

Cambridge International Education
1 Hills Rd
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

12th March '21

Dear Cambridge International,

RE: International Examinations 2021

I am writing to you as the Head of a Private Exam Centre which is also endorsed as a Cambridge International School here in the UK. Upon the decision of the Government to cancel exams earlier in January 2021, Cambridge responded by stating that exams would continue to run here in the UK and as a private examination centre, this gave us hope as we are advocates; believing that examinations are the best method to ensure fairness and provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their true capabilities.

However, following several weeks of fluctuating uncertainty and anxiety amongst students, Cambridge International decided to pull the plug on its own exams here in the UK and in Mexico in late February. This created a level of animosity - not just for ourselves but this has also proven to be detrimental to all the students who were advised by ourselves – encouraging them to be prepared and well-equipped for these examinations. Whilst I understand that Cambridge may regard this out of its own control and that this decision which the Government has made -may have made it impossible for Cambridge to conduct these examinations. However, I would now like to raise the question as to why Cambridge - having cancelled its examinations in the UK and being inherently a UK based examining body justifies its position to continue holding these examinations internationally.

Cambridge International is the last remaining examination board adopting the British Curriculum that wishes to staunchly run examinations worldwide – whilst the impact worldwide in certain cases has even been more disadvantageous education wise; than it has here in the UK. I have personally had students from Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Cambodia, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Malaysia and many more external countries expressing the difficulties they have endured the previous year to even study - let alone prepare for examinations. Needless to say, such students will not have even completed the entire specifications that they are being tested on. Many of these students have not even returned to their classrooms since March 2020 and online learning has certainly not bridged the gap from their conventional forms of learning. You can refer to the table below where students have contacted us to express their concerns regarding this matter.

May I also remind Cambridge that unlike the UK - some of these places across the world do not have the same level of technology or internet connectivity that we may have access to here – and polls here in the UK have even demonstrated how poorly online learning has been compared to its traditional counterpart. Could I also bring it to Cambridge’s attention that many of these international students also happen to come from low-socio economic backgrounds and are currently experiencing high level of anxiety upon discussing their issues with myself and staff here.

My point being; how does Cambridge possibly justify this position that exams will be the ‘fairest outcome for all’ when the learning in the last year has so drastically derailed off-track that these young students are desperately seeking avenues to raise these concerns to their schools, colleges and governments but it is falling upon deaf ears.

I would like to make it very clear; that being an examiner myself I understand how young people may opt for an avenue that avoids difficulties and hardship, however, I am not writing to you in vain because a few students simply not wanting to sit these exams and using this pandemic as an excuse. Furthermore; consortiums such as COBIS have also expressed their concerns regarding the hosting of examinations stating that the vast majority of their sponsored schools are in favour of cancelling these exams. Cambridge has also meanwhile completely ignored this and blocked students from contacting the board whilst also being entirely oblivious to the petition where over 30,000 students have signed to cancel exams internationally.

It is vital that you take into consideration that many of these students are studying several hours a day; whilst others have endured great difficulty by trying to study with power cuts in their respective regions. Many of these students do not possess the luxuries or privileges that we have here in the UK which we may take for granted. In some places, schools and teachers are not able to even cover the entirety of the designated specifications.

My question is as a worldwide International Examining body that stepped in 2020 and stated that:

*Our priority is to protect the safety and wellbeing of our students and teachers, ensure fairness for all our students and support them in continuing with their education. Today, therefore, we have taken the difficult decision not to run our **international examinations** in the May/June **2020** series in any country*

How does Cambridge International justify this bipartisan decision in 2021 to pursue the running of its exams in certain regions whilst having them cancelled in others?

Having this ‘double-standard’ approach where exams are cancelled in one region or placing the onus on a school or local government really does not shift the responsibility of an examining body like Cambridge. It needs to lose its short-sightedness and shifting its own responsibility onto other parties which very well can feel the pressure of this reputable organisation.

I therefore urge you - on behalf of many students across the globe whose future lives and livelihoods revolve around these examinations - to simply cancel the Cambridge International Exams and make it a unified decision for all and maintain the integrity of your Exam Board.

I hope you can take heed and take into consideration all of the points highlighted in this letter with an understanding and sympathetic approach and truly reconsider your strategies and procedures going forward from here, because if this remains unchanged, it will have an adverse and detrimental effect on many students who are currently placing all their trust in your institution.

Kind Regards,

Amin Miab

Head of Centre
A -Team Academy

LIST OF SCHOOLS THAT WISH TO CANCEL INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

School	Country
Mastermind	Bangladesh
Tenby international	Malaysia
Oki international	Sri Lanka
Roots Millennium	Pakistan
Manarat Dhaka International	Bangladesh
Karachi Foundation Public	Pakistan
Boston World School	India
Bangladesh International School	Saudi Arabia
Myers College	Pakistan
Knewton Global	Malaysia
Apple International	UAE
Playpen School	Bangladesh
New Middle East International	Saudi Arabia
Hope International	Cambodia
Campion School	Greece
SFX Greenherald International	Bangladesh
Beacon House	Pakistan
Al-Majd International	Saudi Arabia
Presidency International	Bangladesh
Kids Campus	Bangladesh
Lyceum International	Sri Lanka
Al-Wadi International	Saudi Arabia
Park House	Qatar
European Standard	Bangladesh
Scholastica	Bangladesh
Gravity Institute	Pakistan
City School Ravi	Pakistan
International Modern Arabic	Malaysia
Academia	Bangladesh
Gandhi Nagar International	India
St Gregory High	Pakistan
Chittagong Grammar	Bangladesh
Karachi Grammar	Pakistan
Mussoorie International	India
Trio World	India
Al-Hussain International	Saudi Arabia
Cambridge International	UAE

Al-Murooj International	UAE
Aitch Ison College	Pakistan
Sunnydale	Bangladesh
Royal Institute	Sri Lanka
Oshwal Academy	Kenya
Victory College	Egypt
Westminster	UAE
APS	Pakistan
Daffodil International	Bangladesh
American Standard International	Bangladesh
Hurd Co International	Bangladesh
Nefetari	Egypt
Divisional Model College	Pakistan
Vibgyor High	India