

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 0457/01
Individual Research

Key messages

- Candidates must produce **two** Individual Research reports with a question as the title for each report.
- Candidates need help structuring their reports. Sub-headings might help with this.
- Each Individual Research report should have a full reference list at the end of it and citations should be used in the body of the work.
- Assessors are advised to add notes linked to the assessment criteria to the Individual Candidate Record Cards (ICRCs) to justify the marks they have awarded.
- For each candidate in the sample, Centres need to submit their work and the marks they were awarded on the ICRC. The Centre needs to also include the Mark Sheet for the component and the Coursework Assessment Summary Form (CASF) with the marks for all candidates entered for the session on it. All files should be clearly labelled with candidate numbers as indicated in the guide to Centres. There is a coursework submission checklist available on the Teacher Support Site to assist Centres to submit the work for this component.

General comments

Centres are generally becoming more familiar with the expectations for this component. However, some Centres are still confusing the Individual Research reports with the Group Project. Teachers should consult the necessary documentation available on the Teacher Support Site for further guidance as to what candidates should produce for each component. Using the discussion forum within the Teacher Support Site and the Learning Platform can help with support and guidance for this component and component 2 – Group Project.

Most candidates are now using questions to focus their research. Where candidates did not, their reports lacked clarity. Some candidates also used more than one question about a topic which made the reports more fragmented as candidates then went on to answer their questions and the reports read as if the candidate was telling you all they knew about a specific topic. Candidates need one question as the title of their report, which they then try to answer after consideration of different perspectives. Their conclusion should provide an answer to their question and give their personal response.

Some Centres had covered a range of topics and candidates were given freedom of choice as to which they chose for their Individual Research reports. Sometimes this worked well. At other times, candidates struggled to give a personal response to the topic, for example the topic of conflict and peace did not really allow for the consideration of a personal perspective as many candidates have no personal experience of issues to do with this topic. Candidates would do better to choose global topics of relevance to them and their lives, for example, biodiversity and ecosystem loss and humans and other species.

Centres are asked to advise candidates to produce their work as Word documents so that word counts can be checked and teachers should monitor this situation and advise candidates accordingly. Please also ask candidates to only include pictures and diagrams if they refer to them in the body of their work. Some candidates appear to be spending a long time on the presentation of their work for which there are no marks. Powerpoint presentations do not generally enable candidates to access Band 4 of the assessment criteria as candidates rarely analyse the issues in depth in this format.

Some candidates are still under the impression that they should provide primary evidence, which is unnecessary and rarely adds to the report. The findings from primary evidence can, however, be summarised and given as a perspective; generally a local one.

Comments on specific questions

Teacher assessment

In general, Assessors were a bit generous in their marking of this component and need to look more carefully at the requirements for band 4 for each of the four criteria. Where an Individual Research report meets the assessment criteria in a band fully, marks at the top of that band can be awarded, but for band 4 there should be in-depth analysis of the issues, possible scenarios stemming from these issues that are evaluated before courses of action are proposed. Courses of action need to be developed to access marks in band 4 and not simply identified. For the personal response mark, it is not enough that candidates give their opinion, they should link their response to the evidence found when researching the issues from different perspectives. Assessors should decide on the most appropriate band for each criterion and then decide whether the work meets the band fully in which case the top mark should be awarded, or whether there is something missing and the work only meets the band partially, in which case lower marks within that Band can be awarded.

Gather information representing different perspectives

The majority of candidates were able to gather and present some information linked to the topic area to answer their research question and this usually came from a range of sources, which were sometimes well referenced. However, most candidates tended to give information about countries rather than considering the issues from different perspectives. As well as giving examples of countries for their global perspective, candidates should also be considering the perspectives of individuals or groups related to the issue (s). It is not enough for candidates to simply name countries, there should also be an indication of what these countries, groups and individuals think/believe about the issue(s) under investigation, with evidence to support the perspectives given. All work must be in the candidate's own words or quoted directly and all sources must be acknowledged to avoid any suspicion of plagiarism. Teachers should advise candidates to use quotes sparingly to support a point made as other people's work cannot be credited to the candidate. Candidates need help to write a complete reference list, including the author, date and title of the publication on the website and the date the candidate accessed it, rather than just giving the web link url. For marks in band 4, a broad range of relevant information should be presented and a range of highly appropriate sources used. Wikipedia is not considered highly appropriate so please advise candidates from using this as a source, although it is a useful starting point to find other, more credible sources.

Analyse issues within the report

Analysis, this session, generally required more depth. Candidates need to move beyond simply listing causes and consequences of issues and instead give some explanation. Current situations were generally analysed better, but these were not always developed. More successful reports covered fewer issues in some depth rather than simply presenting a range of unrelated issues. The key to this criterion is that candidates formulate a focused question (with guidance from their teacher) where they can explore one or two issues in depth, explain reasons for them, consequences of them, the scenarios if the issue should continue and whether these scenarios are likely, with explanation.

Identify and evaluate possible scenarios and formulate possible courses of action

Candidates are on the whole still unsure about possible scenarios and how they should be generated. Often they were fairly simple and not linked to the issues. The scenarios presented often already existed and there remains an overall lack of creative thinking about possible scenarios. Where candidates had thought about possible scenarios, they generally did not consider the likelihood of these scenarios. Courses of action were generally not very well developed. Candidates need further guidance to score better for this criterion.

A meaningful question to be asked to identify possible scenarios could be: 'What could happen in the future if this situation continues?' Candidates then need to evaluate the likelihood of this (is it possible that this might happen?) and the possible consequences in order to be awarded marks for evaluation. By doing this, candidates can demonstrate that they have really gained a grasp of the research question and issues related to the question.

Develop evidence-based personal response demonstrating self-awareness

The best reports used evidence from the rest of their report to justify their response. Candidates can make reference to their life at home, in school or where they live in relation to the question posed, possible scenarios and courses of action, sometimes identifying what they had not realised before they commenced their research or something that they will be doing differently as a result of their research. More successful research reports explained how a candidate's thinking and behaviour had changed as a result of something they had found out whilst doing their research, linking their comments to the evidence presented and answering the question posed.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 0457/02

Group Project

Key messages

- Project plans must show advance planning of the project, rather than take the form of a retrospective log of activities and dates.
- Cross-cultural collaboration is an important element of the group project and is compulsory, not optional. The findings from the cross-cultural collaboration should be used to develop the project outcome in a meaningful way. It is **not** necessary for the group project to explore personal, local/national and global perspectives. In the group project, awareness of different perspectives should focus on the group's cross-cultural collaboration.
- In order to ensure that all the assessment criteria are met, it is advisable for candidates to divide their individual evaluations into three sub-headed sections: evaluation of project plan **and** process; evaluation of how far the outcome has achieved the aim set out in the project plan and evaluation of individual contribution to the project and what has been learned both from working as a group **and** collaborating cross-culturally. Evaluations which simply describe what was done and how, without considering critically the strengths and weaknesses of their work, or their approach will not score well on the assessment scheme.
- In awarding marks, assessors need to pay close attention to the descriptions within each of the mark bands, particularly the words in bold. The quality of work produced by the candidate should match the description within the band for the mark that is being awarded. Assessors should also provide some brief supporting comments to indicate how/where credit has been given for each of the assessment criteria on the Individual Candidate Record Cards.

General comments

Candidates chose a variety of interesting topics on which to base their projects in this examination session. These included projects on: finding a solution to the growing of organic, chemical-free vegetables using rooftop greenhouses; the use of colour therapy to reduce stress; spreading awareness about child poverty to encourage charitable donations to a local orphanage; designing a futuristic city with a particular focus on transport and infrastructure and developing strategies to reduce food waste.

Comments on candidate response to assessment criteria

Production of a project plan

[Group assessment]

In general, most groups' project plans were detailed and comprehensive which meant that many candidate groups were able to access marks in the top band. However, candidates should be reminded that if they are to achieve the maximum mark of ten for this criterion, they must provide some reasoning behind the allocation of roles and responsibilities. Some candidates did not produce a plan as such. Instead, they submitted a retrospective log of what they had done and when. This is not an appropriate approach and should be strongly discouraged. Plans should be developed at the outset of the project and should show details of the project aim; the intended outcome; all planned activities; roles and responsibilities with the rationale behind the allocation of those roles. It is perfectly acceptable to amend the plan as the project progresses, should this be necessary.

Representation of different viewpoints and perspectives (including cross-cultural)

[Group assessment]

This examination session saw continued improvement in the nature and quality of cross-cultural collaboration and its use in informing project outcomes. However, teachers should advise candidates that they do **not** need to consider personal, local/national and global perspectives in their research for the project component. Awareness of different perspectives in the project centres on the different perspectives that arise from the group's cross-cultural collaboration. Candidates should not rely solely on their peers for their cross-cultural collaboration, but should broaden their experience by collaborating with people from another culture, either overseas, or within their own country.

Constructive participation in group work/activities

[Individual assessment]

Assessment of performance in this criterion must be based on concrete evidence recorded during teacher observations of group work in progress. Brief supporting comments may be included on the Individual Candidate Record Cards.

Evaluation of project plan and process

[Individual assessment]

In general, candidates' evaluations of their plan and the process of carrying out the project were thorough and in-depth. Strong evaluations were characterised by the fact that the candidates concerned looked at both the plan and process with a critical eye and considered both strengths and weaknesses. They also provided well-considered suggestions for improvement to both. Weak evaluations were generally too descriptive, with candidates simply describing what they had done and how. Such evaluations generally lacked any real critical consideration and suggestions for improvement to both plan and process were often either absent or were superficial in nature.

Evaluation of project outcome

[Individual assessment]

There were some very strong evaluations of project outcomes. These were characterised by the fact that the evaluations were closely and consistently tied to the project aim and showed in-depth and critical consideration of the extent to which the outcome had achieved the project's aim and where it had fallen short of achieving the aim. Although not required by the assessment scheme, some candidates also considered how the group could have improved their project outcome to better achieve the aim which showed real engagement with the project. Weaker evaluations tended to focus largely on the strengths and/or weaknesses of the outcome itself, without considering how successful the outcome was in achieving the project aim. Candidates should be advised the outcome is not an end in itself but the means to achieve the project's aim.

Evaluation of individual contribution (including what was learnt from cross-cultural collaboration)

[Individual assessment]

Most candidates were able to evaluate their individual contribution reasonably well. However, they do need to be reminded that both the strengths **and** weaknesses of their contribution should be critically examined. Some candidates simply detailed what they had done without actually considering how well they had done it and this meant that their evaluations could not score well. As with previous examination sessions, some candidates forgot that they are also required to consider both the benefits and challenges of working together as a group in their evaluation. In the main, the strongest evaluations were characterised by the strength of the candidates' evaluation of what they had learned from their cross-cultural collaboration. Where candidates had not actually not engaged in any real cross-cultural collaboration, it was very difficult for them to make any meaningful comment on what they had learned from it.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 0457/32

Written Paper

Key messages

The key messages from this series of examination papers are that candidates:

- performed well in the interpretation of information
- were able to use reasons and evidence to support their judgements
- should have more experience in the critical comparison of arguments.

General comments

The Written Paper consists of compulsory questions based on a range of sources provided with the paper. The sources present global issues from a range of perspectives. In March 2016 the paper was based upon source material related to inequality in educational provision, especially in terms of access to education.

Overall, the quality of work and levels of achievement were good. Many candidates are clearly developing a critical awareness of global issues and an ability to marshal reasoning and evidence to support an opinion or claim.

Candidates responded enthusiastically to the Source Material, especially in the extended response questions. Candidates were able to explore different perspectives on global issues, particularly in relation to educational inequality.

Examination technique was generally very good. Candidates seemed to have sufficient time for the tasks. The vast majority completed all of the questions within the time allocated.

To improve performance further, candidates should be encouraged to:

- avoid simple assertion, opinion and anecdotal evidence when responding to questions
- explain answers fully by giving a range of reasons and evidence for judgements
- refer explicitly to both statements when comparing arguments.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) (i) The vast majority of candidates correctly identified the trend in the number of children not attending school as decreasing or 'getting less'. Some candidates simply restated the statistical figures for the beginning and end of the time period or performed a sum to show the difference. However, the responses need to clearly demonstrate an understanding of the downward trend to be awarded a mark.
- (ii) Virtually all candidates correctly identified sub-Saharan Africa, from within the text of the source, as the region in which the most children were out of school in 2007.

- (b) Most candidates were generally able to suggest a benefit of education from Source 2 that could be justified as most important. The benefits most frequently selected were 'as a way out of poverty' and to 'strengthen a nation'.

The most successful responses gave several carefully explained reasons and/or some evidence to support the claim about the importance of the benefit. This was most effective when the reason was carefully linked to the suggested benefit, for example the benefit of education was important as it enabled people to get out of poverty due to improved employment opportunities created by the possession of qualifications. These responses typically discussed the impact or consequences of the identified benefit of education.

Weaker responses tended to rely upon assertion without evidence or careful reasoning, or describe the benefit in some detail without explaining its importance.

- (c) Most candidates discussed the values behind the aim of providing free education for all children, for example equal opportunities, and the practicalities of achieving the aim, for example affordability. Some candidates focussed upon the relative importance of primary and other ages of children in terms of government priorities. Most candidates supported the global provision of free education for all; however, a minority argued that other forms of social service were more important, for example health or defence.

The strongest answers gave several carefully explained reasons in support of their argument. Weaker responses often simply stated one reason without development.

Most candidates answered this question quite well.

Question 2

- (a) Candidates who performed well in this question described several methods, sources and types of evidence that could be used to test the claim about learning and the media. These were carefully explained and related to the aim of the research. Candidates tended to describe interviews with parents, children and teachers, or finding relevant information from experts in the field, or by internet research.

The strongest responses provided clearly reasoned, credible and structured explanation for their suggestions; weaker responses often simply stated a method or source of evidence but did not explain it fully or make the link to the claim being tested.

A few candidates responded to the question by describing their personal opinion about the issue rather than describing how it could be researched.

- (b) Candidates were asked to evaluate the potential effectiveness of additional support for learning by after school tuition. Most candidates discussed the potential impact of increased educational provision for young people and children, and the pressures that might be created by more lessons after school for both teachers and learners. Issues of quality were also discussed quite frequently.

The strongest responses provided several clearly explained reasons for their opinion about the issue. Weaker responses tended to assert and provide little evidence or reasoning to support their opinion. Overall, there were a good range of carefully considered and clearly explained responses to the question which demonstrated a thoughtful and credible response to the problem.

Question 3

- (a) The majority of candidates correctly identified a value judgement from the Source Material; many were able to explain their selection to reveal understanding of the nature of value judgements. A common error was simply to describe a judgement rather than a judgement based upon values.

Centres are encouraged to give candidates frequent opportunity to practise the identification and explanation of different parts of arguments using source material in preparation for the examination.

- (b) The majority of candidates correctly identified a fact from the Source; many were able to explain their selection to reveal understanding of the nature of facts, effectively referring to verification and information that could be proved to be true.

Centres are encouraged to give candidates frequent opportunity to practise the identification and explanation of different parts of arguments using source material in preparation for the examination.

- (c) In comparing the effectiveness of the reasoning in the two statements candidates tended to consider the knowledge claims, ability to see and quality/quantity of the evidence presented.

Most candidates suggested that Adam had the most effective reasoning in comparison to Nathalie, primarily due to his involvement in the conference and use of factual research evidence from UNESCO. In contrast Nathalie was often criticised for using anecdotal evidence and personal opinion. Most candidates explicitly referred to the sources and quoted to provide evidence for their judgements.

Responses at the highest levels contained well supported judgements about the arguments with a clear assessment of the reasoning in both statements; this included coherent, structured evaluation of how well the argument worked with a focus on evaluation of reasons and evidence, with a range of points about knowledge claims, values and use of evidence. These responses were usually balanced with a clear conclusion about the relative effectiveness of the arguments. These candidates tended to use the guidance given in the question to plan and structure their responses.

At the lower levels of response, the discussion was unlikely to be supported and tended to be mainly asserted with little clarity of argument. These answers tended to focus on the opinions expressed in the statements rather than the quality of the reasoning and evidence presented in the argument. There was little overt evaluation at the lowest levels of response.

A common error was to discuss only one of the statements and not to make a direct comparison of both statements.

Question 4

In this question, candidates were asked to justify their opinion about an issue using material drawn from the Sources and their own experience and learning. Most candidates argued in favour of the provision of free education for all children being a priority for governments. Some candidates argued that alternative provision, like health and defence, should be a higher priority.

Responses at the highest levels tended to have well supported, logical reasoning and make clear judgements about the issue; this included coherent, structured argument and evaluation of different perspectives. A clear, balanced assessment or conclusion was also reached.

Responses at the lower level tended to be generalised, lack relevance to the issue and focus on the benefits of education in general. Arguments tended to be unsupported and asserted.

Candidates should be encouraged to give reasons and evidence to support their opinions.