

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 0457/01
Individual Research

Key Messages

- Candidates should produce two Individual Research reports with a question as a title for each report. The reports need to be word documents to check word counts. Multimedia should be avoided for this component.
- Sub-headings linked to the assessment criteria within the reports help candidates structure their reports.
- Assessors should add notes linked to the assessment criteria to the Individual Candidate Record Cards (ICRCs) as this helps when marking and moderating.
- For each candidate, Centres need to submit the work and the completed ICRC. The Centre needs to also include the MS1 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 as indicated in the guide to Centres.

General Comments

Centres are becoming more familiar with the expectations for this component. However, some Centres seem to be confusing the Individual Research reports with the Group Project. Teachers should pay close attention to guidance on what candidates should produce for each component. They should ensure they read the Moderator's Report to Centres and take part in any training provided by Cambridge International Examinations. 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.

The majority of candidates used questions to focus their research and their reports, although some did not and this made the reports less focused. It was clear that some Centres allowed candidates to choose their own questions, whilst others were more prescribed. Please note that whilst candidates may choose the same topic area as their peers, the questions should be different and should allow consideration of different perspectives; global, national/local and personal. Cross-cultural collaboration is not a requirement for this component.

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 law and criminality does not really allow for 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, belief systems, biodiversity and ecosystem loss, family, and humans and other species.

Unfortunately, some candidates are still exceeding the word count of 1500–2000 words as specified in the syllabus. Centres are asked to advise candidates to produce their work as word documents so this can be checked, and they 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.

Centres will appreciate that the work produced must reflect the assessment criteria and should be written in continuous prose. Some candidates are under the impression that they should provide primary evidence, which is unnecessary. They do not need to submit a plan, rationale or outcome for the Individual Research, only for the Group Project. The only requirements for the Individual Research are that candidates produce and submit two Individual Research reports. There should also be a completed Individual Candidate Record Card for each candidate and a Coursework Summary Assessment Form and MS1 for each candidate within a Centre that has submitted work for this component. It is helpful if each question is written in the space provided on the ICRC and that there are comments linked to the assessment criteria to help with marking and moderation.

Comments on Specific Questions

Teacher assessment

In general, Assessors tended towards over marking this component and need to look more carefully at the requirements of Band 4 for each of the four criteria. Where an Individual Research report meets the assessment criteria fully, marks within Band 4 were awarded. Where there is limited information for one of the criteria, candidates were given marks in Band 1. 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 should be awarded.

Gather information representing different perspectives

The majority of candidates were able to gather and present more than a limited range of information linked to the topic area and this usually came from a range of sources, which were usually well referenced.

Centres should advise candidates that as well as mentioning other countries in their studies, they should also be considering the perspectives of individuals or groups related to the research. The best reports go beyond simply naming countries to providing an indication of what these countries, as well as groups and individuals within them, think about the issue under investigation. All work must be written in the candidate's own words or quoted directly and all sources must be acknowledged to avoid any suspicion of plagiarism. 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 and candidates should be encouraged to use more appropriate sources.

Analyse issues within the report

Only the more successful reports managed to evaluate thoroughly this series and these tended to cover fewer issues in depth rather than simply present a variety of unrelated issues. Less successful reports were likely to list causes and effects with little explanation.

Identify and evaluate possible scenarios and formulate possible courses of action

Many candidates remain unsure what is meant by possible scenarios and how they should be generated. The scenarios presented often already exist and so candidates need to apply more creative thinking to possible scenarios. A meaningful question to be asked to identify possible scenarios could be, 'What would happen if...?' Candidates then need to evaluate the likelihood of this 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. Where candidates had thought about possible scenarios, they often did not consider the likelihood of these scenarios. Courses of action were also only well developed in the most successful reports.

Develop evidence-based personal response demonstrating self-awareness

Candidates who successfully fulfilled this criterion 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. Better 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.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 0457/02

Group Project

Key Messages

- Project plans should state a clear aim for the project and the specific, active outcome by which this aim is to be achieved. A project outcome is something that is actually produced, designed, carried out, etc. General reports or case studies that simply present information about the topic are not appropriate outcomes for the group project component.
- Projects must show evidence that cross-cultural collaboration has taken place, either with people overseas, or with people from a different community/culture within the home country. The findings from cross-cultural collaboration should then be used to inform or underpin the project outcome.
- Unlike the Individual Research component, 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 addition, candidates do **not** need to consider future scenarios and courses of action in the project component.
- Individual Evaluations need to be divided into three 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.
- Teacher assessors need to ensure that they provide some supporting comments to indicate how/where credit has been given for each of the assessment criteria on the Individual Candidate Record Cards.

General Comments

There were some interesting topics chosen for this examination series. These included projects on: Dengue Fever, school curricula, young smokers and issues relating to employment and levels of job satisfaction. While there were a number of specific and active project outcomes such as video-clips, posters, web-pages, there were also outcomes that were not appropriate for this component, i.e. reports communicating the group's analysis of an issue researched.

Comments on Candidate Response to Assessment Criteria

Production of a project plan

[Group assessment]

Most candidates managed to produce a project plan but some were clearer and more detailed than others. It is important that candidates articulate a specific aim for their project which involves a course of action, e.g. to spread awareness about an issue, or to solve a problem in the community, etc. Some aims were too vague, e.g. 'we want to learn more about/increase our awareness of...' Such an aim is not helpful when it comes to individual candidates within the group evaluating how far their project outcome has achieved the project's aim. As mentioned in the key messages above, outcomes need to be specific, active and actually carried out. Candidates would be well advised to identify a single aim for their projects and a single project outcome in order to allow for in-depth critical evaluation of the success or otherwise of the outcome in achieving the project aim.

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

[Group assessment]

There was some very sound evidence of cross-cultural collaboration and this was sometimes put to good use in the development of the project outcome. It is important that candidates realise that cross-cultural collaboration is not an end in itself. Rather, the information gathered from this collaboration should be used to support the development of the project outcome and, where possible, be reflected in the outcome itself.

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]

Strong evaluations were characterised by their in-depth critical consideration of both the strengths and weaknesses in the project plan **and** the process of carrying out the project, including the research process and activities undertaken in developing/producing the outcome. This strong, critical consideration was then followed by carefully thought-out **suggestions for improvement to both the plan and process**. Weaker evaluations were characterised by candidates' tendency to describe how things were done, rather than to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of what was done, how and why. In the different sections of their evaluations, candidates need to be advised about what constitutes evaluation of project plan and what constitutes evaluation of project process.

Evaluation of project outcome

[Individual assessment]

In strong evaluations of the project outcome, it was clear that candidates had given some consideration as to how they might judge the success or otherwise of the outcome in achieving the project aim. Weaker evaluations tended to be descriptive in nature and lacking in depth, with little reference to the project aims. Candidate groups should be advised that having a very clear project aim and a concrete and active project outcome will help group members maximise their chances of scoring well in their individual evaluations of the project outcome.

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

[Individual assessment]

All candidates were able to discuss their own contribution to the project, though the better evaluations were balanced, with consideration of personal weakness and how personal performance could have been improved as well as of positive contribution. Candidates need to be aware that they should consider both the benefits and challenges of working as a group, as opposed to working on an individual basis. Very strong evaluations were generally characterised by the quality of their reflection on cross-cultural collaboration. This was generally because the cross-cultural collaboration that the group had engaged in was meaningful and highly relevant to the project, thus providing individual group members with a rich source from which they could draw their comments on the learning experience. In weaker evaluations, candidates struggled to find a great deal to say about their learning from the cross-cultural collaborative experience, either because the group had relied entirely on their peers in the school setting for their collaboration, or because their collaboration consisted solely of survey questionnaires sent randomly to overseas recipients. Candidates need to be advised that cross-cultural collaboration should play a key role in developing their project outcome.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 0457/32

Written Paper

Key Messages

- Candidates performed well in the analysis and interpretation of information and evidence.
- Many candidates were able to use reasons and evidence effectively to support their own views and opinions.
- Developing the skills of evaluation of reasoning and evidence through regular review of sources would be valuable.
- Candidates' performance continues to improve overall.

General Comments

There were approximately 50 candidates entered for this IGCSE Global Perspectives Written Paper in March 2015. Internationally and throughout the year, for all examination sessions, interest in the syllabus is growing and more Centres are entering candidates for the qualification.

The quality of work and levels of achievement continue to be good; candidates and Centres are to be congratulated on their improving achievements. Many candidates seem to enjoy exploring different perspectives about global issues and appreciate the complexity of change, carefully considering different courses of action. They are clearly developing a critical awareness of the world in which they live.

Similarly, many candidates are also learning to reflect upon their own perspectives and to consider the implications of global issues for their personal beliefs, values and lifestyle. From the evidence of the examination scripts, the aims of the syllabus are being fulfilled well.

The paper was based upon several contrasting pieces of source material related to the issue of environmental damage and global warming. Within this context, the paper was designed to test candidates' ability to:

- identify and explore different perspectives on global issues
- analyse and interpret information and evidence
- identify gaps in evidence and suggest new lines of enquiry
- develop reasoning and provide evidence to justify points of view
- evaluate evidence and arguments.

From the evidence of candidate responses, the source material and questions were easily understood and accessible to candidates of all abilities. The vast majority of candidates were able to respond to the questions appropriately and demonstrate positive achievement. The paper also differentiated successfully.

Candidates responded enthusiastically to the Source Material, especially in the extended response questions. Candidates generally revealed an appreciation of different perspectives on global issues, particularly in relation to environmental degradation and global warming. Candidates had clearly undertaken stimulating, well designed courses that were helpful in developing the skills to be tested.

In general, the questions were answered well and there were some excellent responses to all of the questions. In particular, most candidates were able to demonstrate high levels of ability when analysing information and evidence from within the sources. Similarly, candidates were able to identify evidence and suggest further lines of enquiry to support decision making and test claims about environmental action. These skills were tested mainly in **Questions 1 and 2**. However, evaluating other perspectives, evidence and reasoning continues to be more challenging for some candidates.

Examination technique was generally good. Candidates seemed to have sufficient time for the tasks. The vast majority completed all of the questions within the time allocated. There were no rubric errors of note.

To improve performance further, candidates should be encouraged to:

- give clear reasons and evidence to support an opinion or argument
- avoid simple assertion, opinion and anecdotal evidence
- explain their answers fully by giving a range of reasons for their point of view
- evaluate reasoning and evidence by referring to both strengths and weaknesses
- practice the analysis and evaluation of sources on a regular basis
- apply key concepts in critical thinking and research, for example bias, reliability and expertise.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1(a)

Candidates were asked to identify two ways that humans are damaging the environment from the source material. Candidates usually identified the following ways:

- littering
- replacing greenery with concrete
- deforestation/tree felling
- putting chemicals in food
- destroying agriculture
- driving cars and polluting the atmosphere with fumes
- overfishing
- oil spills
- coal mining.

Candidates were awarded marks for uses that were linked in some way to the source. The vast majority of candidates correctly identified two ways and were awarded maximum marks.

Question 1(b)

Candidates were asked to explain, in their opinion, which way humans cause damage to the environment was the most serious. They were expected to give several reasons or some evidence for their opinion. Candidates usually gave the following types of reasons to justify their choice:

- possible further consequences or effects
- degree of impact/seriousness for individuals/countries/world
- how many people/groups/countries are affected
- increasing cycle of decline/damage
- how widespread the problem is
- how easy to solve
- effects on natural world
- impact on human ways of life and culture.

The strongest answers provided several clear reasons why one way is more likely to contribute to environmental damage than others; this often involved directly comparing the selected way with one or more other ways. Weaker responses often simply stated the way or did not link the reasons explicitly to environmental damage.

Most candidates answered this question very well.

Question 1(c)

Candidates were asked to identify and explain one possible consequence of the environmental damage caused by humans. Candidates usually identified the following types of consequences:

- global warming and climate change
- pollution and loss of biodiversity

- land based drilling for oil displaces local species and, in remote regions, requires that roads be built out of dense forest, causing deforestation
- marine drilling and shipping results in spills like the BP Gulf of Mexico catastrophe
- overfishing affects supply of fish and could result in loss of species
- cars/vehicles cause pollution by emitting CO₂ into the atmosphere.

Candidates were expected to explain the possible consequence and tended to refer to the following:

- reason for consequence
- degree of impact/seriousness for individuals/groups/nations/world
- how many people/groups/countries are affected
- increasing cycle of cause/effect/damage
- how widespread the problem is
- how easy to solve.

Candidates were only awarded marks for consequences that were linked in some way to the source.

Candidates achieving at higher levels tended to identify a consequence and provide a clearly reasoned, credible and structured explanation. Candidates achieving at the lower levels tended to provide some weak explanation.

The vast majority of candidates correctly identified a consequence and provided some explanation.

Question 1(d)

Candidates were asked to explain one possible course of action an individual might take to reduce the damage caused to the environment. They were expected to give several reasons or some evidence for their opinion. Candidates usually discussed the following actions:

- stop littering
- use recycling outlets
- use bins on the streets
- take bottles and bags back to supermarkets
- raise awareness amongst friends/family
- use less fuel
- suggest parents buy smaller car
- careful use of products to buy/consume to avoid waste.

The strongest answers provided clearly reasoned, credible and structured explanation for their course of action; weaker responses often simply stated the action but did not explain it fully.

Most candidates answered this question very well.

Question 2(a)

Candidates were expected to make a suggestion about what type of additional information they would need to help them to make a decision about whether or not to join a campaign to help clean up the environment.

This question is designed to test candidates' ability to identify information and evidence and suggest further lines of enquiry to gather background material to support decision making about an issue or action.

The strongest responses tended to suggest information that was clearly related to the issue of whether or not to join the campaign, for example about activities, costs and accessibility. Weaker responses tended to suggest information that was only tangentially related to the issue, for example about taking action in general.

Candidates were also asked to explain how the information gained from the answer to the question would help them to make a decision about joining the campaign. The strongest responses tended to clearly describe the way that the information was linked to the campaign to improve the environment and how it would help them in the decision-making process. Weaker responses tended to simply describe the type of information in more detail and not link the information to decision-making, or simply to describe their own opinion about the environment and pollution in an asserted way.

The most common responses suggested the following types of information:

- when the event was taking place/the date
- what the campaign involved/activities/type of action
- what materials were needed – resources, equipment, clothing
- how to apply/join
- where the event was taking place/the location
- the effectiveness of the organisation/past campaigns
- guidelines on health and safety issues.

The most effective form of argument took the form of, ‘if we have this information...then it would help us to make a decision about joining the campaign because...’

The vast majority of candidates were able to identify some information or evidence that was relevant to the decision making process. Most candidates were able to describe the general relevance of the information; however, only the most successful candidates explicitly linked the information to the decision making process.

Question 2(b)

Candidates were expected to consider the types of information, sources of evidence and methods that could be used to test the claim that an organisation’s campaign was making a difference to the environment.

This question was designed to test candidates’ ability to identify evidence and suggest further lines of enquiry about global issues and related action.

The strongest responses tended to suggest information, evidence and sources that were clearly related to the issue about the environmental impact of the campaign. Weaker responses tended to suggest information that was only tangentially related to the issue, for example about the environment in general.

The most common responses suggested the following types of information, evidence and methods:

- types of information:
 - compare statistics/factual information on the work and impact of the campaign on the environment
 - interview or questionnaire data
 - expert testimony
 - material from international NGOs, governments and pressure groups
- sources of Information:
 - national and local governments and their departments
 - international organisations, e.g. United Nations, UNESCO
 - environmental experts
 - research reports
 - pressure groups, charities and NGOs
 - media and worldwide web
- methods:
 - review of secondary sources/literature/research/documents
 - research into budgets for the environment
 - review of government statistics on environmental impact
 - interview relevant experts and doctors
 - internet search.

Responses at the higher levels of response fully described information, evidence and sources that were clearly relevant to the issue supported by clear, reasoned and developed explanation of how the information may be used to help test the claim. Responses at the lower levels tended to be partial, generalised or lack clarity.

Question 3(a)

Candidates were expected to identify a value judgement in Stefan's blog and explain their selection.

The following value judgements were likely to be found by candidates in the blog:

- 'they are lazy'
- 'they just don't care about global warming'
- 'it's just not right'.

A value judgement is usually regarded as a view or decision about the desirability of something based on beliefs. It usually considers the fairness or morality of something.

The strongest responses gave clear explanation of why the statement is a value judgement showing good understanding of the nature of value judgements. Weaker responses tended to identify a value judgement from the blog successfully but did not clearly explain the reason why it was a value judgement.

The vast majority of candidates correctly identified a value judgement; most were able to explain their choice effectively and revealed understanding of the nature of value judgements.

Question 3(b)

Candidates were expected to identify a prediction in Juan's blog, and explain their selection, saying why it was a prediction.

The following examples of predictions could be found in Juan's blog:

- because of nature it (global warming) will continue and get worse

A prediction is usually defined as an assertion or statement about what might happen at some point in the future: something that is forecast in advance.

The strongest responses gave clear explanation of why the statement is a prediction, showing good understanding of the nature of predictions. Weaker responses tended to identify a prediction from the statement successfully, but did not clearly explain the reason why it was a prediction.

The vast majority of candidates correctly identified a prediction; the majority were able to explain their choice effectively to reveal understanding of the nature of predictions.

Question 3(c)

Candidates were asked to compare the arguments in Stefan's and Juan's blogs about global warming. Candidates were expected to make a supported judgement about the effectiveness of the reasoning and evidence. The question was designed to test candidates' ability to evaluate the reasons and evidence used to support an argument. In responding, candidates were encouraged to support their own answers with the words and phrases in the blogs and to consider:

- the strength of the knowledge claims
- the reliability and validity of any evidence
- how logical the reasoning is
- other relevant issues.

Candidates tended to discuss the following types of issue:

- quality of the argument
 - clarity
 - tone – emotive, exaggerated, precise
 - language
 - balance
- quality of the evidence
 - relevance
 - sufficiency – range/type/depth/detail
 - source

- date – how recent
- factual, opinion, value, anecdote
- testimony – from experience and expert
- knowledge claims
- sources of bias
- likelihood of claims and consequences of their ideas
- acceptability of the values to others
 - how likely other people are to agree with their perspective/view.

Responses at the highest levels contained well supported judgements about the arguments, with a clear assessment of the value of the argument in the statements; this included coherent, structured evaluation of how well the argument worked with a focus on evaluation of issues, reasons and evidence, with a range of points about knowledge claims, consequences and values. These responses were usually balanced with a clear conclusion about 'whose argument was the most reasonable'. The blogs were also explicitly quoted and used directly in the response.

At the lower levels of response the discussion was unlikely to be supported and mainly asserted with little clarity of argument. These answers tended to focus on issues rather than reasons, knowledge claims, evidence, consequences or values. There was little overt evaluation at the lowest levels of response. The blogs were rarely used directly or quoted in these responses.

Candidates found this question quite challenging. Centres are encouraged to give candidates opportunities to evaluate reasons and evidence in arguments for a range of purposes during their courses in order to prepare for this type of question. Some key concepts in the evaluation of evidence and argument to consider would be:

- validity
- reliability
- bias
- authority
- expertise
- source of evidence
- sufficiency of evidence
- facts
- opinion
- assertion
- values
- beliefs
- quality of reasoning/argument
- use and tone of language.

Question 4

In this question, candidates were expected to discuss whether or not global, local or individual action was most likely to reduce global warming. Candidates were expected to use the material found in the sources, but go beyond simply repeating or recycling this material without further development. Other material may also be used but it was not necessary to gain full marks.

The arguments used by candidates to consider the effectiveness of actions to reduce global warming tended to include:

- reference to scale of impact on individual/group/governmental/global behaviour and actions
- how long it takes to make a difference
- the effects of cultural differences and beliefs
- barriers to change
- the power of collective action
- the difficulties of changing individual behaviour
- the influence of individuals and groups acting locally
- the role of vested interests and power
- potential conflict
- difficulties in coordinating globally and across different countries with independence
- cost and access to resources to implement change
- governmental responses and action

- examples and evidence from personal experience

Responses at the highest levels tended to have well supported, logical reasoning, and make clear judgements about the effectiveness of different levels and types of action to reduce global warming; this included coherent, structured argument and evaluation. 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 issues of global warming in general. Arguments tended to be unsupported and asserted.

In preparation for this type of question, Centres are encouraged to give candidates regular opportunities to write extended essays in which they contrast and compare different perspectives on an issue. In so doing, candidates need to analyse and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the reasons and evidence for the perspective. Candidates also need to be able to describe and explain the reasons and evidence that have helped to shape their own points of view on global issues.