with a chart indicating how the marks from the *fiche* map onto the Key Points.

After each oral examination the sequence of discussion, decision-making and recording **must** follow this sequence:

1. Examiners briefly review the candidate's performance as described above.
2. They agree a Key Point (and propose a mark – higher/middle/lower – within the key point).
3. They cross-refer to the *fiche* marking grid and the mapping chart, first selecting the appropriate mark for the agreed Key Point from Column C (Spoken English), then the marks for Columns A (response to texts) and B (literary context). 'Response to texts' will focus particularly – though not exclusively – on the Shakespeare commentary; 'literary context' will take account both of candidates' awareness of dramatic features of the Shakespeare passage and, in particular, of their discussion of the synoptic topic.
4. Adding up the marks awarded for Columns A + B + C will show exactly the level of a candidate's performance within the appropriate Key Point.
5. The marks for each column and the total mark are entered on the candidate's *fiche*, together with a summative comment referring back to the relevant Key Point. Examiners sign and date the *fiche*.

NOTICE THAT THIS PROCESS BEGINS AND ENDS (AS AT PRESENT) WITH A FOCUS ON THE KEY POINTS AND THE DESCRIPTORS.

It is likely that steps 1 and 2 above will take up most of the five minutes between orals. To allow time for steps 3 – 5, an extra ten minutes will be built into the examining schedule after every third oral.

Fiche d'évaluation for the Language & Literature Oral examination

A: Niveau de lecture du ou des textes		B: Culture littéraire		C: Expression orale	
Explication partielle ou confuse de la nature et de l'intérêt du ou des textes.	0 ou 1 pt	Aucune référence à l'environnement littéraire du ou des textes (genre, courant, figures emblématiques, etc.).	0 ou 1 pt	Exposé hésitant, vocabulaire pauvre, syntaxe erronée. Interaction difficile.	0 ou 1 pt
Explication acceptable du sens et de l'intérêt du ou des textes	2 pts	Références sommaires à l'environnement littéraire du ou des textes.	2 pts	Exposé clair mais vocabulaire simple, syntaxe élémentaire. Comprend les questions simples et peut répondre.	2 pts
Explication nuancée du sens et de l'intérêt du ou des textes, avec recours à des outils méthodologiques pertinents.	4 pts	Tentative de mise en perspective du ou des textes dans son / leur environnement littéraire.	4 pts	Exposé clair, vocabulaire précis, syntaxe courante maîtrisée. Interaction satisfaisante.	4 pts
Explication nuancée du sens et de l'intérêt du ou des textes, avec recours à des outils méthodologiques pertinents; perception de l'implicite.	5 pts	Mise en perspective pertinente du ou des textes dans son/leur environnement littéraire.	5 pts	Exposé très clair, vocabulaire précis, étendu et varié, syntaxe complexe. Bonne interaction.	5 pts
Analyse fine bien conduite. Argumentation convaincante.	6 pts	Mise en perspective originale et personnelle du ou des textes dans son/leur environnement littéraire et dans son/leur contexte culturel.	7 pts	Interaction riche et aisée qui tire le meilleur parti des interventions de l'interlocuteur.	7 pts
Note A sur 6	/6	Note B sur 7	/7	Note C sur 7	/7

Equivalences between Key Point descriptors & *fiche d'évaluation*

Key Point		A	B	C
		<i>Niveau de lecture</i> Response to texts	<i>Culture littéraire</i> Literary context	<i>Expression Orale</i> Spoken English
20	20	6	7	7
	19	5 or 6	6 or 7	7
17	18	6	5	7
	17	5	5 or 7	5 or 7
	16	6	5	5
14	15	5	5	5
	14	4 or 5	4 or 5	4 or 5
	13	4 or 5	4 or 5	4 or 5
11	12	4 or 5	2 or 4	4 or 5
	11	4 or 5	2	4 or 5
	10	2 or 4	2 or 4	4
8	9	2 or 4	1 or 2	2 or 4
	8	2 or 4	1 or 2	2 or 4
	7	2	1 or 2	2 or 4
5	6	2	2	2
	5	1 or 2	1 or 2	2
	4	1	1	2

As with the Key Point descriptors themselves, marks for A, B and C should be awarded on the 'best-fit' principle. *However, when deciding on the appropriate total mark (out of 20) teacher-examiners should begin by determining the appropriate 'Spoken English' level.* They must bear in mind that this is a 'mother-tongue' examination and the level of spoken English competence at which students should aim is equivalent to C1 or C2 on the Common European Framework (CEFR).

Where alternative marks are shown in the columns above, the totals for A+B+C should match the exact mark out of 20 to be awarded: e.g. a candidate could achieve a mark of 12 by being awarded **either** 4+4+4 **or** 5+2+5.

CEFR reference levels

(source: Council of Europe 'Common Reference Levels: global scale' in *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, Ch.3)

C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

Timing and focus of questioning

The oral examination lasts half an hour. It is divided as follows:

Shakespeare: 15 minutes, with overall balance between commentary and discussion

Synoptic Topic: 15 minutes, with balanced discussion of both texts

These times should be carefully adhered to. Because it is important that both the Shakespeare passage and the Synoptic Topic be adequately discussed in the 30-minute period, one of the teacher-examiners should act as time-keeper. Commentary on and discussion of the Shakespeare passage should be kept to no more than 15 minutes. It is assumed for Key Points 11 and above that the commentary is of the correct length. Examiners should alert candidates who are in danger of overrunning their commentary with an appropriate, gentle warning, such as, 'Was there one final point you would like to make?'

The candidate should be given a fair chance with the Synoptic Topic to refer to both prepared texts, but some imbalance of time should be tolerated – indeed, it is probably inevitable. However, the largest tolerable imbalance should be five minutes on one text and ten on the other. A more nearly equal division is desirable. A candidate who is in danger of speaking for too long on the first text should be gently interrupted and asked to move on to the second. If the contrary problem occurs (that is, the candidate, despite encouragement, "dries up" so quickly on the first text that five minutes have not elapsed), teacher-examiners may move on to the second and return to the first at the end of the oral. **Teacher-examiners must always bear in mind, however, that candidates should be rewarded not for their knowledge and understanding of the texts *per se*, but for their ability to use the texts to demonstrate an understanding and awareness of the topic under discussion.** Questions therefore need to be framed in such a way as to ensure candidates are not tempted to discuss the individual texts without reference to the other text(s) or to the topic.

Candidates may also gain credit for their grasp of the topic by referring either to the poems set for each synoptic topic or to other set texts in addition to the two they have specifically studied. However, such references should not be extensive and **must not** be regarded as a substitute for appropriate discussion involving their two prepared texts.

KEY POINT 20: WORK OF DISTINCTION / Very good

General

This performance is assured and sophisticated. No time is wasted on trivial or unproductive details; there is neither gratuitous narrative nor superfluous reiteration. There is overall detailed familiarity with the three texts and telling as well as economical use of that knowledge, and a wide range of thoroughly considered insights and judgements. There is perceptive analysis of character and relationships, including an ability to see these as evolving rather than static, as well as awareness of thematic and stylistic features through close reading.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Shakespeare: Commentary and discussion

This commentary is very full, possibly even comprehensive, and always firmly grounded in the given extract. The chosen structure is successful in allowing the candidate to manage necessary contextual reminders and close reading. It draws extensively on broader knowledge but always for the purposes of illumination. There is strong awareness of the context of the extract, shown in succinct and selective reminders of those elements of context upon which the commentary is principally to rest. Thorough understanding and clear summary of the context's main claim(s) to overall significance are clear.

Both in the commentary and in the discussion, thematic issues and features such as language, imagery and irony are weighed in relation to the context which generates them and in terms of their dramatic effects. There is sensitivity to implication, connotation, tone, etc. and a sense of the cumulative effect of individual technical touches.

The candidate's discussion is informed by a keen sense of the text as drama.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic

The candidate shows sophisticated understanding of the texts (both individually and collectively) as an expression of the synoptic topic. Detailed and secure knowledge is used to draw insightful and stimulating parallels between texts; comments are perceptive and analysis is subtle. Language and literary features are always linked to meaning in the individual text and in relation to the wider topic. A confident response: candidate is fully engaged with both the topic and the texts.

Demonstration

The capacity to sustain a coherent and purposeful line of argument, perhaps even making concessions or sketching out possible alternatives without losing the thread. Real dialogue is possible.

Expression

English is expressive, with a vocabulary which allows variety and precision. Francophone errors are rare. Delivery is clear and controlled.

KEY POINT 17: VERY GOOD / Good

General

This performance shows consistently good, sound familiarity with the texts, evidence of close reading, insight, and an ability to argue and demonstrate. There is sensitive and effective use of reference for substantiation and illustration. There is a minimum of gratuitous narration. There is sensitivity to language and ideas and a preparedness to examine stylistic features as well as character and relationships. The adaptation of knowledge to the situation is virtually always sensible and effective. Insights and judgements are perceptive, well-considered and digested.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Shakespeare: Commentary and discussion

The candidate offers a full, well-structured commentary (though its structure might occasionally be too obtrusive) which is more or less continuously grounded in the text: if subdivided, divisions are sensible and helpful. It draws on broader knowledge in a way that is usually illuminating and strays only briefly, if at all, from relevance to the original material. Satisfactory awareness of context leads to thorough (perhaps even over-thorough) reminders of background and overall significance. There is good, sound familiarity with the text and its dramatic context. There is also confident handling of the extract, offering some close, detailed reading as well as a broader overview. There is integrated discussion of character and relationships (even if seen as static rather than evolutionary), and acknowledgement of thematic issues (even if the approach is a little formulaic), and of features such as imagery and irony. Individual technical touches are well described although their cumulative effect may not be explicitly dealt with.

Awareness of the characteristics and techniques proper to the genre of drama is evident.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic

Candidate's understanding of the texts (both individually and collectively) as an expression of the synoptic topic is well considered and digested. Their use of knowledge is focused and selective and they are able to identify constructive parallels independently, voicing informed opinions. Sensitivity to language and form in the texts, as well as to their conventions in the wider topic, is clearly demonstrated. An active and committed response.

Demonstration

There is the capacity to sustain, with no more than occasional loss of control, a sound and organised line of argument. Knowledge is flexible enough to allow for changes in text and topic.

Expression

The use of language is secure and effective, though there may be occasional errors (e.g. careless or second language slips).

KEY POINT 14: GOOD / Satisfactory

General

The candidate shows a sound knowledge of the texts and a willingness to discuss them, with a real sense of engagement from time to time. The use of knowledge is also sound though it may be on a rather literal, narrative, character-and-theme level. There may be some unevenness, with some texts clearly preferred.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Shakespeare: Commentary and discussion

The commentary is adequately full and, on the whole, grounded in the given extract. It introduces broad contextual knowledge in ways that are often helpful but which occasionally lose sight of the original point of departure; this can result in some loss of focus in discussion of the whole work. A definite structural approach has been adopted, even though it may not be fully sustained or may have drawbacks. (A wholly linear method may lead to too much reiteration and to treatment at equal length of the important and the trivial; a wholly non-linear approach might neglect developmental features.) There may be an attempt to subdivide the extract, though transitions are likely to be abrupt or blurred. However, the organisation is sound enough to make the commentary easy to follow.

The context of the extract is usually understood but it may be stated in excessive detail and references to it might be clumsy. There is competent (although possibly somewhat simplistic) analysis of character and relationships and an ability to point out major themes though, perhaps, not to discuss them in detail. Close reading is attempted: stylistic features may be noted, though imagery may be treated as self-explanatory. There is understanding of genre and possibly of dramatic effect, including perhaps irony, but there may not be much specific awareness of this.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic

Candidate shows an informed and considered understanding of the texts (both individually and collectively) as an expression of the synoptic topic. There may be some imbalance in their knowledge of the texts, but they can point to parallels and contrasts, and make some thoughtful observations. There is sound evidence of close reading, although this may be slightly simplistic or literal and mainly on the level of character and theme. There may also be some engagement with the literary features of texts or topic. A careful if unimaginative response to the texts and topic.

Demonstration

There should be an ability to argue at times, even if the tendency is to describe, rather than analyse. The candidate can point to parallels and contrasts. Changes of topic or text might cause hesitation, but the candidate's knowledge is flexible enough to permit discussion.

Expression

The candidate's control of language should be reasonably secure: transmission of sense is not impeded and grammar is fairly accurate, despite occasional lapses. Vocabulary and variety of sentence construction may be limited, but adequate.

KEY POINT 11: PASSABLE / Basic

General

A performance that shows basic understanding, but where there may be considerable gaps and inconsistencies. Discussion may centre on plot and character though there is a tendency to be superficial on the latter and (especially) on relationships. There is broad familiarity with the texts and willingness to discuss them. There is likely, however, to be some gratuitous narrative, and superfluous reiteration, with some consequent wasting of time and blurring of focus. Where there is an interesting insight or judgement, it is undeveloped and/or disconnected, possibly giving the impression of being insufficiently considered or digested.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Shakespeare: Commentary and discussion

The commentary is not very full but is broadly based on the given extract though there may, at times, be confusion about whether commentary is based on the extract or the whole text as too much or too little contextual background may be supplied. It may open with a context setting 'introduction' but there may be little precise relating of this to the commentary. There is some extended textual knowledge though there may be errors on points of detail and sequence. The commentary may take the form of a linear combing of the text so includes a good deal of avoidable repetition, and a lack of discrimination as to the relative importance of the features discussed. There is little discussion of stylistic features and themes or images may be mentioned rather than commented on. There is little sense of a flexible or personal response to the text, and little sense of it as a play.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic

Candidate's knowledge of and response to the texts and topic are ill-digested, unselective or superficial. There is some understanding of the texts individually and collectively as an expression of the synoptic topic, although one text may be clearly preferred. They are unlikely to make unprompted parallels or contrasts but can comment when these are highlighted by the examiner. There are occasional, undeveloped references to literary or stylistic features in relation to the topic but little evidence of close reading, and there may be a tendency to narrate rather than to analyse. Overall, a passive response to the texts and topic.

Demonstration

There is a tendency to state rather than argue. Insightful comments cannot be expanded in dialogue and may seem unrelated to the candidate's own reading of or response to texts. Discussion takes the form of unsupported assertion and knowledge may not be flexible enough to allow for changes of direction or previously unfamiliar thought. The candidate may fail to grasp the main point of questions and may not seek clarification so answers may be rambling and ill focused.

Expression

The candidate's use of language demonstrates a measure of control even if it is at times too inaccurate or imprecise to convey ideas effectively.

KEY POINT 8: ELEMENTARY / Inadequate standard

General

Opinions are offered, though based on little or seemingly only partially understood evidence. There is some overall understanding of the texts, but considerable simplification, serious misreading and distortion. There is no close reading of texts. There may be too much attention to trivia, a tendency to narrate, and a great deal of repetition.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Shakespeare: Commentary and discussion

The commentary is very thin; it may also either be too short or overly long because of repetition. There is some attempt to structure, perhaps following the passage chronologically, possibly reading selected lines aloud. The commentary may seem only to be very loosely based on the extract (with which there is some familiarity), but overall knowledge of the text is very vague, patchy or even faulty enough to suggest travesty. Knowledge is included rather than exploited. There is concentration on character rather than relationships, themes, imagery, etc. though understanding is limited and accounts of characters are simplified and/or distorted. There is no appreciation of genre, stagecraft or stylistic features.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic

Knowledge of the texts and topic is poor: the candidate makes unsupported generalisations with no evidence of close reading. There is insufficient sense of how texts individually or collectively function as an expression of the synoptic topic. Attempts to engage in comparisons or to see parallels or contrasts are rare and they make have difficulty in drawing these even when prompted. Little sign of an active response to texts or topic.

If it proves to be impossible to discuss either text at all, the candidate must be placed lower than this point.

Demonstration

There may be some moments when analysis is attempted. Evidence may be offered, even if it is unexplained or irrelevant. Textual evidence may take only the form of narrative. As answers are not argued, opportunities for discussion are rare.

Expression

The candidate's struggle to express himself/herself is evident; vocabulary may seem too limited to allow for sustained commentary or dialogue; the candidate may manifest discomfort with the task.

PART III: HISTORY-GEOGRAPHY

10. SUBJECT DETAILS

10.1 Aims and objectives

The syllabus aims to develop the skills of the historian and geographer, including the following abilities:

- to extract information from a variety of sources
- to interpret, analyse and evaluate material
- to place material in its relevant context
- to develop evidence-based arguments in written, cartographic and oral form
- to show an awareness of the characteristics of peoples, places and events and the interaction between them
- to use relevant and precise examples and/or case studies to support an answer.

The syllabus seeks to provide an introduction to History and Geography as separate disciplines and to develop an understanding of historical and geographical concepts and skills. Students should be able to use the knowledge gained from one discipline to develop a greater understanding of the other.

10.2 Further aims of the History programme

The syllabus aims to provide an international context in the teaching of History. It also aims to encourage the development of independent thought and judgement and an awareness of different and maybe conflicting interpretations of the past. Specifically, three aims are identified:

- (i) to increase knowledge and understanding of the past;
- (ii) to identify and study some major historical themes and contexts and so help to provide an explanation of the contemporary world;
- (iii) to develop an imaginative and sympathetic approach to people and events in the past. To seek to see History from the points of view of those in the past.

10.3 Further aims of the Geography programme

The overall concerns of the Geography programme are to study the relationships between people and their environments and to explain the spatial organisation of the world. It aims:

- (i) to increase knowledge and understanding of contemporary issues at different scales from local to global;
- (ii) to develop and deploy geographical skills;
- (iii) to develop an understanding of the significance of spatial scale and time scale in geographical systems, distributions and environments;
- (iv) to increase knowledge and understanding of different groups of people, their spatial organisation and their interrelationships.

10.4 The History-Geography syllabus

10.4.1 History

The **syllabus** as defined by the French Ministry of Education for teaching from September 2013 is as follows:

Regards historiques sur le monde actuel

<i>Thème 1</i>	<i>Le rapport des sociétés à leur passé</i>
<i>Thème 2</i>	<i>Idéologies, opinions et croyances de la fin du XIXe siècle à nos jours</i>
<i>Thème 3</i>	<i>Puissance et tensions dans le monde de 1918 à nos jours</i>
<i>Thème 4</i>	<i>Les échelles de gouvernement dans le monde de 1945 à nos jours</i>
<i>Thème 5</i>	<i>Étude d'un État (au choix de la section) depuis la seconde moitié du XXe siècle jusqu'à nos jours</i>

The **specification** of that syllabus by Cambridge Assessment International Education is as follows:

Theme 1	Collective memory
Theme 2	Media and public opinion in the context of one political crisis
Theme 3	Great powers and world tensions from 1918 to the present Pathways to power: 1 USA 2 China A region of conflict: 3 The Near and Middle East
Theme 4	Levels of government from 1945 to the present National level (France) Continental level (European integration) World level (World economic governance)
Theme 5	Study of Britain from the second half of the 20 th century to the present Britain – politics, economy and society, 1945–97

10.4.2 Geography

The **syllabus** as defined by the French Ministry of Education for teaching from September 2012 is as follows:

<i>Thème 1</i>	<i>Clés de lectures d'un monde complexe</i>
<i>Thème 2</i>	<i>Les dynamiques de la mondialisation</i>
<i>Thème 3</i>	<i>Dynamiques géographiques de grandes aires continentales</i>

The **specification** of that syllabus by Cambridge Assessment International Education is as follows:

Theme 1	Keys for understanding a complex world Maps for understanding the world
Theme 2	Globalisation and development (with reference to the Americas, Africa, South and South-east Asia and East Asia) <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The globalisation of economic activity▪ Development in a global(ised) world▪ Regional disparities within countries
Theme 3	Urbanisation and demographic issues (with reference to the Americas, Africa, South and South-east Asia and East Asia) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Urban trends, issues of urbanisation and migration▪ International migration▪ Demographic issues

Note: It is suggested that Theme 1 (maps) be incorporated within the teaching of Themes 2 and 3. For this reason there is no Key content for the oral examinations for Theme 1, only for Themes 2 and 3.

10.5 Assessment

History-Geography is assessed through a written examination, lasting 4 hours, and by an oral examination, lasting 15 minutes. Both examinations contain content from the History specification and from the Geography specification.

Both examinations are marked by teacher-examiners approved by Cambridge International, through the Cambridge Inspector, and by the Ministry of Education and published in a grid. All teacher-examiners are trained for the work they undertake and use common marking guidance (for the written examination) and a common marking framework (for the oral examination) to assess the quality of candidates' performances.

The foundation of good assessment is the testing of what candidates know, what they understand and what they can do. These three elements may be called knowledge, understanding and skills, respectively. Both the written examination and the oral examination test all three of these elements. The knowledge and understanding required are the same for both the written and the oral examinations, being derived from the syllabus content and specifications. However, the skills required in the written examination, for example the interpretation of source materials, the production of a structured annotated-map, or the production of a piece of extended writing (an essay), differ from the skills required in an oral examination, for example presenting a short talk or responding verbally to questions.

Three Assessment Objectives (AOs) are defined for the oral examination. An Assessment Objective is defined as "an intended area of competence in the subject" and identifies the focus of the assessment (see the marking framework of performance descriptors for the oral examination, which follows).

The written examination is usually marked by one teacher-examiner from another school who has no personal links to any of the candidates in his/her allocation (for example, from previous employment). This marking is moderated by the Cambridge Inspector with the help of one or more senior and benchmark teacher-examiners working as Team Leaders (written), as part of the quality assurance which Cambridge Assessment International Education delivers for the British Option.

The oral examination is assessed by a teacher-examiner pair, each from another school, who have no personal links to any of the candidates (for example, from previous employment). This marking is moderated by the Cambridge Inspector with the help of senior and benchmark teacher-examiners working as Assistant Oral Moderators, as part of the quality assurance which Cambridge Assessment International Education delivers for the British Option. Care is given to the construction of the examiner grid in the light of a number of constraints. Wherever possible, the examiner pair consists of a man and a woman, an historian and a geographer and an experienced teacher-examiner with someone newer to the role.

10.6 The written examination

4 hours

Candidates choose to answer either Section A or Section B.

Section A: History essay and Geography document-based question*

Three questions are set, two essay questions in History and one structured document-based question in Geography. Candidates are required to answer one essay and the document-based question.

Section B: Geography essay and History document-based question

Three questions are set, two essay questions in Geography and one structured document-based question in History. Candidates are required to answer one essay and the document-based question.

The essay questions each have titles indicating the Theme from which they are taken and their scope. Each question enables a candidate, to a greater or lesser extent, to select his/her own examples and case studies in support of a general argument.

The structured document-based questions each have titles indicating the Theme from which they are taken and their scope. Each document-based question has one or two documents. Questions are in two parts, (a) and (b), the second requiring a candidate to write a **substantial** essay on a topic based upon the document(s) presented combined with his/her own knowledge and understanding.

The first part of all questions, both essay questions and document-based questions, carries 8 marks and the second part 12 marks. The mark allocation does not appear on the question paper.

*From 2018, the Geography DBQ may be replaced with an equivalent question which requires the drawing of a *croquis* or annotated map. This question will be structured as follows;

- Part (a): A question linked to one of the approved *croquis* topics for that year, that requires candidates to produce an annotated map and a structured key, and to comment on this annotated map and structured key in a provided number of lines. Part (a) will be worth 10 marks.
- Part (b): A **mini-essay** question that requires candidates to use their annotated map and structured key, a second source document and their own knowledge in their answer. The second source document will be provided in the exam paper and could be a short written text, a photograph or a table of statistics. Part (b) will be worth 10 marks.

10.7 The oral examination

15 minutes; in English.

The oral examines the subject's Key content. This Key content is a distillation of essential elements of the subject across the whole specification, agreed by the teaching community and approved by the Cambridge Inspector. This Key content is reviewed and revised whenever there is a change to the Ministry's syllabus and at intervals of a few years, as appropriate.

The term Key content comprises two elements: Key issues and Key terms. Each oral comprises examination of one Key issue and one Key term. If the Key issue which the candidate selects is from History, the Key term is from Geography, and vice versa. All orals therefore comprise an element of History and an element of Geography.

Each list will contain five Key Issues for History and five for Geography, covering three or four of the five Themes in History, and, in Geography, two Key issues from Theme 2 and three Key issues from Theme

3. The lists are numbered 181 to 184 for convenience (i.e. 2018 list 1 etc). The list number which a school has selected has to be submitted by an agreed date which will be circulated to Centres. Two sets of ten Key terms for oral examination (five for History and five for Geography) are selected by the Cambridge Inspector in collaboration with the Subject Leaders in the spring and kept strictly confidential. One set of Key Terms is for schools in France and one set for schools outside France. The list of approved Key issues for each school and of the ten Key terms agreed for use that examination year is revealed to candidates approximately one month before the written examination (on dates set and communicated to schools each year by the Cambridge Inspector); so that candidates have time for their own detailed preparation. During this period teachers should restrict their role to general encouragement and to covering broad issues of examination technique. The Key content that candidates will use in the September session, if needed, consists of two of the **Key terms** from the syllabus, one in History and one in Geography, which have not already been used in the orals that year. (See section 11.8, below, for further details).

Practice orals should not be conducted on any of the school's ten approved Key issues or on the ten approved Key terms, which are for the candidates' own use. Practice orals may be given until the day before the first oral examination in a Centre entering candidates for the British option. (This date is communicated to schools by the Cambridge Inspector at the time the approved Key content for the oral examinations is published).

Just before the oral examination, candidates choose one of the ten Key issues and one of the ten Key terms at random. The Key issue is chosen first. If the Key issue chosen is from History, the Key term is taken from Geography, and vice versa. Candidates then have 20 minutes in a supervised preparation room to prepare themselves. Candidates who wish to use a computer to prepare their notes must have received prior permission from the Head of Centre where the oral examination is to take place and the Cambridge Inspector must also be informed that this has been agreed. Candidates may use maps or other illustrations during their talk on the Key issue but they must be ones they have created themselves during the preparation period. The talk should not last longer than 5 minutes, and the candidate is warned when this time is nearly up. Examiners should then proceed to ask questions for 5 minutes based on or emerging from the talk on the Key issue, before introducing the Key term to discuss for the remaining 5 minutes.

11. INSTRUCTIONS TO EXAMINERS

11.1 General guidance on the marking of written responses

The work of an examiner is to assess each candidate in the three broad areas of knowledge (K), understanding (U) and skills (S). Simply, this means knowledge and understanding of,

- History and Geography
- the questions and topics set on the specified Themes.

Skills to be assessed include:

- skills in selecting and/or presenting relevant information and appropriate evidence in written or cartographic form
- skills in making effective use of varied sources and examples
- skills in arguing coherently, logically and fluently
- skills in assessment and evaluation
- skills in structuring a response

Examiners are asked to bear in mind:

1. that the written examination is a test of a candidate's knowledge, understanding and skills, especially those of essay-writing (extended writing);
2. that the full range of marks 0–20 is available and should be used if responses justify this;

3. that a candidate's answer does not have to meet all the criteria for a band of marks (as defined below) in order to be placed in that band;

The written examination requires a candidate to answer only two questions in four hours. The first part of each question, i.e. the first element of the essay question, or part (a) of the document-based question, is fairly specific and fairly precise guidelines are provided for marking responses to these. However, the second part of each question, i.e. the second element or sentence of the essay question, and part (b), of the document-based question, is a general stimulus for an essay. It is set more as a general topic than as a specific, narrowly-defined, question and is intended to 'open out'. In relation to this second part of the essay question, a candidate is permitted and expected to select his/her own exemplar materials and case studies in support of his/her general argument. In relation to the second part of the document-based question, part (b) a candidate is permitted and expected to write an answer drawing to some extent upon the documents presented and the annotated map that may have been drawn, but also considerably upon his/her own additional knowledge about, and understanding of, the topic. A wide variety of responses can be expected to the second part of each question and it is difficult to provide specific marking guidelines. Moreover, the second part of each answer carries a high proportion of the 20 marks available (usually 12 marks), which is a narrow range for an essay. Examiners should consider responses in the light of the general guidelines set out above, along with the specific marking guidance provided and published standards.

Given that the examination requires only two responses in four hours, there should not be a problem with 'short responses' (unfinished responses or responses which are only in note form) although some are seen each year. Such failings normally reflect poor time management by a candidate. Any such misallocation of time is self-penalising. Each candidate must be assessed on the basis of the work that he/she has presented, not on the work that might have been presented had the candidate allocated time to each question more appropriately.

11.2 Specific guidance on marking

As soon as candidates have sat the examination, teacher-examiners are sent draft marking guidance for each of the questions in the examination. This marking guidance is compiled by the Cambridge Inspector with help from Subject Leaders. As soon as the Inspector and Team Leaders have marked some sample scripts, and the Inspector has received comments from written examiners from their initial reading of sample scripts, he considers the appropriateness of the marking guidance and may revise it in the light of the candidates' responses. The revised and finalised marking guidance is sent rapidly to teacher-examiners to enable them to standardise their marking.

11.3 Generic marking criteria

Assessing 'what students know, what they understand, and what they can do'.
The principles of positive marking, benefit of the doubt and 'best fit' apply in awarding marks.

/8	/10	/12	Performance descriptors
8	9-10	11-12	<p>Very good (Refers to questions/scripts awarded 18-20 overall)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive, detailed and well-directed knowledge • Very good understanding with a "big picture" approach • High ability to analyse, evaluate and provide evidence-based judgements • Highly skilled interpretation and use of document(s) • Locations on the annotated map are precisely identified. Symbols and colours are wide-ranging, appropriate and used correctly. Key very well structured • Devises and structures response very effectively
6-7	7-8	9-10	<p>Good (Refers to questions/scripts awarded 14-17 overall)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good, detailed knowledge, directed effectively • Good level of understanding, developing ideas within firm subject context • Good ability to analyse, evaluate and provide evidence-based judgements • Skilled interpretation and use of document(s) • Most locations on the annotated map are precisely identified. A good range of appropriate symbols and colours used. Key well structured • Devises and structures response well
5	6	7-8	<p>Satisfactory (Refers to questions/scripts awarded 11-13 overall)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate knowledge • Sound understanding, with some elements of subject context • Some ability to analyse, evaluate and provide judgements • Clear interpretation and use of document(s) • Many of the locations on the annotated map are precisely identified. Sufficient number of symbols and colours used. Key adequately structured • Devises a simple, clear structure for the response
4	5	6	<p>Bare pass (Refers to questions/scripts awarded 10 overall)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge • Basic understanding and limited awareness of subject context • Analysis, evaluation and use of evidence basic • Basic approach to document(s); limitations in interpretation and/or use • Some locations on the annotated map are precisely identified. Symbols and colours sometimes used inappropriately. Basic key structure. • Gives response a basic structure
3	3-4	4-5	<p>Weak (Refers to questions/scripts awarded 6-9 overall)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge – restricted in scope, depth or detail • Basic understanding – restricted and/or faulty • Approach largely descriptive or analysis is weak or faulty and evaluation lacks supporting evidence • Weak approach to document(s) interpretation and use • Many of the locations on the annotated map are incorrectly identified. Inadequate use of symbols and colours. Key lacks structure. • Devises and structures response weakly or offers fragments, notes or an unfinished response
1-2	1-2	1-3	<p>Very weak (Refers to questions/scripts awarded 1-5 overall)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very little relevant knowledge – a few basic facts • Very restricted understanding • Little or no analysis or evaluation or judgements offered • Very weak approach to document(s) interpretation and use • Most of the locations on the annotated map are incorrectly identified or missing. Very few symbols and colours used. No key or key is fragmentary • Devises and structures response very weakly or offers fragments
0	0	0	No response

11.4 Grading *hors sujet* questions

It sometimes happens that candidates answer questions on the written paper which have not been set. The degree of error and its cause will vary. A candidate may deliberately misread the question in order to ignore what he/she does not know and to write about what he/she does. On the other hand, the misreading could be accidental. The candidate might interpret the question in a possible, but unlikely, way and thus give an answer that is incorrect. Or the candidate might interpret the question unconventionally, but plausibly.

In principle, examiners marking the written paper should start with the presumption that an *hors sujet* answer will earn no marks, but should look carefully for any possible credit that might be awarded. If the misreading appears to have been deliberate, awarding marks could encourage the practice. If the misreading appears to be accidental but plausible, the answer deserves the possibility of some credit.

During the marking period, examiners should refer any such response to the Cambridge Inspector or the Team Leader moderating their marking for a second opinion.

11.5 Recording written examination marks for the *jury*

Once the final marks for all candidates have been determined, they are officially recorded for the information of the *jury*. Where the total marks for all subjects of a given candidate place him/her within reach of the *mention* above, French teacher-examiners present at the *jury* may agree to an additional mark in their subject. Therefore a benefit of the doubt system is used, with the mark recorded by the Cambridge Inspector for the *jury* being the highest possible on the basis of the evidence (written or oral).

11.6 Grading the oral examination

In order to be fair to candidates, the procedures for oral examinations must be the same for each of them. These guidelines and the training provided annually are intended to contribute to the **comparability** of procedures and standards of orals conducted by different examiners in different centres in any one year, and to the **consistency** of procedures and standards from year to year.

1. On arrival at the examination room, each candidate is invited to make two choices at random using two sets of cards. First the candidate chooses one card from a set of ten. Each of these cards has on its underside a number from 1 to 10, corresponding to the list of Key issues for his/her school. Next the candidate chooses at random one card from a set of five to determine the Key term. Each of these cards has on its underside a letter from A to E, corresponding to the list of Key terms for all schools. This second set of cards is smaller than the set of ten cards, and is made of card of a different colour, to avoid confusion.

If the Key issue chosen is in History, the Key term to be examined is in Geography, and vice versa.

One teacher-examiner uses a highlighter pen to highlight, on a copy of a page of the candidate's school's Key content, the Key issue and the Key term corresponding to the cards chosen. The candidate takes this sheet of paper away with him/her to the preparation room. The other teacher-examiner notes the Key issue and the Key term on the mark recording sheet.

2. Each candidate has a preparation time of 20 minutes during which he/she must prepare himself/herself to talk about the Key issue and to answer questions on it, as well as to discuss the Key term, each for 5 minutes. The oral lasts for a total of 15 minutes.
3. Examiners must be alert to a candidate's anxiety and try to put him/her at ease. When a candidate enters the examination room, one examiner should introduce himself/herself and the second examiner by name. If the Cambridge Inspector, Associate Inspector or an Assistant Moderator (AM) is present, he/she should also be introduced to the candidate by name, but the point should be made that the Inspector or AM is there to check on the examiners and not on the candidate.
4. Seating in the examination room should be arranged so that the candidate has a clear view of the two examiners, while a Cambridge Inspector, Associate Inspector or Assistant Moderator (if present) should be seated to one side or behind, away from the examiners and the candidate. The

candidate's line of sight should be on the examiners and not on the Inspector, who observes, but only very rarely participates in, the oral examination (see point 12).

5. If a representative of the French educational *Inspectorat* asks to attend an oral examination (as he/she has the right to do), then he/she should be seated out of the candidate's line of sight. A trainee-examiner may also observe an oral if the examiners and the candidate give their agreement and provided that the number of non-candidates present does not exceed four. Any such trainee must not have any personal or professional relationship to the candidate and is not permitted to participate in the oral in any way. He too should be seated out of the candidate's line of sight.
6. A supply of drinking water should be available for all involved in the examination. In accordance with French law, there should be no smoking at any time in the rooms used for oral examinations.
7. Each candidate must be given the same amount of time for the oral examination. This is the case both where an oral could easily over-run and where a candidate has given a talk of less, or much less, than 5 minutes' duration. After a short talk the candidate should be given the benefit of the rest of the 10 minute period he/she is allocated for the Key issue. The transition to the Key term should always be made after the passage of 10 minutes, and not before. The agreed timetable must be adhered to throughout the examining day.
8. The Key issues are expressed in specific terms inviting assessment, evaluation, argument and the expression of opinions supported by evidence and/or examples. Each candidate determines the structure of his/her own talk, which is one of the skills being examined by the oral. A candidate may use maps or other illustrations during his/her talk, but only ones created during the preparation period. Each talk should not be permitted to last longer than 5 minutes and a candidate approaching the end of that time period should be warned (after 4 minutes) that the time is nearly up.
9. Oral examinations must be conducted fairly and sympathetically, with examiners encouraging rather than challenging candidates, except where this may extend an able candidate and has the potential to enhance his/her performance. Taking an oral examination is very demanding, and every effort should be made to ensure that candidates are provided with equitable opportunities to provide evidence of their knowledge and understanding of the selected topics. Examiners should not be intrusive, agitated or dismissive and they should not interrupt or correct candidates. Any lapse from this high standard might unsettle a candidate. Every effort must be made to allow candidates to respond to questions in the manner and to the extent that they are able to do so. Examiners should ask mainly 'open' rather than 'closed' questions: that is, they should pose questions which require candidates to develop an argued response rather than questions which permit a candidate to respond with little more than a 'yes' or 'no' answer. An oral examination should be seen by examiners and candidates alike as a discussion, as an exploration of a candidate's knowledge and understanding, and not as an interrogation.
10. Examiners must use the marking framework which follows to assess a candidate's performance in the oral examination. This framework identifies three Assessment Objectives (AOs) and five levels of achievement for each. Although the oral examination comprises two elements of Key content, i.e. the Key issue and the Key term, the approach to assessment should be a holistic one. It is important that examiners avoid separating these elements mentally. Marks are awarded for each AO using the principle of 'best fit', before being totalled out of 20. Half marks may not be used. This agreed and recorded mark should represent the assessment of a candidate's overall performance, recognising that two candidates can take different routes to achieve the same mark within the marking framework employed.
11. If there are any special circumstances for a particular oral (such as a candidate showing obvious signs of abnormal stress or of illness), then examiners should award their mark for the oral on the basis of the candidate's performance, but they should also include, on the mark recording sheet sent to the Cambridge Inspector, a note briefly describing those special circumstances.

12. Generally, the Cambridge Inspector, if present, observes an oral examination in silence. He may intervene, however, if a session shows signs of over-running the time allotted or if he/she considers a candidate is being probed unproductively beyond his/her level of knowledge or understanding. The Inspector may also intervene if one of the examiners is dominating the discussion to the disadvantage of the candidate or of the other examiner, or if an examiner is moving in an unstructured way away from the general field of the selected Key content.
13. Examiners are advised to take notes during an oral examination, both about the arguments made by a candidate and about their own assessment of the quality of a candidate's performance. Only brief notes need be taken: a candidate might be unsettled by an examiner who appears to be making a transcript of the oral. These rough notes should be retained for reference and may be needed to give further evidence to the Cambridge Inspector during the preparation of final marks or in the rare instance of a later enquiry about a mark.
14. Examiners should confer at the end of each oral to establish a "provisional mark" with the possibility of revising it at the end of the block of orals or the end of the day. Each oral should be given a mark out of 20 for its overall quality, judged in terms of the published Assessment Objectives (AOs), using the marking framework below, for the Key content selected.
15. At the completion of a pair of examiners' orals, marks should be agreed by the examiners. These are recorded on the standard mark recording sheet provided, the *fiche d'évaluation*, together with notes justifying the marks awarded. These are then given or sent to the Cambridge Inspector, who works with the Associate Inspector in the preparation of final marks for some days towards the end of the oral examination period. Where the Cambridge Inspector is present and has observed some orals, he/she may adjust marks in order to ensure comparability of standards. This adjustment may also be made on the basis of evidence and recommendations from Assistant Moderators who assist the Cambridge Inspector with the work of moderating the oral examination or from the Associate Inspector.

Oral marking framework – OIB History-Geography oral performance descriptors

AO1 Knowledge and understanding [8 marks]	AO2a Skills: analysis and evaluation [7 marks]	AO2b Skills: organisation and communication [5 marks]
8 Very good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive, detailed and well-directed knowledge • Very good level of understanding • Demonstrates a “big picture” approach 	6–7 Very good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High ability to analyse and evaluate in both talk and responses • Consistently provides valid and well substantiated judgements • Highly aware of patterns and perspectives 	5 Very good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devises and structures talk very effectively • Very good responses to questions • Precise use of subject terms; very good expression and delivery
7 Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good, detailed knowledge directed effectively • Good level of understanding • Development of ideas within firm subject context 	4–5 Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good ability to analyse and evaluate in both talk and responses • Provides valid and well substantiated judgements • Well aware of patterns and perspectives 	4 Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk is well devised and structured • Responds well to most questions • Use of terms is accurate; good expression and delivery
5–6 Satisfactory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate knowledge • Sound understanding • Some elements of subject context 	3 Satisfactory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some ability to analyse and/or evaluate • Some judgements made • Some awareness of patterns and perspectives 	3 Satisfactory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk has a simple, clear structure • Some ability to frame responses to questions • Use of terms largely accurate; sound expression and delivery
3–4 Weak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge • Basic understanding • Limited awareness of subject context even when prompted 	2 Weak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and evaluation are limited, approach is largely descriptive • Answers are assertions rather than judgements • Limited awareness of patterns and perspectives even when prompted 	2 Weak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some difficulty in devising and structuring talk • Limited response to most questions • Some inaccuracy and irrelevance in use of terms; weak expression and delivery
0–2 Very weak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very little relevant knowledge • Very restricted understanding • Simple statement of a few basic facts in isolation 	0–1 Very weak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little or no analysis or evaluation, takes a descriptive approach • Little or no judgement offered, even when asked or prompted • Lacks awareness of patterns and perspectives 	0–1 Very weak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very poorly devised talk • Has difficulty understanding and responding to questions • Expression and delivery break down

The principle of 'best fit' applies in awarding marks for each Assessment Objective. Half marks must not be used.

11.7 Recording oral examination marks for the *jury*

Once the final marks for all candidates have been determined, they are officially recorded for the information of the *baccalauréat jury*. Where the total marks for all subjects of a given candidate place him/her within reach of the *mention* above, French teacher-examiners present at the *jury* may agree to an additional mark in their subject. Therefore a benefit of the doubt system is used, with the mark recorded by the Cambridge Inspector for the *jury* being the highest possible on the basis of the evidence (written or oral).

11.8 *Rattrapage*

A teacher-examiner (selected by the Subject Leader at the point when oral examiners are named for the forthcoming examination session and approved by the Cambridge Inspector) conducts the *rattrapage* interview on his/her own. Because the result of *rattrapage* is a mark replacing the mark achieved for the written examination, it is essential that it offers the chance of a thorough examination of the candidate's knowledge and understanding. This is best achieved by a sustained conversation between the examiner and the candidate. The examiner is then free to concentrate entirely on the candidate and to guide the discussion logically and coherently, without having to be concerned about ensuring that another examiner has the opportunity of questioning. In addition, a candidate is likely to be under less stress at this point in the examining process when faced by only one examiner.

Rattrapage in History-Geography is always conducted in English. If a candidate who answered the written examination in French seeks *rattrapage*, even though it replaces their written mark, *rattrapage* is conducted in English.

The content of the *rattrapage* examination comprises two Key terms, one in History and one in Geography.

The *rattrapage* examination lasts 20 minutes plus 20 minutes of preparation time. The candidate selects a Geography Key term and a History Key term in a similar way as they do for the original oral examination, using the approved list of Key terms for that year. They then have twenty minutes to prepare. In the examination, the *rattrapage* examiner uses one of the Key terms as the starting point and then moves on to the other Key term at the point when this is judged to be in the candidate's best interests. Candidates do not deliver an oral talk on either of the Key terms; the question and answer format is more likely to permit the examiner to assess a candidate's knowledge, understanding and skills effectively. The *rattrapage* examiners use the same marking framework for assessing a candidate's performance as for the main oral examinations, even though the format is slightly different, there being no talk. The same principles of best fit, holistic marking and benefit of the doubt apply, as during the main oral examination period.

Heads of Oral Examination Centres must ensure that candidates are kept apart whilst *rattrapage* is in progress.



OIB 2019
Administrative Organisation



Cambridge Associate

Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Jun	July
We send			We send			DGESCO circular regarding organisation of OIB exams sent to Rectorats	We send			We send the "Fiches d'évaluation" validated by the Inspectors to Heads of Oral Exam centres
Admin org overview including dates of meetings			Grid to fill in with the names of participants at the oral examiner training meetings				Request for Estimated Grades and Special Consideration forms			We send the "Fiches d'évaluation pour Epreuves orales" pre-filled with the names of candidates and examiners to Heads of Oral Exam centres
We send										
OIB school audit via schoolpost								Cambridge letters sent via DGESCO to Proviseurs regarding organisation of OIB exams		We send
We send						We send				A grid to fill in with the names of participants at the October subject meetings
Registration form for new colleagues who wish to attend the October subject meetings				Heads of Oral Exam Centres		A calendar for the forthcoming oral examinations in the different centres to the Heads of Oral Exam Centres				
	We send			Complete and return table of oral dates in their centre and related dates						
	Language/Literature grid to fill in with oral and written options									
We send										
Invitations for the Subject meetings										
We send										
Request to update the examiner database		We send				We send				
		Grid to fill in with candidates' details				Examiner grids to all involved				You send
You send			You send							
List of participants at the subject meetings and staff changes by mid Sept	You send						You send			Names and details of the candidates at the September session by 10th July
	Language/Literature grid completed with oral and written options by 24th November		List of participants at the oral examiner training meetings				Completed Estimated Grades and Special Consideration forms by mid-May			
You send										
A schoolpost reply form with all information about your school by end of September			You send						Heads of Oral Exam centres send "Fiches d'évaluation pour Epreuves orales" completed with provisional marks and comments	
Details of any changes in personnel in your section										A Schoolpost reply form listing participants at the subject meetings
			Deadline for receipt of list of candidates and their details 21st December							
Update the examiner database							We send the schedule for your oral centre completed with the names of the candidates and examiners			



Association des sections internationales
britanniques et anglophones



Cambridge Associate

Protocol for the Organisation of Oral Examinations in Overseas Centres

Overseas Centres must make contact with ASIBA at the beginning of the academic year to arrange the administration of their oral examinations and ensure that funding has been arranged.

The Cambridge Inspector will designate an Examiner to visit the overseas Centre to conduct the oral examinations. Another examiner, also designated by the Cambridge Inspector, will attend the orals by remote video link (videoconferencing). The remote examiner's role is to listen to the orals and participate in the attribution of marks. The Cambridge Inspector and/or another person designated by them (e.g. an Assistant Moderator) will also be able to attend orals by videoconference.

Terminology / glossary of terms

- The term 'visiting examiner' refers to the examiner who has travelled to the Centre and is physically present in the room with the candidate in the overseas examination centre.
- The term 'remote examiner' refers to the examiner who attends the examination via remote video link (videoconferencing) using the internet. The remote examiner should be situated in a quiet room, away from distractions. No other person may be present in the remote examiner's room at any time during the oral.

The examination room in the overseas centre

The examination room in the overseas centre is run under the authority of the Head of Centre, who is also responsible for ensuring the equipment defined in this document is available and in working order.

The following equipment must be set up in the examination room (see Appendix 3 for technical specifications):

- a computer connected to the internet via a network cable. (This is to ensure an adequate speed of connection - a wireless connection should not be used).
- a webcam, preferably external to the computer
- a multidirectional microphone, external to the computer (and connected via USB or mini-jack) that is capable of providing high quality rendition of the voices of those present. (Sound quality is of the utmost importance - this must be tested in the examination room prior to the oral examination.)
- the same equipment as required in oral examination centres in France (as outlined in the Cambridge International/OIB Handbook, available online at www.asiba.fr). The examination room should be arranged in the same way as in examination centres in France, as shown in the Handbook.
- a back-up means of communication in case of connection failure:
 - o an alternative internet connection e.g. a 3G key allowing connection by the mobile phone network
 - o a landline telephone with loudspeaker and the direct-dial number of the landline telephone in the remote examiner's room. The telephone should have a cabled handset, not a wireless one, to avoid problems of battery failure.

The examination centre must set up and test the equipment well in advance of the examination session in order to resolve any potential problems.

The following documents should also be available in the examination room:

- the current OIB Handbook
- the Protocol for the Organisation of Oral Examinations in Overseas Centres
- Exam Day - Special Consideration Forms

The remote examiner

The remote examiner must arrange to attend the oral examinations via remote video link in a quiet room, away from distractions. No other person may be present in the remote examiner's room at any time during the oral. All measures must be taken to ensure that the remote examiner is not disturbed during the designated examination period.

The following equipment must be set up in the remote examiner's room (see Appendix 1 for technical specifications):

- a computer connected to the internet via a network cable. (This is to ensure an adequate speed of connection - a wireless connection should not be used)
- a speaker headset with microphone (preferable to relying on the computer's internal microphone and speakers)
- a webcam
- a back-up means of communication in case of connection failure:
 - o An alternative internet connection e.g. a 3G key allowing connection by the mobile phone network
 - o A landline telephone, preferably with loudspeaker. This should have a cabled handset, not a wireless one (to avoid problems of battery failure).

Remote examiners must set up and test the equipment well in advance of the examination session.

The following documents should also be available to the remote examiner:

- the current OIB Handbook
- the Protocol for the Organisation of Oral Examinations in Overseas Centres
- Exam Day - Special Consideration Forms

A standby remote examiner will be designated by the Subject Leader in case of emergency.

IT support

An IT technician or teacher with appropriate IT/Internet skills must be available at both ends of the link during the examination period in case of technical difficulties. He or she must be able to intervene rapidly if required.

Videoconferencing services

In order to facilitate the coordination of oral examinations across different examination centres, ASIBA recommends that schools use Webex, which offers a secure videoconferencing service that is free when used with up to three participants. More information can be found at <http://www.webex.com>. If a school wishes to use an alternative videoconferencing service, they should seek approval from the Schools' Chair before 1st April. For information, services that offer a conference/meeting approach in which participants join a meeting rather than establishing a two-way connection are preferable because they enable remote examiners to re-join the examination without disrupting the oral in progress should the connection be lost. It is the responsibility of the overseas centre to set up the videoconference and to liaise with the remote examiner and Cambridge Inspector (or anyone designated by them) to ensure they are able to attend the oral examinations via the videoconferencing system in good time before the beginning of the examination session.

In order to ensure the smooth running of the oral examinations, it is essential that:

- a) all partners (overseas centre, remote examiner, Cambridge Inspector, emergency remote examiner) create register with the videoconference system and install the appropriate software at least one calendar month before the examinations are due to start.
- b) the overseas centre is informed of the email addresses being used by the remote examiner, emergency remote examiner and, if necessary, the Cambridge Inspector by the British OIB Schools and Examination Centres Administrative Co-ordinator at least one calendar month before the start of the oral examinations.
- c) the overseas centre and the remote examiner arrange to test the internet connection and videoconferencing software, as well as the back-up means of communication, at least ten working days before the start of the actual exams. This should be hosted by the overseas centre.

- d) the remote examiner uses the computer onto which the videoconferencing software software has been installed.

Timetabling oral examinations

- The Head of Centre is responsible for timetabling the oral examinations in their centre once they have received confirmation of the examiners and agreed dates of the oral examinations from the British OIB Schools and Examination Centres Administrative Co-ordinator.
- The following considerations should also be borne in mind when timetabling the oral examinations:
 - examiners should not examine more than three candidates consecutively unless approval to do so has been given by the OIB Subject Leader
 - neither candidates nor examiners should work before 8.00 or beyond 19.00 local time
- The examiners will be informed of the examination timetable by the overseas centre and should abide by it. No unscheduled breaks can be taken.

Preparing for the examinations

- Examiners (including standby examiners) should be made aware of the examination protocol and briefed by the Subject Leader at least one month before the exams.
- The examiners will be informed of the oral examination topics at least a month before the exams.
- The Head of Centre must arrange to test the internet connection and videoconferencing software, as well as back-up means of communication, with the remote examiner at least ten working days before the oral examinations are due to start. Any technical problems must be addressed quickly and well before the first day of oral examining.
- For overseas centres in different time zones, the visiting examiner must arrive at least one day before the start of the examinations to recover from jet lag.

Examination Procedure

- The two examiners should connect with each other via the videoconferencing system at least one hour before the start of the examinations to establish contact, check the quality of the connection and to identify and solve any potential technical difficulties
- All applications other than those required for the videoconferencing should be closed down on the computers being used by both examiners
- The visiting examiner should follow the procedure outlined in the OIB Handbook for greeting candidates and issuing/selecting examination topics etc. In addition, s/he should introduce the remote examiner using the webcam and explain their role in the examination. A suitable phrasing would be: "I should like to introduce you to Mr / Ms x, the remote examiner. Mr / Ms X will listen to the oral and we will agree the mark together. S/he will not participate in the oral examination; s/he will not ask any questions or intervene in any way. Do you have any questions?" The remote examiner should greet the candidate clearly and audibly at this point.
- The webcam should be placed in such a position as to capture the visiting examiner and **not** the candidate (so as not to disturb the candidate during the examination)
- The computer screen should face the visiting examiner during the oral so as not to disturb or unsettle the candidate
- **The examination will be conducted by the visiting examiner only.** The remote examiner should not intervene in any way and should not make any noise that could distract the candidate during the examination. The remote examiner should maintain full concentration during the examination and should take detailed notes on the presentation and responses provided by the candidate so they can serve as evidence for establishing the mark
- At the end of the oral, when the candidate has left the room, the two examiners should then discuss and agree a provisional mark. Both examiners should record the agreed provisional mark (both the overall mark and any component marks)
- If appropriate, the examiners may also discuss the questions that were put to the candidate in order to help the visiting examiner to develop his/her questioning
- The visiting examiner should complete the '*fiches d'évaluation*' at the designated times during the day and/or at the end of each day of examining as appropriate, and they should double-check the marks and comments with the remote examiner against both examiners' records before submitting them to the Cambridge Inspector.

Inspector / Assistant Moderators

- All examining pairs who examine overseas centres will be inspected / observed by a Cambridge Inspector and / or Assistant Moderator.
- The Inspector / Assistant Moderator will inform the examining pair which orals they wish to attend

- If their attendance is by remote video link, the visiting examiner, with the support of the Head of the overseas centre, is responsible for establishing contact with them and ensuring that all parties (the remote examiner and Inspector / Assistant Moderator) are connected.
- The visiting examiner should introduce the Inspector / Assistant Moderator to the candidate at the same time and in the same way as they introduce the remote examiner.
- The Inspector / Assistant Moderator will listen to the oral examination in the same way as the remote examiner. S/he may intervene in the examiners' deliberations.

Unexpected circumstances

- Should the connection fail during an oral, the visiting examiner should complete the oral in progress taking care to ensure that the candidate is not aware of the loss of connection (this is to avoid disturbing the candidate). The remote examiner should note the time at which connection was lost. If the videoconferencing software allows the remote examiner to re-join the meeting without disturbing the oral in progress, they should attempt to do so; otherwise, they must not intervene and they should wait for the visiting examiner to re-establish the connection after the candidate has left the room.
- If the connection cannot be re-established, the examiners should try the back-up means of connecting
- If necessary, and as a last resort, the visiting examiner should use the telephone provided to call the remote examiner and the orals should continue using the telephone (audio-only) connection until such time as the technical problem can be resolved by the IT technician on hand.
- Any problems with connection resulting in the remote examiner being unable to attend for the full duration of an oral must be communicated to the Cambridge Inspector (by the visiting examiner) using the Exam Day - Special Consideration Form.
- Examiners need to be aware of the impact of delay on the oral schedule and particularly when making decisions about remedying problems with equipment before moving to the back-up means of communication.

Rattrapage

- *Rattrapage* orals are conducted via videoconference by the visiting examiner who originally examined in the overseas centre.
- The Head of Centre must contact the Subject Coordinator(s) to inform them if they have any candidates opting to take OIB subjects in *rattrapage* on the day that results are published. The Subject Leader then liaises with the examiner.
- The Head of Centre is responsible for timetabling the exam as well as setting up the examination room and the videoconferencing system. It is essential that a member of staff who has not been the candidate's teacher is present in the examination room during the *rattrapage* oral to act as an invigilator and ensure that no malpractice takes place. The invigilator should sit some way behind and out of sight of the candidate but with a clear view of them.
- The *rattrapage* examiner should be situated in a quiet room, away from distractions and should prepare in the same way as the remote examiner did for the original oral examinations.
- The Head of Centre must arrange to test the internet connection and videoconferencing software with the *rattrapage* examiner before the examination to enable any technical problems to be addressed.
- The *rattrapage* examiner conducts the examination according to the instructions laid out in the Cambridge International/ASIBA Handbook for *rattrapage* in France.

Technical Specifications

- Computer requirements:
 - o Windows 7 (with Explorer v. 11), 8 and 8.1:
 - Processor At least 1 GHz, recommended 1.8 GHz
 - RAM At least 512 MB
 - Additional software DirectX v9.0 or higher
 - o Windows 10 (version 1507 or 15.11):
 - Processor 1.9 GHz Quad-core processor
 - RAM At least 1 GB
 - o Mac:
 - Version Mac OS X 10.10 (Yosemite) - 10.13 (High Sierra) or higher*
 - Processor At least 1 GHz Intel processor (Core 2 Duo)
 - RAM At least 1 GB
 - Additional software The latest version of QuickTime
 - o Graphics card requirements:
 - minimum: 32 MB
 - recommended: At least 64 MB

The operating system as well as the drivers for the hardware installed must be up to date.

- Computers must be able to send and receive video of the following standard:

Video quality	Definition: Image resolution (pixels)	Frames per second
High-quality	640x480	30
HD	1280x720	30

- To do this they will need the following technical specifications (or higher):
 - o to be able to send and receive High Quality (480p):
 - CPU: Dual-core processor
 - RAM: 1 GB RAM
 - Camera: a high-quality video supported USB-based web camera
 - Network bandwidth: 512Kbps
 - o High definition (720p):
 - o To be able to send:
 - CPU: Quad-core processor (three or more meeting participants), Dual-core processor (two meeting participants).
 - RAM: 2 GB RAM

- Camera: a high-definition video supported USB-based web camera
 - Network bandwidth: 3Mbps
 - o To be able to receive:
 - CPU: Dual-core processor
 - RAM: 2 GB RAM
 - Network bandwidth: 2Mbps
- Multi-directional microphones.
- External speakers or a headset that will deliver sound quality for the remote examiner.
- Speakerphones combine the speaker, allows hands-free operation and more than one person to participate in a call in one room.
- Built-in cameras have a lower definition and a narrow field of view. It is recommended to use an external camera.

Internet connections available must be:

Call type	Minimum download / upload speed	Recommended download / upload speed
Video calling /Screen sharing	128kbps / 128kbps	300kbps / 300kbps
Video calling (high-quality)	400kbps / 400kbps	512kbps / 512kbps
Video calling (HD):	1.2Mbps / 1.2Mbps	1.5Mbps / 1.5Mbps
Group video (3 computers):	512kbps / 128kbps	2Mbps / 512kbps