

Cambridge International witnesses a 13% rise in students opting for STEM

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Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, First Language English, and Biology were the most popular Cambridge IGCSE subjects in the March exam series in 2022



Despite the uncertainty caused by the pandemic, Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International AS & A Level have seen 13% growth in STEM subjects. This is in stark contrast to the National Achievement Survey 2021 which found that academic performance, especially in Science and Mathematics, has been underwhelming in the state schools and private schools in India.

The national average scores calculated out of 500 for class X level Math, at the state government-run schools, slipped from 252 in 2017 to 210 in 2021. The private schools recorded a fall from 263 to 228. State-government schools slipped from 251 to 195, while the private schools' performance dipped from 259 to 229 in Science. Is it rank-

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On the other hand, Cambridge IGCSE saw an increasing number of students joining its ranks. It recorded a growth of 12% with over 45,000 entries for the year 2021-22 compared to 40,895 entries last year, and Cambridge International AS & A Level saw a growth of 4% with 13,833 entries for the year 2021-22 compared to 13,246 entries last year.

There was over 10% growth in entries for Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International AS & A Level on last year, and 13% growth in STEM subjects over the last year. Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, First Language English and Biology were the most popular Cambridge IGCSE subjects in the March exam series this year. For Cambridge International AS & A Level, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Economics and Business emerged as the most popular subjects.

Flexibility

Mahesh Srivastava, Regional Director, South Asia, Cambridge International says: "When the Cambridge programme was initiated in India; we were offering two series, one in May and the other in November. The students who appeared in the May series would get their results in July and they would fall behind in the Indian university system as the calendars were different."

Several schools suggested that the Cambridge International series should be aligned with March and that's how the March series came into the picture in 2015. "This series was meant only for India and there are a couple of other countries that are interested in it as it syncs with their systems. Romania is one such country," says Srivastava, explaining that the Cambridge international has been getting a lot of traction for the past four-five years.

“Every year 40-50 new schools are joining us. Our students are regularly cracking JEE and NEET. In 2019, the girl topper was a Cambridge student from Ahmedabad, such achievers have built our credibility among parents. About 70% of our students crack top deemed universities and progress well,” says Srivastava.

Vishnu Karthik, director, The Heritage Schools and CEO Xperiential Learning Systems, says, “Our school has witnessed a substantial increase in the number of enrollments for the international board, especially over the past three years. The international curriculum (Cambridge and International Baccalaureate) is emerging as the fastest-growing option for parents in urban India.”

The international board has several strengths including focusing on skills and attributes rather than content. It promotes interdisciplinary learning and focuses on developing transfer skills, application-oriented assignments and assessments that call for higher-order thinking, higher student agency, and relevant and updated content. It integrates co-curricular and community service into the curriculum, he says.

International curriculum

Karthik suggests that parents prefer to provide a platform to their child that allows them to collaborate and compete with students internationally. Also, parents who have had higher exposure to the international job market and have seen it transform are aware that they need to equip their children with a toolkit that empowers them with the ability to embrace change and think creatively, staying emotionally grounded and socially connected at the same time. However, one needs to be careful in choosing the school that offers the international board as there needs to be a high degree of alignment between the school's education culture and facilitating capacities for it to be able to deliver the international curriculum the way it is intended.