



Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board



**CAMBRIDGE**  
International Education

**Singapore–Cambridge General Certificate of Education  
Ordinary Level (2026)**

# **Arabic as a Third Language (Syllabus 1135)**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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This document provides details of the Ordinary Level Arabic as a Third Language syllabus for candidates in **Singapore**.

## **AIM**

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The aim of the syllabus is to develop students' communicative ability in, and understanding of, the Arabic language and of the culture of countries where Arabic is spoken so as to enable them to develop strong relationships with speakers of Arabic and citizens of countries where it is spoken.

## **THE LANGUAGE**

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The language studied and assessed is the standard version of Arabic which is used in countries where Arabic is spoken.

## **ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES**

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At the end of the four years of study of Arabic, students should be able to:

- exchange information, opinions, ideas, experiences and plans in spoken and written texts in Arabic
- express ideas, information and experiences in written texts in Arabic
- analyse, process and respond to texts that are in Arabic
- understand aspects of language usage
- understand and appreciate the relationship between language and culture.

## ASSESSMENT

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### AVAILABILITY

This syllabus is available in November only.

### RULES OF COMBINATION

Candidates will take Papers 1, 2, 3 and 4.

### SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

This examination assumes that students have completed a four-year programme of study in Arabic. It is based on the aim, assessment objectives, teaching and learning principles and content of the teaching syllabus for O-Level Arabic as a Third Language.

The examination format is as follows:

Paper	Title	Item Type	Weighting	Duration
1	<b>Writing</b> Section 1: Correspondence Section 2: Composition	OE	20%	1 hour 45 minutes
2	<b>Reading Comprehension and Language Usage</b> Section 1: Reading Comprehension Section 2: Language Usage	MCQ/FIB/OE	30%	1 hour 15 minutes
3	<b>Listening Comprehension</b>	MCQ	20%	approx. 30 minutes
4	<b>Oral</b> Section 1: Reading Aloud Section 2: Conversation	OE	30%	approx. 15 minutes
Total			100%	

## DESCRIPTION OF COMPONENTS

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### **PAPER 1: Writing (1 hour 45 minutes) (20 marks)**

This paper is made up of two sections:

Section 1: Correspondence (5 marks)

Section 2: Composition (15 marks)

Section 1 of the paper is designed to assess students' ability to provide and exchange information, and express personal ideas through writing texts in Arabic, in the form of, for example, a short note, a message, an email or a personal note. Students are required to answer one of two questions by responding to a brief scenario, an instruction or a stimulus text with or without visuals and are expected to write a response of 50–70 words.

Section 2 of the paper is designed to assess students' ability to express personal ideas and opinions, recount an episode or event, and describe plans, through writing a text in Arabic. Students are required to answer one of three questions. The questions set may require students to respond to a picture or a series of pictures, write a descriptive text or a narrative. Students are expected to write a minimum of 170 words.

The use of a monolingual dictionary without any annotations is allowed for this paper.

### **PAPER 2: Reading Comprehension and Language Usage (1 hour 15 minutes) (30 marks)**

This paper is made up of two sections:

Section 1: Reading Comprehension (25 marks)

Section 2: Language Usage (5 marks)

Section 1 of the paper is made up of Part A and Part B.

Part A is designed to assess students' understanding of written Arabic. For Part A, students are required to read and comprehend a text with graphic(s) and provide answers to multiple choice questions. The text with graphic(s) could include, for example, an advertisement, itinerary, promotion, information chart, brochure, TV guide, web page, recipe, menu, etc.

For Part B, students are required to read and comprehend a narrative, descriptive or expository text (approximately 200 words) and to answer open-ended questions. This part of the paper will also have multiple choice questions testing vocabulary based on the passage.

Part A carries 10 marks and Part B carries 15 marks.

Section 2 of the paper is designed to assess students' understanding of language features of a text. Students are required to fill in the blanks in a gapped passage. Students select the correct word from a set of given words.

If Papers 1 and 2 are examined on the same day, there will be at least a 30-minute break between the two papers.

### **PAPER 3: Listening Comprehension (approx. 30 minutes) (15 marks weighted to 20 marks)**

This paper is designed to assess students' ability to understand aural texts in Arabic. Students listen to five or six short texts (e.g. conversations, announcements, speeches, talks, interviews, news reports, advertisements, instructions, short narratives, etc.) and respond to a total of 15 multiple choice questions based on these texts. Each text is played twice.

**PAPER 4: Oral (approx. 15 minutes) (30 marks)**

This paper is made up of two sections:

Section 1: Reading Aloud (10 marks)

Section 2: Conversation (20 marks)

Section 1 is designed to assess students' ability to read aloud a text in Arabic with good pronunciation and intonation. Section 2 is designed to assess students' ability to use Arabic in exchanging information and ideas orally about personal interests and general experiences.

In Section 1, the student reads aloud a passage in Arabic to the external examiner. In Section 2, the examiner will engage the student in a conversation about the student's personal worlds, e.g. life, family, education, friends, interests and aspirations. This part of the conversation will last approximately 2 minutes. The examiner will then engage the student in a conversation based on a topic chosen from the list given below. The broad topics in the list relate to Singapore. This part of the conversation will last approximately 2 minutes. Students may refer to personal experiences related to the topic. The examiner will then engage the student in a conversation on a topic chosen by the student himself/herself, based on the list given below. This part of the conversation will last approximately 2 minutes. Notes, pictures and cue cards are **not** allowed.

Each candidate will spend approximately 15 minutes on this paper, including 5 minutes of preparation time.

List of topics for Conversation which relate to Singapore:

1. Community (e.g. neighbourhoods, interesting places, shopping malls, etc.)
2. Culture (e.g. food, festivals, national celebrations, etc.)
3. Environment (e.g. energy conservation, water resources, pollution, land use, etc.)
4. Lifestyle (e.g. youth and their concerns, health concerns, sport and recreation, etc.)

## TABLE OF SPECIFICATION

Paper	Component	Item Type	No. of Items	Weighting (Marks)
1 (1 hour 45 minutes)	<b>Writing</b>	OE	2 out of 5	20% (20)
	<b>Section 1:</b> Correspondence Candidates answer 1 question out of 2 from this section, writing 50–70 words.		2 (Answer 1)	5% (5)
	<b>Section 2:</b> Composition Candidates answer 1 question out of 3 from this section, writing at least 170 words.		3 (Answer 1)	15% (15)
2 (1 hour 15 minutes)	<b>Reading Comprehension and Language Usage</b>	MCQ and OE	16	30% (30)
	<b>Section 1:</b> Reading Comprehension Part A – Text with graphic(s) which may include charts, advertisements, TV guides, itineraries, etc. followed by multiple choice questions. Part B – An extended reading passage followed by open-ended comprehension questions and multiple choice questions on vocabulary.		5	10% (10)
	<b>Section 2:</b> Language Usage A gapped passage (descriptive, narrative or expository) will be set.	FIB	6	15% (15)
3 (approx. 30 minutes)	<b>Listening Comprehension</b>  Candidates answer multiple choice questions based on recorded texts. The following types of texts may be set: conversations, announcements, speeches, talks, interviews, news reports, advertisements, instructions, short narratives, etc.	MCQ	15	20% (20)
4 (approx. 15 minutes – including 5 minutes preparation time)	<b>Oral</b>	OE	2	30% (30)
	<b>Section 1:</b> Reading Aloud Candidates read aloud a descriptive, narrative or expository passage.	OE	1 passage	10% (10)
	<b>Section 2:</b> Conversation Candidates hold a conversation about their personal worlds, e.g. life, family, education, friends, interests and aspirations. Candidates hold a conversation on a topic related to Singapore. Candidates hold a conversation on a topic of their choice, which may develop in other directions.	OE	3 topics	20% (20)
Total				100% (100)

Key: MCQ Multiple choice questions  
 FIB Fill-in-the-blank type questions  
 OE Open-ended questions