Edexcel International GCSE quick guide

How the 9–1 grades and exam series work, the subject codes, how Edexcel compares with Cambridge, and a 12-week revision plan.

The basics

Grades	9 (highest) to 1. Pearson aligns the scale with GCSEs in England.
Exam series	May/June and November. The November series replaced January from 2023. All International GCSEs are offered in May/June.
Tiers	Some subjects, such as Mathematics A, have Foundation and Higher tiers. Your school chooses the tier.
Your specification	Always revise from the specification and past papers for your exact code.

Subject codes

Mathematics	Mathematics A 4MA1 · Mathematics B 4MB1 · Further Pure Mathematics 4PM1
Sciences	Biology 4BI1 · Chemistry 4CH1 · Physics 4PH1
English	English Language A 4EA1 · English Literature 4ET1
Humanities and business	Economics 4EC1 · Business 4BS1 · Accounting 4AC1 · Geography 4GE1 · History 4HI1
Computing	Computer Science 4CP0

Cambridge IGCSE or Edexcel International GCSE?

Grades	Cambridge: A*–G for most syllabuses (some 9–1 versions) · Edexcel: 9–1
Exam series	Cambridge: June and November, plus March in India for many subjects · Edexcel: May/June and November
Codes	Cambridge: four digits, e.g. Mathematics 0580 · Edexcel: e.g. Mathematics A 4MA1
Content	Overlaps a lot, but papers and mark schemes differ: follow your own board

Facts from Pearson's International GCSE pages · check your exact specification for paper details

A 12-week revision plan

Weeks 1–4	List every topic from your specification. Mark each red, amber or green. Fix the red topics first, one a day.
Weeks 5–8	Topic questions from past papers. Mark them with the mark scheme and write down every lost mark.
Weeks 9–11	Full timed papers, two or three a week. Review mistakes the same day.
Week 12	Light review of formulas, definitions and your mistake list. Sleep well.

Command words

State / give	A short answer, no explanation needed
Describe	Say what happens or what something is like
Explain	Give reasons: “because…”, “so…”
Calculate / show that	Show full working, with units
Evaluate / discuss	Both sides, then a judgement

Maths and science must-knows

Maths	$(x + a)(x + b) = x^2 + (a + b)x + ab$ · Pythagoras $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ · area of a circle πr^2 · compound interest $P(1 + r)^n$
Physics	$F = ma$ · $V = IR$ · $v = f\lambda$ · speed = distance ÷ time
Chemistry	pH 7 neutral · metal + acid → salt + hydrogen · relative formula mass: add the relative atomic masses
Biology	Photosynthesis in chloroplasts · aerobic respiration: glucose + oxygen → carbon dioxide + water

Self-test (answers at the bottom)

1. What is the highest Edexcel International GCSE grade?
2. Which two exam series does Pearson run?
3. What is the code for Further Pure Mathematics?
4. Solve $x^2 - 7x + 12 = 0$.
5. A 2 kg mass accelerates at 3 m/s². What is the force?
6. What does “evaluate” ask you to do?

Answers: 1. 9. 2. May/June and November. 3. 4PM1. 4. x = 3 or x = 4. 5. 6 N. 6. Give both sides, then a judgement.