

## CIE What is the difference between IGCSE and GCSE?

### Introduction About GCSE

General Certificate of Secondary Education examinations (GCSEs) were introduced in 1986 and replaced the previous GCE 'O' Level and CSE systems by merging them together. Coursework became a new feature of assessment, one that teachers rightly regarded with scepticism. The recent introduction of controlled assessment for coursework attempts to overcome the issue of coursework authentication by making coursework supervision compulsory.

While many employers only recognise A \* -C grade GCSEs, others have criticised the qualification as lacking in challenge for more able pupils. With more and more students achieving A grades, the GCSE exam is widely perceived as getting easier and easier, and lacking an 'absolute standard' GCSEs are offered in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland with Scotland offering its own system of qualifications.

### Introduction About IGCSE

IGCSEs were introduced in 1988 and are internationally recognised qualifications. Candidates can sit IGCSE examinations all over the world. Offering over 70 subjects, IGCSEs are taken in over 120 countries. IGCSEs do not include coursework. Similar to GCSEs, they are perceived by some as academically more rigorous, and for this reason have recently been adopted by over 300 independent schools in the UK. In February 2009, 16 Cambridge IGCSE syllabuses received accreditation from Ofqual, the government body that regulates qualifications, exams and tests in England. IGCSEs are widely accepted by universities and colleges as part of their entry requirements. IGCSEs are offered by Cambridge and Edexcel exam boards

IGCSE qualifications are ideal for those wanting to study for national qualifications by distance learning. Without all the administrative problems that encumber GCSE coursework, IGCSEs offer a practical way forward for those studying at home as assessment is by written exam at test centres world-wide. If you need qualifications to go to college or university, apply for a professional or vocational course, or need say, Maths or English GCSE or IGCSE to apply for a job, then IGCSEs will help you achieve your goal.

### Benefits of Taking IGCSE

- The IGCSE essentially has to be more flexible, because it is available in more than 100 countries. It does not have to adhere to the English national curriculum.
- It might well be taken by a pupil at an English school in a foreign country.
- It does not include the compulsory study of English Literature for example, Shakespeare, despite his works would still be an option in an IGCSE.

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- IGCSE exam entries increased from 15, 000 in 2007 to 40, 000 in 2008.

## Differences between GCSE and IGCSE

### About GCSE

GCSE means “General Certificate of Secondary Education”

General Certificate of Secondary Education is in vogue in England, Northern Ireland, and Wales

GCSE exams were made compulsory in the late 1980s. It replaced the GCE Ordinary Level and Certification of Secondary Education exams.

GCSE is easier in terms of syllabus.

GCSE has easier curriculum

GCSE is mainly confined to Britain.

GCSE syllabus is less comprehensive

### About IGCSE

IGCSE means “International General Certificate of Secondary Education”

It was the University of Cambridge International Examinations that developed the International General Certificate of Secondary Education in 1988. IGCSE certification is mainly given to students outside Britain who favor the English qualification system.

IGCSE certification is mainly given to students outside Britain who favor the English qualification system but private schools in the UK are also now offering the IGCSE aimed at better standards for the students.

When comparing the examination and syllabus, the IGCSE is known to be harder than the GCSE. It is hard to get a higher grade in the IGCSE than getting an A or A + in the GCSE.

In comparison to the GCSE, the IGCSE has a challenging curriculum.

When compared to the GCSE, the IGCSE is the largest provider of qualification internationally.

IGCSE syllabus is more comprehensive