

IB GLOBAL POLITICS  
**POLITICAL  
ENGAGEMENT  
ACTIVITY:  
WRITING THE  
REPORT**

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**GLOBAL POLITICS AT UWCCR**



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“ At the heart of experiential education are three key elements: Content, experience and reflection ”

Morten Asfeldt

# Using this guide

This booklet provides guidance on how you may wish to consider structuring the report component of your Political Engagement IA for Global Politics.

There is no prescribed structure for the report so you are free to follow, adapt or ignore this advice as you choose.

However, you are reminded that the PEA Internal Assessment is worth 20% of your final grade for Global Politics (25% at SL) so it is something you should take seriously and try to produce the best report possible.

Equally, it is worth remembering that, while the engagement and complementary research are also compulsory components of this IA - and it will be impossible to produce a successful report without having completed these two components - the report is the only component that is formally assessed.



# THE REPORT

## POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY 1A

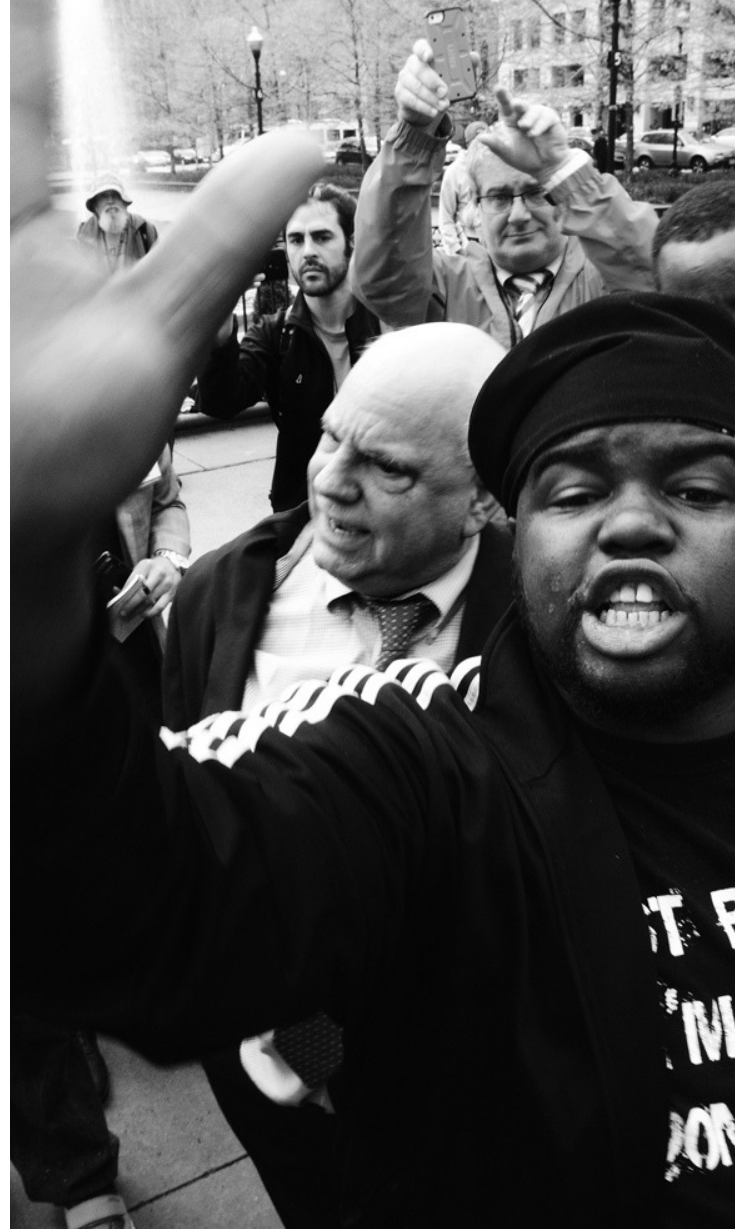
As you know, there are three components to this internal assessment: Complementary research; the engagement and the written report of 2,000 words

The written report is the only part which is formally assessed so it is important to get it right and make sure you are hitting all of the criteria as set out in the subject guide

## FOUR ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Your report will be assessed against four different criteria:

1. Identification of issue and justification (4 marks)
2. Explanation of engagement (4 marks)
3. Analysis of issue (6 marks)
4. Synthesis and evaluation (6 marks)



Writing a successful report means that you must consider how you structure your work to ensure you consider all four criteria.

Whilst there will be a certain amount of description required in order to explain what you did on your engagement you must be careful to ensure that your report is primarily analytical and evaluative rather than descriptive if it is to successfully meet the IB criteria

A suggested structure for your report is considered overleaf.

# STRUCTURING THE REPORT

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT  
ACTIVITY 1A

There is a word limit of 2,000 words for the report. This is not as much as it may seem so it is important that you avoid waffle or saying something that is not directly related to the assessment criteria.

## MAXIMUM OF THREE OR FOUR SECTIONS

This structure is a suggestion.

You are free to structure your report in a different way if you are confident it still meets the assessment criteria

**Section 1.** Identification and justification  
(approx. 200-300 words)

**Section 2.** Explanation of engagement  
(approx. 500 600 words)

**Section 3.** Analysis and Evaluation  
(approx. 1,200 words)



The suggested word counts for each section are suggestions.

If you choose to structure your report differently, remember that your report must be largely analytical and evaluative in nature and must synthesise what you learnt through your engagement with what you found out through your complementary research

Remember, the overall word limit for your report is 2,00 words so keep it concise and to the point



# SECTION 1: IDENTIFICATION AND JUSTIFICATION

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT  
ACTIVITY 1A

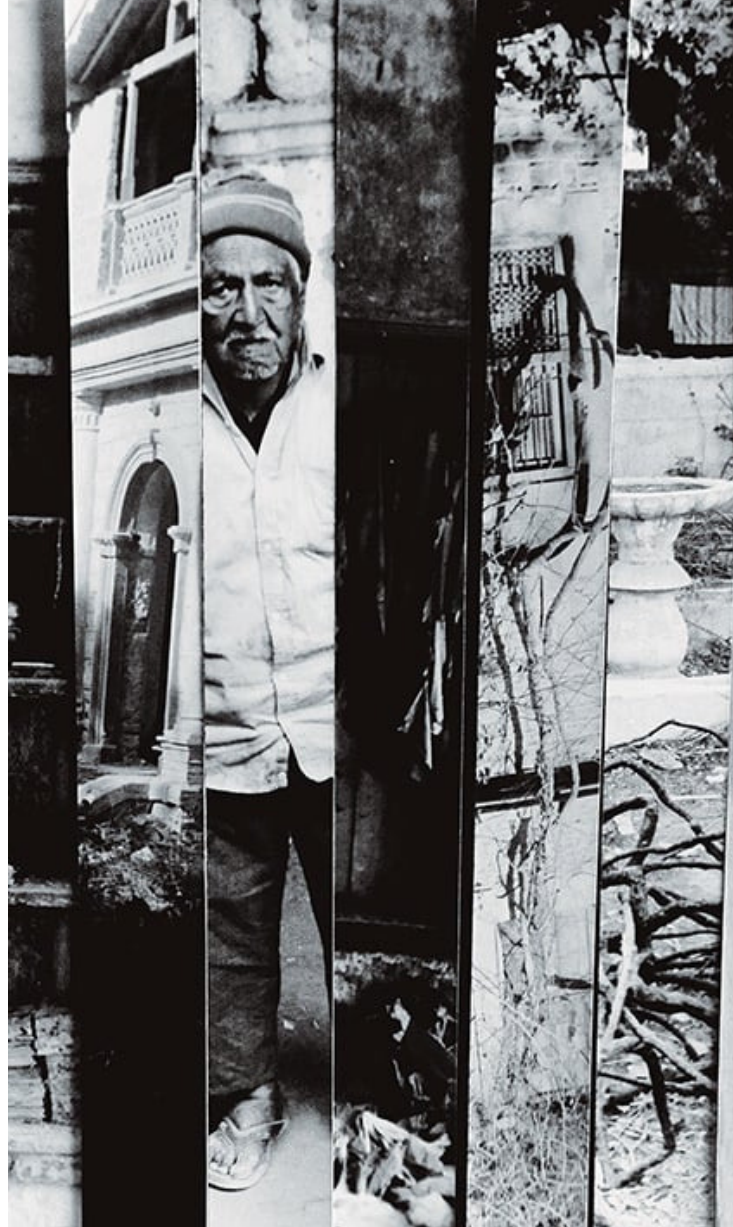
## Key questions to consider:

Is there a clear explanation of why this particular political issue and engagement are of interest to the student?

Is there a clear link between the engagement and political issue on one hand and the course content on the other hand?

WILL THE  
EXAMINER BE  
ABLE TO  
ANSWER YES  
TO THESE  
QUESTIONS?

If you cannot answer 'yes' to these questions then how will the examiner be able to?



## TOP LEVEL DESCRIPTOR FOR CRITERION A

“

The political issue explored through the engagement is clearly and explicitly identified. There is a clear explanation of why this engagement and political issue are of interest to the student. There is a clear link between the engagement and political issue on one hand and the course content on the other

”



# IDENTIFY AND JUSTIFY

Not a difficult section to pick marks up on here but make sure you are including everything required in the assessment criteria. The criteria you need to be looking at is **A: Identification and Justification of Issue.**

There are three key points you need to make:

- 1: You must clearly state the political issue is being explored through your engagement.
2. You must explain - clearly but briefly - why this political issue is of interest to you and why you have chosen to carry out the particular engagement you have decided upon
3. You must relate the political issue and your engagement to the course content. How does it link with the syllabus?

## Sentence starters:

The political issue explored through this engagement is...

I have chosen to base my engagement on the political issue of...

I am interested in this issue because...

I chose to carry out my engagement because...

By carrying out my engagement in this way...

Both this engagement and issue clearly relate to the syllabus and this links can be seen most strongly with the following concepts in Unit...

## KEEP IT CONCISE AVOID WAFFLE

## SECTION 2. EXPLANATION OF ENGAGEMENT

### POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY 1A

#### Key questions to consider:

Is the description of the engagement and what the student actually did clear and relevant for their chosen political issue?

Is there a clear explanation of the ways in which the student's experiences informed his or her understanding of the political issue?

IF THE  
ANSWER TO  
THESE  
QUESTIONS  
IS NO THEN  
YOUR  
REPORT IS  
NOT READY

If you cannot answer 'yes' to these questions then how will the examiner be able to?



#### TOP LEVEL DESCRIPTOR FOR CRITERION B

“

The description of the engagement and of what the student actually did is clear and relevant for their chosen political issue. There is a clear explanation of the ways in which the student's experiences informed his or her understanding of the political issue

”

# DESCRIBE AND EXPLAIN

There are four (4) marks available for this section and provided you have done a decent engagement and not relied solely on interviews then you should have no major problems here.

There are three points to consider when writing up this section:

1. You must explain exactly what you did as your engagement activity. It is not enough to say, for example, I helped out at a homeless shelter in San José. You should say - briefly - exactly what you did at the homeless shelter. What jobs did you do? Who did you work with? Who did you interact with? How long were you there for?
2. It should be clear to the examiner how this engagement is relevant to the political issue you have chosen to investigate. The easiest way to do this is for you to clearly state how your engagement is relevant to your chosen political issue
3. You must make it extremely clear what you learnt through carrying out your engagement and how this has increased your understanding of the political issue. Remember, it is ok to say that your engagement has made you question everything you thought you believed about an issue beforehand.

## Relating sections to criteria

You should remember that, while this section will go a long way to meeting criterion B, it is essential that you continue to make reference to your engagement in the third section of your report in order to be sure you hit the criteria for C and B.

## Sentence starters:

As part of my engagement, I..

During my engagement I took part in the following / worked with the following people...

The engagement I undertook is relevant to my political issue because....

The three most important things I learnt about my political issue from undertaking this engagement were....

WHAT DID YOU DO?  
WHY IS IT RELEVANT?  
WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

# A word about Section 3: Analysis and Evaluation



If you follow the suggested three section structure for your report, Section 3 is where you will hit Criterion C and D as well as part of Criterion B which you have already begun to address in Section 2.

In the following pages, Criteria C and D are discussed differently before we consider exactly what you need to do in this final section

## SECTION 3. ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION (CRITERION C)

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT  
ACTIVITY 1A

### Key questions to consider:

To what extent does the student  
analyse the political issue?

To what extent does the student justify  
his or her main points?

THESE ARE  
THE  
QUESTIONS  
THE PERSON  
READING  
YOUR  
REPORT WILL  
BE ASKING  
THEMSELVES

This means you must also consider  
these question carefully when writing  
your report



### TOP LEVEL DESCRIPTOR FOR CRITERION C

“

The political issue is explored in depth,  
using the key concepts of the course  
where relevant, and the response  
contains clear critical analysis. All, or  
nearly all, of the main points are  
justified.

”



## SECTION 3. ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION (CRITERION D)

### POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY 1A

#### Key questions to consider:

To what extent does the student synthesise his or her experience and research in the discussion of the political issue?

To what extent does the student show evidence of evaluation, underpinned by his or her experiences and adequate research, to allow multiple perspectives on the political issue?



THESE  
QUESTIONS  
MUST GUIDE  
WHAT YOU  
INCLUDE IN  
THIS  
SECTION

#### TOP BAND DESCRIPTOR

“ The student's experiences and more theoretical perspectives are synthesised so that an integrated and rich treatment of the political issue ensues. Conclusions are clearly stated, balanced and consistent with the evidence presented. There is evidence of evaluation of the political issue from multiple perspectives

”

Remember, the top level descriptor for Criterion B says you must explain how your engagement added to your understanding of your political issue. There is scope to do this in Section 3 as well as Section 2 depending on the structure of your report

# Analysis Synthesis Evaluation Conclusion

Section 3 (Analysis and Evaluation) is the most important section of your report so it is important you get it right. It is worth over 50% of the marks available and will hit Criteria C and D (as well as some of Criterion B) provided you get it right

We can break this section down into three main parts:

1. Analysis and Justification
3. Synthesis and Evaluation
3. Conclusion

You do not need to write these sub-sections with their own sub-titles but you must make sure that you do include all of these requirements in this section

## What do you need to do in this section?

You must **analyse** the political issue

You must **justify** any points you make by using supporting evidence

You must **synthesise** what you learnt during your engagement with what you learnt by carrying out complementary research

You must **evaluate** different views on the political issue - whether your own or someone else - in order to show that there are multiple ways of considering the issue

You must come to a **conclusion** based on the evidence you have discussed in your report



# What do we mean by...

## Analysis and Justification?

In this case, analysis means you have broken down the political issue in order to bring out the essential elements; identified parts and relationships between different parts and interpreted information to help reach a conclusion.

Justifying your main points means saying why you think these points are worth making and using supporting evidence to back up what you are saying

## Synthesis and Evaluation

Synthesis, in the context of your Political Engagement Activity, means that you have considered what you have learnt through carrying out your engagement and compared it to what others have said about the same political issue. To put it in simple terms, you are comparing the results of your engagement with the results of your engagement. Do they both tell you the same thing? If not, why not? Do different people have different views? If so, why do they have different views? Evaluation refers to you making judgements about the views of others - assessing the strengths and weaknesses of their arguments and ideas

## Conclusion

Come to a decision. You set out to explore a political issue when you began this project. Say - but keep it brief - exactly what it is you have achieved and found out

## Sentence Starters:

My findings as a result of my engagement contrast with the theory developed by...

Support for this view can be found in the work of...

An alternative perspective can be seen in...

The work of X supports / contradicts this view...

The weaknesses / strengths of this arguments can be summarised as....

# COMMAND TERMS

REMEMBER TO CHECK THE GLOBAL  
POLITICS SUBJECT GUIDE

# Some final thoughts...

1

You **must** connect your analysis to the key concepts of the Global Politics course. Not only must you connect your analysis to the course concepts, but you must do so in a way that shows you **understand** those concepts

You must use complementary sources (properly cited in a consistent and recognised format) throughout your report. This is an academic report and you are therefore expected to use academic sources as evidence to support the points you make in your report

2

3

You must make it clear where the points you are making come from. Are they a result of your engagement? Are they a result of your complementary research? Are they your own thoughts and conclusions? If it is not obvious where your points come from it is unlikely you will be given credit for them,

It may seem like an awful lot but 2,000 words is actually very few in which to hit all of the criteria expected by the IB. Draft and redraft your report as many times as necessary. Be brutal. If you can't say exactly how something is helping you to meet the criteria then get rid of it. Cut the waffle and the padding.

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