

PRESS RELEASE



14 JANUARY 2019

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32 GCE O-LEVEL ADDITIONAL MATHEMATICS CANDIDATES AFFECTED BY LOSS OF PAPER 2 SCRIPTS IN THE UK

The Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board (SEAB) has been informed by Cambridge Assessment that 32 answer scripts for the 2018 GCE O-Level Additional Mathematics' Paper 2 were lost in the United Kingdom (UK).

2 The 32 scripts were from two secondary schools – 20 scripts from Nan Hua High School and 12 scripts from Hong Kah Secondary School (12 scripts).

3 The incident occurred on 21 November 2018. A Cambridge examiner was travelling by train from London to the north of England with the 32 scripts in his luggage bag. The examiner's bag was mistakenly taken by another train passenger. Cambridge Assessment immediately launched an investigation into the loss, and carried out extensive searches through the rail companies and police to locate the examiner's bag. Unfortunately, the scripts have not been recovered and the search is still on-going.

4 Chief Executive of SEAB, Ms Tan Lay Choo, said, "We were upset and disappointed when we heard the news from Cambridge Assessment, especially since this happened so close to last year's incident where 238 A-Level H2 Chemistry scripts were stolen in the UK. Cambridge Assessment has expressed its regret over the incident¹ and asked SEAB to convey its sincere apologies to the affected candidates. Our priority now is to ensure that the affected candidates are not disadvantaged by the incident, and that they are given a valid and fair assessment for their Additional Mathematics examination."

Valid and Fair Assessment for Affected Candidates

5 In circumstances where a candidate does not have a mark for a paper, Cambridge Assessment and SEAB have an established procedure to derive a grade for the subject. The key consideration is to ensure that each affected candidate is given a valid and fair assessment.

¹ Please refer to Cambridge Assessment's press statement.

PRESS RELEASE



6 In this case, both Papers 1 and 2 of O-level Additional Mathematics assess content from the whole syllabus, based on the same assessment objectives. To award affected candidates a fair and valid grade, Cambridge Assessment and SEAB took into consideration the 32 candidates' performance in the other Additional Mathematics paper², which makes up 44% of the final grade, relative to the entire cohort's overall performance in the subject. To check for consistency in the affected candidates' overall performance in Additional Mathematics, Cambridge Assessment and SEAB also considered the candidates' school preliminary examination results. It is important to note that the derived final grade is not simply a rebasing of Paper 1 from 44% to 100%.

7 Following this procedure, about 91% (29 Candidates) of the affected candidates obtained at least a Pass grade, with about 63% (20 candidates) attaining distinctions, i.e. A1/A2. Almost all the affected candidates had been awarded better or the same grades for the O-Level Additional Mathematics as compared to their school preliminary examinations.

Offer of Re-examination of Paper 2

8 Similar to last year's incident, Cambridge Assessment and SEAB will offer affected candidates the option of a re-examination of the Additional Mathematics Paper 2 on 15 February 2019. The results of the re-examination will be released by end-February 2019. Details of the registration for the re-examination have been provided by SEAB to the candidates on 14 January 2019, after they had received their result slips.

9 The re-examination of Additional Mathematics Paper 2 will be based on the same curriculum that the candidates had been taught in schools. The re-examination will be pegged at the same standard as the 2018 Additional Mathematics Paper 2. The examination format will also remain unchanged.

10 For candidates who choose to sit for the re-examination, Cambridge Assessment and SEAB will count the better of the two grades, i.e. the better of the awarded grade and the re-examination grade, and this will be recorded as the final grade in their GCE O-Level result slip and certificate.

² 2018 GCE O-Level Additional Mathematics examination format:

- Paper 1 is a 2 h paper with 80 marks and 44% weighting; and
- Paper 2 is a 2 h 30min paper with 100 marks and 56% weighting.

PRESS RELEASE



11 For candidates who did not choose to sit for the re-examination, their awarded grade will be recorded as the final grade in their GCE O-Level result slip and certificate.

Facilitating Off-Cycle Posting

12 MOE and SEAB will also work with the junior colleges, Millennia Institute, polytechnics and the Institute of Technical Education to consider the candidates' re-examination results for off-cycle posting to these institutions and courses of study.

Public statement

32 candidates affected by missing scripts for Singapore- Cambridge GCE O-Level Additional Mathematics Paper 2

Cambridge Assessment has informed the Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board (SEAB) that 32 scripts for the 2018 Singapore-Cambridge GCE O-Level Additional Mathematics Paper 2 have been lost in the UK.

On 21 November 2018, a Cambridge examiner was travelling by train from London to the north of England with the scripts in a luggage bag. The bag containing the scripts was mistakenly taken by another train passenger as it was almost identical to their own.

Cambridge Assessment immediately launched a major investigation to locate the examiner's bag, carrying out extensive searches through the relevant rail companies and the police. The other passenger has not yet attempted to reclaim the bag, which was left behind on the train, or returned the examiner's bag. The search for the examiner's missing bag is ongoing.

Cambridge Assessment sincerely regrets this incident and any distress caused to candidates. Cambridge Assessment will work with SEAB to make sure that the affected candidates receive a fair and valid result.

The examiner involved in this incident has breached Cambridge Assessment's security policy for the transportation of scripts by leaving them unattended. As a result, this examiner will not be engaged to mark scripts in the future. Cambridge Assessment has also taken steps to remind all examiners of the importance of keeping scripts secure whilst they are in their possession.

Speaking on behalf of Cambridge Assessment, Juliet Wilson, Director of Assessment, said: "We apologise for this incident and for the distress caused to candidates. We will work closely with SEAB to make sure that affected candidates receive a fair and valid grade, and are not disadvantaged. We are conducting a thorough review of our procedures relating to handling of scripts."

Valid and fair assessment of affected candidates

Cambridge Assessment has a robust procedure in place for situations where a candidate does not have a mark for one of the papers of an examined subject. This procedure is designed to provide a valid and fair assessment of the affected candidates while maintaining the integrity of the examination itself. With the concurrence of SEAB, Cambridge Assessment has awarded each candidate a grade based on the candidate's performance in the other Additional Mathematics paper and their cohort's performance in Additional Mathematics.

Offer of re-examination

Cambridge Assessment is also working closely with SEAB to offer affected candidates the option of a re-examination of the O-Level Additional Mathematics Paper 2 on 15 February 2019. The results will be released by the end of February 2019.

The re-examination of O-Level Additional Mathematics Paper 2 will assess the same curriculum as and be graded at the same standard as the original 2018 O-Level Additional Mathematics Paper 2 examination.

For candidates who take up the re-examination, Cambridge Assessment and SEAB will award the better of the two grades – i.e. the better of the assessed grade and the re-examination grade. This will be recorded on their O-Level results slip and certificate. For candidates who do not wish to take the re-examination, the assessed grade will be recorded on their O-Level statement of results and certificate.

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Notes to editors**About Cambridge Assessment**

Cambridge Assessment prepares school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. We are part of the University of Cambridge.

For media enquiries please contact: media@cambridgeinternational.org