

Cambridge Pre-U Syllabus

Cambridge International Level 3
Pre-U Certificate in
MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES
SHORT COURSES

Cambridge
Pre-U

For examination in 2013, 2014 and 2015



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE
International Examinations

Modern Foreign Languages (1342–1346)

**Cambridge International Level 3
Pre-U Certificate in Modern Foreign Languages
(Short Course)**

For examination in 2013, 2014 and 2015

**French: QN 500/3730/4
German: QN 500/3727/4
Spanish: QN 500/3726/2
Russian: QN 500/3728/6
Italian: QN 500/3729/8**

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 valid for examination in 2013, 2014 and 2015.

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**Modern Foreign Languages
(Short Courses)****1342 French****1343 German****1344 Spanish****1345 Russian****1346 Italian****Contents**

	Page
Introduction	4
Suggested sources of authentic material	5
Aims	6
Scheme of assessment	7
Assessment objectives	7
Relationship between scheme of assessment and assessment objectives	8
Description of components	9
Topic areas	10
Appendix 1: Grammar syllabus	12
Appendix 2: Grade descriptors	16
Appendix 3: Additional information	17

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 Principal Subject 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 a modern foreign language is separate from, and cannot contribute towards, a Principal result.

This syllabus seeks to bring the teaching and learning of modern languages into close contact with the target language culture and, above all, with authentic language. By giving a solid context both linguistically and culturally within which the candidates can develop their linguistic skills and awareness, the Cambridge Pre-U strives to move away from the emphasis on classroom language towards an immersion in authentic language and culture.

In modern foreign languages, the advent of the internet enables the teacher and candidate to have access to a range of authentic press, television, radio and information that was previously unimaginable. Cambridge Pre-U encourages candidates to learn in context through a personal engagement with the culture by means of the new media available. Candidates and teachers are encouraged to build up a portfolio of authentic articles and thus sharpen the focus of learning through current affairs, in their widest sense. Teaching becomes more flexible, to be driven by both candidate and teacher interests and considerations. The sources for reading, listening and oral work are necessarily authentic and hence the Cambridge Pre-U seeks to move the classroom into contact with the culture of the target language in a concrete way. The ensuing written tasks will therefore spring from a meaningful and engaging contextual knowledge. In order

to facilitate the learning process, a number of topic areas have been identified, and all textual and listening material used in the examination will be drawn from them.

This syllabus equips candidates with a range of skills for careers in business, education and the arts.

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

Suggested sources of authentic material

French

Candidates are encouraged to learn vocabulary in context by engaging personally and building up a portfolio of authentic articles on current affairs falling under general newspaper sections such as: A la une, Monde, Eco, Sciences, Société, Culture, Sports, Insolite and Médias. These articles can be obtained from a variety of free online sources, for example, <http://fr.news.yahoo.com>. A more youth-oriented perspective is available via *Les Clés de l'Actualité* or the BBC language site "*Accents d'Europe*". In addition, there are many websites, such as <http://curiosphere.tv>, offering an extensive range of French-language links. An online French magazine at school might also prove to be a good forum to encourage discussion of Francophone issues among candidates.

German

Candidates are encouraged to learn vocabulary in context by engaging personally and building up a portfolio of authentic articles on current affairs falling under general newspaper sections such as Nachrichten, Politik, Panorama, Wirtschaft, Kultur, Wissen, Unterhaltung, Gesellschaft, Feuilleton, Sport. These articles can be obtained from a variety of free online sources. A broad base can be found on <http://de.news.yahoo.com> whilst a more youth-oriented perspective is available via the Federal Republic's website www.fluter.de. To aid teachers there is also <http://german.about.com>, a site which provides supporting vocabulary material as well as resources in other media. In addition there are many websites, such as www.zeitungen.de, offering links to an extensive range of German-language newspapers and other media. An online German magazine at school might also prove to be a good forum for the encouragement of discussion of German-related issues among candidates.

Spanish

Candidates are encouraged to engage personally in their learning and build up a portfolio of authentic articles, which can be obtained from a variety of free online sources. In this context, the Centro Virtual Cervantes (cvc.cervantes.es/oteador) might be useful as it offers links to a number of Spanish-language newspapers, radio and television stations throughout the world. An online Spanish magazine at school might also prove to be a good forum to promote discussion of Hispanic issues among candidates.

Russian

Candidates are encouraged to engage personally in their learning and build up a portfolio of authentic articles, which can be obtained from a variety of free online sources. In this context, the Rambler website (www.rambler.ru) might be useful, as it offers links to a number of Russian-language newspapers, journals, radio and television stations throughout the world. An online Russian magazine at school might also prove to be a good forum to promote discussion of Russian issues among candidates.

Italian

Candidates are encouraged to engage personally in their learning and build up a portfolio of authentic articles, which can be obtained from a variety of free online sources (e.g. www.media.rai.it), newspapers (e.g. *la Repubblica* and *Il Corriere della Sera*) and current affairs magazines (e.g. *L'Espresso* and *Panorama*). An online Italian magazine at school might also prove to be a good forum to promote the discussion of Italian issues among candidates.

Aims

- To develop the ability to understand the language in a variety of registers.
- To enable the candidate to communicate confidently and clearly in the target language.
- 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 the language is spoken.
- To encourage positive attitudes to language learning and a sympathetic approach to other cultures.
- To further intellectual and personal development by promoting learning and social skills.

Scheme of assessment

The Short Course is a stand-alone qualification to be taken after one year of post-GCSE study, and it is intended for those candidates who may not wish to complete the two-year Pre-U programme. Candidates take both components together at the end of the course in the same examination session. The emphasis will be on effective communication, grammatical accuracy and basic awareness of societies where the target language is spoken.

In order to facilitate the learning process, a number of topic areas have been identified, and all textual and listening material in the examination will be drawn from them. There is also a core grammar syllabus, but this will not be formally tested.

Component	Component name	Duration	Weighting (%)	Type of assessment
1	Speaking	8–10 minutes	25	Externally assessed oral
2	Listening, Reading, and Writing	2 hours 15 minutes	75	Externally set and marked written paper

Assessment objectives

A01	Understand and respond to texts written in the target language, drawn from a variety of sources, such as magazines, newspapers, reports, books and other forms of extended written and spoken material.
A02	Manipulate the target language accurately in spoken and written forms to demonstrate an ability to choose appropriate examples of lexis and structure.
A03	Select and present information, organising arguments and ideas logically.
A04	Understand and respond to cultural topics.

Relationship between scheme of assessment and assessment objectives

The table below shows the approximate weighting given to each assessment objective.

Assessment objective	Component 1 (marks)	Component 2 (marks)			Weighting (%)
		Part I	Part II	Part III	
AO1		30	30	5	54
AO2	16			15	26
AO3	7			10	14
AO4	7				6
TOTAL	30	30	30	30	120 / 100

Description of components

Component 1: Speaking

- Prepared topic discussion (8–10 minutes). Candidates will research a topic related to the history, current affairs or culture (including art, cinema, literature and traditions) of an area of the world where the target language is spoken. They will identify five to eight headings within their topic, and submit these to CIE two weeks before the oral examination on a form provided. In the examination, candidates will be allowed to present their research for up to one minute (identifying interesting/contentious points in their topic, and reasons for choosing it) before discussion of the headings starts. Candidates can bring the headings into the examination to act as a prompt. They may also bring up to three pieces of visual material. Mark grids will assess knowledge as well as linguistic competence.

Component 2: Listening, Reading and Writing

- Listening (45 minutes). There will be several recordings with listening comprehension questions in the target language and English. Language accuracy will not be taken into account as long as it does not impede communication. Candidates will hear the recordings three times and there will be pauses between each section.
- Reading (45 minutes). There will be several passages with reading comprehension questions in the target language and English. Language accuracy will not be taken into account as long as it does not impede communication.
- Guided writing (45 minutes). This part of the examination will consist of a guided piece of writing of 220–250 words in the target language (Russian 150–180 words), based on the stimulus of a short reading passage and dealing with a contemporary topic of a general discursive nature. Language accuracy and linguistic range will be taken into account in the mark scheme.

Topic areas

All textual material used in the examination will be drawn from the topic areas below, with reference to the country or countries where the language is spoken.

- Human relationships
- Family
- Generation gap
- Young people

- The media
- Food and drink
- Law and order
- Health and fitness

- Work and leisure
- Sport
- Travel and tourism
- Education

- Technological innovation

- Environment
- Conservation
- Pollution

Teachers are free to explore the topic areas **in any way they choose**. The following examples (which are not prescriptive) may provide a useful guide to planning courses. All these **suggestions**, and other themes chosen by the teacher from within the topic areas, should be studied with reference to the country or countries where the language is spoken.

Human relationships; family; generation gap; young people

- family activities; new patterns of family relationships; the status of the elderly and responsibility for their care
- generation gap: conflicts in the family circle; young people and the older generation; attitudes of young people to the family environment
- young people: young people and their peer group; young people as a target group for advertisers and politicians

The media; food and drink; law and order; health and fitness

- the role and influence of the media; the power of advertising
- healthy eating; fast-food; national traditions of eating and drinking
- violence and crime; drug-related crime; the role of the police; law-enforcement
- healthy living; exercise; dieting, drugs, health care provision; stress; AIDS

Work and leisure; sport; travel and tourism; education

- women in society and in the workforce; equality of opportunity for minority groups
- individual and team sports; amateur and professional sport
- value of leisure; balance between leisure and work; planning leisure time
- tourism as a modern phenomenon; friction between tourists and local inhabitants; holidays and foreign travel
- education systems and types of school; patterns of curriculum, relationship between education and training; further and higher education provision; examinations

Technological innovation

- advances in the treatment of disease; ethical issues of medical and other technologies
- modern communications systems

Environment; conservation; pollution

- the individual in his/her own surroundings; effect of environment on individuals; protest action to protect one's locality; ways of contributing to environmental awareness
- global warming; acid rain; air pollution; water pollution; noise pollution; destruction of rain forests; damage to animal world; solutions and cost implications
- saving endangered species and landscapes

Appendix 1: Grammar syllabus

[(R) = receptive]

French (Short Course)

1 Nouns

- Gender
- Singular and plural forms

2 Articles

- Definite, indefinite and partitive

3 Adjectives

- Agreement
- Position
- Comparative and superlative
- Demonstrative (*ce, cet, cette, ces*)
- Possessive
- Interrogative (*quel ? quelle ?*)

4 Adverbs

- Comparative and superlative
- Interrogative (*comment ? quand ?*)

5 Quantifiers/intensifiers (*très, assez, beaucoup*)

6 Pronouns

- Personal
- Reflexive
- Relative
- Disjunctive/emphatic
- Demonstrative (*celui, etc.*)
- Possessive (*le mien, etc.*)
- Interrogative (*qui ? que ?*)
- Use of *y, en*
- Direct and indirect object

7 Verbs

- Regular and irregular forms of verbs, including reflexive verbs
- Modes of address (*tu, vous*)
- Impersonal forms
- Verbs followed by an infinitive (with or without a preposition)
- Dependent infinitives (for example, *faire réparer*)
- Perfect infinitive
- Negative forms
- Interrogative forms
- Tenses: present, perfect (including agreement of past participle), imperfect, future, conditional, future perfect (R), conditional perfect (R), pluperfect, past historic (R), passive voice: present tense, other tenses (R)
- Imperative
- Present participle
- Subjunctive mood: present, perfect

8 Indirect speech

- 9 **Inversion after speech**
- 10 **Prepositions**
- 11 **Conjunctions**
- 12 **Number, quantity and time** (including use of *depuis*, *venir de*)

German (Short Course)

- 1 **Verbs**
 - Weak, strong, mixed and irregular verb forms
 - Tenses: present, perfect, perfect (modal verbs), imperfect, future, conditional, future perfect (R), conditional perfect (R), pluperfect.
 - Imperative
 - Reflexive usages
 - Impersonal
 - Separable/inseparable
 - Basic modals
 - Passive voice (with a direct object) [indirect object R]
 - Subjunctive in conditional clauses (imperfect), indirect speech, other constructions (R)
 - Infinitive constructions
- 2 **Nouns**
 - All genders, singular and plural
- 3 **Articles**
- 4 **Adjectives**
- 5 **Adverbs**
- 6 **Qualifiers**
- 7 **Determiners**
- 8 **Pronouns**
 - personal, reflexive, relative, indefinite, possessive, interrogative
- 9 **Prepositions**
- 10 **Cases**
- 11 **Word order**
- 12 **Clause structures and verb position**
- 13 **Conjunctions**
- 14 **Subordinating conjunctions**
- 15 **Numbers**

Spanish (Short Course)

- 1 **Verbs** (forms and use)
 - *Ser* and *estar*
 - Negatives
 - Indicative: present, imperfect, preterite, future, perfect, pluperfect, future perfect
 - Conditional, conditional perfect
 - Imperative
 - Past participle and gerund
 - Use of the infinitive
 - Subjunctive: present, imperfect, perfect, pluperfect
 - Passive sentences and structures with *se*

- 2 **Nouns** (gender, singular and plural forms)
- 3 **Articles** (definite, indefinite)
- 4 **Adjectives** (agreement, position, comparative and superlative)
- 5 **Demonstratives**
- 6 **Possessives**
- 7 **Indefinite adjectives and pronouns** (*algo, alguien, demasiado, cada, ninguno...*)
- 8 **Numbers**
- 9 **Personal pronouns**
- 10 **Reflexive pronouns**
- 11 **Question words**
- 12 **Adverbs**
- 13 **Prepositions**
- 14 **Time phrases** (*hace un año que vivo aquí, llevo una hora esperando, estudio español desde octubre*)
- 15 **Basic conjunctions requiring the indicative or the subjunctive**

Russian (Short Course)

- 1 **Nouns**
 - all genders, cases, singular and plural
 - animate/inanimate
- 2 **Adjectives**
 - long forms, all genders, cases, singular and plural
 - short forms (R)
 - common comparatives
 - common superlatives
- 3 **Adverbs**
 - all common forms
 - comparatives (R)
- 4 **Personal pronouns**
 - all cases, singular and plural
- 5 **Demonstratives**
- 6 **Relatives**
- 7 **Interrogatives**
- 8 **Possessives**
- 9 **Determinatives**
- 10 **Verbs**
 - tenses
 - aspects
 - imperatives (R)
 - conditional
 - subjunctive (R)
 - reflexives
 - passives
 - participles (R)
 - gerunds (R)
 - common verbs of motion
 - indirect statement

- 11 Conjunctions**
- common simple
 - compound (R)
- 12 Impersonal constructions**
- all tenses (R)
- 13 Prepositions**
- 14 Numerals**
- cardinals – all cases (R)
 - ordinals – all cases (R)
- 15 Particles**
- -то (R)
 - -нибудь (R)
- 16 Times and dates**
- 17 Negation**
- simple
 - common pronouns

Italian (Short Course)

- 1 Verbs** (forms and use)
- Indicative: present, *passato prossimo*, imperfect, future, conditional, pluperfect, future perfect, conditional perfect
 - Reflexives
 - Imperatives
 - Passives
 - Gerunds, *stare* + gerund
 - Subjunctive: present, past, perfect, pluperfect
 - Modals
 - Impersonal verbs
 - Use of the infinitive
 - Verbs followed by *di* or *a*
 - Hypothetical clauses
- 2 Articles** (definite and indefinite)
- 3 Nouns** (gender, rules of agreement)
- 4 Adjectives** (gender, rules of agreement)
- 5 Plurals** (including irregulars)
- 6 Prepositions** (of place and of time), *preposizioni articolate*
- 7 Demonstrative adjectives, demonstrative pronouns**
- 8 Possessive adjectives**
- 9 Question words**
- 10 Adverbs**
- 11 Personal pronouns** (conjunctive, disjunctive, *combinati*)
- 12 *ci* and *ne***
- 13 Relative pronouns**
- 14 Conjunctions** (coordinate and subordinate)
- 15 Indefinite adjectives and pronouns**
- 16 Comparatives and superlatives**

Appendix 2: Grade descriptors

The following grade descriptors indicate the level of attainment characteristic of the middle of the given grade band in Modern Foreign Languages 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 performance in others.

Distinction (D2)

Very good level of understanding expressed in well organised 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 3: 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

These qualifications are shown on a certificate as:

- Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate in **French (Short Course)**
- Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate in **German (Short Course)**
- Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate in **Spanish (Short Course)**
- Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate in **Russian (Short Course)**
- Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate in **Italian (Short Course)**

The qualifications are accredited at Level 3 of the UK National Qualifications Framework and provide a solid grounding for candidates to pursue a variety of progression pathways.

Entries

For entry information please refer to the *UK 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 each language is as follows: **5650 (French); 5670 (German); 5750 (Spanish); 6090 (Russian) and 5690 (Italian)**.

Language

This syllabus and the associated assessment materials are currently available 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 UK 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 Component 1.

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 Component 1 allows candidates to gain specific insights into the societies, both in Europe and in the rest of the world, where the language is spoken.

The European dimension is clearly covered in every aspect of the syllabus through the study of French, German, Spanish, Russian or Italian in the European context. Emphasis is also placed, where appropriate, on studying the international context of the language.

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 QCDA Key Skills website (www.qcda.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, 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.

Component	Communication	Application of Number	IT	Working with others	Learning and Performance	Problem Solving
1	✓		✓		✓	
2 Part I	✓		✓		✓	
2 Part II	✓		✓		✓	
2 Part III	✓		✓		✓	✓

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