

## **I.C.S.E & I.S.C**

The Indian Certificate of Secondary Education was first established in 1958 by the Local Examinations Syndicate of the University of Cambridge. The syllabus followed by ICSE schools differs vastly from that followed in CBSE schools mainly in terms of content and volume. The board conducts an ICSE examination towards the end of tenth grade and an Indian School Certificate (ISC) examination towards the end of twelfth grade.

Additionally, it provides the Certificate of Vocational Education Examination (CVE-12) that has been created as an examination. This examination can be taken by students after doing ICSE course or its equivalent examination, through the medium of English. This is intended to prepare the candidates for specific vocations. Private candidates cannot take this exam.

About 1,900 schools are affiliated with the CISCE board which focuses more on application-oriented studies and aims at a holistic development of students. Although it's not affiliated to the Indian government, yet enjoys a reputation of having a very rigorous and well-structured syllabus.

### **ICSE for 10th**

The Indian Certificate of Secondary Education has been designed to provide an examination in a course of general education through the medium of English. ICSE is especially known for having a rigorous syllabus for English.

Private candidates are not permitted to appear for this examination. The ICSE curriculum is wide and covers several topics to help the students in developing their overall growth. It focuses more on practical knowledge and analytical skills.

### **Subjects offered in ICSE**

Some of the important subjects that most schools offer are: History, Economics, Math, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Performing Arts etc. The subjects at the ICSE level are offered under three GROUPS. Group 1 is Compulsory for All. Students may select any 2 subjects from group 2 and any 1 subject from group 3. All candidates are required to enter and sit for six subjects and Socially Useful Productive Work.

**Subjects in the GROUP I are compulsory for students:**

1. English
2. A Second Language (One/Two)
  - a. Indian Languages OR
  - b. Modern Foreign Languages
3. History, Civics and Geography

**In GROUP II the students have the choice of two/three out of the following seven subjects:**

4. Mathematics
5. Science (Physics, Chemistry and Biology)
6. Economics
7. Commercial Studies
8. A Modern Foreign Language
9. A Classical Language
10. Environmental Science

**From the GROUP III any one of the following subjects can be chosen:**

11. Computer Applications
12. Economic Applications
13. Commercial Applications
14. Art
15. Performing Arts
16. Home Science
17. Cookery
18. Fashion Designing
19. Physical Education
20. Yoga

21. Technical Drawing Applications
22. Environmental Applications
23. A Modern Foreign Language

In addition to the aforementioned subjects, the board would be introducing Mass Media and Communication in the year 2020 and Hospitality in the year 2021. This is the official notification that has been released as on 30th April, 2019. However, as Career Counsellors, it would be wise for us to keep track of any new changes that may be announced.

### **Socially Useful Productive Work (Compulsory)**

Under Socially Useful Productive Work and Community Service emphasis is placed on work practice and classroom discussions in these classes. A component of Contemporary Studies may be correlated with SUPW while Work Practice includes one main craft and at least one subsidiary craft or equivalent service eg- pottery work, weaving, block printing, embroidery, wood work, needle work etc.

### **ICSE Marking Scheme:**

The marking scheme of ICSE is very simple. There are a total of 3 groups that students have to select subjects from. The following table shows the percentage of internal and external marks allotted to each subject. Please note that in Group 3, the subjects have equal marks allotted for both internal and external exams.

#### **Group 1:**

S. No.	Subject Name	Marks Percentage – External Exam	Marks Percentage – Internal Exam
1	English	80%	20%
2	A Second Language	80%	20%
3	History, Civics, and Geography	80%	20%

Group 2:

S. No.	Subject Name	Marks Percentage – External Exam	Marks Percentage – Internal Exam
1	Mathematics	80%	20%
2	Science (Physics, Chemistry, Biology)	80%	20%
3	Economics	80%	20%
4	Commercial Studies	80%	20%
5	Modern Foreign Language	80%	20%
6	A Classical Language	80%	20%
7	Environmental Science	80%	20%

Group 3:

S. No.	Subject Name	Marks Percentage – External Exam	Marks Percentage – Internal Exam
1	Computer Applications	50%	50%
2	Economic Applications	50%	50%
3	Commercial Applications	50%	50%

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**Group 3 (cont'd):**

S. No.	Subject Name	Marks Percentage – External Exam	Marks Percentage – Internal Exam
4	Art	50%	50%
5	Performing Arts	50%	50%
6	Home Science	50%	50%
7	Cookery	50%	50%
8	Fashion Designing	50%	50%
9	Physical Education	50%	50%
10	Yoga	50%	50%
11	Technical Drawing Applications	50%	50%
12	Environmental Applications	50%	50%
13	Modern Foreign Language	50%	50%

As per the regulations published by the board, from 2020 and 2021, any student writing the ICSE exam the minimum pass percentage will be 33% for each subject. This is as per the notification mentioned as of now.

## **ISC for class 12:**

The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations also offers a course for classes 11 and 12.

The Indian School Certificate Examination is a two-year course of studies taken after the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (Year 10) examination or its equivalent examination. Examinations are conducted in English, which is a compulsory subject, and three to five other subjects of the student's choice.

Students can choose from one of the three streams: Arts and Humanities, Science, and Commerce. The good part about ISC is that it is recognized by universities in the United Kingdom also, so applicants are no longer required to obtain 'A' level qualifications or complete bridging courses, while seeking entry to universities in the UK and some other countries in the Commonwealth. That will definitely be good news for a lot of students.

Let us now look at some of the subjects offered under the ISC, of course English being one of the most important ones. All students must enter and sit for English (compulsory), with three, four or five elective subjects and secure a pass grade in Socially Useful Productive Work (SUPW) and Community Service (compulsory).

**Compulsory      Subject:      English**

### **Elective Subjects:**

- An Indian Language
- A Modern Foreign Language (Chinese, French, German, Tibetan, Spanish)
- A Classical Language (Arabic, Sanskrit, Persian)
- Elective English
- History
- Political Science
- Geography
- Sociology
- Psychology
- Economics
- Commerce
- Accounts

- Business Studies
- Mathematics
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Biology
- Home Science
- Fashion Designing
- Electricity & Electronics
- Engineering Science
- Computer Science
- Geometrical & Mechanical Drawing
- Geometrical & Building Drawing
- Art
- Music

- a. Indian Music- Hindustani
- b. Indian Music- Carnatic
- c. Western Music

- Physical Education
- Environmental Science
- Biotechnology

Similar to the ICSE syllabus, in addition to the aforementioned subjects, the board would be introducing Mass Media and Communication in the year 2020 and Hospitality in the year 2021. This is the official notification that has been released as on 30th April, 2019. However, as Career Counsellors, it would be wise for us to keep track of any new changes that may be announced.

SUPW: SUPW in class 12 syllabus for SUPW is a bit more advanced, wherein the students have to focus more on community service and Contemporary Studies. This could include Hospital work, Tree Plantation, Health and Nutrition Education etc.

## ISC Marking Scheme

Marking or grading scheme in any board is one of the most important aspects that every counsellor needs to understand for effective guidance. You will constantly get students who would have either changed boards or might be looking to change boards. In this regard, it is important to understand the marking scheme of each board. In subsequent sections, we will also be learning about conversion of grades from one board to another.

With regards to the ISC marking scheme, the board has recently notified some changes vis-a-vis the marking scheme of class 12th board exams. As per the new scheme, the ratio of marks between theory exam and practical exam will be 70:30 respectively. Initially, the theory exams and the practical exams were both held for 50 marks each. The changes will be visible in the following subjects:

- Computer Science
- Fashion Designing
- Physical Education
- Indian Classical Music (Hindustani)
- Indian Classical Music (Carnatic Style)
- Western Music.

Also, both the papers (theory and practical) will be held for a duration of three hours.

As per the regulations published by the board, from 2020 and 2021, any student writing the ISC exam the minimum pass percentage will be 35% for each subject. This is as per the notification mentioned as of now.

Like most things in life, ICSE/ISC also has pros and cons. Let us look at some:

### **Pros:**

- The syllabus followed by the ICSE board is more comprehensive and complete, encompassing all fields with equal importance.
- Students who are interested in careers in the lines of Management and Humanities will find the curriculum followed under ICSE to be more interesting and challenging.



- Certification under the CISCE board will be recognized around the world, particularly by foreign schools and universities when compared to the central board's local margin.
- Due to the emphasis laid on English in ICSE, students from this board may hold a slight edge over other students in exams like TOEFL.

**Cons:**

- Students may find the syllabus to be extensive for their liking, as an average student studying under an ICSE board will face thirteen subjects/examinations during the sixth grade, when compared to the six subjects faced by the student's counterpart in a CBSE affiliated school.
- Although the ICSE syllabus can facilitate deeper understanding and better life skills and analytical skills, pursuing further education may prove to be a problem due to a lack of leniency in evaluating papers after an ISC examination.

**ISC vs. CBSE**

The biggest advantage that the ISC students have is the utility of having good English language skills throughout life. The English taught in ISC is of excellent quality and follows high standards. It is not a subject where students can score easily and get by.

The following table will give you a brief picture of the differences between CBSE and ICSE.

Points of	C. B. S. E	I. C. S. E
Boarding Body	Central Board of	Council for the Indian School
Certificates	SSE and SSCE	ICSE and ISC
Number of Subjects	Students have to pick a minimum of 6 subjects in both classes 10 and 12.	Students have to pick a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 7 subjects in class 10 and a minimum of 4 subjects and a maximum of 6 subjects in class 12.
Focus	The focus is mainly on Mathematics and	The focus is largely on the English Language and Mathematics.

### **KEY TAKEAWAY**

- **The CISCE is a highly reputed educational board in India. Although it's not officially recognized by the government of India, it is considered quite reputed in many other countries.**
- **It offers curricula for classes 10 and 12. The curriculum for class 10 is called ICSE while the curriculum for class 12 is called ISC.**
- **ICSE curriculum is more balanced and diverse when compared to other boards.**
- **ICSE and ISC lay more emphasis on English education.**
- **Changes in subject options and the making scheme for the upcoming years have been announced by the board. It is in our best interest to keep referring to the notification made by the board from time to time.**