

# Cambridge English

## Transforming Language Education

### Language assessment in German state schools

**Clients:** Education Ministries in Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Berlin, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Saarland and Saxony

**Country:** Germany

Cambridge English Language Assessment is working with state Ministries of Education across Germany to provide access to Cambridge English examinations for state school students.

Germany foreign language evaluation standards are closely tied to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, and an increasing number of state education ministries now offer external certification of English language skills in addition to German qualifications.

A mapping exercise, undertaken by Cambridge English Language Assessment,



showed that Cambridge English exams were highly compatible with the German approach to language learning, also meeting a requirement for exams relating to specific levels within the school curriculum. As a result, *Cambridge English: Preliminary (PET)*, *Cambridge English: First (FCE)* and *Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE)* examinations have been introduced in a number of state schools as an optional extra qualification.

The first exam sessions were undertaken in 2001, in Baden-Württemberg, by Grade 9 students; since that date, provision has expanded across the country, with – for example – thousands of students in Nordrhein-Westfalen taking a Cambridge Exam in 2013.

In addition, Cambridge English also provides ongoing, tailored teacher support and training, free of charge, and has supported the training of teachers as Speaking test examiners in Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria. ‘One-off’ testing exercises are also a regular activity; in Berlin, for example, past papers were used to assess the ability of over 10,000 Grade 10 students.

With the Cambridge team evaluating the success of all large school projects, Cambridge English exams are now used by a growing number of state school education systems, and are also formally referenced in German Federal Education Ministry standards documents.

*“My students take Cambridge English: First for a variety of career-based reasons or simply for the structure and recognised achievement this certificate will offer them”*

Susanna Akehurst,  
Berlin School of English

