

Cambridge Pre-U Syllabus

Cambridge International Level 3
Pre-U Certificate in
MANDARIN CHINESE
SHORT COURSE

For examination in 2009

Cambridge
Pre-U

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UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE
International Examinations

Mandarin Chinese (1341)

Cambridge International Level 3
Pre-U Certificate in Mandarin Chinese (Short Course)

For examination in 2009

QAN 500/5038/2

Support

CIE provides comprehensive support for all its qualifications, including the Cambridge Pre-U. There are resources for teachers and candidates written by experts. CIE also endorses a range of materials from other publishers to give a choice of approach. More information on what is available for this particular syllabus can be found at www.cie.org.uk

Syllabus Updates

This syllabus is for teaching from 2008 and is valid for examination in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012. For the 2010, 2011 and 2012 examinations, please consult the separate syllabus booklet which includes details of the Mandarin Chinese Principal Course examination.

If there are any changes to this syllabus CIE will write to Centres to inform them. This syllabus will also be published annually on the CIE website (www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu). The version of the syllabus on the website should always be considered as the definitive version.

Further copies of this, or any other Cambridge Pre-U syllabus, can be obtained by either downloading from our website www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu

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Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate

Mandarin Chinese (Short Course)**1341****Contents**

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Introduction

Cambridge Pre-U syllabuses aim to equip candidates with the skills required to make a success of their subsequent studies at university, involving not only a solid grounding in each specialist subject at an appropriate level, but also the ability to undertake independent and self-directed learning and to think laterally, critically and creatively. The Cambridge Pre-U curriculum is underpinned by a core set of educational principles:

- A programme of study which supports the development of well-informed, open and independent-minded individuals capable of applying their skills to meet the demands of the world as they will find it and over which they may have influence.
- A curriculum which retains the integrity of subject specialisms and which can be efficiently, effectively and reliably assessed, graded and reported to meet the needs of universities.
- A curriculum which is designed to recognise a wide range of individual talents, interests and abilities and which provides the depth and rigour required for a university degree course.
- A curriculum which encourages the acquisition of specific skills and abilities, in particular the skills of problem solving, creativity, critical thinking, team working and effective communication.
- The encouragement of 'deep understanding' in learning – where that deep understanding is likely to involve higher order cognitive activities.
- The development of a perspective which equips young people to understand a range of different cultures and ideas and to respond successfully to the opportunity for international mobility.

Cambridge Pre-U syllabuses are linear. A candidate taking a Principal Subject must take all the components together at the end of the course in one examination session. A Short Course is provided for those who do not wish to take the subject through to Principal Level, for those who desire a 'progress check', or for those opting out of a Principal course but wishing to gain certification. A Cambridge Pre-U Short Course in Mandarin Chinese is separate from, and cannot contribute towards, a Principal result.

This syllabus aims to equip candidates learning Mandarin Chinese as a foreign language with the skills to survive in a Chinese environment. The syllabus also provides a stepping stone for university courses in Chinese and Chinese Studies, allowing universities to offer alternative courses to the prevailing *ab initio* classes for successful Pre-U candidates.

As well as allowing candidates to develop their language skills, the syllabus will foster an awareness of Chinese culture and history.

In addition to providing a secure foundation for study in higher education, the syllabus equips candidates with a range of skills for careers in business, education and the arts.

The syllabus builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills typically gained by candidates taking Level 2 qualifications.

Aims

- To develop the ability to understand Mandarin Chinese.
- To enable the candidate to communicate confidently and clearly in Mandarin Chinese.
- To form a sound base of skills, language and attitudes required for further study, work and leisure.
- To develop insights into the culture and civilisation of countries where Chinese is spoken.
- To encourage positive attitudes to language learning and a sympathetic approach to other cultures and civilisations.
- To further intellectual and personal development by promoting learning and social skills.

Assessment Objectives

A01	Understand and respond to spoken material.
A02	Manipulate the target language accurately in the spoken form to demonstrate a capacity to choose appropriate examples of lexis and structures.
A03	Select information and present it in Mandarin Chinese and in English, organising arguments and ideas logically.
A04	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of aspects of Chinese society.

Scheme of Assessment

Component	Name	Duration	Weighting (%)	Type of Assessment
Paper 1	Speaking	c. 15 mins	40	Internally assessed Oral – externally moderated
Paper 2	Chinese Culture	1 hour 15 minutes	60	Externally set and marked written paper

Candidates take Papers 1 and 2.

Relationship between Scheme of Assessment and Assessment Objectives

Component	AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4
1	✓	✓	✓	✓
2			✓	✓

Component	Marks available for each Assessment Objective			
	AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4
1	10	40	5	5
2			5	25
Total	10 = 7%	40 = 27%	10 = 13%	30 = 53%

Core Vocabulary

There is no Core Vocabulary for the Short Course. Candidates will be expected to have the vocabulary to discuss the Topic Areas below in some depth and in a way that reflects progression from GCSE.

Topic Areas

The main purpose of this list of Topic Areas is to provide a manageable content which offers flexibility to teachers in the planning of their courses but places restrictions on the Topic Areas from which Examiners may make their choice of material. These Topic Areas are intended to help candidates and not limit them and where the subject matter is the personal choice of candidates, for example the Prepared Topic in the Speaking Test, they may choose topics of personal interest even if they lie outside the following list.

- 1 **Family**
- 2 **Young People**
- 3 **Education**

These Topic Areas will remain constant from year to year.

Description of Papers

Paper 1: Speaking (60 marks)

The Short Course oral examination lasts for 12–15 minutes and is internally assessed and externally moderated. All oral examinations must be held during the official examining period of 15 March to 15 May. An Examiner appointed by the Centre, normally the candidates' teacher, will conduct and assess the oral examination for candidates in that Centre. The oral examinations of all candidates must be recorded.

After the examinations have taken place, all recordings, Working Mark Sheets (completed according to the instructions) and Moderator copies of the MS1 Internal Assessment Mark Sheet must be sent, to arrive at CIE by no later than 22 May. Labels will be supplied for this purpose.

Forms and full instructions relating to Paper 1 Speaking will be provided in a separate document which can be downloaded by navigating to the Cambridge Pre-U area of the CIE website (cie.org.uk). Centres that make Estimated entries for the Mandarin Chinese Short Course, as required by CIE, will automatically receive a copy of this document in the February of the year of examination.

Section 1: Prepared topic and topic conversation

- PREPARED TOPIC AND TOPIC CONVERSATION (5–7 minutes). Candidates will research a topic related to the history, current affairs or culture (including art, cinema, literature and traditions) of the Chinese world. They will identify the area of their Prepared Topic and submit this to their teacher/examiner no fewer than 4 working days before the oral examination on a form provided. In the examination the candidate will be allowed to speak in Mandarin Chinese on this topic for about 2 minutes. The Examiner will follow-up this initial presentation with questions in Mandarin Chinese on the chosen topic. Candidates will be assessed on the content of their presentation (ability to present relevant facts, express opinions and put forward points for discussion) as well as their linguistic competence (comprehension and responsiveness, fluency, accuracy of tones, pronunciation, range of vocabulary, variety of sentence structures). Candidates may prepare a 'cue card' (not more than postcard size; maximum number of characters/pinyin syllables = 50) in the language to remind them of the main points they wish to make, to bring into the examination room. A script of their presentation is not allowed.

Section 2: General conversation

- GENERAL CONVERSATION (6–8 minutes). This section will begin with straightforward questions about the candidate's background and interests and move quickly on to a more mature conversation covering the Topic Areas listed on page 6. It is expected that the General Conversation section will cover 2 or 3 of the Topic Areas. The subject matter covered in the Prepared Topic will not be covered in the General Conversation. Candidates will be assessed on linguistic competence (comprehension and responsiveness, fluency, accuracy of tones, pronunciation, range of vocabulary, variety of sentence structures).

15 marks will be available for the Prepared Topic, 15 marks for the Topic Conversation, 15 marks for the General Conversation and 15 marks to be awarded globally for Pronunciation/Intonation and Feel for the Language.

Dictionaries are not allowed.

Paper 2: Chinese Culture (30 marks)

Candidates must choose and prepare ONE option from either Section 1 or Section 2. The examination will last 1 hour 15 minutes and candidates will be required to answer ONE question in English on their chosen option. The recommended length is 600–750 words. There will be a choice of two questions per option. This part of the examination will assess candidates' knowledge and understanding of their chosen cultural options and ability to use this knowledge to answer a question in a clear and focused manner.

Section 1: Topics in Chinese culture

- TOPICS IN CHINESE CULTURE. There will be three options for this section:
 - The Founding of the People's Republic of China*
 - Chinese Economic Trends since 1978**
 - The City of Beijing**

Section 2: Chinese literature and film

- CHINESE LITERATURE AND FILM. There will be three options for this section:
 - Fiction – The Picador Book of Contemporary Chinese Fiction**
 - Fiction – Red Dust, Ma Jian**
 - Film – Yellow Earth, Chen Kaige*

Texts in Section 2 are to be read and studied in English.

* Options marked with ONE asterisk will also be set for 2010, 2011 and 2012.

** Options marked with TWO asterisks will also be set for 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013.

There is no objection to any of these options being used for the Prepared Topic in the Speaking Test.

Appendix 1: Performance Descriptors

The following performance descriptors indicate the level of attainment characteristic of the given grade in Mandarin Chinese at Pre-U. They give a general indication of the required standard at each specific grade. The descriptors should be interpreted in relation to the content outlined in the syllabus; they are not designed to define that content.

The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the Assessment Objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the examination may be balanced by better performances in others.

Distinction (D2)

Very good level of understanding and/or knowledge, expressed in well argued responses with relevant illustration; high level of accuracy, wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence patterns; a sense of idiom; very good pronunciation and intonation.

Merit (M2)

Good level of understanding and/or knowledge; responses showing some ability to develop argument with appropriate illustration; generally accurate in simple structures but variable success in more complex language; adequate vocabulary and pronunciation.

Pass (P2)

Uneven and/or basic responses showing some level of understanding and/or knowledge expressed with limited argument and illustration; gaps in grammatical awareness; simple and repetitive sentence patterns and vocabulary; many sounds mispronounced.

Appendix 2: Additional Information

Guided Learning Hours

It is intended that each Short Course should be delivered through 180 hours of guided learning. This is a notional measure of the substance of the qualification. It includes an estimate of the time that might be allocated to direct teaching or instruction, together with other structured learning time such as directed assignments or supported individual study and practice. It excludes learner-initiated private study.

Certification Title

This qualification is shown on a certificate as:

- Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate in **Mandarin Chinese (Short Course)**

The qualification is accredited at Level 3 of the UK National Qualifications Framework and provides a solid grounding for students to pursue a variety of progression pathways.

Entries

For Entry information please refer to the *Pre-U E3 Booklet*.

Grading and Reporting

The Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificates in the Short Course Subjects are qualifications in their own right. They are acceptable as an alternative to AS Level (or other Level 3 qualifications) for entry into Higher Education or employment. Each individual Short Course Subject is graded separately on a scale of nine grades: Distinction 1, Distinction 2, Distinction 3, Merit 1, Merit 2, Merit 3, Pass 1, Pass 2, Pass 3.

The Short Course does not form part of the overall Pre-U Diploma.

Classification Code for UK Centres

In the UK, every syllabus is assigned to a national classification code that indicates the subject area to which it belongs. UK Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one qualification with the same classification code will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables.

The classification code for this syllabus is **5950**.

Language

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

Procedures and Regulations

This syllabus complies with the *CIE Code of Practice* and *The Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications 2004*.

Further information about the administration of Cambridge Pre-U qualifications can be found in the *CIE Handbook for Cambridge Pre-U Centres* available from CIE Publications or by contacting international@cie.org.uk

Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Legislative, Economic and Cultural Issues

This syllabus contributes to an understanding of these issues through the study of Topic Areas and the study of culture for Paper 2.

Sustainable Development, Environmental Education, Health and Safety considerations, European Dimension and International Agreements

This syllabus contributes to an understanding of these issues through the study of Topic Areas. The opportunity to study culture in Paper 2 allows candidates to gain specific insights into the societies where the language is spoken.

Avoidance of Bias

CIE has taken great care in the preparation of this syllabus and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind.

Key Skills

This syllabus provides opportunities for the development of evidence for the Key Skills of: *Communication, Application of Number, Information Technology, Working with Others, Improving Own Learning and Performance* and *Problem Solving* at Levels 2 and/or 3. However, the extent to which this evidence fulfils the Key Skills criteria at these levels will be totally dependent on the style of teaching and learning adopted for each section.

The Key Skills awarding bodies and the regulatory authorities have produced a suite of example portfolios that will help to give candidates and practitioners a clear understanding of the requirements for the Key Skills portfolio. These are available on the QCA Key Skills website (www.qca.org.uk/keyskills). Full details of the requirements for certification can be obtained from the awarding bodies that are approved to offer Key Skills. For further information about Key Skills assessment, including the current standards, please see the document *The Key Skills Qualifications Standards and Guidance* published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority 2004 (ISBN 1 85838 548 2).

The following table indicates where opportunities may exist for at least some coverage of the various Key Skills criteria at Levels 2 and/or 3 for each section.

Short Course

Paper	Communication	Application of Number	IT	Working with others	Learning and Performance	Problem Solving
1 section 1	✓		✓		✓	✓
1 section 2	✓		✓		✓	
2 section 1	✓		✓		✓	✓
2 section 2	✓		✓		✓	✓

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