



**Cambridge Assessment  
International Education**

**Cambridge  
International  
AS & A Level**

# **SYLLABUS**

**Cambridge International AS & A Level  
Global Perspectives & Research**

**9239**

For examination in June and November 2020 and 2021.  
Also available for examination in March 2020 and 2021  
for India only.

### Changes to the syllabus for 2020 and 2021

The latest syllabus is version 2, published December 2018

Assessment

The mark scheme for Component 2 is changed (see Subject page for this syllabus at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/9239](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/9239) for more information).

#### **Previous version of this syllabus, published September 2017.**

There are no significant changes which affect teaching.

**You are strongly advised to read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.**

**Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2017–2019 are still suitable for use with this syllabus.**

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## Welcome

Cambridge International AS & A Level Global Perspectives encourages students to explore their subject in depth. The syllabus has been designed, in consultation with teachers and universities, to help students develop not only subject knowledge, but also a strong understanding of some of the key concepts that are critical to mastering the subject.

All our syllabuses are reviewed and updated regularly so that they reflect the latest thinking of international experts and practitioners, and take account of the different national contexts in which they are taught. Consultation is an important part of the way we develop our syllabuses.

### Consulting teachers

Teachers at Cambridge schools worldwide help us to shape our Cambridge International AS & A Level syllabuses. The feedback contributes to the development of syllabus content, assessments and support materials. Consulting teachers ensures that our materials are designed carefully around their needs and the needs of their students.

### Consulting universities

Like teachers, universities help to shape our Cambridge International AS & A Level syllabuses. We consult with leading higher education institutions to make sure the syllabuses encourage students to get a firm grasp of the subject's key concepts and develop the skills necessary for success at university.

### Key concepts

Key concepts are essential ideas, theories, principles or mental tools that help learners to develop a deep understanding of their subject and make links between the different topics. The key concepts that this syllabus is designed to develop are deconstruction, reconstruction, reflection, and communication and collaboration. These are developed within the unifying concept of the Critical Path, as detailed in section 3. The Critical Path is at the heart of Global Perspectives & Research. The teaching support package helps teachers integrate the key concepts into their teaching, showing how they fit into the overall syllabus and suggesting ways to teach them with each topic.

### Teacher support

Our comprehensive teacher support will help you deliver the syllabus confidently and effectively. The support includes resources for teaching and learning as well as exam preparation. The teaching support package helps teachers integrate the key concepts into their teaching, showing how they fit into the overall syllabus and suggesting ways to teach them with each topic. Learn more on page 8.

“ Cambridge International AS and A Levels prepare students well for university because they've learnt to go into a subject in considerable depth. There's that ability to really understand the depth and richness and the detail of a subject. It's a wonderful preparation for what they are going to face at university. ”

Christoph Guttentag, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, Duke University, USA

## Why choose Cambridge Assessment International Education?

Cambridge Assessment International Education prepares school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. We are part of the University of Cambridge.

Our international qualifications are recognised by the world's best universities and employers, giving students a wide range of options in their education and career. As a not-for-profit organisation, we devote our resources to delivering high-quality educational programmes that can unlock learners' potential.

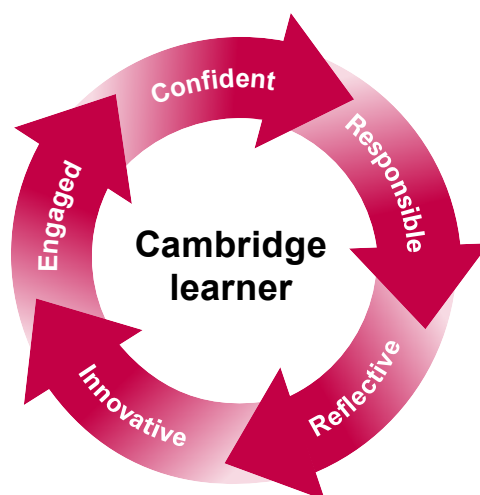
Our programmes and qualifications set the global standard for international education. They are created by subject experts, rooted in academic rigour and reflect the latest educational research. They provide a strong platform for students to progress from one stage to the next, and are well supported by teaching and learning resources.

Every year, nearly a million Cambridge learners from 10 000 schools in 160 countries prepare for their future with an international education from Cambridge International.

### Cambridge learners

Our mission is to provide educational benefit through provision of international programmes and qualifications for school education and to be the world leader in this field. Together with schools, we develop Cambridge learners who are:

- **confident** in working with information and ideas – their own and those of others
- **responsible** for themselves, responsive to and respectful of others
- **reflective** as learners, developing their ability to learn
- **innovative** and equipped for new and future challenges
- **engaged** intellectually and socially ready to make a difference.



**Learn more** about the Cambridge learner attributes in Chapter 2 of our *Implementing the curriculum with Cambridge* guide at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/curriculumguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/curriculumguide)

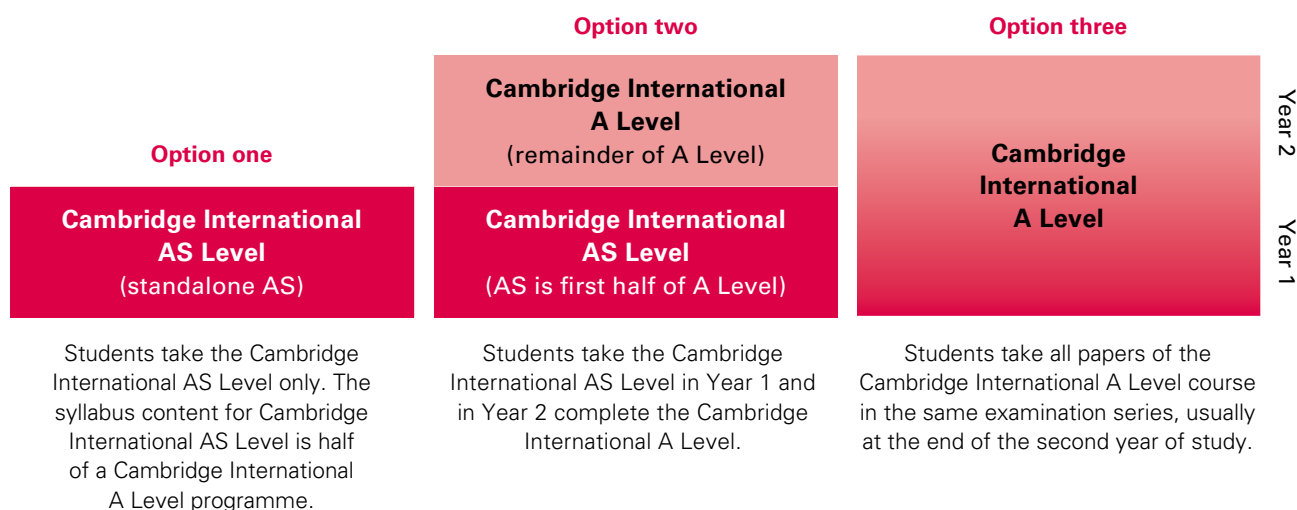
## Why Cambridge International AS & A Levels?

Cambridge International AS & A Levels are international in outlook, but retain a local relevance. The syllabuses provide opportunities for contextualised learning and the content has been created to suit a wide variety of schools, avoid cultural bias and develop essential lifelong skills, including creative thinking and problem-solving.

Our aim is to balance knowledge, understanding and skills in our qualifications to enable students to become effective learners and to provide a solid foundation for their continuing educational journey. Cambridge International AS & A Levels give students building blocks for an individualised curriculum that develops their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Cambridge International AS & A Level curricula are flexible. It is possible to offer almost any combination from a wide range of subjects. Cambridge International A Level is typically a two-year course, and Cambridge International AS Level is typically one year. Some subjects can be started as a Cambridge International AS Level and extended to a Cambridge International A Level.

There are three possible assessment approaches for Cambridge International AS & A Level:



Every year thousands of students with Cambridge International AS & A Levels gain places at leading universities worldwide. Cambridge International AS & A Levels are accepted across 195 countries. They are valued by top universities around the world including those in the UK, US (including Ivy League universities), European nations, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. Learners should check the university website for specific entry requirements before applying.

### Did you know?

In some countries universities accept Cambridge International AS Levels in their own right as qualifications counting towards entry to courses in the same or other related subjects. Many students who take Cambridge International AS Levels also choose to progress to Cambridge International A Level.

### Learn more

For more details go to [www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition)

## Why Cambridge International AS & A Level Global Perspectives & Research

It is widely recognised that we live in an increasingly digitised and inter-connected world. The means by which we access information and the pace with which this takes place are profoundly changing the way we learn, communicate and work. Increasingly, young people are faced with access to a multiplicity of competing ideas. In such an information-rich society, young people need the skills and dispositions to be able to think critically. In the broadest sense this means that they need to: deconstruct arguments, differentiate between the ways in which people express their perspectives, views and arguments, assess and evaluate claims and develop strong lines of reasoning. This will ensure that the learner has the twenty-first century skills to communicate and collaborate in today's society.

### About the syllabus

#### Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research

Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research aims to encourage young people to think about and explore issues of global significance. Studying this syllabus will appeal to young people because it enables them to explore and make judgements about global issues of relevance and importance to their own lives. It offers learners opportunities to acquire, develop and apply skills in critical thinking, problem-solving, research, communication and collaboration. In short, this course encourages the development within young people of global competency – the ability to define a global problem, reflect and take action.

This syllabus is firmly based on skills rather than specific content. Through the study of a range of global issues, learners will explore different and sometimes opposing perspectives. Recognising these perspectives will help to nurture a climate of cross-cultural awareness and promote cultural agility.

Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research encourages transformative learning, whereby learners become more aware of their own beliefs and assumptions and more able to be self-critical. This leads to an increased willingness to modify their standpoints and be open to different views and ways of thinking. In short, this course will develop learners who are capable of understanding, assessing and taking action on global issues with competence and confidence.

By studying this course learners will develop research skills that will enable them to obtain information, evaluate its reliability and usefulness and use the evidence gathered to construct their own arguments and lines of reasoning.

Through well-defined stages, called the Critical Path, learners will be encouraged to apply a logical approach to thinking and reasoning. By following this path, they will be able to analyse the structure and context of arguments, assess the impact and limitations of evidence and make well-reasoned judgements. Learners will build skills in organising and communicating their findings in appropriate multimedia formats.

By developing thinking and reasoning skills, as well as research and communication skills, Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research will enable learners to meet the demands of the twenty-first century and to make a successful transition to higher education, employment and lifelong learning.

## Cambridge International A Level Global Perspectives & Research

Cambridge International A Level Global Perspectives & Research provides learners with the opportunity to further develop their research skills through the in-depth study of an academic topic of their own choice. Learners should be supported in identifying a suitable research topic, devising and developing an appropriate research question and engaging fully in the research process. As such this syllabus builds on the higher-order thinking skills of analysis, evaluation and synthesis but focuses primarily on developing learners' research and communication skills.

Learners who have completed Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research can therefore embark with confidence on the A Level syllabus, having already developed the skills involved in identifying questions, locating and evaluating sources and perspectives, and setting out a realistic and meaningful research agenda. The Critical Path provides learners with the skills and aptitudes to be successful in both AS and A Level Global Perspectives & Research.

Through constructing a research report, A Level learners are offered the opportunity to apply the tools for independent, proactive, interdisciplinary study. They may engage more deeply in a chosen specialism and may make a new departure with a study in a non-school subject, perhaps one that they plan to read at university. Learners are encouraged to cross academic boundaries with an interdisciplinary enquiry.

Cambridge International A Level Global Perspectives & Research encourages critical and creative thinking, with communication an important culminating feature of the process. By taking forward the emphasis on an interdisciplinary, independent and reflective approach, and by building on an awareness of the issues involved in setting up a research proposal, identifying an appropriate question, and undertaking a literature review or its equivalent, learners are well placed to make a successful transition to higher education, employment and lifelong learning.

### Guided learning hours

Guided learning hours give an indication of the amount of contact time teachers need to have with learners to deliver a particular course. Our syllabuses are designed around 180 guided learning hours for Cambridge International AS Level, and around 360 guided learning hours for Cambridge International A Level.

These figures are for guidance only. The number of hours needed to gain the qualification may vary depending on local practice and the learners' previous experience of the subject.

### Prior learning

Cambridge International AS and A Level Global Perspectives & Research builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills typically gained by candidates taking Level 2 qualifications. We recommend that learners who are beginning this course have attained communication and literacy skills at a level equivalent to IGCSE™/GCSE Grade C in English.

### Progression

#### Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research

Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research is the first part of Cambridge International AS and A Level Global Perspectives & Research.

Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research develops a range of transferable skills independent of specific subject content. The syllabus enables candidates to develop a better understanding of the world through interdisciplinary study. By following the course, they will approach other subjects with an improved ability to analyse, evaluate and reflect on issues and reasoning. Studying Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research will prepare young people for a wide range of careers, including law, scientific research, social science, journalism, education, medicine, business,



accounting and engineering. As a curriculum subject, Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research enables candidates to think critically, to reason in a disciplined way and to communicate effectively.

Depending on local university entrance requirements, Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research may permit or assist progression directly to university courses in a range of subjects.

### Cambridge International A Level Global Perspectives & Research

Cambridge International A Level Global Perspectives & Research is the second part of Cambridge International AS and A Level Global Perspectives & Research.

Cambridge International A Level Global Perspectives & Research develops in candidates the ability in learning how to learn. It provides them with tools and aptitudes for independent, proactive, interdisciplinary study. The syllabus will equip candidates with a coherent theoretical and practical basis of transferable skills and key knowledge suitable for future careers, including law, scientific research, medicine and academic research. As a curriculum subject, Cambridge International A Level Global Perspectives & Research enables candidates to reason critically and creatively and to communicate effectively.

Depending on local university entrance requirements, Cambridge International A Level Global Perspectives & Research may permit or assist progression directly to university courses in a range of subjects.

We recommend learners check the Cambridge recognitions database and the university websites to find the most up-to-date entry requirements for courses they wish to study.

#### How can I find out more?

##### If you are already a Cambridge school

You can make entries for this qualification through your usual channels. If you have any questions, please contact us at [info@cambridgeinternational.org](mailto:info@cambridgeinternational.org)

##### If you are not yet a Cambridge school

Learn more about the benefits of becoming a Cambridge school from our website at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/startcambridge](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/startcambridge)

Email us at [info@cambridgeinternational.org](mailto:info@cambridgeinternational.org) to find out how your organisation can register to become a Cambridge school.

## Cambridge AICE

Cambridge AICE Diploma is the group award of the Cambridge International AS & A Level. It gives schools the opportunity to benefit from offering a broad and balanced curriculum by recognising the achievements of candidates who pass examinations from different curriculum groups.

#### Learn more

For more details go to [www.cambridgeinternational.org/aice](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/aice)

“ Our research has shown that students who came to the university with a Cambridge AICE background performed better than anyone else that came to the university. That really wasn't surprising considering the emphasis they have on critical research and analysis, and that's what we require at university. ”

John Barnhill, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management, Florida State University, USA

## Teacher support

We offer a wide range of practical and innovative support to help teachers plan and deliver our programmes and qualifications confidently.

The support package for our Cambridge International AS & A Levels will help teachers integrate key concepts into their teaching, showing how they fit into the overall syllabus and suggesting ways to teach them within each topic. It also gives teachers access to a worldwide teaching community enabling them to connect with other teachers, swap ideas and share best practice.

We offer a customised support package for each subject. Find out more about the specific support for this syllabus at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/gpr](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/gpr)

### Teaching and learning

- Support materials provide teachers with ideas and planning resources for their lessons.
- Endorsed textbooks, ebooks and digital resources are produced by leading publishers. We have quality checked these materials to make sure they provide a high level of support for teachers and learners.
- Resource lists to help support teaching, including textbooks and websites.

### Exam preparation

- Past question papers and mark schemes so teachers can give learners the opportunity to practise answering different questions.
- Example candidate responses help teachers understand exactly what examiners are looking for.
- Principal examiner reports describing learners' overall performance on each part of the papers. The reports give insight into common misconceptions shown by learners, which teachers can address in lessons.

## Cambridge International AS & A Level support for teachers

### Professional development

#### Face-to-face training

We hold workshops around the world to support teachers in delivering Cambridge syllabuses and developing their skills.

#### Online training

We offer self-study and tutor-led online training courses via our virtual learning environment. A wide range of syllabus-specific courses and skills courses is available. We also offer training via video conference and webinars.

#### Qualifications

We offer a wide range of practice-based qualifications at Certificate and Diploma level, providing a framework for continuing professional development.

### Learn more

Find out more about support for this syllabus at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/alevel](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/alevel)

Visit our online resource bank and discussion forum at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/support](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/support)

You can find useful information, as well as share your ideas and experiences with other teachers, on our social media channels and community forums.

Find out more at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/social-media](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/social-media)

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# 1 Syllabus overview

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## 1.1 A skills-based approach

### Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research

Learners engage with a variety of sources of information and interact in class, focusing on particular global issues.

Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research is based on **skills** rather than on specific content. Learners develop skills in research, critical thinking, reasoning, problem-solving and communication by following an approach to analysing and evaluating arguments and perspectives called the Critical Path. This is an approach to learning designed to enhance skills in carrying out research, the analysis and evaluation of evidence and arguments, holistic reflection and communication. Collaboration skills are enhanced through participation in a **team project**.

As this is a skills-based course, teaching and learning are likely to involve learners in researching current global affairs using a wide variety of media formats such as newspapers, websites, academic journal articles, podcasts and books. Having researched and identified relevant materials, learners engage with the issues they raise and interpret and evaluate the arguments through activities such as class discussions, role play, presentations and group-based tasks.

The course is based on the premise that investigating global issues through a variety of different perspectives will help increase learner awareness of the world around them. The syllabus provides a wide array of global topics from which learners choose to study those most pertinent to their own interests and areas of expertise.

### Cambridge International A Level Global Perspectives & Research

Learners study for the AS Level before studying for the A Level. They build on their work in Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research through carrying out **research** in an academic topic of their choice.

Learners begin Cambridge International A Level Global Perspectives & Research from the point of a general awareness of the issues involved in setting up a research proposal, identifying an appropriate question and undertaking a literature review or its equivalent. By giving learners the opportunity to apply the skills acquired through the Critical Path to an extended piece of writing, they are well positioned to develop skills of **argumentation** and **oral justification** of their work.

Cambridge International A Level Global Perspectives & Research enables learners to develop and apply practical skills in **research methodology, critical thinking, reasoning** and the skills to manage a sustained piece of academic work. Importantly, it seeks to deepen the academic experience.

The course is based on the premise that developing skills of independent enquiry and research methodology will help learners, both in their current development and in their preparation for higher education, employment and lifelong learning.

## 1.2 Assessment

For Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research, candidates take **three** compulsory components: Written Examination; Essay; Team Project. All three components are **externally assessed**.

For Cambridge International A Level Global Perspectives & Research, candidates take **four** compulsory components: Written Examination; Essay; Team Project; Cambridge Research Report. Components 1 to 3 are **externally assessed** and Component 4 is **internally assessed and externally moderated**.

Component	Weighting	
	AS Level	A Level
<p><b>Component 1 Written Examination</b> <b>1 hour 30 minutes</b></p> <p>Written examination consisting of compulsory, structured questions based on sources provided with the examination paper.</p> <p>Candidates analyse and evaluate arguments, interrogate evidence and compare perspectives on global issues listed in the syllabus.</p> <p>30 marks</p>	30%	15%
<p><b>Component 2 Essay</b></p> <p>Candidates explore different perspectives on issues of global significance arising from their studies during the course and write an essay based on their research. The essay title is devised by candidates themselves.</p> <p>The essay must be between 1750 and 2000 words and written in continuous prose.</p> <p>35 marks</p>	35%	17.5%
<p><b>Component 3 Team Project</b></p> <p>Candidates work in teams to identify a local problem which has global relevance. Individual team members research the issue and suggest solutions to the problem based on their research findings. Teams work together to agree a set of proposed <i>team solutions</i> to the problem.</p> <p>While the focus of the task is on team work, each candidate within a team prepares two pieces of work for individual submission. These are:</p> <p><b>Presentation</b></p> <p>Each candidate presents an eight-minute live presentation of their individual research and proposed solutions to the problem. Team presentations are <b>not</b> permitted. (25 marks)</p> <p><b>Reflective Paper</b></p> <p>Each candidate explains these team solutions in an individual 800-word reflective paper. (10 marks)</p> <p>35 marks in total</p>	35%	17.5%
<p><b>Component 4 Cambridge Research Report</b></p> <p>Candidates devise and develop a research question. This is answered in a report based on independent personal research.</p> <p>The research report must not exceed 5000 words.</p> <p>75 marks</p>	–	50%

## Availability

This syllabus is examined in the June and November examination series. This syllabus is also available for examination in March for India only.

This syllabus is not available to private candidates.

Detailed timetables are available from [www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables)

## Combining this with other syllabuses

Candidates can combine this syllabus in an examination series with any other Cambridge International syllabus, except:

- syllabuses containing Global Perspectives within the syllabus title at the same level.

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## 2 Syllabus aims and assessment objectives

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### 2.1 Syllabus aims

The syllabus aims to encourage learners to develop by:

- providing opportunities to acquire disciplined and scholarly research skills
- promoting a critical, questioning approach to information using the language of reasoning
- prompting self-reflection and independence of thought
- creating opportunities to understand and engage with key global issues wherever they live and work
- nurturing an awareness and understanding of, and respect for, the diversity of perspectives on global issues
- offering an interdisciplinary approach to global issues
- encouraging development of independent learning skills in preparation for study in higher education and lifelong learning
- promoting an understanding of appropriate research skills
- engaging in the research process on an academic topic of their own choice which reflects their interest
- providing opportunities for the exercise of the higher-order thinking skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation
- providing opportunities to develop oral presentation and communication skills.

## 2.2 Assessment objectives

Throughout the AS Level course, learners will gain knowledge and understanding of the background to a range of global issues and will learn to appreciate the diversity of perspectives within them. This knowledge and understanding will be used and assessed through the skills learners acquire and develop, but knowledge and understanding will **not** be separately assessed.

Throughout the A Level course, learners will gain knowledge and understanding of how to: design, plan and manage a research report; collect and analyse information; evaluate and make reasoned judgements; and communicate findings and conclusions.

The three assessment objectives in Cambridge International AS and A Level Global Perspectives & Research are:

### **AO1 Research, analysis and evaluation**

- analyse arguments to understand how they are structured and on what they are based
- analyse perspectives and understand the different claims, reasons, arguments, views and evidence they contain
- synthesise relevant and credible research in support of judgements about arguments and perspectives
- critically evaluate the strengths, weaknesses and implications of reasoning in arguments and overall perspectives
- critically evaluate the nature of different arguments and perspectives
- use research to support judgements about arguments and perspectives
- design and manage own research project using appropriate research methods and methodology (A Level only)
- select and analyse appropriate concepts, arguments, perspectives and evidence from a range of source material and use these in own research report (A Level only)
- evaluate specific research methods and methodology as used in own research report (A Level only).

### **AO2 Reflection**

- research and consider alternative perspectives objectively and with empathy
- consider the ways in which personal standpoints may have been affected by the research process
- evaluate the impact of alternative perspectives and conclusions on personal standpoint
- identify the need for further research in light of the research findings
- reflect on the scope, nature and limitations of own research report (A Level only).

### **AO3 Communication and collaboration**

- work effectively in a group to identify an appropriate local problem with global relevance and consider a range of possible solutions (AS Level only)
- select and present relevant information in an engaging, coherent and well-structured way to a non-specialist audience (AS Level only)
- present complex global concepts, perspectives and arguments effectively using multimedia (audio and/or visual) appropriate to the presentation (AS Level only)
- use appropriate technical terms and cited references effectively
- provide an oral explanation and justification of own report findings, choice and use of research methods and methodology (A Level only).

## 2.3 Relationship between assessment objectives and components

The approximate weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives (AOs) are summarised below.

The table shows the assessment objectives (AO) as a percentage of each component.

Component	AO1 %	AO2 %	AO3 %
<b>1 Written Examination</b>	100	–	–
<b>2 Essay</b>	57	29	14
<b>3 Team Project: Presentation, Reflective Paper</b>	57	14	29
<b>4 Cambridge Research Report</b>	80	7	13

## 2.4 Relationship between assessment objectives and qualifications

The approximate weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives are summarised below.

The table shows the assessment objectives (AO) as a percentage of each qualification.

Assessment objective	Weighting in AS Level %	Weighting in A Level %
<b>AO1</b>	70	75
<b>AO2</b>	15	11
<b>AO3</b>	15	14



### 3 Approaches to teaching and learning

Cambridge International AS Level Global Perspectives & Research is a skills-based syllabus which uses global issues as a context for study. Following this syllabus will equip learners with the skills to be effective, active participants in a rapidly changing intellectual and technical environment. Importantly, it also prepares and encourages them to work collaboratively, confidently and inter-culturally with respect for and understanding of different cultures.

Cambridge International A Level Global Perspectives & Research encourages the development of independent enquiry and an understanding and use of appropriate research methods and methodology. Following this course necessitates that learners become fully engaged in a research process of their own and provides further development and practice of the higher-order thinking skills of analysis, evaluation and synthesis. It encourages learners to work proactively, independently and in a confident way.

We have an online Learning Area for students to support the teaching of Cambridge Global Perspectives AS and A Level. Teachers can log into the area to access resources and course content. It also allows learners around the world to collaborate between schools, countries and cultures, helping to foster genuine global perspectives.

If you are interested in accessing the Learning Area please create a teacher account by completing our online form [www.cambridgeinternational.org/registergp](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/registergp)

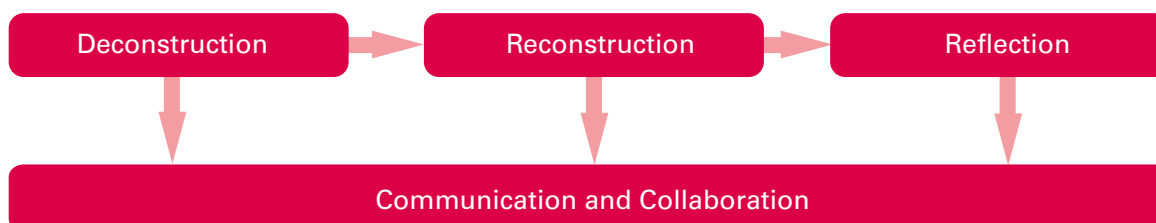
If you already have a teacher account you can access the learning area here <http://learning.cambridgeinternational.org/professionaldevelopment/login/index.php>

#### The Critical Path

To encourage learners to think critically, this syllabus presents an approach to analysing and evaluating arguments and perspectives called the Critical Path. This is distinctive to Cambridge International AS and A Level Global Perspectives & Research and provides a central unifying concept linking all parts of the syllabus.

The Critical Path offers a rational approach to teaching and learning, where learners develop the ability to deconstruct and reconstruct arguments about global issues through personal research and interrogation of evidence. By reflecting on the implications of their research and the personal judgements it leads them to make, they learn to communicate their findings and ideas through a range of appropriate formats.

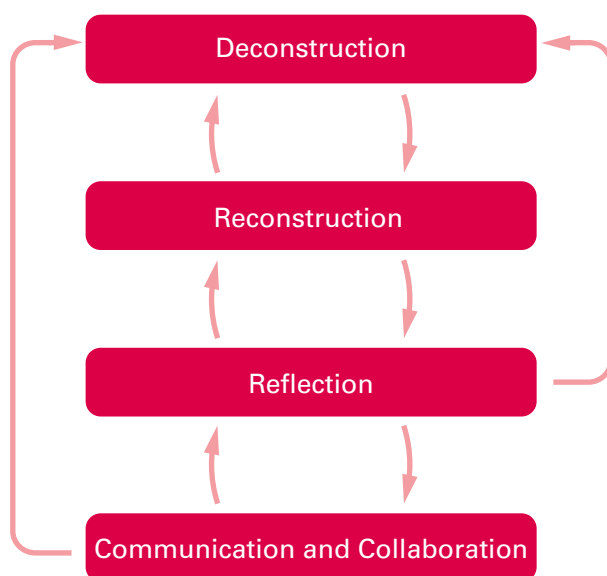
#### The Critical Path



### 3.1 Skills in research, communication, thinking and reasoning

The Critical Path is a teaching and learning process, through which learners can develop the skills of research, reasoning and communication in a systematic way. These skills are transferable across other subjects of study and provide candidates with valuable thinking and reasoning skills for use in higher education and for a wide range of careers. The Critical Path is best seen as an iterative learning process which needs to be practised. It is a highly useful teaching and learning tool, as it provides an effective approach to interrogating information, exploring different perspectives and communicating personal reflections.

The Critical Path as an iterative process



The exemplar questions below are designed to support teachers and candidates in developing skills in research, thinking, applying the language of reasoning and communicating effectively.

Element	Exemplar questions to promote thinking and learning
<p><b>Deconstruction</b> Conduct a detailed analysis and evaluation of a point of view</p>	<p><b>Which different perspectives are represented?</b> Identify and critically compare different perspectives on an issue made up of arguments, claims, views, beliefs and evidence.</p> <p><b>What are the key components of the argument or claim?</b> Differentiate between fact, argument, opinion, rant, speculation, prediction, explanation, hypothesis, account and belief. Identify conclusions, reasons (premises), assumptions (stated and unstated), assertions (and counter-assertions), and supporting evidence.</p> <p><b>What are the implications of the conclusions, arguments, reasoning or claims?</b> Suggest the consequences of the conclusions, arguments, reasoning or claims.</p> <p><b>What are the strengths and weaknesses of arguments, reasoning or claims?</b> Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the arguments, reasoning or claims. Assess the use of analogy and identify any flaws. Is there a valid conclusion or claim? Identify whether any evidence gives strong or weak support to the conclusion or claim. Suggest other evidence required to substantiate or refute claims or counterclaims.</p>

Element	Exemplar questions to promote thinking and learning
<p><b>Reconstruction</b></p> <p>Carry out research, identify and evaluate evidence and sources for and against competing points of view</p>	<p><b>What evidence is there to support different perspectives?</b> Analyse the evidence base and support for different perspectives.</p> <p><b>Which sources are used as supporting evidence and how credible are they?</b> Identify, synthesise and evaluate sources of research to support the evidence.</p> <p><b>Does the evidence lead to a single conclusion?</b> Research and evaluate alternative explanations and perspectives. Make a reasoned and balanced judgement based on evidence.</p> <p><b>What is the context of the arguments?</b> Explain the context in which the arguments have been made.</p> <p><b>How reliable is the conclusion?</b> Evaluate the reliability and credibility of the sources, making it clear how reasoned judgements are made.</p>
<p><b>Reflection</b></p> <p>Explore the impact of research on personal perspectives</p>	<p><b>What were the personal viewpoints before carrying out the research?</b> Reflect on personal perspectives before undertaking the research.</p> <p><b>How do the personal viewpoints relate to the perspectives identified in the research?</b> Evaluate personal viewpoints against alternative perspectives on issues.</p> <p><b>What impact has the research had on any prior viewpoints?</b> Evaluate the extent to which personal viewpoints have changed after carrying out the research.</p> <p><b>Why has the research had an effect on prior viewpoints?</b> Justify the reasons why personal perspectives have changed as a result of research.</p> <p><b>What additional research might be useful?</b> Identify and justify possible further research directions.</p>
<p><b>Communication and Collaboration</b></p> <p>Communicate views, information and research effectively and convincingly</p>	<p><b>How can I work with others to identify problems and work towards devising effective and workable solutions?</b> Find ways of working together and maximising each individual's potential in pursuit of a common goal.</p> <p><b>What is the most effective way to structure a presentation?</b> Select and organise relevant information in a logical and coherent way.</p> <p><b>How can research findings be presented to a non-specialist audience?</b> Explore appropriate multimedia formats to present complex perspectives.</p> <p><b>How can arguments be presented effectively and persuasively?</b> Use well-supported lines of reasoning based on supporting evidence.</p> <p><b>How can research findings be presented reliably?</b> Use appropriate technical terms and cite references accurately and clearly.</p>

## 3.2 Global topics, themes, issues and perspectives (AS Level)

The syllabus includes a broad range of global topics and themes which together provide meaningful and stimulating contexts for skills development. By engaging with these topics and themes, candidates can begin to develop the skills necessary to become active global participants – with a capacity and disposition for understanding and acting on global matters.

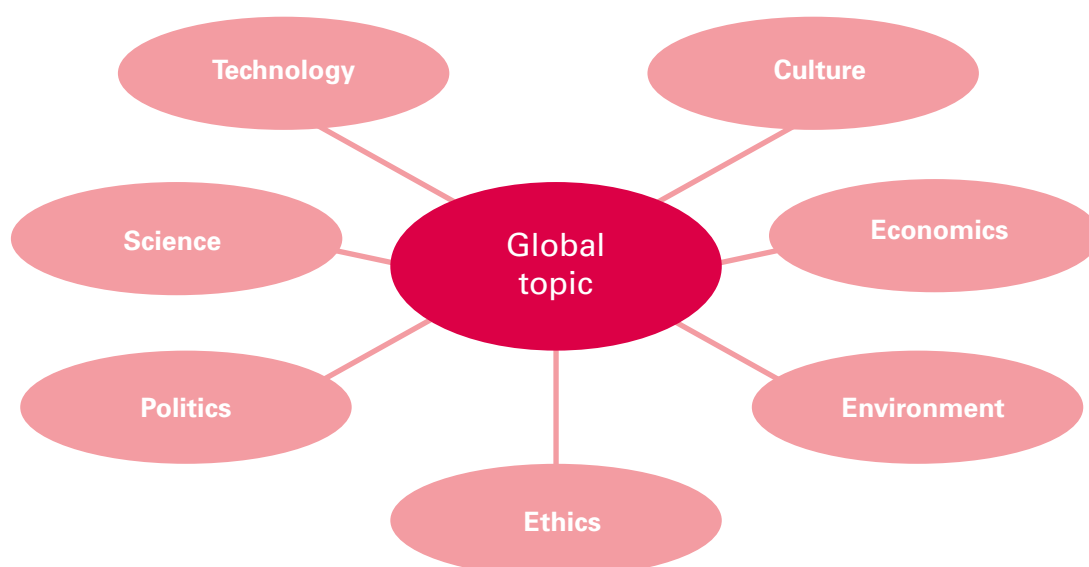
Candidates will practise the Critical Path by identifying and studying global issues arising from at least three topics.

### Topics

Alternatives to oil	Industrial pollution
Architectural priorities	International law
Artificial Intelligence	International sport
Arts in an international context	Medical ethics and priorities
Biodiversity	Migration and work
Changing national identities	Political systems
Climate change	Religious-secular divide
Cultural heritage	Rise of global superpowers
Endangered cultures	Standard of living/quality of life
Ethical foreign policies	Sustainable futures
Ethics and economics of food	Technology and lifestyles
Gender issues	Tourism
Genetic engineering	Transnational organisations (e.g. UN, EU, NATO)
Global economic activity	Transport
Impact of the internet	Urbanisation

### Themes

Candidates research global topics through as many different themes as is relevant:



## Global issues and perspectives

By studying topics through different themes, candidates will be supported in identifying global issues which transcend local and national contexts.

### Example 1

By viewing the topic of international sport through the themes of economics, politics and ethics, global issues emerge. One such issue may be who should be responsible for funding events such as the Olympics. Different perspectives to emerge from this issue would include the following.

#### Perspective 1

Funding Olympic events is a drain on tax payers' money. This perspective may be based on different arguments about the value of the Olympics, the needs of the tax payer, the possible economic benefits, and the political popularity or unpopularity of spending public money. Behind the perspective may be assumptions and beliefs about the importance of international support relative to the costs of the Olympics.

This draws on the themes of economics and politics.

#### Perspective 2

Funding Olympic venues is worth the investment because of the profit they produce after the event. The key here is 'worth' and the assumption that for many reasons the Olympics is worth the investment for the resulting economic and financial benefits and also for the political prestige it brings to the host country. It is not just individual arguments that are being explained and considered but also general outlooks on the funding of the Olympics which contain different assumptions, views, justifications and beliefs. It would also be possible to bring into these broad perspectives themes relating to culture, education and the moral importance of nations meeting and competing.

This draws on the themes of economics, politics, culture and ethics.

### Examples 2 and 3

The table below illustrates two examples of how exploring a global topic through different themes can lead to the generation of global issues and in turn to identifying different perspectives.

Global topic	Themes	Global issue	Perspectives
Example 2: Tourism	Culture Economics Environment Ethics	The extent to which tourist companies embrace ethical tourism	Tourist companies should be obliged to pay a local tax to help fund environmentally sound local projects. <b>OR</b> Tourist companies attract and generate wide economic benefits for a locality and should not be expected to pay local taxes on top of this.
Example 3: Rise of global superpowers	Politics Economics Culture Technology	The relationship between regulation of the internet and the rise of a global superpower	Unregulated control is essential for the emergence of a global superpower. <b>OR</b> A global superpower can only emerge if it controls the internet.

### 3.3 Key terms (AS Level)

Key terms are words and phrases which may require further clarification in order to become fully realised and used with accuracy.

**Global topics** are those listed in section 3.2 of this syllabus. The main purpose of the list is to help teachers and learners begin to identify the context for the course. Global topics are not mutually exclusive and some overlap is inevitable.

**Themes** such as culture, economics or science provide lenses through which global topics can be viewed. Themes can be overlapping but consideration of a topic through more than one theme is likely to generate a more nuanced range of issues for consideration. For example, if the topic of 'Climate change' is viewed through the themes of politics and science the learner is more likely to identify different global issues and perspectives than if the same topic is viewed solely through the theme of science. In short, by using themes to explore a topic, candidates can be supported in identifying global issues and in turn perspectives.

A **global issue** is one that extends beyond a local or national context and would be experienced by people wherever in the world they live or work. Global issues will almost inevitably touch on more than one global topic. For example, wind power as an alternative source of energy to fossil fuels is a global issue which would fall under more than one topic: 'Alternatives to oil' and 'Sustainable futures' to name two.

A **perspective** is a viewpoint or standpoint, sometimes embedded in or strongly informed by a world view. Perspectives tend to be coloured by the circumstances in which people live, the language they use and the ideas that surround them. Underlying any perspective are concepts, principles, uses of language and attitudes which are often implicit and may be emotional and subconscious.

Different perspectives should be genuinely **contrasting** (i.e. they should come from a different world view rather than represent subtly different takes on an issue). Although there is no absolute requirement that alternative perspectives be rooted in different geographical areas, genuinely different **global perspectives** are likely to be informed by different cultural, geographical and political environments. Looking at materials from different countries and/or cultures would therefore be a good way of accessing different global perspectives.

It is also possible for two contrasting perspectives (rooted in different world views) to be exemplified by particular 'local' contexts. This could be for example, the views of a local religious community in contrast to a community of people from a secular background. Teachers should note, however, that while local contexts can be used as exemplification, this exemplification should be used to consider implications more globally. Learners need to **empathise** with viewpoints that differ from their own while not necessarily accepting the viewpoints of others.

Arguments and evidence can be used to express a perspective and to support a perspective. There needs to be some form of **evidence base** underlying and/or supporting all perspectives. This evidence base is likely to consist of a variety of arguments, sources and evidence (factual information) which may or may not be of good quality. Candidates need to sift and select evidence. **Evidence** is likely to come in two forms: primary evidence and secondary evidence. Primary evidence originates at the time to which it relates and can come from a range of sources, such as interviews, surveys, artefacts, letters and scientific experimenting. Secondary evidence includes material such as the arguments and opinions of historians and scientists. Candidates should be aware of the strengths and potential weaknesses of all types of evidence. When assessing the value of particular sources, candidates should bear in mind that this is a way of assessing the evidence presented for a perspective and is not an end in itself. Evidence may be assessed in many ways depending on its nature, but a major part of the course is to encourage a critical approach to all sources and an analysis of how far arguments are convincingly supported.

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## 4 Description of components

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### 4.1 Component 1 Written Examination

Written examination, 1 hour 30 minutes, 30 marks – weighted at 30 per cent of the total marks available for the AS Level and 15 per cent at A Level. The approximate mark weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives are summarised below.

AO1 – 30 marks      AO2 – 0 marks      AO3 – 0 marks

Candidates answer compulsory, structured questions based on two sources provided with the examination paper. Questions will require both short and longer responses.

The source material may express different perspectives on issues of global significance.

Candidates will **not** be assessed on their knowledge and understanding of the specific issues represented in the source material. Instead, candidates will be assessed on their thinking and reasoning skills focused on analysing and evaluating arguments, interrogating evidence and contexts and comparing perspectives centred on global issues.

In carrying out a critical and comparative analysis of the source material, candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- analyse arguments to understand how they are structured and on what they are based
- analyse perspectives and understand the different claims, reasons, arguments, views and evidence they contain
- synthesise relevant and credible research in support of judgements about arguments and perspectives
- critically evaluate the strengths, weaknesses and implications of reasoning in arguments and overall perspectives
- critically evaluate the nature of different arguments and perspectives
- use research to support judgements about arguments and perspectives.

### Nature of assessment

This component is an externally set assessment, marked by Cambridge.

#### The role of the teacher

As this is a skills-based examination (one that does not require candidates to have been taught any specific content), teachers should consider and explore the skills candidates need to display to be successful in the written examination. Teachers should prepare candidates for the types of questions they are likely to meet in the examination by using specimen and past papers and mark schemes which can be obtained from the Cambridge website [www.cambridgeinternational.org](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org). There is also an online AS course available on our online Learning Area. For details on how to access this see page 15.

## 4.2 Component 2 Essay

Essay, 35 marks – weighted at 35 per cent of the total marks available for the AS Level and 17.5 per cent at A Level. The approximate mark weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives are summarised below.

AO1 – 20 marks      AO2 – 10 marks      AO3 – 5 marks

Candidates write an essay on a global issue of their own choice from topics studied during the course.

The essay must be framed as a single question which is clearly focused on a global issue that lends itself to global treatment in 1750 to 2000 words. Candidates should be supported in formulating an appropriate question.

Candidates should focus their individual research on identifying and exploring the context and basis of the arguments from different global perspectives. They should identify different perspectives, understand the arguments, reasoning or claims upon which these perspectives are based, offer a critical view of them and reach a personal, supported view.

In the essay, candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- identify, synthesise, analyse and evaluate relevant sources
- analyse at least two globally contrasting perspectives
- identify and evaluate the evidence that supports the perspectives
- explain how the research has affected their personal perspectives
- present convincing and well-supported judgements that answer the question posed
- suggest further relevant research
- communicate effectively and concisely, using technical terms where appropriate.

The essay must be written in continuous prose, include a list of sources used and be submitted in an electronic format. Quotations must be fully referenced. The essay must **not** exceed 2000 words and an accurate word count must be clearly stated on each essay. The word count excludes the title, references and footnotes. Work beyond the 2000 word maximum will **not** be included in the assessment.

### Nature of assessment

Candidates decide on their own essay question for this component. The essay is externally marked by Cambridge. All materials for Component 2 must be submitted electronically. The deadlines and methods for submission are contained in the *Cambridge Global Perspectives Administrative Guide*. The guide is available from the Exams Officer section of our website: [www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsOfficers](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsOfficers)



### The role of the teacher

A class may work together to carry out background research on a global issue, but each candidate must devise their own question. Each candidate must submit an essay on a different question.

Candidates should be given sufficient time to plan and prepare their research. During this preparation, teachers should support each candidate in:

- understanding the nature of the task
- identifying a suitable issue to research
- formulating an appropriate global question
- developing a suitable approach to the research
- developing organisational skills
- citing and referencing their sources
- focusing on reconstruction and reflection
- writing effectively and concisely to stay between 1750 and 2000 words
- including an accurate word count.

In supporting candidates to formulate an appropriate global question, teachers may find it useful to explain that the question should:

- be phrased as a question and not as a statement to discuss
- allow for the analysis of at least two globally contrasting perspectives; this means that questions focusing on one national perspective are unlikely to be appropriate
- encourage candidates to work towards making well-supported judgements which are likely to affect their own personal perspective on the issue/s being considered; this means that candidates should set a question on an issue in which they are genuinely interested.

Further support in formulating appropriate and effective global questions can be found in the online AS course available on our online Learning Area. For details on how to access this see page 15.

**The essay must be the candidate's own work.** Once candidates embark on researching and writing the essay, they should seek assistance from their teacher, **but** there must be minimum intervention by the teacher. Candidates must **not** cut and paste text from sources without showing evidence of reworking.

Teachers must **not**:

- undertake any research on behalf of candidates
- prepare or write any subject-specific notes or drafts for candidates
- correct any part of a candidate's essay or notes used for the essay
- suggest amendments to or comment on any part of the essay.

### Candidates must be taught the meaning and significance of plagiarism.

Cambridge use plagiarism detection software packages. Candidates will be required to include a statement of originality confirming that the essay is their own work. The teacher responsible will be required to verify this statement. This statement must be included as part of the candidate's submission to Cambridge. Details of where to find the statement of originality can be found in the *Cambridge Global Perspectives Administrative Guide*.

## 4.3 Component 3 Team Project

Two pieces of work: presentation and reflective paper, total 35 marks – weighted at 35 per cent of the total marks available for the AS Level and 17.5 per cent at A Level. The approximate mark weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives are summarised below.

AO1 – 20 marks      AO2 – 5 marks      AO3 – 10 marks

In preparing for this component, candidates must work in teams of two to five members to identify a local problem which has global relevance. Each team works together to identify the problem to research and in response to which they will propose effective workable solutions. The team must frame a single question that allows them to address contrasting perspectives on the problem. The scope of the proposed research should be sufficiently broad to enable teams to explore the problem from local and global perspectives. Teams should be supported in formulating an appropriate question.

Candidates allocate areas for each team member to research. It is expected that each candidate in the team will identify a solution which arises from a distinctive perspective they have identified, and argue for effective and workable solutions which arise from that perspective. This will allow scope for candidates to be innovative in the solutions they identify.

### Presentation

Presentation, 25 marks – weighted at 25 per cent of the total marks available for the AS Level and 12.5 per cent of the total marks available for the A Level.

AO1 – 20 marks      AO2 – 0 marks      AO3 – 5 marks

Individuals will present their research and preferred solution in a formal live presentation for up to eight minutes (per individual). The formal presentation must be a live recording of the candidate and should not be edited in any way. It is important that the presentation is recorded in one sitting and in an area that is quiet with no background noise to ensure what the candidate is saying can be heard.

Editing software should not be used to add slides to the presentation. Candidates are assessed on their presentational methods so it is important that the video shows the candidate's live, unedited presentation.

The presentation should be supported by multimedia (audio and/or visual) appropriate to the presentation and delivered to an audience. The size of the audience can be determined by the centre but must include at least three people, of which one must be the class teacher. Team presentations must **not** be submitted for assessment. An eight minute presentation must be submitted for **each** candidate.

In the formal presentation, candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- structure and communicate a coherent argument
- research and identify with different perspectives (local and global), showing any relationships between them
- develop a line of reasoning based on supporting evidence
- differentiate their personal perspective from the work of the team as a whole
- present convincing and well-supported conclusions which respond to the overall question posed by the team
- present complex global concepts, perspectives and arguments in a creative and effective manner using multimedia appropriate to the presentation.

The formal presentation should:

- be engaging to a non-specialist audience
- use multimedia (audio and/or visual) in an effective way
- use appropriate technical terms and cite references clearly and accurately.

The formal presentations must be video-recorded and submitted to Cambridge along with the multimedia materials used and a verbatim transcript of the presentation. The running time for the presentation must not exceed eight minutes. Work beyond the maximum running time will not be included in the assessment. Teachers must ensure that the quality of any recording will permit accurate marking of the work. Candidates should **not** be allowed to edit presentations after they have been recorded. This includes any use of presentation software.

Following the individual presentations, candidates then come together to discuss their findings and agree on a set of team solutions to the problem and question posed. These findings and team solutions must be contained in the reflective paper.

## Reflective Paper

Reflective paper, 10 marks – weighted at 10 per cent of the total marks available for the AS Level and 5 per cent of the total marks available for the A Level.

AO1 – 0 marks      AO2 – 5 marks      AO3 – 5 marks

At the end of the process each candidate will write a reflective paper (maximum 800 words) focusing on how the team worked together, what could be improved, and any changes to their personal views shaped by the collaborative experience.

The reflective paper must include the team's agreed effective and workable solutions to the problem they are solving.

In the reflective paper, candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- evaluate the effectiveness of their work with others in a team to identify an appropriate local problem with global relevance
- work with others in a team to consider a range of effective and workable solutions
- consider the ways in which personal standpoints may have been affected by the research and collaborative experience
- identify the need for further research in light of the research findings.

Teachers must ensure that, for each candidate, sufficient and appropriate supporting evidence is submitted to Cambridge to permit accurate marking of the work. This should include: a recording of the live presentation, any multimedia materials used as part of the presentation, a transcript of the presentation and a copy of the reflective paper. Work beyond the maximum 800 words will **not** be included in the assessment.

The reflective paper must be submitted to Cambridge for assessment.

## Nature of assessment

Both the presentation and the reflective paper are externally assessed by Cambridge. All materials for Component 3 must be submitted electronically. The deadlines and methods for submission are contained in the *Cambridge Global Perspectives Administrative Guide*. The guide is available from the Exams Officer section of our website: [www.cie.org.uk/examsOfficers](http://www.cie.org.uk/examsOfficers)

### The role of the teacher

The teacher should take an active role in creating teams. The maximum team size is five, the minimum two; however, in most instances teams of three or four may work together more readily and find it easier to agree on a problem to research.

Teachers should support each candidate and team in:

- understanding the nature of the task
- formulating an appropriate research question
- developing a means through which candidates can research different perspectives
- developing organisational skills
- citing and referencing their sources
- focusing on reflection and communication
- developing clear oral arguments
- working collaboratively towards the same shared outcome
- being part of the audience.

Teachers should note that the use of multimedia (audio and/or visual) does not need to be extensive but rather should be fit for purpose and reflective of working in the twenty-first century.

**The presentation and reflective paper must be each candidate's own work.** Once candidates embark on researching and producing the presentation, they should seek assistance from their teacher, **but** there must be minimum intervention by the teacher. Candidates must **not** cut and paste text from sources without showing evidence of reworking.

Teachers must **not**:

- offer or provide detailed subject guidance to candidates or teams
- undertake any research on behalf of candidates
- prepare or write any subject-specific notes or drafts for candidates
- correct any part of a candidate's notes used for the presentation
- prepare any part of the presentation
- produce any part of the transcript to accompany the oral commentary
- suggest amendments to or comment on any part of the presentation or reflective paper.

### Candidates must be taught the meaning and significance of plagiarism.

Cambridge use plagiarism detection software packages. Candidates will be required to include a statement of originality confirming that the essay is their own work. The teacher responsible will be required to verify this statement. This statement must be included as part of the candidate's submission to Cambridge. Details of where to find the statement of originality can be found in the *Cambridge Global Perspectives Administrative Guide*.

## 4.4 Component 4 Cambridge Research Report

Research report, 75 marks – weighted at 50 per cent of the total marks available for the A Level. The approximate mark weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives are summarised below.

AO1 – 60 marks      AO2 – 5 marks      AO3 – 10 marks

Candidates write a research report on a research question of their own choice.

The Cambridge Research Report must be framed as a single question that lends itself to in-depth research.

In the research report, candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- devise and develop an appropriate research question
- design and manage their own research project using appropriate research methods and methodology
- maintain and use a research log in support of the research process
- select and analyse appropriate concepts, arguments, perspectives and evidence from a range of source material
- analyse and use relevant and credible evidence in support of arguments and overall perspectives
- analyse relevant perspectives, showing awareness of how the arguments, claims and the nature of the evidence are used to support conclusions
- evaluate specific research methods and methodology
- evaluate and synthesise evidence to draw reasoned conclusions
- evaluate and synthesise alternative perspectives and interpretations in order to make their own reasoned personal judgements
- reflect on the scope, nature and limitations of their own research report, and how and why their own personal viewpoints of the issue/s researched may have changed during the research process
- communicate clearly throughout the report using appropriate academic terms, referencing and citation techniques
- provide an oral explanation and justification of their own report findings, choice and use of research methods and methodology.

The report must include a bibliography and full bibliographical references must be given for any quotations. The precise format and referencing conventions used should be appropriate to the subject discipline/s. The production of a bibliography is a requirement.

The report must **not** exceed 5000 words, excluding only the bibliography. A word count must be declared. Any work beyond 5000 words should not be marked by the centre and will **not** be included in the assessment.

Candidates are expected to apply research methods appropriate to their chosen subject discipline/s. Equally, whether the work is based on primary and/or secondary evidence will depend on the subject matter and the approach.

Candidates must use, maintain and submit a research log in support of the research process.

## Nature of assessment

Candidates decide on their own research topic and question for this component. The report is internally marked and externally moderated by Cambridge International. The deadlines and methods for submission are contained in the *Cambridge Global Perspectives Administrative Guide*. The guide is available from the Exams Officer section of our website: [www.cie.org.uk/examsOfficers](http://www.cie.org.uk/examsOfficers)

### The role of the teacher

The teacher will need to assist with determining the subject and scale of the report so that the topic selected provides sufficient opportunities to meet the assessment criteria while being neither too large nor too complex. In the initial stage when topics are being selected, teachers might conduct seminar-style workshops for candidates to discuss subject-specific issues and approaches. As topics are refined and questions developed, seminars might be used to share ideas. Once questions have been defined, teachers **must** submit outline proposal forms (OPF) to Cambridge International for approval and advice. For further details on submitting OPFs, see the *Cambridge Global Perspectives Administrative Guide*.

The teacher should support each candidate throughout the independent research process, in particular: Planning and preparation, to:

- identify an appropriate area of study and develop the research question
- consider alternative perspectives on the question
- consider research ethics and conventions in relation to specific research ideas
- consider the time scale and overall planning
- manage personal and independent research
- keep a research log.

Production of the report, to:

- show awareness of research methods and methodology
- use appropriate academic terms, referencing and citation techniques
- consider critically a range of views, opinions, beliefs, and evidence
- reach independent conclusions
- communicate effectively and clearly in an extended piece of writing.

Research must be the candidate's own unaided work and findings must be the result of personal reflection and judgement. The work may be supported by ongoing tutorials, classes, and seminars. Teachers should monitor progress by discussion of the research log. There is also an online *Learners' Guide to the Cambridge Research Report* course available on our online Learning Area from spring 2015. For details on how to access this see page 15.

Teachers must **not**:

- teach specific topics or offer their own information sheets and views on topics
- undertake any research for a candidate
- correct any part of a candidate's notes or drafts
- prepare any part of a candidate's report.

The teacher's role is to ensure an understanding of the task, monitor progress, and respond to requests for advice on research and writing in general, but not to guide specific content.

## Research methods and methodology

Candidates must explain the process through which they planned and executed the research paying particular attention to their choice, use and evaluation of appropriate research methods and methodology.

Candidates should select and apply research methods appropriate to the discipline/s they are working within and the nature of the selected topic. It is expected that some, but not all, of the research methods listed below will be used in their report:

- literature review (as method)
- qualitative research methods (e.g. ethnography, interviews, focus group)
- quantitative research methods (e.g. surveys, experiments)
- mixed methods.

The use of research methods is always accompanied by underlying theories. These theories can be seen as assumptions on which the acceptance of the research findings and argument are based. Candidates are expected to engage with the theory underlying the choice of methods and the impact this has on the inference of any research findings. Candidates are also expected to evaluate the choice and use of the research methods and methodology.

Candidates should certainly be taught the:

- broad understanding of research methods and methodology within relevant research domains
- necessary research and organisational skills for this task
- appropriate academic conventions for presentation of the report
- meaning and significance of plagiarism.

Significant time should be allocated to this important preparatory stage prior to the research itself.

## Explanation and justification of the research report

After the completed reports have been submitted, teachers must hold a 10-minute interview/viva with each candidate. The teacher must have read the research report prior to the interview/viva and devised a line of questioning which will provide candidates with an opportunity to explain and justify their work with reference to:

- the choice and use of research methods/methodology
- the justification of any conclusions arising from the research findings
- providing oral reasoned reflection on what has been learnt and achieved throughout the research process
- seeking confirmation that the work submitted is that of the candidate working alone.

## Assessment criteria

Research reports should be assessed using the criteria on the following pages.

<b>Assessment criteria overview: Component 4 Cambridge Research Report</b>		
<b>AO1 Research, Analysis and Evaluation</b>		
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Devise and develop an appropriate research question.</li> <li>Design and manage own research project using appropriate research methods and methodology.</li> <li>Maintain and use a research log in support of the research process.</li> </ul>	20 marks
Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select and analyse appropriate concepts, arguments, perspectives and evidence from a range of source material.</li> <li>Analyse and use relevant and credible evidence in support of arguments and overall perspectives.</li> <li>Analyse relevant perspectives, showing awareness of how the arguments, claims and the nature of the evidence are used to support conclusions.</li> </ul>	20 marks
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate specific research methods and methodology.</li> <li>Evaluate and synthesise evidence to draw reasoned conclusions.</li> <li>Evaluate and synthesise alternative perspectives and interpretations in order to make own reasoned personal judgements.</li> </ul>	20 marks
<b>AO1 TOTAL</b>		<b>60 marks</b>
<b>AO2 Reflection</b>		
Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect on the scope, nature and limitations of own research report and how and why own personal viewpoints of the issue/s researched may have changed during the research process.</li> </ul>	5 marks
<b>AO2 TOTAL</b>		<b>5 marks</b>
<b>AO3 Communication</b>		
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate clearly throughout the report using appropriate academic terms, referencing and citation techniques.</li> <li>Provide an oral explanation and justification of own report findings, choice and use of research methods and methodology.</li> </ul>	10 marks
<b>AO3 TOTAL</b>		<b>10 marks</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>75 marks</b>



## Applying the assessment criteria

In general terms, progression through level descriptors is underpinned by the increase in:

- breadth and depth of understanding
- coherence of argument
- independence and originality.

Candidates can perform at different levels across the assessment criteria. Shortcomings in some aspects of the assessment requirements may be balanced by better performance in others. Teachers should select appropriate levels not on the basis of a 'tick list' but on the overall response as it relates to the requirements stated within each level. Teachers should adopt a holistic, 'best-fit' approach and apply their professional judgement.

Marking must be positive. Marks are not to be deducted for inaccuracies. Part marks are not to be used. Only where the candidate's work does not meet any of the required criteria should no marks be awarded.

### Annotation

Teachers must annotate the work to show that every page has been read. If a piece of work fulfils the full requirement of that level, a candidate must be rewarded accordingly. Further guidance on annotation is available in the *Cambridge Global Perspectives Administrative Guide*. The guide is available from the Exams Officer section of our website: [www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers)

Assessment criteria: Component 4 Cambridge Research Report		
AO1 Research, Analysis and Evaluation		
AO1 Research		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devise and develop an appropriate research question.</li> <li>• Design and manage own research project using appropriate research methods and methodology.</li> <li>• Maintain and use a research log in support of the research process.</li> </ul>		
Level	Mark Range	Indicative Descriptors
4	16–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate and challenging research question developed thoughtfully and independently by constructive dialogue, responding fully to feedback.</li> <li>• Strong and consistent understanding of appropriate research methods. Methodology is carefully and thoughtfully considered and shows an innovative approach. The work is independently managed without over-reliance on teacher support.</li> <li>• Highly effective and clear maintenance and use of a research log showing full support of the research process.</li> </ul>
3	11–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate research question developed with some independence, showing reflection and/or responding to feedback.</li> <li>• Sound understanding of appropriate research methods. Methodology is considered. Much of the work is independently managed without over-reliance on teacher support.</li> <li>• Effective and reasonably clear maintenance and use of a research log throughout the research process.</li> </ul>
2	6–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research question identified which may be inappropriate but with guidance shows some ability to develop it either by reflection on its implications or by responding to feedback.</li> <li>• Shows understanding of appropriate research methods. Some research is self-motivated and effective, but some relies on ongoing support and is not well-focused.</li> <li>• Some effective use of a research log, but this is used inconsistently in support of the research process.</li> </ul>
1	1–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research question may be inappropriate and/or there is no serious attempt to develop it throughout the study.</li> <li>• Shows limited understanding of appropriate research methods. Management of research lacks independence and is unfocused and ineffective.</li> <li>• Limited and ineffective use of a research log.</li> </ul>
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A mark of zero should be awarded for no creditable content.</li> </ul>

AO1 Research, Analysis and Evaluation		
AO1 Analysis		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select and analyse appropriate concepts, arguments, perspectives and evidence from a range of source material.</li> <li>Analyse and use relevant and credible evidence in support of arguments and overall perspectives.</li> <li>Analyse relevant perspectives, showing awareness of how the arguments, claims and the nature of the evidence are used to support conclusions.</li> </ul>		
Level	Mark Range	Indicative Descriptors
4	16–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent selection and analysis of highly appropriate and sharply relevant material from a wide and challenging range of relevant sources.</li> <li>Strong and consistent analysis of evidence, showing innovation and depth of thought in support of arguments and overall perspectives.</li> <li>Well-considered and developed analysis of relevant perspectives to draw reasoned conclusions. There is a good balance between perspectives and the analysis has depth.</li> </ul>
3	11–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good selection and analysis of appropriate and relevant material from a range of relevant sources.</li> <li>Consistent and efficient analysis and use of evidence in support of arguments and overall perspectives, but some lack of depth.</li> <li>Consistent analysis of relevant perspectives in supporting reasoned conclusions. There may be some imbalance between perspectives and lack of depth in the analysis.</li> </ul>
2	6–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some selection and analysis of relevant and appropriate material from relevant sources.</li> <li>Some analysis and use of evidence in support of arguments and/or overall perspectives.</li> <li>Some analysis of relevant perspectives in supporting any conclusions. There may be some description and much imbalance between perspectives.</li> </ul>
1	1–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited selection and analysis of appropriate material from a limited range of sources.</li> <li>Limited analysis and use of evidence. Much description of evidence or unsupported assertion.</li> <li>Limited analysis of relevant perspectives and little awareness of how they are used to support any conclusions. Description rather than analysis and based heavily on one relevant perspective.</li> </ul>
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A mark of zero should be awarded for no creditable content.</li> </ul>

<b>AO1 Research, Analysis and Evaluation</b>		
<b>AO1 Evaluation</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate specific research methods and methodology.</li> <li>Evaluate and synthesise evidence to draw reasoned conclusions.</li> <li>Evaluate and synthesise alternative perspectives and interpretations in order to make own reasoned personal judgements.</li> </ul>		
<b>Level</b>	<b>Mark Range</b>	<b>Indicative Descriptors</b>
4	16–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent and sustained evaluation of specific research methods and methodology.</li> <li>Evaluation and synthesis of evidence is consistently well supported, developed and used effectively to draw reasoned conclusions.</li> <li>Alternative perspectives and interpretations are fully evaluated and synthesised to have direct impact on forming own reasoned judgements. There is a developed critical sense.</li> </ul>
3	11–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good evaluation of specific research methods and methodology.</li> <li>Evaluation and synthesis of evidence is well supported, developed and used effectively to draw reasoned conclusions.</li> <li>Alternative perspectives and interpretations are evaluated with a critical sense and synthesised to have impact on forming own reasoned judgements.</li> </ul>
2	6–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some evaluation of specific research methods.</li> <li>Some evaluation and synthesis of evidence in order to draw reasoned conclusions. There may be overreliance on generalised comment on the origin of evidence rather than on validity of its arguments.</li> <li>Alternative perspectives are considered with some critical sense but have little impact on making own reasoned judgements.</li> </ul>
1	1–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited evaluation of research methods.</li> <li>Any evaluation/synthesis of evidence is limited, generalised and barely related to any conclusions.</li> <li>Limited engagement with alternative perspectives in making own judgements. Little sustained critical sense. Serious imbalance with the focus being largely on one perspective.</li> </ul>
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A mark of zero should be awarded for no creditable content.</li> </ul>

AO2 Reflection		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect on the scope, nature and limitations of own research report and how and why own personal viewpoints of the issue/s researched may have changed during the research process.</li> </ul>		
Level	Mark Range	Indicative Descriptors
4	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflection on the scope, nature and limitations of the research is clear and cogent. Reflection shows a thoughtful and mature approach to how and why personal viewpoints may have altered during the research process.</li> </ul>
3	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear and well-considered reflection on the scope and limitations of the research. Reasoned reflection of how and why personal viewpoints may have altered is related clearly to the research process.</li> </ul>
2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some reflection on the scope and/or limitations of the research. Reflection of how and why personal viewpoints may have altered is related to the research process.</li> </ul>
1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited reflection on the scope of the research. Any reflection of how and why personal viewpoints may have altered lacks reference to the research process.</li> </ul>
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A mark of zero should be awarded for no creditable content.</li> </ul>
AO3 Communication		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate clearly throughout the report using appropriate academic terms, referencing and citation techniques.</li> <li>Provide an oral explanation and justification of own report findings, choice and use of research methods and methodology.</li> </ul>		
Level	Mark Range	Indicative Descriptors
4	9–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The report is very well organised and very clear to follow. Academic terms and conventions are used consistently and precisely throughout the report.</li> <li>Very clear and convincing explanation and justification of report findings, choice and use of research methods and methodology.</li> </ul>
3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The report is well organised and clear to follow. Academic terms and conventions are used consistently and precisely throughout most of the report.</li> <li>Clear and convincing explanation and justification of report findings, choice and use of research methods and methodology.</li> </ul>
2	3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The report is organised and fairly clear to follow. Academic terms and conventions are evident but are used inconsistently at times or lack precision.</li> <li>Some explanation and justification of report findings, choice and use of research methods.</li> </ul>
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The report is limited in organisation and is unclear to follow. Academic terms and conventions may be evident but are used inconsistently and/or lack precision.</li> <li>Limited and unconvincing explanation and justification of report findings.</li> </ul>
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A mark of zero should be awarded for no creditable content.</li> </ul>

## Further guidance

The Cambridge Research Report is designed to be stimulating, enjoyable and academically challenging. It is intended to enable the use and development of skills which will help candidates in higher education and future employment – not least the ability to plan, monitor and review progress as independent learners.

In supporting candidates throughout the research process, teachers and candidates should find the following information and advice useful.

## Initial preparation

Candidates are advised to choose a topic that engages them strongly and is of real importance to them.

The title of the report **must** take the form of a question. Formulating a good research question forms part of the research process and the assessment criteria. It takes time and careful consideration. It must be made clear to the reader how and why the question was developed. Considerable thought must be given to this; why, for example, is the question worth asking, and how did it develop throughout the research process? The use of the research log is important in supporting the process throughout its development.

## Research log

A research log must be maintained and used in support of the report. The purpose of the log is to help plan, monitor and review progress and thinking throughout the research process. The log **must** be submitted as part of the assessment but it will not constitute part of the 5000 word limit. The log must be included as an electronic appendix and cross referenced as necessary within the main body of the report.

The log does not need to include details of all actions and thinking; it should be maintained and used in order to support how the research developed over time. It could contain reflective thoughts, a reminder of things to check, notes/commentary on the use of methods and methodology, comments on how the research question may have changed as a result of feedback received. It must not be used as a means of extending the 5000 word limit but rather as supporting evidence for how the research progressed the way it did.

## Perspectives

The research question should lead to the discussion of different perspectives. The possibilities of analysing and evaluating different views and arguments and the evidence which supports them should be evident from the way the question is formed.

To take an example, there are different views about capital punishment. Those against may oppose it on grounds of its failure as a deterrent and they may produce evidence in the form of statistics and studies to confirm this; they may also oppose it on moral grounds based on views on the sanctity of life. There may also be underlying assumptions behind the views to consider. Some views cannot be supported by empirical evidence but they may be supported by reference to philosophical or religious evidence. The counter view should also be considered, including its arguments, evidence and assumptions. Thus two broad perspectives will be assessed and a judgement reached by careful and sympathetic but critical evaluation of serious and genuinely-held views.

The question should lead directly to the assessment of the perspectives. So the title 'Capital Punishment' will not be sufficient. 'Why it is right to abolish capital punishment' does not lead directly to a debate. 'How capital punishment developed' is asking for a description and is not framed as a question. 'Should capital punishment be abolished?' could lead to establishing and evaluating different perspectives and would be an example of an appropriate title.

## Methods and methodology

Research methods relate to the techniques used. Research methodology relates to the choice and use of the method/s which in part relates to the theoretical assumptions underpinning the work. The extent to which candidates develop issues of methodology will be related to the research question and the nature and scope of the report.

The report must explain the process through which any data were collected. This is to ensure that the author and any future reader are able to consider the impact of this process on the inferences drawn from the findings. Candidates do not have to use primary research methods (techniques) unless these are relevant for their study. Many successful reports will use a literature review as method; this may well be appropriate but candidates must still make clear to the reader the process through which they identified and selected relevant literature – the key words/themes used, and why.

The choice and use of research methods are related to the theoretical assumptions underpinning the work, because it is only through understanding these that the author's assumptions about reality become clear.

## Presenting the Cambridge Research Report

The report needs to be organised so that the argument is well communicated. The report should contain an introduction, main body and conclusion. It should include sub-headings and must include references (see below). The detailed structure of the report is left to the candidate's discretion and should be aligned with academic conventions of relevant disciplines.

Work beyond the maximum 5000 words will not be included in the assessment.

## Sources and references

Candidates must acknowledge where specific ideas and information come from. They should adopt an appropriate referencing and citation system related to the academic discipline/s in which they are working. Many reports will adopt the Harvard, Chicago or APA referencing systems. The actual system adopted is less important than using it consistently.

### **Candidates must be taught the meanings and significance of plagiarism.**

Cambridge International use plagiarism detection software packages. Candidates will be required to include a statement of originality confirming that the essay is their own work. The teacher responsible will be required to verify this statement. This statement must be included as part of the candidate's submission to Cambridge International. Details of where to find the statement of originality can be found in the *Cambridge Global Perspectives Administrative Guide*.

Further guidance and support for candidates is available in the document *The Learner's Guide to the Cambridge Research Report*.

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## 5 Other information

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### Equality and inclusion

We have taken great care in the preparation of this syllabus and related assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind. To comply with the UK Equality Act (2010), we have designed this qualification with the aim of avoiding direct and indirect discrimination.

The standard assessment arrangements may present unnecessary barriers for candidates with disabilities or learning difficulties. Arrangements can be put in place for these candidates to enable them to access the assessments and receive recognition of their attainment. Access arrangements will not be agreed if they give candidates an unfair advantage over others or if they compromise the standards being assessed. Candidates who are unable to access the assessment of any component may be eligible to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have taken.

Information on access arrangements is found in the *Cambridge Handbook*, which can be downloaded from the website [www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsOfficers](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsOfficers)

### Language

This syllabus and the associated assessment materials are available in English only.

### Grading and reporting

Cambridge International A Level results are shown by one of the grades A\*, A, B, C, D or E, indicating the standard achieved, A\* being the highest and E the lowest. 'Ungraded' indicates that the candidate's performance fell short of the standard required for grade E. 'Ungraded' will be reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. The letters Q (result pending), X (no result) and Y (to be issued) may also appear on the statement of results but not on the certificate.

Cambridge International AS Level results are shown by one of the grades a, b, c, d or e, indicating the standard achieved, 'a' being the highest and 'e' the lowest. 'Ungraded' indicates that the candidate's performance fell short of the standard required for grade 'e'. 'Ungraded' will be reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. The letters Q (result pending), X (no result) and Y (to be issued) may also appear on the statement of results but not on the certificate.

If a candidate takes a Cambridge International A Level and fails to achieve grade E or higher, a Cambridge International AS Level grade will be awarded if both of the following apply:

- the components taken for the Cambridge International A Level by the candidate in that series included all the components making up a Cambridge International AS Level
- the candidate's performance on the AS Level components was sufficient to merit the award of a Cambridge International AS Level grade.

For the assessment of languages other than English, Cambridge International also reports separate speaking endorsement grades (Distinction, Merit and Pass), for candidates who satisfy the conditions stated in the syllabus.



## Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as 'administrative zones'. We allocate all Cambridge schools to one administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable. Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

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