

UAE schools at the forefront as global momentum builds for new International GCSE Global Skills Projects

Strong global interest follows launch of new qualification developed with OxfordAQA, with the UAE's fast-growing school sector positioned to lead adoption.

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, April 8, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The UAE is emerging as a leading market in the global rollout of the International GCSE Global Skills Projects, following last week's international launch of the new qualification developed by OxfordAQA in collaboration with 8billionideas.

With one of the world's fastest-growing independent school sectors and a strong focus on innovation in education, the UAE is uniquely positioned to be at the forefront of early engagement and adoption.

In the days since launch, schools across multiple regions – including the Middle East – have begun exploring how the qualification can be integrated and delivered alongside core academic subjects.

8billionideas, with its main bases in the UK and the UAE, operates in more than 25 countries worldwide, working closely with schools to support early-stage conversations and implementation planning.

Designed to sit alongside and complement traditional GCSEs, the International GCSE Global Skills Projects combines academic rigour with a focus on real-world skills, equipping students to succeed in an increasingly complex and fast-changing world.

Unlike traditional qualifications, it is assessed entirely through coursework rather than final



David Harkin of 8billionideas and Andrew Coombe, MD of OxfordAQA celebrate a partnership that will deliver the ground-breaking new GCSE

examinations, enabling students to demonstrate their skills through practical, applied projects.

With first teaching in schools worldwide from August, it represents one of the first GCSEs designed specifically to assess real-world skills through applied, project-based learning, and is the only one fully delivered and assessed through coursework.

The qualification draws on 8billionideas' award-winning Critical Curriculum, which develops students across eight key pillars: entrepreneurship, careers, wellbeing, leadership, performance, financial literacy, sustainability, and technology.



Andrew Coombe (left), MD of OxfordAQA, and David Harkin, Founder and CEO of 8billionideas celebrate their new partnership

It also aligns closely with the UAE's 'We the UAE 2031' vision and National Strategy for Higher Education 2030, both of which place a strong emphasis on developing human capital, innovation and real-world skills aligned to the needs of a future workforce.

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We're seeing real appetite from schools to explore how this qualification can complement and strengthen what they already offer, through its focus on real-world skills and its coursework-based model.”

David Harkin, CEO and Founder, 8billionideas

David Harkin, CEO of 8billionideas, said: “The response over the past week has been incredibly strong, and the UAE is already playing a central role in that momentum.

“It's a market that consistently leads in educational innovation, and we're seeing real appetite from schools to explore how this qualification can complement and strengthen what they already offer, particularly through its focus on real-world skills and its fully coursework-based assessment model.

“The interest confirms this as the most important new

GCSE in a generation.”

The UAE's emphasis on future-ready education, combined with its diverse international school landscape, makes it a natural environment for a qualification designed to bridge academic

learning with real-world application.

Further updates are expected in the coming weeks as more schools begin their journey and early implementation plans take shape across key global markets.

More information about International GCSE Global Skills Projects, including guidance on how schools can get started, is available at <https://oxfordaqa-lp.vercel.app/>.

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Emily Cheffins, Chief Examiner of OxfordAQA: 'This GCSE represents an important evolution in how international education prepares students for the future'

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/904466155>

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