

Press Information

3 May 2006

Cambridge first to launch computer-based assessment in IGCSE Geography

An online alternative to coursework is introduced to schools

University of Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) is the first examination board to introduce computer-based testing in IGCSE. The innovative computer-based assessment was successfully piloted in November 2004 and was taken as part of the Cambridge IGCSE examinations in April 2006.

Cambridge students will now be able to sit a computer-based test in Cambridge IGCSE Geography. Schools from China, Denmark, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Malta, Malaysia, Norway, Philippines, Portugal, Slovakia, Thailand, Vietnam, South Africa and Zambia took part in this.

David Williamson, Geography teacher at Yew Chung International School, Shanghai said:

“Students were impressed with the whole experience and enjoyed it. Many said, ‘why can’t we do Maths or History this way?’ “

The assessment is designed to assess practical skills and students use simulations of measuring equipment, video and audio clips to measure, analyse and present their work. Practice materials include simulations on topics such as the weather, rivers and inner cities and are available on the teacher support website, a dedicated site for registered teachers. The computer-based assessment carries the same marks and is the same duration as the current alternative to coursework written paper.

CIE is also conducting further pilot studies of computer-based assessment in other subjects such as Mathematics and Biology. Sarah Maughan, CIE’s Group Leader, Assessment Development Unit said:

“Computer-based assessment has developed as a direct result of working closely with Cambridge schools, and meeting their specific assessment needs in an innovative and practical way. We are all looking forward to seeing the first results in June.”

CIE developed the innovative system in partnership with BTL Group Ltd in the UK. John Winkley, Commercial Director, BTL Group Ltd said:

"Feedback on these interactive tests that use simulation of real-world settings has been very positive. Following the live trials in June, we see many opportunities for using them in formative assessment as well as traditional examination settings."

Learn more! Visit www.cie.org.uk

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Notes to Editors

About CIE

University of Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) is the world's largest provider of international qualifications for 14-19 year olds. CIE offers a broad range of qualifications, created for an international audience. CIE's qualifications include Cambridge IGCSE and International A/AS Level. CIE qualifications are taken in 150 countries and recognised by universities, educational providers and employers across the world.

CIE is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group, a not-for-profit organisation and part of the University of Cambridge. CIE has a strong pedigree in development and research – it was the first exam board to develop the International GCSE 20 years ago. We constantly review our provision and introduce new subject areas and qualifications. CIE offers unrivalled support to its network of registered Centres.

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