



**BRITISH  
INTERNATIONAL  
DISTANCE  
COLLEGE**

*Est. 2001*

# GENERAL INFORMATION BOOKLET

*AFFORDABLE DISTANCE EDUCATION  
THAT WORKS!*



- ✓ *Integrity*
- ✓ *Service*
- ✓ *Opportunity*
- ✓ *Excellence*



**Cambridge Assessment  
International Education**

Cambridge Associate





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## **DISTANCE EDUCATION THAT WORKS**

Welcome to British International Distance College (BIDC). We are proud to have been selected by the University of Cambridge to offer this unique opportunity to provide you with up to date, quality distance learning education of the highest international standards.

On completion of your selected course, you will have a University of Cambridge International Examinations qualification. BIDC students write examinations set and marked by the University of Cambridge International Examinations board in the U.K. and have ongoing support throughout the year from the Cambridge trained, highly experienced and successful British International College Tutors in Johannesburg.

BIDC students use a hybrid approach to education using both paper-based guidance and assignments, and digital resources available through our Online Student Services (OSS) to complete our courses. Not only do our courses offer the cognitive rich paper-based Work Programme and technology embracing resources, students have access to Tutors through both synchronous and asynchronous interactions. We offer Midterm Seminars, an online group experience for students within the same course, as well as Exam Preparation Workshops with subject specialists, and academic consultation with BIDC staff.

## **PREMIUM COURSES**

Our BIDC courses are developed on the foundation of the Cambridge syllabuses by subject specialists to ensure our students have access to the best in distance education. With a 30-week timeline, our courses cover sections of the syllabus to ensure that there is enough time to complete the content before final assessments. Our courses are designed to be age appropriate, but supports the uniqueness of our students. The autonomy remains with students with no fixed due dates for assignments during the academic year. This means that students can work as fast or as slow as they want. And you can also register for courses whenever you want!

## **DISTANCE EDUCATION AND UNIVERSITY/WORKPLACE-READY STUDENTS**

Distance education is the term given to the provision of education to students usually via correspondence or some other means of distance communication. With the recent rapid developments in technology and communication, distance education is now, more than ever, a completely viable and realistic alternative to conventional full time study, although research indicates that pure online study is not as effective as “blended” or mixed online/paper based learning. BIDC students are recognised by Cambridge as distance learners rather than home schoolers.

Distance learning develops some amazing personal and academic skills leading to a well-rounded university and workplace-ready student. The skillset includes self-discipline, autonomy, organisation and planning, time management, research skills, reading comprehension, computer skills, critical thinking and problem solving, and much more.

## WHY BRITISH INTERNATIONAL DISTANCE COLLEGE?

- The British International Distance College has been providing distance tuition in Cambridge qualifications since 2001.
- We are a fully approved Cambridge Associate in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Our students have produced spectacular results year after year.
- As a Cambridge Exam Centre, we offer the Cambridge Exams at our venues countrywide in the May/June and October/November exam series.
- We offer courses and run all local and Cambridge International Examinations including subjects with practical, oral or coursework components, such as **Chemistry, Physics and Biology; Art and Design, French and Computer Science.**
- We have tutoring staff on hand for queries, some of the most highly qualified and experienced in the country.
- Our courses are designed to include a weekly guide through the syllabus (Work Programme) with prescribed coursebooks, and are supported with Assignments and feedback; online support from reputable syllabus-aligned sources; online Seminars with Cambridge-trained Tutors; Exam Preparation Programmes for both theory and practical course components, and Distance College Exams (up to IGCSE 01 (Core)).
- Students are assigned a dedicated Student Advisor to assist with all queries, from administration to academic consultation.

This becomes clear why the British International Distance College is the premier institution for secondary distance education in South Africa.

BIDC offers a complete science journey from Foundation to AS Level. Our students will have the choice of our premium science courses, which exposes them to all branches of science at all levels. This means that our students can complete all school sciences at BIDC with four Cambridge qualifications\*.

Foundation	IGCSE 01 (Core)	IGCSE 02 (Extended)	AS Level
Checkpoint Combined Science	IGCSE Combined Science	IGCSE Coordinated Science (Double Award)	Biology Chemistry Physics

### Student recognition

At BIDC, distance learners are recognised for their progress and diligence. These awards are given to students based on set criteria:

- ✓ Progress Award: This is awarded to students who have submitted all six BIDC Assignments for a course in their registered academic year.
- ✓ Diligence Award: This is awarded to students who have attended all Midterm Seminars for a course in their registered academic year.

\* Dependent on course registration and Cambridge Exam entry.

## HOW OUR DISTANCE COURSES WORK

### ONLINE REGISTRATIONS

It's as easy as 1-2-3!

1. Register as a new student at the British International Distance College website (<https://dcreg.bi-oss.co.za/>)\*. Parent and Student Portals are also available.
2. Select the courses you would like to complete\*\*.
3. Complete your purchase.

That's it! As soon as you receive your Course Material, you can get started.

\* Existing students can add courses through the OSS Portal.

\*\* We recommend discussing your intended selection with our Student Advisors in a complementary consultation prior to registering or adding courses.

### ONLINE RESOURCES

Additional digital resources for your courses are available on our OSS Student Portal. This makes these resources easily accessible.

Registered students and their parents/guardians can use the respective OSS portals for admin processes, including tracking progress through assignment results, as well as book for Topic Tutorials and complete entries for Cambridge Exams.

The nature of our Work Programmes grants students autonomy over their studies to progress at their own pace by providing direction through the syllabus. This student-aimed document uses our carefully selected prescribed material and additional resources to create opportunities for learning.

As with any form of academic endeavour, the results one can expect are directly dependent on the degree of commitment and effort one puts in. This is especially true concerning distance education. Once our study material has been received, it is up to the student to work through the syllabus using our Work Programmes, and to submit assignments.

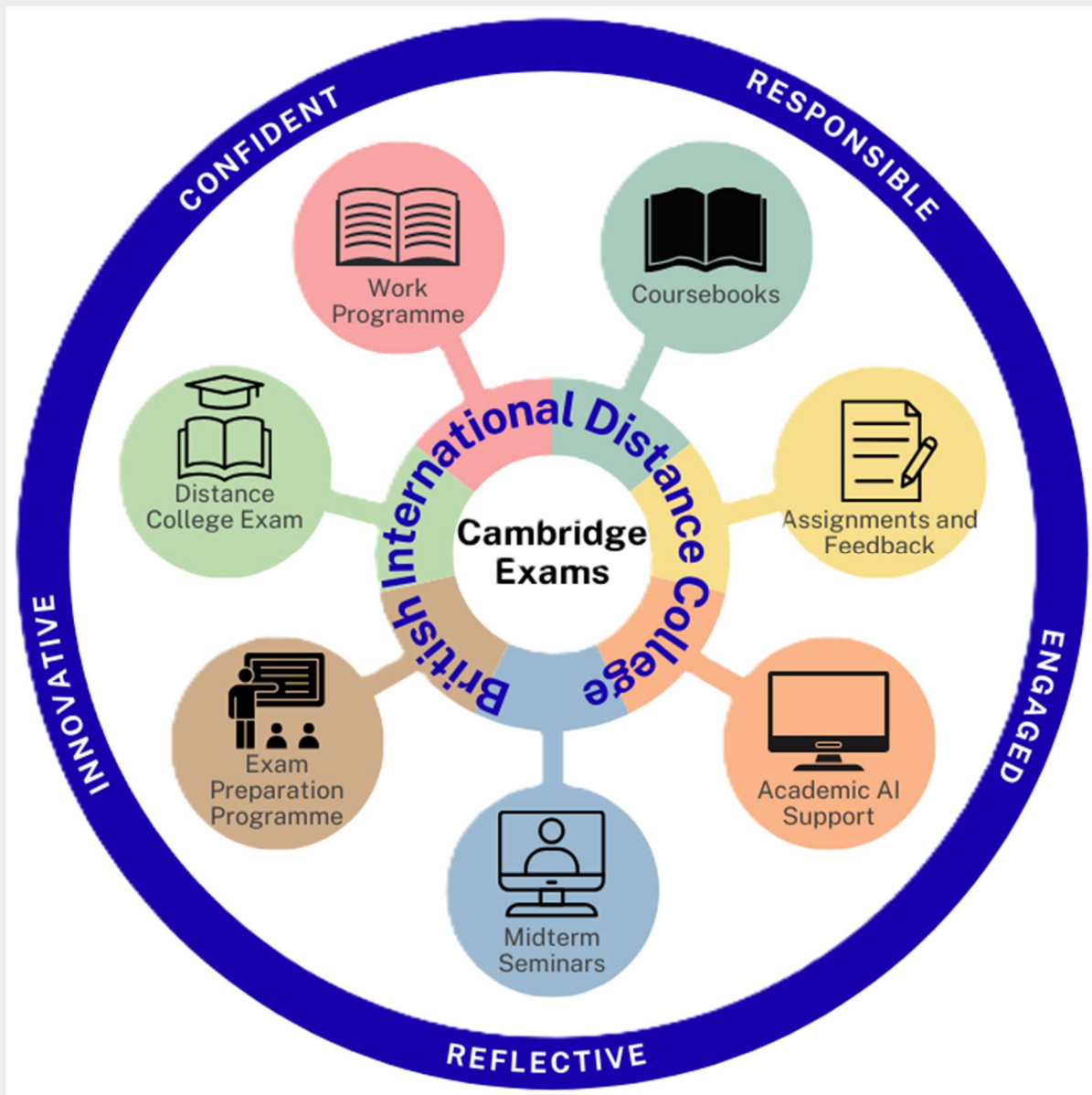
### Comprehensive academic support and feedback

Your assignments are marked by our BIDC Tutors. Submitted assignments are returned with comprehensive feedback and recommendations. You are welcome to request more specialised guidance and engage in discussions for additional support.

Students are supported throughout the academic year by their assigned Student Advisor. Any queries and questions regarding a course, management of their studies, administration, or further consultations can be raised.

In addition, BIDC offers Exam Preparation Workshops to BIDC students in their registered courses. These are held prior to the Cambridge Examinations (for both the May/June and October/November Series) and Distance College Examinations (October). These workshops are hosted at our Bryanston Campus in Johannesburg and covers exam preparation, lab work, skills application, and content explanation on areas of difficulty in the syllabus.

We also offer 1-hour Topic Tutorials at an additional fee for those especially difficult to grasp topics. These one-on-one sessions are booked through our Online Student Services (OSS) Portal, and offered through Microsoft Teams so you are supported no matter where you are.



Infographic: How BIDC Works

## CAMBRIDGE ASSOCIATE

Cambridge International Assessment Education is one of the world's leading providers of international qualifications and assessments. They have a broad range of qualifications that have been created with an international audience in mind, making them interest and relevant for 21<sup>st</sup> century students. The Cambridge qualifications are accepted and recognised across the globe. This international recognition ensures that your child is getting the best opportunities available for their future.

Recognition on this scale is not taken for granted; Cambridge operates a continuous programme to ensure qualifications are globally relevant. This is done by continuous review of their assessments and syllabuses, and the introduction of new subject areas and qualifications. By working closely with the University of Cambridge, Cambridge International Assessment Education is at the forefront of development in education. More information about Cambridge can be found at <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/>.

**BIDC is part of the British International Colleges and Schools group**



**Cambridge Assessment  
International Education**

Cambridge Associate

This means that we form part of the Colleges that fall under the banner of Cambridge Associate. As a Cambridge Associate, we aim to provide up-to-date material and support to our students to ensure that they can unlock their greatest potential.

Once a student completes their academic journey with Cambridge, they would have gained the Cambridge Student Attributes:

Confident, Responsible, Reflective, Innovative, and Engaged.

BIDC supports this journey by supporting students using our ISOE principles, and encouraging our students to practice the same:

- ✓ Integrity
- ✓ Service
- ✓ Opportunity
- ✓ Excellence





## LOWER SECONDARY STUDIES

Our Foundation courses are designed to give students a firm grounding in the concepts of Mathematics, Combined Science, and English. Cambridge Secondary Checkpoint diagnostic tests are written at the end of the Foundation (Year 9) for these courses. However, there are many additional courses offered to supplement exposure and meet education requirements.

We provide Distance College Exams for all other courses offered at BIDC. These internally set exams are aligned with the expectations of Cambridge in preparing our students for their upcoming courses, and marked internally.

Students often take many courses at this level to establish a solid foundation for future studies and help guide them in selecting their IGCSE courses.

### Educational requirements

It is important to note that all students **under the age of 15** are required to be registered as a home education learner with their **Provincial Education Department**. The onus is on the parent/guardian to register the student with their province-specific Department of Education. Information on how to register can be found at the respective websites.

***Our Student Advisors provide free guidance to our BIDC registered students in registering with the Department of Education***

### Foundation (Year 7 and Year 8) Courses

It is strongly recommended that students take all courses offered in the Foundation (Year 7) and Foundation (Year 8).

- ✓ English
- ✓ French or Afrikaans
- ✓ Mathematics
- ✓ Combined Science (Biology, Chemistry, and Physics)
- ✓ Integrated Studies (Business, Geography, History, Health Education, and Expressive Arts)



### Foundation (Year 9) Courses

Students must take all compulsory courses. It is recommended that a student chooses a minimum of 2 courses in addition to the compulsory courses

#### Compulsory courses

- ✓ English
- ✓ French or Afrikaans
- ✓ Mathematics
- ✓ Combined Science (Biology, Chemistry, and Physics)
- ✓ Personal Development Programme (PDP)

#### Additional courses

- ✓ Art and Design
- ✓ Business
- ✓ Geography
- ✓ History
- ✓ IT Skills (ICT)



## UPPER SECONDARY STUDIES

(Grades 10 and 11)

The International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) is offered in over 160 countries worldwide, both in international schools and in institutions catering for local populations. It was introduced in 1988 as a replacement for O Levels in many countries, and is internationally recognised as being equivalent to the GCSE in the United Kingdom. Grading is on an eight-point scale (A\*-G). The International GCSE has been designed to equip students with the skills needed for immediate employment. IGCSE is recognised as evidence of ability by academic institutions and employers around the world. It is a valid school leaving qualification.

IGCSE provides a broad study programme by drawing subjects from five areas: Languages, Humanities, Social Sciences, Mathematics, Creative, Technical and Vocational. Within the curriculum, there is a balanced mix of practical experience and theoretical knowledge.

Differing abilities are catered for with a choice of Core and Extended examinations in some subjects such as Maths, making IGCSE suitable for all students.

The IGCSE curriculum allows courses to be placed in a localised context, making it relevant in different regions. It is also suitable for students whose first language may not be English and this is acknowledged throughout the examination process.

In some countries, IGCSE qualifications will satisfy the entry requirements for further study at university or college. In others, they are widely used as a preparation for AS Level, A Level, International Baccalaureate and US Advanced Placement Programmes



## IGCSE 01 (CORE) COURSES

IGCSE 01 (Core) is the basic material of our course. IGCSE 02 (Extended) is more in-depth and more complex, covering additional aspects of the syllabus that IGCSE 01 (Core) does not. The IGCSE 02 (Extended) course includes aspects of the IGCSE 01 (Core) syllabus and expects students to have covered the content; the exams for IGCSE 02 (Extended) include assessments on everything covered in the entire IGCSE syllabus.

There are some IGCSE exams which offer entries to the IGCSE Core component only. It is more common for students to enter the IGCSE Extended Exam in the case where there is a choice. This is different to our BIDC Courses which are structured to cover the IGCSE syllabus over two years through our structuring of IGCSE 01 (Core) and IGCSE 02 (Extended).

Students who opt to write the Cambridge IGCSE Core Exams can achieve a maximum grade of a C. Your result does not indicate Core or Extended. However, when students write the Cambridge IGCSE Extended Exam, a maximum grade of A\* can be achieved.

### IGCSE 01 (Core)

Students are encouraged to take IGCSE 01 (Core) courses where possible as this provides additional academic support and time to complete the entire IGCSE syllabus.

#### Languages

- ✓ English
- ✓ French
- ✓ Afrikaans

#### Sciences

- ✓ Mathematics
- ✓ Biology (includes applied science)
- ✓ Combined Science (Biology, Chemistry, and Physics; includes applied science)



## IGCSE 02 (EXTENDED) COURSES

Students usually choose a minimum of 6 courses comprising of subjects from the various groups: a first language course, an additional language, and 4 others. This helps meet requirements for South African universities.

Additional courses can be taken. In these cases, it is recommended to extend these courses over two academic years.

Contact your Student Advisor for assistance when choosing these courses, and understanding the requirements for the Cambridge Exams and sitting rules.

### IGCSE 02 (Extended)

We recommend students registering for IGCSE 02 (Extended) courses take at least 6 courses. This contributes to South African education requirements set out by SAQA. Courses continued to AS Level will not contribute to these requirements at IGCSE Level.

#### Languages (English plus one other)

- ✓ English First Language
- ✓ French Foreign Language
- ✓ Afrikaans Second Language

#### Sciences

- ✓ Mathematics
- ✓ Biology (includes applied science)
- ✓ Coordinated Science (Biology, Chemistry, and Physics; includes applied science)\*

#### Humanities

- ✓ English Literature \*\*
- ✓ Geography
- ✓ History
- ✓ Sociology \*\*

#### Vocational

- ✓ Accounting
- ✓ Art and Design (practical)
- ✓ Business
- ✓ Computer Science
- ✓ Music

\* Double Award Exam

\*\* IGCSE is the highest level offered at BIDC





## ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS) LEVEL

(Grade 12)

AS Level courses are equivalent to the 12<sup>th</sup> year of South African schooling. AS Level is the first year of the qualification and may meet university entry requirements in South Africa, Australia, USA, and other countries. A passing grade ranges from a to e. South African universities require a passing grade (usually minimum c grade) in all exams in a maximum of 2 exam sittings (Exams sat over a maximum of 2 years).

Students usually choose 5 courses to complete AS Level, and should comply with the correct grouping requirements.

An extra subject is recommended if sitting the AS Level Examinations over two sittings for entrance to South African universities.

Only the AS Level (first year) component of the full A Level course is offered through distance learning due to its academic demands. Should you wish to continue with A Levels, or need help in understanding the grade requirements, you may request a complementary consultation with your Student Advisor.

### AS Level

At least one language should be completed, with the addition of at least one Science course, and two other courses.

#### Languages (at least 1)

- ✓ English
- ✓ Afrikaans

#### Sciences (at least 1)

- ✓ Mathematics
- ✓ Biology (practical)
- ✓ Chemistry (practical)
- ✓ Physics (practical)

#### Humanities

- ✓ Geography
- ✓ History

#### Vocational

- ✓ Accounting
- ✓ Art and Design (practical)
- ✓ Business
- ✓ Economics
- ✓ Music
- ✓ Psychology \*
- ✓ Thinking Skills \*

\* not a South African school subject



## EXAMINATION INFORMATION

- Foundation College exams, Cambridge International Checkpoint Assessments and Cambridge Progression tests can be written in April/May/June and October/November.
- Cambridge IGCSE and AS level examinations are written in May/June and October/November of each year.
- All Cambridge exams must be written at a Cambridge examination centre.
- AS Level students should consult a BIDC Student Advisor regarding the examination sittings rule for university admission.
- IGCSE Physical Science and all Afrikaans examinations are only offered by Cambridge in the November session.

### Examination Venues:

British International College	British International College/Pretoria
130 Bryanston Drive Bryanston Sandton Gauteng	201 East Avenue Eastcliffe Pretoria

### Alternate Venues:

If students are unable to write exams at British International College in Sandton or Pretoria, the College has arranged additional exam centres nationally, which may be closer to their home. These are at Cambridge's discretion and do involve costs for hire of a venue, courier fees, invigilation fees etc. These costs are over and above exam fees charged by Cambridge.

### Oral and Practical Examinations

We have a privilege to run all practical and oral exams including the following:

- ✓ IGCSE English 2nd Language and IGCSE French Foreign Language.  
Oral papers for these Exams must be taken at one of the British International College campuses.
- ✓ IGCSE and AS Level Art and Music examinations.  
These Exams are also completed at the College campuses only.
- ✓ AS Level Biology, Chemistry and Physics Practical Exams  
These courses have practical exam papers, which can only be completed at British International Colleges in Bryanston or Pretoria. Students selecting these courses are strongly advised to attend the Exam Preparation Workshops for practical laboratory exposure before the exams.

**Exam Application and Deadlines:**

Our students apply for Cambridge exam entry online via OSS. Should you need any help, our Student Advisors are on hand for any support through the process.

**Note the Cambridge exam application deadlines are:**

- For May/June Examinations: **31 January**
- For October/November Examinations: **31 May**

**Late entries incur financial penalties from Cambridge. Late entries for Cambridge Exams may even be refused.**

**Examination Results**

Student examination scripts are couriered to the United Kingdom to be marked by examiners at Cambridge University. Provisional Results are received in August for the June exam session and in January for the November exam session. Cambridge certificates are sent to our exams office approximately 4 months after the exam session.

As these are legal documents, it is the responsibility of the student to collect their certificates from our premises.



## CONTACT US

Physical Address	Postal Address
130 Bryanston Drive Bryanston Sandton Gauteng	Private Bag X79 Bryanston 2021 South Africa



(011) 706 7775



[admin@bidc.co.za](mailto:admin@bidc.co.za)

***Contact us and speak to a BIDC Student Advisor for more information***

