



FAQ's about IAL's

1. What are IAL's?

IAL's are International Advanced Levels which have been introduced this academic year by the UK examination board, Pearson, (formerly Edexcel.)

2. Why were they created?

Due to UK exam reform, (see separate A Level Reform FAQ), students will no longer be permitted to sit exams in the January session. They may only sit exams in the June session. Pearson created the IAL, which offers January sittings, primarily in order to service the needs of centres in the Far East which operate on a two semester programme. However, other international centres may opt for this qualification, if they wish.

3. Will students sitting IAL's be able to sit/re-sit a unit in January *and* June?

No. All students sitting IAL's will only be able to sit/re-sit a unit once, in January or June. GCE A Level students sitting/re-sitting a unit will also only be able to do this once, in June.

4. What is the difference between IAL's and GCE A levels?

IAL's can only be sat by students at international centres. The specification and assessment are virtually unchanged. However, new GCE A levels will be developed for teaching from September 2015.

5. Who regulates IAL's?

IAL's are regulated by Pearson rather than Ofqual, (UK Office of Qualifications and Examinations.)

6. What about A Level Biology and Physics at The English School?

It has always been an option for international students to sit a science 'Written Alternative to coursework' unit, instead of the internal assessment component (coursework), as currently undertaken by the Chemistry department at our school.

Since this unit is not available in the UK, it is not a UK regulated qualification, although Pearson applies the same quality standards as those for the UK qualification. Therefore, the qualification of those students sitting this A level with the 'Written Alternative to Coursework' paper at AS or A2 Level, in our case Biology or Physics, has now converted to an IAL.

7. Which universities accept IAL's?

The qualification is widely accepted. At the moment over 195 leading universities world-wide have recognised the qualification. See the following site for further details:

<http://progressionplus.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/ial-recognition69.pdf>



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- 8. Is my child's application to university going to be adversely affected by the conversion of his/her A Level Biology and Physics to IAL's?**

There is no evidence at all that our students have been disadvantaged in any way. The university admission departments are treating the IAL as they would a GCE A level.

- 9. What is the English School's future strategy concerning IAL's?**

The school has decided to continue with its suite of UK GCE A levels, therefore it is expected that all its qualifications will be brought into line with this decision.

The English School. November 2013.