

Annual Review

2011–2012



CAMBRIDGE ASSESSMENT

PUTTING LEARNING AT THE HEART OF ASSESSMENT



TRUST
EDUCATION
VALUE
INFLUENCE
FORWARD THINKING
PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING
GETTING IT RIGHT

INTRODUCTION

Against a backdrop of increased scrutiny from Government, the English exams regulator and the media, we continued to play a leading role in developing and delivering educational assessment in over 160 countries around the world.



The momentum for educational reform has been building for some time and in the UK we experienced significant policy change related to qualifications, from new specifications for GCSEs and vocational qualifications to the potential redesign of A Levels.

There was also the added pressure of changes to the regulatory system and the market generally. The English exams regulator was given powers to fine exam boards up to 10 per cent of their annual turnover. The desire to be able to fine boards arose, at least in part, from widespread concerns about errors in all boards' question papers in June 2011 and the need to find a proportionate penalty.

During the year clerical errors were discovered in the transcribing and totalling of marks for some scripts from OCR's June 2011 session which led to GCSE and A Level grade changes for a small number of candidates following an internal investigation. OCR took a number of corrective actions to address these matters including

terminating four examiners' contracts, placing another 78 on notice to improve and instituting a new clerical checking regime. Ofqual, the English exams regulator, undertook its own detailed investigation and, as a result, served OCR with a Direction in September 2012 which sought improvements in OCR's management processes and systems.

Changes to school performance measures had a huge impact upon vocational qualification design. For inclusion in 14–16 performance tables from 2014 onwards in the UK, vocational qualifications will need to be at least the size of a GCSE. The changes we are undertaking are in line with the recommendations from Professor Alison Wolf's review of vocational education in which she identified the need to reduce the number of qualifications that count as equivalent to a GCSE; increase the level of external assessment; reduce the number of small qualifications; and concentrate on the delivery of those which could evidence strong progression. This is and continues to be a major focus of our UK exam board.

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A similar shift in policy was set out for 17–19 learners where again Wolf’s recommendations are driving the policy agenda. There is much to welcome in the proposals to move funding by learner rather than qualifications, emphasising the importance of English and Maths and the need to deliver high quality work experience and measure destinations and progression rather than the number of qualifications achieved. Ofqual’s strategy became clearer over the last year and four principles are evident: a focus on standards; a heavy sourcing of international benchmarking evidence; a finessing of regulatory powers; and a strengthening of public confidence.

Internationally, the impact of UK policy changes, regulation and the media furore is being felt. We continue to support international educational reform initiatives with national partner bodies which have a broad focus, including the development of new curricula, assessments and professional development programmes for teachers and schools’ leaders. This enables students to be successful within their own national education context and gain qualifications that are recognised, accepted and valued regionally and internationally.

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We strengthened our presence in Asia Pacific and continued our work with education ministries around the world to develop national assessment programmes, bringing to bear our global expertise and knowledge.

The capacity to adapt to change is essential in education. Our experience of developing and delivering educational assessment both in the UK and 160 countries worldwide can help to deliver whatever reforms come our way.

Simon Lebus
Group Chief Executive
Cambridge Assessment



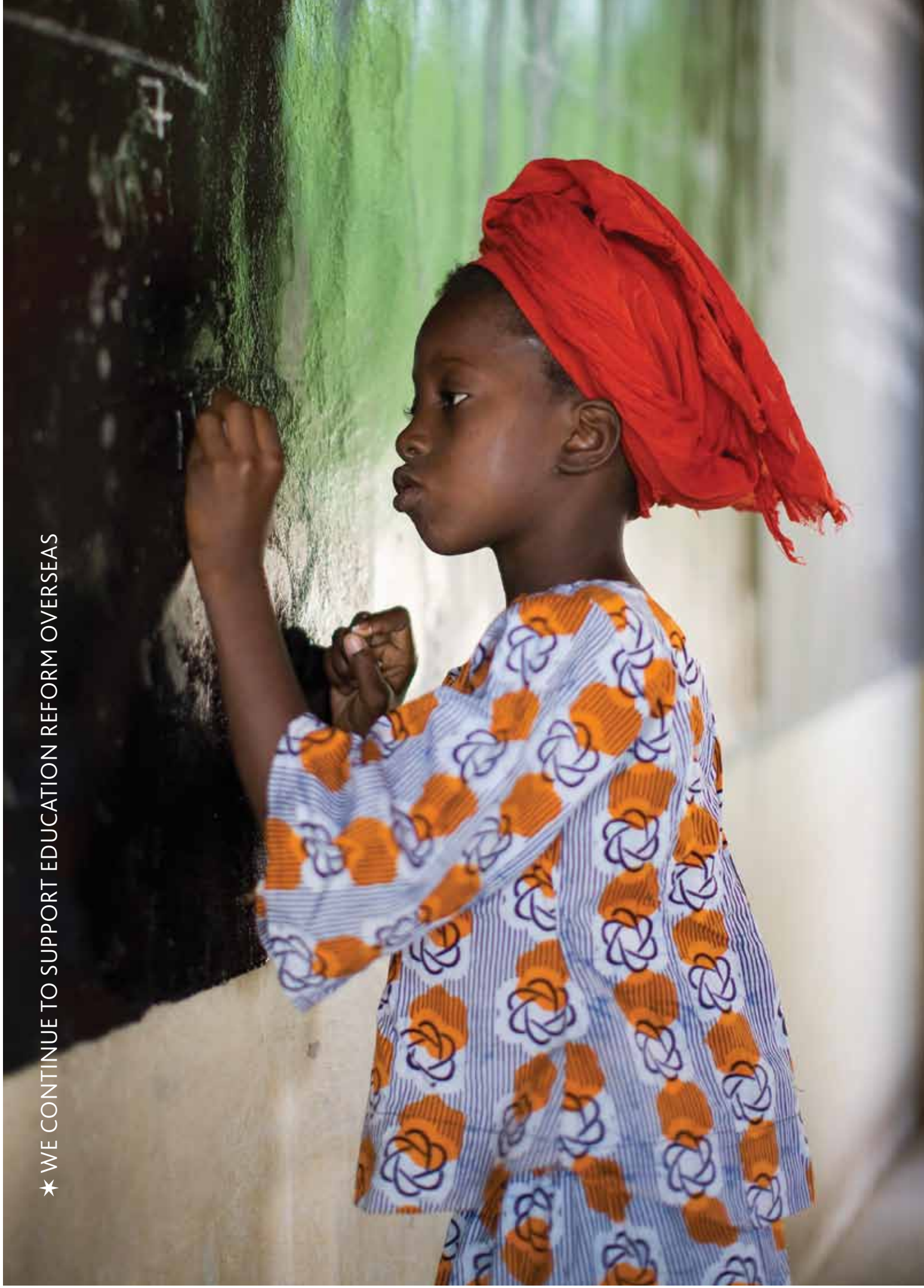
Ann Puntis,
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Cambridge International
Examinations

Dr Michael Milanovic,
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★ WE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT EDUCATION REFORM OVERSEAS



TO REINFORCE OUR POSITION AS A GLOBALLY RECOGNISED AND RESPECTED AUTHORITY ON ASSESSMENT

At a time when education is under intense scrutiny around the world, we continued to influence education practitioners, policy makers and governments on assessment and education and how best to provide learners with the knowledge and skills that they need.

As a Group we were called upon to give both written and oral evidence in defence of the UK exam system at the House of Commons Education Select Committee as part of its inquiry into the administration of examinations for 15–19 year olds in England.

In our submission to the Committee's inquiry we gave evidence on the arguments in favour for and against having a range of awarding bodies for academic and applied qualifications, and the merits of alternative arrangements such as having one national body or examination boards franchised to offer qualifications in particular subjects or fields. Covering each of these issues in turn, we attempted to provide the Committee with concrete examples which reflect both past UK experience and best practice abroad. In order that current arrangements might achieve their full potential, we also supplied recommendations for improvement in the current system for the Committee to consider. It was rather pleasing to note that the Group's assessment expertise was praised by England's exam regulator, Ofqual, at the hearing.

Elsewhere, we continued to offer our expertise and evidence in response to a great number of consultations over the last year on a variety of topics, including: Further Education, GCSE and Higher Education reform; risk-based regulation; and UCAS' admissions process review.

As testament to the Group's expertise, our Director of Assessment Research and Development, Tim Oates, was asked to lead the four-person Expert Panel on the

National Curriculum Review which began in January 2011. In December 2011, the panel published its report. The report made major recommendations including more detailed and focused programmes of study in core subjects, assessment linked to essential learning outcomes, a linkage to international standards and a proper curriculum hierarchy. The Government has followed the panel's recommendations regarding a delay in the implementation of changes. Although the Panel has completed its work, Tim Oates will continue as advisor to the Review and as a member of the Review's Advisory Committee.



Ann Puntis, Chief Executive of Cambridge International Examinations, at its annual Cambridge Teachers' Conference in 2011.



The French language version of our business language test, BULATS, is recognised by organisations in France such as Air France, Airbus Industries, the Ministry of Defence, as well as the Council of Europe and OECD.

As an independent voice, not motivated simply by commercial returns, we continued to tackle big education topics, such as; ‘Learning comes first: shifting the focus from examining to the curriculum’ and ‘Can’t speak, can’t learn: what is the impact of non-native speakers in schools?’. Our events continue to attract sizeable audiences including teachers, assessment experts, employers and journalists with hundreds more watching online. These campaigns reflect that the Group, and its constituent parts, are educationalists not merely assessment deliverers.

Our attendance at all three main political party conferences provides the Group with a platform to discuss educational issues with policy makers. Last year we held a forum session titled ‘Too many exams and not enough education’. We commented that the system had become “exam driven, not education driven” and called for a rebalancing of the education system.

In a much anticipated move, the UK Secretary of State for Education wrote to the English exams regulator proposing that universities should play a lead role in developing the next generation of A Levels and reviewing their performance each year. This was in line with our advice to ministers and reflects the Group’s comprehensive Higher Education engagement strategy, which we have been delivering through an HE consultative forum and a series of subject forums, and an extensive 18-month research programme to drive forward preparation for the next round of A Level change. The findings of our research attracted widespread print and broadcast media coverage, ensuring that we are at the heart of the A Level reform debate.

RECOGNITION

Overseas, we continued to support education reform initiatives with national partner bodies. We signed a new initiative that will introduce a bilingual education into state schools in Mongolia. The bilingual education programme incorporates Cambridge programmes and qualifications, such as Cambridge IGCSE, to align the national education system of Mongolia to Cambridge International education standards.

Results from the French language version of our business language test, BULATS, were accepted by France's Ministry of the Interior as proof that applicants have the minimum language skills needed for citizenship. The test is already widely recognised by organisations all over the world including the UK Border Agency and the authorities in several German States. It is also widely used in France by organisations such as Air France, Airbus Industries, the Ministry of Defence, as well as the Council of Europe and OECD.

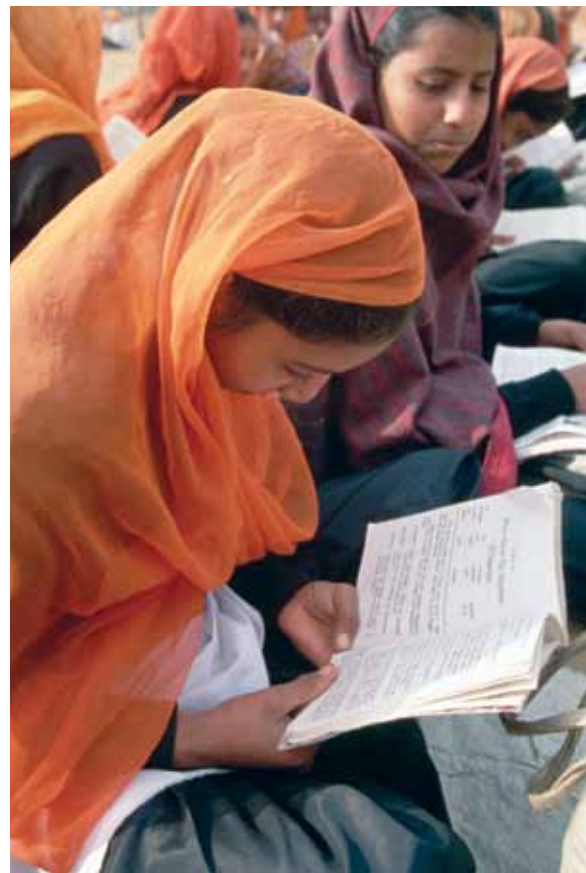
An agreement was signed with the largest university in Mexico to smooth the path of Cambridge learners in Mexico who want to progress to national universities. The Memorandum of Understanding recognises that our Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International AS and A Levels are equivalent to the Mexican 'prepa certificate' for 16 to 18 year olds.

As proof of English language skills for student visa applications, Australia's Department of Immigration and Citizenship accepted scores for our Cambridge English: Advanced exam. The new rules will benefit students who want to prove that they have in-depth English language skills and the ability to use them effectively

in an educational context. It will also help universities, colleges and schools to be confident that the students they recruit are able to deal with the demands of academic study in English across all four skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing.

SHARING KNOWLEDGE

We held our most successful International Study Programme to date, bringing together assessment experts from around the world to share best practice in public examinations' development and administration. This year the course attracted 27 delegates from 16 countries including Botswana, Malaysia, Mongolia, and Argentina, and the heads of three African examination boards – Lesotho, Swaziland, and Namibia. Launched in 2006, the two-week programme provides a comprehensive insight into the development and delivery of public examinations for a multi-national



Our qualifications enhance learning and recognise a learner's knowledge and ability.

audience. The course draws on the strength and depth of expertise of staff from across the Group, each speaker bringing a specialist understanding of their field with sessions on item writing and test construction, mark scheme development and e-assessment proving particularly popular.

To gain first-hand experience of English teaching in the UK we held a month-long course for a group of ten teachers of English from Singapore. It is the second time we have run this course, which includes a placement in local primary and secondary schools, after successfully winning the Singapore Ministry of Education contract. The teachers were nominated by their schools for the 'Overseas Study Award', which is considered a great honour, and they are expected to disseminate what they have learned on their return. The course also reinforces the already strong relationship between the Group and Singapore.

We developed a bespoke blended learning course in assessment and education for the Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development. The course, attended by 30 delegates, focused on the principles of assessment and ways of assessing a curriculum.

For 2011–12, we restructured our Certificate in the Principles and Practice of Assessment programme into its new linear format – which is now awarded as a full Undergraduate Certificate of the University of Cambridge. Thirteen students completed the course this year, including staff as well as participants from Ofqual, the Scottish Qualifications Authority, the Wines and Spirits Education Trust and one teacher.

Our annual Cambridge Teachers Conference continued to be popular. More than 200 teachers from over 50 countries attended to hear experts from the University of Bristol and the University of Cambridge share the latest brain research and discuss its implications for education. We also continued to hold teacher events around the world (Pakistan, Qatar, UAE, Kuwait,

Argentina), often in collaboration with the University's Faculty of Education, to give teachers new strategies and techniques for teaching science and maths.

We had a very successful exhibition at the BETT 2012 show in London, one of the largest educational technology shows in the world. The exhibition was opened by the UK Education Secretary Michael Gove who stated that the current programme of ICT study in England's schools would be replaced by an 'open source' curriculum in computer science and programming from September, designed with the help of universities and industry. Our UK exam board OCR is currently the only board to offer a GCSE in Computing and Michael Gove commented that "OCR is pioneering work" in computing qualifications.



The presenters sharing their experiences and views on the impact of EAL on teachers and the education of mainstream students at one of our events.



Mark Dawe, Chief Executive of OCR, speaking at our education event at the Labour Party annual conference in 2011.

As well as hosting our own knowledge-sharing events we also participated in a plethora of external education events around the world either by speaking or exhibiting. In the UK we continued to participate in events aimed at policy makers, including Westminster Education Forum and Westminster Briefing where we often provided a speaker.

We continue to demonstrate that we have a strong research base from which to influence thinking, highlighting the organisation's academic integrity and educational values. In addition to sharing our research via our own publications, Research Matters, Research Notes and Studies in Language Testing, the Group also contributed articles to a wide selection of well-regarded books and peer-reviewed journals published around the world.

IN BRIEF A LEADING AUTHORITY ON ASSESSMENT

- ◆ As an independent voice, not motivated simply by commercial returns, we continued to tackle big education topics.
- ◆ We continue to demonstrate that we have a strong research base from which to influence thinking on education issues.
- ◆ The UK Secretary of State for Education's proposition that universities should play a lead role in developing the next generation of A Levels, was in line with our advice to ministers and reflects the Group's Higher Education engagement programme.
- ◆ Overseas, we continued to support education reform initiatives with national partner bodies.
- ◆ As well as hosting our own knowledge-sharing events we also participated in a plethora of external education events around the world.

TO REINFORCE OUR POSITION AS A GLOBALLY RECOGNISED AND RESPECTED AUTHORITY ON ASSESSMENT

★ WE CONTINUE TO INVEST IN NEW IT SYSTEMS TO IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF ALL EXAMS



TO EFFECTIVELY USE AND DEPLOY MODERN TECHNOLOGY

Technology continues to play a key part in examination administrative processes with millions of exam papers being marked online every year. The use of computer-based testing (CBT) also is rapidly expanding bringing benefits to education by offering on-demand testing, quicker turnaround of results, better and authentic item types and improved security. Therefore we continue to invest in new IT systems to improve the efficiency of all exams through online marking, online grading and, eventually, online test-taking.

E-TESTING

In the first experiment of its kind in the UK, our international exam board trialled the use of portable devices in exam conditions. In the pilot students at a Cambridge school were given portable computers on which to view a Cambridge IGCSE Biology mock exam paper. Although they still had to write out their answers by hand, the experiment was well received by students. The pilot was part of a research project to find out more about the validity of using tablet technology in assessment. However, we have no plans to introduce the system in 'live' exams just yet.

A major CBT breakthrough was the development of our on-screen and on-demand Functional Skills assessments, ready for launch mid-September 2012. Functional Skills are practical skills in English, Maths and ICT that help learners gain the most out of work, education and everyday life. They have been introduced to address government and employers' concerns over current standards in basic literacy and numeracy for learners of

all ages. Functional Skills are also an essential part of the Apprenticeship frameworks. With an increase in the roll-on, roll-off programmes of learning offered by schools, we also reduced our turnaround times for results to just 20 days. We are continually reviewing our processes and will be aiming to reduce the turnaround times further for some of our assessments from September onwards.

BIOMETRICS

To make sure that institutions can be confident that the person presenting our certificate is actually the person who sat the exam, we introduced 'Identica' – a new test-day photo system developed by Aware Inc. Initially Identica will be used to enhance exam security of our Cambridge English: Advanced tests for immigration and other high stakes purposes – accepted by the majority of universities in Australia and the UK, and by the UK Border Agency for all visa categories including Tier 4 student visa – prior to being rolled out across the Group, as required. Launched in Switzerland, Identica



Our new test-day photo system, Identica, will be used to enhance exam security of our Cambridge English exams.



Web-based learning and virtual conferencing are just a few of the ways we share knowledge and deliver teacher training.

has already been rolled out to English test centres in Canada, Mexico, New Zealand, China, Poland, Argentina, Spain, Germany, Brazil, Italy, Malaysia, Taiwan, Ukraine, India, Peru, Russia, Macedonia and France.

The candidate biometrics project is the first project to be delivered by the Group's strategic change programme, Project Threshold.

E-PROCESSING AND ADMINISTRATION

Teachers in the UK were able to submit requests for post-examination adjustments to be made to candidates' marks to make allowance for adverse circumstances that may affect their performance on the exam day (known as Special Considerations) online for the first time thanks to a new application capability developed by Project Threshold. Initially developed for OCR, it will be extended to our other exam boards during this forthcoming year. The development followed a customer satisfaction survey in which schools and colleges ranked the introduction of an online process for special consideration applications in their top three 'wish list'.

Our free and secure online Results Verification Service continues to be a popular way for organisations to check candidates' Cambridge ESOL results. Organisations can see results quickly and easily on a site that is securely encrypted, giving them the confidence to make important decisions about study, work or immigration.

We also upgraded our Candidate Results online service for August 2012 to meet the growing demand from students to access their own Cambridge International Examination results online, and improve their experience of the service.

And in response to requests from schools for more support to help them promote Cambridge programmes one of our exam boards launched a new secure area on its website called Marketing Resources.

E-LEARNING

We launched a new, interactive web-based learning solution to help students prepare for the speaking part of the Cambridge English: First exam. The online speaking practice test incorporates video footage of a real Cambridge ESOL examiner asking authentic exam questions. Students can record and share their answers with teachers and friends – and then compare their responses to videos of students giving sample answers.

To enable us to offer a face-to-face training experience to customers anywhere in the world, we increased the use of video conferencing to deliver teacher training.

Virtual conferencing is just one of the ways we share the knowledge and experience of leading practitioners in online language teaching, and encourage teachers to participate in wider discussion. Bringing together 1,500 people from 52 countries, our 2011 annual virtual conference highlighted the vast opportunities of online learning in the English classroom and the importance of striking a good balance with face-to-face teaching.

We partnered with Oxford University Press and Hodder Education to develop free electronic versions of AS and A2 textbooks for all schools and colleges teaching A Levels. The initiative launched in September 2011, with nearly 100 eBooks available in a wide range of subjects. This was the first time that free eBooks from major publishers had been made available via an exam board and was a very popular initiative which has now been extended for a further two years. To date, over 375,000 free AS and A2 eBooks have been ordered by cost-conscious schools and colleges. According to research we commissioned earlier this year, accessibility and portability are the greatest benefits of eBooks, especially for students. The eBooks are also benefitting teachers, who use them to plan and prepare lessons.

E-MARKING

The increasing use of on-screen marking technology for both paper and computer-based assessments has made it possible to introduce significant improvements. These include the ability to monitor the quality of marking of each examiner against a set of common, 'definitively' marked scripts on an on-going basis; the ability to anonymise and randomise the allocation of scripts; the availability of more detailed evidence upon which to decide whether an individual examiner's marking is 'aberrant'; and the ability to allocate re-marking immediately without the delays caused by the need to despatch paper scripts.

During the year our UK exam board brought forward its target of marking all long essay-style answers online to 100 per cent by 2014, up from 84 per cent this year. On-screen marking brings with it many benefits and will

help to eliminate opportunities for human error.

From June 2012 everyone we invite to mark hard copy Cambridge International scripts will also be given the option of using ERM – electronic return of marks. ERM is a system for returning marks electronically for scripts which have been marked on paper. It means markers do not have to complete paper mark sheets. Using ERM improves the accuracy of the recording of marks, reduces the time between examiners completing their marking and the marks being loaded onto the marks database, and reduces the chances of marks being delayed in the post. We will be encouraging examiners to use ERM as paper mark scripts are being phased out, and from June 2013 all marks will need to be returned using ERM.

IN BRIEF TECHNOLOGY

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TO EFFECTIVELY USE AND DEPLOY MODERN TECHNOLOGY

★ WE ARE A VITAL AND INTEGRAL PART OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING WORLDWIDE



TO CONTINUE TO EXPAND THE ORGANISATION BY PROVIDING AND INVESTING IN A BROAD, ATTRACTIVE AND INNOVATIVE PORTFOLIO OF ASSESSMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS, AND RELATED SERVICES

We continue to develop and deliver a range of assessments, qualifications and tests, for learners of all ages across the full range of subjects which are used and respected by educational establishments around the world. Additionally, the Group provides a broad range of educational services. These stretch from advising governments on major educational and curriculum reform programmes to teacher development to helping improve standards of taught English in state primary school systems overseas.

PRIMARY

The re-launch of our Cambridge Primary in 2011 has been a success with the number of schools offering the curriculum frameworks programme in 2012 up by 34 per cent on last year. We also held the first test session of our Cambridge Primary Checkpoint. Developed in response to schools, it offers feedback on learners' strengths and weaknesses in the key curriculum areas of English, Mathematics and Science. The tests, developed exclusively for existing customers of Cambridge Primary, are marked by us and provide schools with an external international benchmark for learner performance.

GCSEs AND IGCSEs

This year saw a move to linear GCSEs with an increased focus upon spelling, punctuation and grammar and the re-checking of all of our UK specifications to confirm that they offer sufficient breadth. Despite this regulatory decision in England, the Welsh government decided to allow exam boards to continue to offer the current modular GCSEs in Wales. We declined the opportunity to continue to offer modular GCSEs in Wales as we have strong reservations about having at least two different models of GCSE operating ostensibly under the same title but each with different regulatory requirements and it presents technical challenges relating to standards and creates significant operational costs.

We were also concerned that it makes our shared task of maintaining confidence in GCSEs more challenging when pupils in Wales are seen to have access to more re-sit opportunities than their English counterparts. The Education Minister in Northern Ireland also decided that schools should have the freedom to offer pupils either linear or modular GCSEs, dependent upon which they feel would better meet their needs and aptitudes.

The decision to return to a linear structure comes as we see the first awards issued for new modular GCSEs in English, Mathematics, ICT and Science in summer 2012. These versions are unitised, which means that candidates can sit exams for different units throughout the course, and also include controlled assessment.

Extending our suite of language qualifications to meet the diverse language needs of Cambridge learners worldwide we launched: Cambridge IGCSE Italian Foreign Language for first examination in 2014; Cambridge IGCSE Chinese as a Second Language (first pilot exam in 2012); and Cambridge IGCSE Urdu as a Second Language (for first examination in 2015). The Ministry of Education in Indonesia also asked us to develop Cambridge IGCSE Bahasa Indonesia for students in Indonesian schools.

We developed Cambridge IGCSE World Literature with a group of schools in Hong Kong, and they are already piloting the syllabus for examination in 2012. Schools in mainland China, India, Argentina, The Netherlands, Thailand and the UK are now working with us to pilot the syllabus for the 2013 assessment. Feedback from pilot schools has highlighted the flexibility for teachers to reflect the interests of their learners. They also welcome the preparation which the syllabus offers for later study at Cambridge International A Level and the International Baccalaureate.

Cambridge IGCSE Enterprise and Cambridge IGCSE Islamiyat, both out of pilot phase, were examined for the first time in June 2012.

VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Changes to school performance measures had a huge impact upon vocational qualification design. We developed Cambridge Nationals to replace the popular OCR Nationals to meet the Government's new performance table criteria for schools from 2014. Industry leaders, teachers and training providers were consulted during development to ensure OCR's new qualifications were 'Wolf compliant' and focused on the skills, as well as the computer knowledge, expected by future employers and places of study. Five subjects – ICT, Business, Health and Social Care, Sport and Science – are ready for first teaching in September 2012.

During the year we also launched Cambridge Technicals, our new suite of vocational qualifications for students aged 16 plus. Following consultation with employers, industry specialists and teachers, the knowledge and skills embedded in the new Cambridge Technicals will provide relevant experience for students wishing to progress into employment or higher education. They also have UCAS points so they are recognised for entry to higher education. Offered as Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications in Business, IT, and Health and Social Care, for teaching by schools and colleges from September 2012, qualifications in Media, Art and Design, Science and Sport will follow from this September to broaden the subject range.

Following the Government's evaluation of the Skills for Life programme it concluded that those qualifications which underpin it needed refreshing. Our UK exam board partnered with Tribal – world leaders in educational support – to develop a new range of English and Maths qualifications to address this issue. Subject to accreditation, the new proficiency qualifications, which are exclusively from OCR, will be available for first teaching from September 2012.

GCE AND CAMBRIDGE PRE-U

The UK Secretary of State for Education's decision that universities should create a new set of A Levels and review them each year was excellent news for the Group as we had already been delivering a comprehensive Higher Education (HE) engagement programme; through an HE Consultative Forum and a series of subject forums to drive forward our work in preparation for the next



round of A Level change. This programme is really progressing the shift to greater HE involvement in the design, review and administration of A Levels.

During the year we announced a new 'HE endorsed' A Level in Humanities, developed by OCR in collaboration with the University of Essex. The qualification, which will be launched in September 2012, has a strong emphasis on developing the ability to interrogate, interpret and evaluate a range of information to produce well-reasoned explanations supported by evidence – skills which are highly valued by both HE and employers.

Take-up of Cambridge Pre-U is nearing equal numbers of state and private schools in the UK – with 64 state schools and 74 independent schools entering their pupils for Cambridge Pre-U subjects. Since its introduction



Students explore the challenges of a global world at a Cambridge Pre-U Global Perspectives and Research Report (GPR) event.

in using English in contemporary communication – from advertisements and brochures to news reports and blogs.

Other new qualifications examined for the first time in June 2012 were: Cambridge Pre-U Short Courses in Global Perspectives, Mathematics (Statistics with Pure Mathematics), and Further Mathematics.

PARTNERSHIPS

We developed a new education programme, in conjunction with the American College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) programme, to help prepare US high school students for university. The initial stage of the project involves a pilot, where students will study a mix of AP courses alongside a seminar course from the adapted Cambridge Pre-U Global Perspectives and Research project. The pilot will last until 2015, enabling two separate cohorts of students to participate.

We strengthened our presence in Asia Pacific with the appointment of a Regional Director and with the opening of a Singapore office. The Group has a long record of involvement in Asia Pacific countries, in curriculum development and in the development, design and operation of examinations. Students in almost 2,000 schools in Asia Pacific take Cambridge qualifications and we also work in partnership with ministries of education in several Asian countries, including Singapore. Elsewhere in the region, to meet the growing popularity of our Cambridge English exams, we expanded our test centre network in China.

In Bahrain, we continued to work closely with the National Examinations Unit, part of the Bahrain Quality Assurance Authority for Education and Training, and successfully piloted Grade 12 examinations for school-leavers for the subjects of Arabic, English and Problem Solving. The pilot has provided invaluable learning for the cycle of live exams at this level to be implemented from 2013.

in 2008 appetite for the qualification, which aims to prepare students for the rigour of university study, has grown across the board. Overall entries for June 2012 are up 30 per cent on last year. And following the launch of a Pre-U Drama and Theatre, for first examination in 2014, we now offer Cambridge Pre-U in 27 Principal Subjects.

Drawing on our experience with Cambridge IGCSE Global Perspectives we developed the new Cambridge International AS Level in Global Perspectives. Already available and popular at Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge Pre-U level, Global Perspectives helps students develop flexible communication and research skills that universities and employers really value.

We launched Cambridge International A Level English Language, for first examination in 2014, following requests from schools for a follow-on qualification to the AS Level. It is designed to give learners confidence

Due to political change, the Nile Egyptian Schools (NES) project in Egypt faced very challenging circumstances, yet work has progressed very well in key areas including curriculum and assessment development, as well as teacher training. We are looking forward to another productive year with NES students at the five pilot schools beginning classes at Grades 4 and 8 for the first time, and plans being produced for the development of curriculum and assessment materials for Grades 10–12.

We signed a major new Description of Services for the Integrated Programme of Development of the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS) to support their long-term goal and enhance the wider education system in Kazakhstan. Our involvement in the 'Centres of Excellence' project – in collaboration with colleagues at the Faculty of Education of the University – builds on the progress we made in 2011 and includes support in such areas as curriculum development, teacher professional development and assessment design.

The findings of the European Survey on Language Competences, which was conducted by an international consortium led by Cambridge ESOL, was published by the European Commission. The largest ever survey of its kind, it involved nearly 54,000 secondary school pupils in 14 countries taking specially developed language tests. The results, which were widely reported across Europe and beyond, found large differences in the levels achieved in the participating countries, and highlighted factors which could help to deliver more effective teaching and learning.

Strengthening our joint language assessment venture between Cambridge ESOL and the University of Michigan English Language Institute Testing and Certification Division, we appointed a Chief Executive Officer of Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments. The primary focus of Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments, launched in 2010, is to promote the Michigan English Language exams around the world.

ADMISSIONS

To help Italy's universities benefit from the growing internationalisation of the higher education sector we signed an agreement with the Italian Ministry of Education to provide admissions tests for Italian and overseas students planning to study for Italian degrees. The admissions tests will be available for a range of subjects including Medicine, Engineering, Architecture, Economics, Basic Science, Humanities.

TEACHER SUPPORT

In England the exams regulator revised face-to-face teacher training guidelines after newspaper allegations that examiners were tipping off teachers about the questions their pupils should expect. The disappearance of the traditional Inset model brings the opportunity for alternatives, such as well-designed online modules, interactive forums and set-piece webinars. By re-channelling the considerable resources previously spent on developing and running face-to-face events we can reach a much wider audience, particularly at a time when schools increasingly struggle to release teachers for a whole day including travel. We can also expand our provision of wider, subject-based events designed to engage and inspire teachers. Such events still provide teachers with the opportunity to get out and network with their peers whilst at the same time recharging their enthusiasm for their subject.

In calling for tighter controls over text books and other support materials, the House of Commons Select Committee's report into the administration of examinations for 15–19 year olds in England was particularly critical of exclusive agreements between publishers and awarding bodies – something we have always scrupulously avoided. But the report was also concerned about the practice of endorsing text books in general. Whatever happens with text books in the UK, it will be our concern to find a way of making sure that all qualifications come with the requisite levels of support for learners and teachers. International evidence shows that high quality textbooks improve the performance of an education system – but only if the right relationship between textbooks and learning can be secured.

In the UK we also secured a dedicated OCR section within the TES Online's wider resources coverage



Students at a Cambridge International Examinations event exploring the transition from post-16 study to university.

within which to publish, showcase and map our own resources to OCR specifications. There is also potential to incorporate teachers' own resources into our section if they relate to our specifications. Initially we will go live with English in autumn 2012. A number of other subjects will follow, using the English landing page as a template. This is yet another example of aligning our free resources across multiple channels.

We launched Cambridge English Teacher, an innovative online community which provides resources, training and discussion forums for English Language teachers, in collaboration with Cambridge University Press. As part of our initiative to raise teaching standards worldwide, we offered English Language teachers a free online language awareness course. Cambridge English Teacher is already proving popular with English Language teachers around the world and has received over 2,000 registrations since its launch earlier in March 2012. The project is building an online community that encourages teachers to share ideas and approaches on a global scale as part of their on-going career development.

APPRENTICESHIPS

We hosted a free Apprenticeship event for employers in collaboration with Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, Birmingham Metropolitan College and the National Apprenticeships Service. Nearly 100 people from businesses across the West Midlands attended to find

out more about Apprenticeships, the benefits they can bring to their organisation and how we have developed bespoke programmes for businesses such as IBM, the BBC and PwC. With regards to the latter, PwC were successful in bidding for funding from the BIS Higher Apprenticeship Fund to develop a Level 4 framework in Professional Services. The framework has three distinct pathways: Management Consulting; Tax; and Audit. OCR supported PwC through the accreditation of a series of qualifications that sit within the framework and the first Level 4 apprentices in Professional Services will begin in September 2012.

IN BRIEF INNOVATION

- ◆ We extended our suite of language qualifications with the launch of Cambridge IGCSE Italian Foreign Language; Cambridge IGCSE Chinese as a Second Language; and Cambridge IGCSE Urdu as a Second Language.
- ◆ We developed Cambridge Nationals to replace the popular OCR Nationals for 14–16 year olds and Cambridge Technicals for students aged 16 plus in response to a Government commissioned review of vocational qualifications.
- ◆ Take-up of Cambridge Pre-U is nearing equal numbers of state and private schools in the UK.
- ◆ We grew our presence in Asia Pacific.
- ◆ The findings of the European Survey on Language Competences, which was conducted by an international consortium led by Cambridge ESOL, was published by the European Commission.

TO CONTINUE TO EXPAND THE ORGANISATION BY PROVIDING AND INVESTING IN A BROAD, ATTRACTIVE AND INNOVATIVE PORTFOLIO OF ASSESSMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS, AND RELATED SERVICES

★ WE CONSTANTLY SEEK OUT NEW WAYS TO ENHANCE EDUCATION



TO MAINTAIN EFFICIENT AND ECONOMIC PROCESSES TO SUPPORT WORLD-WIDE DELIVERY OF EXAMINATIONS AND MAXIMISE ACCESSIBILITY

We are working with IT company Cognizant to provide a range of application services to help the organisation improve the management and processing of exams. The current technology portfolio is a diverse mix of over 115 applications using legacy, web-based and proprietary technologies and database applications as well as third-party packages. Cognizant will streamline the applications and business processes to ensure the successful management of exam processing and a move towards more cost-effective and easy-to-use technologies. It will also help the Group by improving the current support function to enable and monitor capabilities, improve usability and governance of in-house applications and support the business during seasonal workload increases at exam times.

As a Group we continued to manage complexities in challenging markets with the use of time zoned examinations to maximise security for our customers. The introduction of time zoned question papers in 2010 enabled us to enhance question paper security for our customers. With the number of schools in the Americas growing another zone has been introduced. This final piece of the time zone jigsaw will ensure the 414 schools in zone 1 have more logical Key Times (when learners must be under Full Centre Supervision), and it will also further improve the security of question papers. Every country has been allocated to one of six administrative zones. Every country has an identified Key Time that needs to be observed when timetabling exams.

Our Admissions Tests and Special Testing team is expanding its role, and will include the University Language Testing service in collaboration with Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments.

We successfully completed the relocation of OCR's Logistics Service to DC10 and closed the Windsor Street, Birmingham site. The introduction of an additional nine million question papers and 18 million non-confidential items for despatch was successfully planned and managed, all delivered with the support of the staff in Birmingham. This also coincided with a change in process which introduced the scanning of scripts where schools and colleges had requested them.

The Vice Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, and Group Chief Executive, Simon Lebus, declared the 72 Hills Road



We pride ourselves on designing world class processes and systems to ensure we deliver the right assessments to the right candidate on time.



Mark Dawe, Chief Executive of OCR, at the launch of Cambridge Nationals, which were created in partnership and consultation with students, teachers, education specialists and employers to ensure that they prepare students for future study and the workplace.

office open at the end of October 2011. With 72 Hills Road completed and the refurbishment of 9 Hills Road well underway, the next Group project is to convert the warehouse and improve facilities in Coventry.

We created Cambridge Assessment Singapore which, in partnership with Cambridge International Examinations, opened an office in Singapore to act as regional base for Asia Pacific. The new office will help increase our presence in the region – a strategically important area for the Group where 30 per cent of the world’s population live and approximately 22 per cent of people are under 18 years old.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND BURSARIES

As part of our commitment to widen access to education, we launched a Cambridge International Examinations bursary fund for Cambridge teachers

applying to study a new Master’s degree in Advanced Subject Teaching at the University of Cambridge’s Institute of Continuing Education. The bursaries, accessible to teachers both in the UK and worldwide, are offered as part of our commitment to support teachers. Available to teachers who teach Cambridge programmes and qualifications, one bursary is available for English teachers and the other for History teachers. The Master’s degree in Advanced Subject Teaching has been designed to help English and History teachers develop their subject knowledge and enhance their professional and academic standing.

The first ever Cambridge Assessment scholars completed their studies. The scholarship programme, launched in 2009, funds postgraduate students from outside the UK to pursue MPhil degree courses in Education, English Language or Applied Linguistics at the University of Cambridge. The 13 scholars came from China, Hong Kong, India, Montenegro, Malaysia, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Uganda and the USA.

The scholarships are run by the Cambridge Commonwealth and Overseas Trusts. Our international exam board also continued to work with the Trusts to offer undergraduate scholarships for students in India and Pakistan. The scholarships provide financial assistance to exceptional students to encourage attendance at the University of Cambridge, thereby helping us to extend the benefits of a University of Cambridge education.

In the UK eight of the West Midlands' brightest students who took up their places at Cambridge University in 2011, received bursaries from OCR towards their tuition fees. Each of the students received a bursary of £3,375 which means their individual tuition fees will be paid for the lifetime of their undergraduate studies. The award fund, arising from OCR's historical association with the West Midlands Exam Board, helps talented students in the region to make the most of their studies.



IN BRIEF EFFICIENCY

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- ◆ We created Cambridge Assessment Singapore which, in partnership with Cambridge International Examinations, opened an office in Singapore to act as regional base for Asia Pacific.
- ◆ We launched a Cambridge International Examinations bursary fund for Cambridge teachers applying to study a new Master's degree in Advanced Subject Teaching at the University of Cambridge's Institute of Continuing Education.
- ◆ We are streamlining our applications and business processes to ensure the successful management of exam processing and a move towards more cost-effective and easy-to-use technologies.
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TO MAINTAIN EFFICIENT AND ECONOMIC PROCESSES TO SUPPORT WORLD-WIDE DELIVERY OF EXAMINATIONS AND MAXIMISE ACCESSIBILITY

★ WE ARE FORWARD THINKING ABOUT LEARNING AND ASSESSMENTS



TO PURSUE INTERNAL SYNERGIES TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIES OF SCALE AND MAXIMISE EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

Our strategic change programme, Project Threshold, continues to make significant progress towards delivering business transformation through the replacement of legacy technology and processes, enabling sustained, future growth and success for the Group.

Throughout the year, Project Threshold has been meeting the challenge of designing and delivering the foundation systems which will form the bedrock for the Group's new, future integrated administration processes.

Collaboration is a major theme of the project as it continues to require a great deal of input and assistance from staff across the Group.

By the end of 2012, Project Threshold will deliver the foundation phase of our four year change programme. This key delivery milestone encompasses: refreshing our finance and procurement processes, installation of storage servers to modernise how we store our information and start the rejuvenation of all main external customer-facing websites.

Staff training remains a key focus for Project Threshold. As the completion of the first phase draws closer, an intensive period of e-learning and classroom-based training will give staff the skills they need to embrace the changes we are driving forward.

PROJECTS

Our exam boards continue to work collaboratively. Cambridge International Examinations and Cambridge ESOL have been working closely on education reform projects to deliver clients' requirement for English as a Second Language.

OCR and Cambridge International Examinations continue to promote Cambridge IGCSE to UK schools as an integrated GCSE/IGCSE package.

OCR and Cambridge International Examinations sponsored the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge, an

international competition developed by tutors at the University to get students thinking about Science in the way they will at university.

ENVIRONMENTAL

Following the introduction of Dry Mixed Recycling and a rationalisation of our waste management contractors, over 94 per cent of our waste is now recycled – up from 92 per cent in 2010–11. This brings us even closer to achieving our target of zero waste going to landfill by 2015.

PROPERTY

The review and consolidation of our warehouse activities into a single 'hub' at DC10 were completed which meant the closure of our warehousing facilities in Birmingham. Work enhancing the layout of DC10 to optimise space utilisation, workflow and automation to accommodate the transfer of operations has also enabled us to plan for future projected business growth.

The optimisation project has also delivered security improvements and allowed us to create new working areas for OCR and Cambridge International Examinations Art marking.

IN BRIEF SYNERGY

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- ◆ Our exam boards continue to work collaboratively on education reform.
- ◆ The review and consolidation of our warehouse activities into a single 'hub' at DC10 were completed.

TO PURSUE INTERNAL SYNERGIES TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIES OF SCALE AND MAXIMISE EDUCATIONAL IMPACT



★ WE HAVE SYSTEMS IN PLACE TO ENSURE WE CONTINUALLY IMPROVE

TO ENSURE THAT STAFF HAVE THE RIGHT SKILLS TO IMPLEMENT AND PROVIDE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

We are committed to providing opportunities for learning, development and training to help everyone, both externally and internally, maximise their potential. Our training and development plans are crucial to our ability to respond to the evolving education environment and our role within it.

We encourage a culture of continuous professional development, providing job-specific development opportunities for employees (training, mentoring, secondments and work attachments) to achieve effective performance, and in particular, seek to develop and share our management skills.

This year's learning and development has been very much about looking to the future. We have delivered a number of events under the 'Fit for the Future' banner targeting middle to upper managers that cover topics such as commercial awareness from a financial perspective and exploring business risk.

We have also invested in our future managers with an Aspiring Managers programme designed to supply them with an insight into what being a manager means and some opportunity to learn and practise line management skills.

We have added new training courses to our core offering, including one designed for people who spend 25 per cent or more of their working day reading, checking and transferring data. It has already proved popular in Cambridge and we anticipate a similar reception in Coventry.

As well as classroom-based events, in utilising modern technologies and a more blended approach to learning, Microsoft E-Learning was deployed and continues to be utilised by staff.

The Microsoft Home Use Program was also rolled-out, providing the latest technology to staff at home as well as within the Group, developing their skills further.

Training facilities in Coventry were successfully relocated, where we took the opportunity to upgrade equipment ensuring services remain fit for purpose.

Staff continue to make the most of the training and development opportunities on offer with well over 2,000 people having attended soft skills courses this year. The most popular courses were Time Management and Prioritisation, Influencing Skills, Active Listening and Problem Solving and Decision Making.

A new online HR system was rolled out across the Group to make it easier for staff to access their personal information, including their employment history, benefits details and absence records, meaning far less paperwork and faster updates. Managers will benefit from having immediate access to management information, with the ability to delegate responsibility for absence management and holiday requests to another manager during periods when they know they will not be available to action them.

We also continue to encourage staff to attend Cambridge Assessment Network events, complete the Certificate in the Principles and Practice of Assessment, and remain open to new ideas and fresh approaches.

IN BRIEF OPPORTUNITY

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- ◆ This year's learning and development has been very much about looking to the future.
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TO ENSURE THAT STAFF HAVE THE RIGHT SKILLS TO IMPLEMENT AND PROVIDE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Putting learning at the heart of assessment

CAMBRIDGE ASSESSMENT

The Cambridge Assessment Group influences thinking around the world on the development of assessment and delivers excellence through its three exam boards.

For more information about our three exam boards, visit:

www.ocr.org.uk

www.cie.org.uk

www.cambridgeesol.org

To find out more about Cambridge Assessment, please visit:

www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk

You can keep up to date with our activities by subscribing to *View* – our e-newsletter designed to inform education debates.

Email expertview@cambridgeassessment.org.uk to join our mailing list.

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