

**Research Log guidance for centres**

**The purpose of the research log**

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.

**The key uses of the research log are:**

1. The log is a form of evidence submitted together with the research report to further demonstrate the research process from start to finish.
2. The log should document the ongoing work that is taking place while candidates are planning and writing their research report.
3. The log should be maintained throughout the research process, and not written retrospectively after the research has been completed.
4. The log should be effective in helping candidates write their research report, and ensuring it meets the requirements for the use, analysis and evaluation of evidence and perspectives in order to reach a reasoned conclusion.
5. The log should encourage ongoing student reflection on a variety of evidence and perspectives.
6. The log should be useful for centres when monitoring candidates' progress, conducting the final interview and in submitting the statement of originality confirming that the work belongs entirely to the candidate.

The following extracts are examples from research logs. Please note that this guidance is not designed to be prescriptive, and centres may devise their own format for research logs based on this guidance which they feel allows their candidates to best demonstrate their learning process.

***Our comments on the candidate's work are written in bold throughout this document.***

**Cambridge International AS and A Level Global Perspectives and Research (9239)**  
**Component 4: Cambridge Research Report - Research Log**

**Deciding on a topic and choosing a title**

**Example A**

| <i>Initial idea for research report</i>   | <i>Why I chose it</i>  | <i>Initial search for resources</i>  | <i>Any advice from tutor</i>  |
|---|--|--|---|
| Date XX/XX/XX<br><br>‘Migration from Middle East.<br>Why is it such a problem?<br>What effects will it have on the West?’   | Pictures on TV.<br>Saw documentary.<br>Was disturbed by pictures of refugees and wanted to know more. Personally interested because my family were originally immigrants. I think we have a duty to help migrants and this is not just Europe’s problem. | Did an internet search on Middle East conflict and refugee problems.<br><br><i>(specific url links could be copy and pasted in here)</i> |   |
| Date XX/XX/XX<br><br>‘What effects will migration have on society?’   | Some like Angela Merkel have welcomed refugees. Sees economic benefits.<br><br>There is also hatred and opposition to refugees and concern about culture clashes and economic costs.   | <b><i>(Sources should be included)</i></b>   | In a discussion, tutor showed mark schemes and advice. Explained perspectives.<br><br>Gave presentation on issue to class explaining why this is an important issue both globally and for me. |
| Adviser suggested changing title to avoid series of explanations and setting up more of a debate.<br><br>‘Should European states take in more refugees from the Middle East?’ | Set out plan into different broad perspectives.<br><br><u>For</u><br>Extend plan<br>Moral responsibility<br>Possible benefits to European societies with falling populations<br>Ease burden on   | To be decided but need more on possible social benefits.   | Tutor suggested developing clearer perspectives and extending reading list.   |

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|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  | <p>countries like Lebanon and Syria Prevent people trafficking.</p> <p><u>Against</u></p> <p>Social strains on Western countries Might delay a settlement in the Middle East Fears of affecting the culture and way of life in Europe.</p> |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|

*These logs show the development process from initial idea to title and show how the candidate has reflected over time, using the log as a resource for forming a constructive dialogue. The candidate is modifying their ideas continuously as they develop their research plan. At this stage the candidate should be considering the sources that will be submitted in their Outline Proposal Form (OPF), and the specific sources the candidate is considering could have been listed in the research log.*

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**Record of sources used (sample extract from research log)**

**Example B**

| Date             | Resource  | Key ideas  | Evaluation  |
|------------------|---|--|---|
| Date<br>XX/XX/XX | Manifesto of Danish conservative groups against migration<br><br><i>(url reference and date of source should be included)</i> | Need to restrict migration.<br>Threat to traditional Christian way of life.<br>Heavy costs to Danes to support migrants.<br>Migrants should not be allowed to enter unless they prove political persecution.<br>Many Danes oppose. | Multi-faith communities common in Europe and assumption that there is a 'Christian way of life' may be false.<br>In any case Christian values are those of charity so illogical.<br>Assumption that migrants would cost more, but many are young and would add to labour market.<br>Opinion poll does confirm a lot of opposition, but should this determine policy?<br><br>Need to balance this by counter arguments. Is this typical of arguments from anti-immigration groups? |

**Centres should submit extracts from the research log to demonstrate how candidates have used sources. It would be acceptable to include an extract from the beginning, middle and end of the research process. It is not expected that every source used should be submitted. The log shows the date and the source. The source is analysed in the 'Key ideas' column and there are some indications of evaluation in the final column. A variety of extracts taken from a range of stages in the research process would sufficiently demonstrate that the research log was being maintained through research period, and that it was being used and that it was used effectively in helping candidates fulfill the assessment objective of Analysis and Evaluation (AO1).**

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**Record of tutorials and seminars (sample extracts from research log)**

**Example C**

| <i>Date</i>      | <i>Tutorial/Seminar</i>            | <i>Issues discussed</i>  | <i>How this affected my research/writing</i>   |
|------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Date<br>XX/XX/XX | Seminar on source evaluation       | How statistical evidence can be assessed.  | I went back to my section on the economic costs of migration and looked more critically at the figures produced and considered the samples they were based on. |
| Date<br>XX/XX/XX | Tutorial on reflecting on research | How reflection should avoid being general and should focus on particular research issues to do with migration. | Reviewed my reflections and edited some over-personal and general comments.  |

*Centres may submit a sample of research logs wherein candidates provide examples of the tutorials, seminars and/or lectures which they have either attended in person or listened to online which they have reflected on and the subsequent impact they have had on the research.*

*A couple of examples would demonstrate that the candidate has thought about and engaged widely with different lectures and seminars and should then elaborate on how their engagement with such talks helped them reframe their ideas and refine their research approach. In this particular example, the candidate has attended seminars pertaining to research methodology, which is invaluable in helping them think about how to proceed with their own research in terms of using appropriate research approaches and methods for their topic. Even if the candidate decides not to use a specific kind of method (for example, quantitative data), it is still valuable evidence that the candidate has thought critically about the advantages and disadvantages of using various research approaches.*

*Candidates may attend events such as talks in person, watch academic seminars online or listen to relevant podcasts, all of which are equally useful sources.*