

## ***INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS IN UK OPT FOR IGCSE***

Half of all independent schools in the UK are now offering the IGCSE in at least one subject, reports the Daily Telegraph (10 January 2008). The IGCSE, a Cambridge International Examination qualification developed for use internationally, is seen by these schools as being more rigorous, with harder questions and less coursework than the UK qualification. Schools say the local qualification is too reliant on coursework and fails to stretch the brightest students.

Ironically, because the IGCSE is not yet recognised by the UK Government for inclusion in league tables comparing performance of schools, independent schools have received rock-bottom ratings in the league tables. Some of the most prestigious schools in the UK, including Eton, Harrow, Winchester and St Pauls are now at the bottom of official rankings because of this technicality and are rated below some of the UK's worst performing schools. Independent schools have called for league tables to be scrapped because they do not include IGCSE results.

CIE has approached the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority about the accreditation of IGCSE for use in all UK schools, both state and independent.