

Assessment outline

First examinations 2008

The assessment model in theory of knowledge (TOK) comprises two components, both of which should be completed within the 100 hours designated for the course.

Part 1 External assessment (40 points)

Essay on a prescribed title (1,200–1,600 words)

One essay on a title chosen from a list of ten titles prescribed by the IBO for each examination session.

Part 2 Internal assessment (20 points)

The presentation (approximately 10 minutes per student)

One presentation to the class.

One written presentation planning document and presentation marking form, using the relevant form from the *Vade Mecum*, including:

- the knowledge issue that is the focus of the presentation
- a summary in note form of the knowledge issues to be treated during the presentation
- achievement levels for each of the four assessment criteria, briefly justified, from both student and teacher.

The presentation should be an integral part of the TOK course.

The diploma points matrix

		Theory of knowledge					
		Excellent A	Good B	Satisfactory C	Mediocre D	Elementary E	Not submitted
Extended essay	Excellent A	3	3	2	2	1	N
	Good B	3	2	1	1	0	N
	Satisfactory C	2	1	1	0	0	N
	Mediocre D	2	1	0	0	0	N
	Elementary E	1	0	0	0	Failing condition	N
	Not submitted	N	N	N	N	N	N

TOK points

Points awarded for the externally assessed component, part 1, the essay on a prescribed title (40 points), and for the internally assessed component, part 2, the presentation (20 points), are combined to give a total out of 60. The grade boundaries are then applied, to determine the band (A to E) to which the student's performance in TOK belongs.

The band descriptors are:

- A Work of an **excellent** standard
- B Work of a **good** standard
- C Work of a **satisfactory** standard
- D Work of a **mediocre** standard
- E Work of an **elementary** standard

The band descriptor is used both to determine the contribution of TOK to the overall diploma score and to provide the basis for reporting to schools on each student's TOK performance.

TOK and the extended essay

The performance of a student in both Diploma Programme requirements, theory of knowledge and the extended essay, is determined according to the quality of the work, based on the application of the IB Diploma Programme assessment criteria. It is described by one of the band descriptors A–E. Using the **two** performance levels and the diploma points matrix, a maximum of **three** diploma points can be awarded for a student's combined performance.

A student who, for example, writes a **satisfactory** extended essay and whose performance in theory of knowledge is judged to be **good** will be awarded 1 point, while a student who writes a **mediocre** extended essay and whose performance in theory of knowledge is judged to be **excellent** will be awarded 2 points.

A student who fails to submit a TOK essay, or who fails to make a presentation, will be awarded N for TOK, will score no points, and will not be awarded a diploma.

Performance in both theory of knowledge and the extended essay of an **elementary** standard is a failing condition for the award of the diploma.

Assessment details

Nature of the tasks

The two assessment tasks, the essay and the presentation, are seen as complementary opportunities for students to show the extent to which they have achieved the TOK course objectives.

Both assessment tasks have at their centre reflection on knowledge issues but this reflection is demonstrated differently in each. The emphasis in the TOK presentation is on demonstrating an understanding of knowledge at work in the world. It is thus distinguished from the TOK essay, where students are required to show their TOK thinking skills in the discussion of a prescribed title that may be primarily conceptual in nature. Concrete examples play an important role in the essay in illustrating the main ideas or taking forward the argument but the presentation is in a sense an extensive TOK reflection on a single example, albeit one that is necessarily of a particular kind.

Neither the essay nor the presentation is primarily a research exercise, although some factual information may need to be included. If so, its reliability needs to be established through proper checks and referencing.

Part 1 Essay on a prescribed title (1,200–1,600 words)

General

Each student must submit for external assessment an essay on any one of the ten titles prescribed by the IBO for each examination session.

The titles ask generic questions about knowledge and are cross-disciplinary in nature. They may be answered with reference to any part or parts of the TOK course, to specific disciplines, or with reference to opinions gained about knowledge both inside and outside the classroom.

The titles are not meant to be treated only in the abstract, or on the basis of external authorities. In all cases, essays should express the conclusions reached by students through a sustained consideration of knowledge issues; claims and counterclaims should be formulated and main ideas should be illustrated with varied and effective examples that show the approach consciously taken by the student. Essays should demonstrate the student's ability to link knowledge issues to areas of knowledge and ways of knowing.

The chosen title must be used exactly as given; it must not be altered in any way. Students who modify the titles may gain very few or no points, since the knowledge issues that essays treat must be relevant to the titles in their prescribed formulation.

The essay must be well presented, clearly legible, and, where appropriate, include references and a bibliography.

Acknowledgments and references

Students are expected to acknowledge fully and in detail the work, thoughts or ideas of another person if incorporated in work submitted for assessment, and to ensure that their own work is never given to another student, either in the form of hard copy or by electronic means, knowing that it might be submitted for assessment as the work of that other student.

Factual claims that may be considered common knowledge (for example, “The second world war ended in 1945”) do not need to be referenced. However, what one person thinks of as common knowledge, within a particular culture, may be unfamiliar to someone else, for example, an assessor in a different part of the world. If in doubt, give an authoritative source for the claim. Even the most carefully argued case is weak if its foundations are not secure.

The principle behind referencing in TOK is that it should allow the source to be traced. The simplest way to achieve this is to use consistently an accepted form of referencing. Guidance on such matters is available in the Diploma Programme *Extended Essay guide* or on reputable web sites, for example <http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/Documentation.html>.

A particular difficulty arises in the context of class notes or discussion. Reference to factual claims or ideas originating from these sources should be as precise as possible (for example, giving the name of the speaker and the date of the discussion). In cases where factual claims are fundamental to the argument of an essay, high academic standards demand that such claims should always be checked and a proper, traceable source supplied.

Bibliography

The TOK essay is **not** a research paper but, if specific sources are used, they must be acknowledged in a bibliography. The bibliography should include only those works (such as books, journals, magazines and online sources) consulted by the student.

As appropriate, the bibliography should specify:

- author(s), title, date and place of publication
- the name of the publisher or URL (<http://...>)
- the date when the web page was accessed, adhering to one standard method of listing sources.

Essay length

The essay on the prescribed title must be between 1,200 and 1,600 words in length. Extended notes or appendices are not appropriate to a TOK essay and may not be read.

The word count includes:

- the main part of the essay
- any quotations.

The word count does not include:

- any acknowledgments
- the references (whether given in footnotes or endnotes)

- any maps, charts, diagrams, annotated illustrations and tables
- the bibliography.

Students are required to indicate the number of words.

The role of the teacher

In relation to the student's essay on a prescribed title, the teacher has four principal responsibilities:

- to encourage and support the student in the writing of the essay
- to provide the student with advice on and guidance about the skills needed
- to ensure that the essay is the student's own work
- to complete the coversheet.

While the teacher is encouraged to discuss the prescribed titles with the students, they should be allowed to make the final choice of title and to develop their own ideas.

If a preliminary draft is produced, the teacher may read and comment on it, but is not permitted to edit it for the student. Only one draft may be presented to the teacher before the final essay is submitted. In general, teachers' comments should be about the essay as a whole, although it is acceptable to question or comment upon a particular paragraph. Where a student is writing in a second or third language, more flexibility may be appropriate: for example, the teacher may indicate that a particular sentence or word usage is difficult for the reader. However, here as elsewhere, it is the student's responsibility to correct mistakes and make improvements.

Authenticity

Teachers must ensure that essays are the student's own work. If there is doubt, authenticity should be checked by a discussion with the student about the content of the essay submitted and a scrutiny of one or more of the following:

- the student's initial proposal and outline
- the first draft of the essay
- the student's references and bibliography for the essay, where appropriate
- the style of the writing, which may reveal obvious discrepancies.

It should be made clear to students that they will be required to sign a written declaration when submitting the essay, to confirm that it is their own work. In addition, students must be made aware that their teachers will also be required to verify the claim made in the declaration (see the relevant edition of the *Vade Mecum* for procedures).

Part 2 The presentation

General

Students must make one or more individual and/or small group presentations to the class during the course. The maximum group size is **five**. If a student makes more than one presentation, the teacher should choose the best one (or the best group presentation in which the student participated) for the purposes of assessment.

The TOK presentation requires students to identify and explore the knowledge issues raised by a substantive real-life situation that is of interest to them. Aided by their teachers (see below), students can select the situation they will tackle from a more limited domain of personal, school, or community relevance, or from a wider one of national, international or global scope.

It is important that the situation that is selected is sufficiently circumscribed, so as to allow an effective treatment of knowledge issues. For this reason, it is wise to avoid topics so unfamiliar to the class that a great deal of explanation is needed before the underlying knowledge issues can be appreciated and explored.

Presentations may take many forms, such as lectures, skits, simulations, games, dramatized readings, interviews or debates. Students may use supporting material such as videos, MS PowerPoint presentations, overhead projections, posters, questionnaires, recordings of songs or interviews, costumes, or props. Under no circumstances, however, should the presentation be simply an essay read aloud to the class.

Each presentation will have two stages:

- an introduction, briefly describing the real-life situation and linking it to one or more relevant knowledge issue
- a treatment of the knowledge issue(s) that explores their nature and responses to them, and shows how these relate to the chosen situation.

A good presentation will demonstrate the presenter's personal involvement in the topic and show both why the topic is important and how it relates to other areas (see assessment criteria for more details).

Approximately 10 minutes per presenter should be allowed, up to a maximum in most cases of 30 minutes per group. Presentations should be scheduled to allow time for class discussion afterwards.

Interaction and audience participation are allowed during the presentation, not just in follow-up discussion, but there must be an identifiable substantial input from the presenter(s) that is assessable.

Before the presentation, the individual or group must give the teacher a copy of the presentation planning document (see below). The document is not to be handed out to the audience.

The role of the teacher

The presentation should be a positive TOK learning experience for the audience. With this goal in mind, teachers may assist students in the choice of topic (situation) for the presentation (or even supply it), and in a general way support their thinking about relevant knowledge claims, means of justification, the issue(s) to be posed, the perspectives to be addressed, and the connections that can be made. Often a variety of appropriate knowledge issues can be identified in the kind of real-life situations/contemporary problems most students will want to present. Teachers should help them concentrate their efforts on a clearly formulated one.

Each topic should be treated only once in a particular teaching group.

In summary, the teacher should give the presenter(s) every opportunity to construct a presentation that will advance the aims of the TOK course for the class as a whole. The teacher may support students by guiding them towards suitable approaches but should not do their work for them.

The date when each presentation is to take place should be given to students well in advance, to allow sufficient time for topics to be chosen and for material to be prepared.

Internal assessment documentation

Presentation planning document

Each student must complete and submit a presentation planning document. In a group presentation these may, but need not, be compiled individually. This document will summarize the thinking behind the topic, state the specific knowledge issues to be addressed, and present an outline of the intended treatment of them, in a maximum of one typed A4 page or equivalent. It should provide clear evidence of an inquiry in keeping with the aims and objectives of TOK, and meeting the requirements of the assessment criteria for the presentation. It must not be an essay, but should be in skeleton or bullet point form.

Content of presentation planning document

Please describe your planning for the presentation, either in the space below, or on an attached A4 word-processed page.

Your description must include:

- the knowledge issue that will be the focus of your presentation
- a summary in note form (for example, a bulleted list) of the way you plan to deal with knowledge issues during your presentation.

Presentation marking form

Both students and teachers must fill in the presentation marking form (the reverse side of the presentation planning document). Student presenters award themselves an achievement level for each of the four assessment criteria and briefly justify the level they have given. If the teacher considers the student mark accurate, they may simply reproduce it. Both students and teachers are required to certify the authenticity of the presentation work.

Participants in a group presentation should be marked individually, although all may be given the same marks if they have contributed equally. In a group presentation, not every student need speak for the same amount of time, but all students are expected to make a contribution and to participate actively.

Content of presentation marking form

Presenter's assessment

Each presenter should give themselves an achievement level for each of the four assessment criteria. Presenters should briefly justify the level they have given, in the "Comments/evidence" space provided.

Teacher's assessment

In the "Comments/evidence" box, please indicate briefly why you have given each level.

Both students and teachers are required to certify the authenticity of the presentation work.

The marks that will be used towards the final grade will be those entered in the teacher section of the form and transmitted via IBIS.

Verification of internal assessment

All schools must retain both the presentation planning document and the presentation marking form for each student until the close of session (15 September [15 March] for May [November] session schools).

In addition, some schools in each session will be required to record some or all of their presentations. These schools may be randomly chosen, or may be ones where a possible problem has been identified, for example, by analysis of the marks awarded in previous sessions. It is not necessary for schools to record presentations unless they are asked to do so, although it can be a useful exercise in order to standardize internal marking, where more than one teacher is involved.

Any adjustment (moderation) of the schools' internal assessment marks will take place on the basis of the evidence provided.

Examples of presentation topics

It should be noted that these are merely examples, meant only to illustrate the kinds of topics appropriate for TOK presentations. In particular, they are included to provide a concrete sense of what is meant by "real-life situation/contemporary problem" and to show how a knowledge issue can be identified in it and then treated from different perspectives. As well as guiding the selection of appropriate topics, the examples also illustrate ways that topics may be treated in the presentation, in accordance with the assessment criteria.

Real-life situation/contemporary problem: Global warming

- Knowledge issues: "Can we be certain that global warming is taking place?" or, "Does language (or the use of statistics, graphs, photographs) affect our view of whether or not the planet is undergoing global warming?"
- Format: Students analyse and critically evaluate video and newspaper clips involving the views of experts, politicians and activists who defend or dispute the notion that the planet is suffering from global warming. Each member of the group draws attention to different aspects of the evidence—the nature of the words used, statistics and graphs, photographs.
- Knower's (student's) point of view: As a group, students suggest that the evidence in favour of global warming seems compelling, but underline that in some cases it is difficult to separate some protagonists' positions and how they are formulated from the interest groups they represent.

Real-life situation/contemporary problem: Intensive agriculture

- Knowledge issue: "How can we know whether intensive farming methods are always harmful?"
- Format: Inputs by students representing the views of farmers in different circumstances from different parts of the world, cross-examined by a presenter and members of the audience.
- Knower's (student's) point of view: It may be easy to take a view on (to think we know) what is right in our own situation. Looked at globally the question is much more complicated.

Real-life situation/contemporary problem: Reliability of media reporting of science

- Knowledge issues: “What constitutes responsible journalism? How can we know whether scientific conclusions are justified?”
- Format: Summary and analysis of a newspaper article reporting on a new scientific study showing that a diet that contains no fat can lead to more weight gain than a similar diet that contains some fat (the original stimulus). Discussion of the quality of the newspaper article (what information ought it to contain, so that we can make a good judgment about the reliability of the claims made?) and of the scientific study it describes (how can we tell whether the evidence cited in the scientific study justifies its conclusions?).
- Knower’s (student’s) point of view: It is easy to tell that some newspapers are more concerned with entertainment than with truth. How easy is it to tell how much credibility to give to more serious stories?

Real-life situation/contemporary problem: What makes a work of art?

- Knowledge issues: “What is it that distinguishes an ordinary bag of rubbish from a major work of art that just looks like a bag of rubbish? Can anything be art—and, if so, what makes it into art?”
- Format: Skit of a TV talk show discussion about an incident when an artwork in an exhibition, consisting of a plastic bag full of rubbish, was mistakenly thrown out by a cleaner. Students role-play the host of the show, the artist of the work in question, a visual arts critic and a gallery owner, all of whom offer other examples of contentious contemporary art and their ideas about what distinguishes these artworks from non-art.
- Knower’s (student’s) point of view: Why are people prepared to dismiss contemporary art without understanding much about it, while often blindly believing scientific claims, however outlandish and improbable?

Real-life situation/contemporary problem: Demonstrations in China against the issue of a new history textbook in Japan

- Knowledge issues: Who should decide, and on what grounds, what history should be taught in schools? What part does the notion of historical truth play here?
- Format: Arguments for and against the Chinese attempt to tell the Japanese what they should teach about the actions of the Japanese army in China during the second world war. Should other countries be able to have a say in what the **Chinese** teach their children? What, in general terms, should determine a history curriculum?
- Knower’s (student’s) point of view: Is history too important to be left to historians?

Real-life situation/contemporary problem: What evidence is there about how dinosaurs looked and behaved?

- Knowledge issues: Are the methods of paleontology more like a science such as physics, or more like history?
- Format: Showing and discussion of a clip from the TV documentary *Walking with Dinosaurs* on how dinosaurs lived, showing a detailed scene from the life of a particular dinosaur, with a commentary presented as if this were a real scene.
- Knower’s (student’s) point of view: How far is it legitimate for TV programmes to go, to make their subject matter entertaining?

Assessment criteria

Using the assessment criteria

The method of assessment used by the IBO is criterion-related. That is to say, the method of assessing the essay on a prescribed title and the presentation in TOK judges each in relation to identified assessment criteria and not in relation to the work of other students.

- There are **four** assessment criteria (A–D) for the essay on a prescribed title, and **four** (A–D) for the presentation. For each assessment criterion, achievement level descriptors are defined that concentrate on positive achievement, although for the lower levels (zero is the lowest level of achievement) failure to achieve may be included in the description.
- The aim is to find, for each criterion, the descriptor that conveys most adequately the achievement level attained by the student. The process, therefore, is one of approximation. In the light of any one criterion, a student's work may contain features denoted by a high achievement level descriptor combined with features appropriate to a lower one. A professional judgment should be made in identifying the descriptor that approximates most closely to the work.
- Having scrutinized the work to be assessed, the descriptors for each criterion should be read, starting with level 0, until one is reached that describes an achievement level that the work being assessed does not match as well as the previous level. The work is therefore best described by the preceding achievement level descriptor and this level should be recorded. In cases where a single descriptor covers two levels, a further decision is needed as to whether the work fulfills the descriptor to a greater or lesser extent.
- Only whole numbers should be used, not partial points such as fractions or decimals.
- The highest descriptors do not imply faultless performance and assessors and teachers should not hesitate to use the extremes, including zero, if they are appropriate descriptions of the work being assessed.
- Descriptors should not be considered as marks or percentages, although the descriptor levels are ultimately added together to obtain a total. It should not be assumed that there are other arithmetical relationships; for example, a level 4 performance is not necessarily twice as good as a level 2 performance.
- A student who attains a particular achievement level in relation to one criterion will not necessarily attain similar achievement levels in relation to the others. It should not be assumed that the overall assessment of the students will produce any particular distribution of scores.

Part 1 Essay on a prescribed title

A Understanding knowledge issues

This criterion is concerned with the extent to which the essay focuses on knowledge issues relevant to the prescribed title, and with the depth and breadth of the understanding demonstrated in the essay.

A **relevant** knowledge issue is one that directly relates to the prescribed title undertaken, or one that the essay has shown is important in relation to it.

Depth of understanding is often indicated by drawing distinctions within ways of knowing and areas of knowledge, or by connecting several facets of knowledge issues to these.

Breadth of understanding is often indicated by making comparisons between ways of knowing and areas of knowledge. *Since not all prescribed titles lend themselves to an extensive treatment of an equal range of areas of knowledge or ways of knowing, this element in the descriptors should be applied with concern for the particularity of the title.*

- Does the essay demonstrate understanding of knowledge issues that are relevant to the prescribed title?
- Does the essay demonstrate an awareness of the connections between knowledge issues, areas of knowledge and ways of knowing?

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	Level 1 is not achieved.
1–2	The essay includes very little treatment of knowledge issues that are relevant to the prescribed title and demonstrates little understanding of them. If present, areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing are merely mentioned.
3–4	The essay includes some treatment of knowledge issues that are relevant to the prescribed title and demonstrates a rudimentary understanding of them. Some links to areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing have been attempted but they are largely ineffective.
5–6	For the most part the essay treats knowledge issues that are relevant to the prescribed title, and demonstrates some understanding of them. Some effective links are drawn between areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing.
7–8	The essay consistently maintains as its focus knowledge issues that are relevant to the prescribed title. Effective links and some comparisons between areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing are drawn, so that the essay demonstrates a good understanding of the knowledge issues under consideration.
9–10	The essay consistently maintains as its focus knowledge issues that are relevant to the prescribed title. Effective links and comparisons between areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing are elaborated, so that the essay demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the knowledge issues under consideration.

B Knower's perspective

- To what extent have the knowledge issues relevant to the prescribed title been connected to the student's own experience as a learner?
- Does the student show an awareness of his or her own perspective as a knower in relation to other perspectives, such as those that may arise, for example, from academic and philosophical traditions, culture or position in society (gender, age, and so on)?
- Do the examples chosen show an individual approach consciously taken by the student, rather than mere repetition of standard commonplace cases or the impersonal recounting of sources?

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	Level 1 is not achieved.
1–2	The essay shows no evidence of independent thinking about the knowledge issues related to the prescribed title. There is limited personal engagement with the knowledge issues and no attempt to acknowledge or explore different perspectives. There are no appropriate examples.
3–4	The essay shows very little evidence of independent thinking about the knowledge issues related to the prescribed title. There is some personal engagement with the knowledge issues. Different perspectives may be mentioned but there is no attempt to explore them. Examples chosen are sometimes appropriate.
5–6	The essay shows some evidence of independent thinking about the knowledge issues related to the prescribed title. The student has shaped the essay in a way that shows personal engagement with the knowledge issues. There is an awareness that different perspectives may exist, although there may be little attempt to explore these. Examples chosen are appropriate, although there may be little variety in their sources.
7–8	The essay shows adequate evidence of independent thinking about the knowledge issues related to the prescribed title. The student has shaped the essay in a way that shows thoughtful, personal engagement with the knowledge issues and some self-awareness as a knower. There is an acknowledgment of different perspectives and some attempt to explore these. Examples chosen are effective, with some variety.
9–10	The essay shows much evidence of independent thinking about the knowledge issues related to the prescribed title. The student has shaped the essay in a way that shows both a personal, reflective exploration of the knowledge issues and significant self-awareness as a knower. There is serious consideration of different perspectives. Examples chosen are varied and effectively used.

C Quality of analysis of knowledge issues

- What is the quality of the inquiry into knowledge issues?
- Are the main points in the essay justified? Are the arguments coherent and compelling?
- Have counterclaims been considered?
- Are the implications and underlying assumptions of the essay's argument identified?

This criterion is concerned only with knowledge issues that are relevant to the prescribed title. Analysis of knowledge issues that are not relevant to the prescribed title is not assessed.

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	Level 1 is not achieved.
1–2	There is no inquiry into knowledge issues, only description. There are very few attempts at justifying the main points of the essay. There is very little evidence of any awareness of counterclaims.
3–4	The inquiry partly explores, but largely describes, knowledge issues. There is some justification of main points and some coherent argument. Counterclaims are implicitly identified.
5–6	The inquiry explores knowledge issues. Most points are justified; most arguments are coherent. Some counterclaims are considered.
7–8	The inquiry explores with some insight, in some depth and/or detail, knowledge issues. All, or nearly all, main points are justified and arguments are coherent. Counterclaims are explored. Implications of the essay's argument are identified.
9–10	The inquiry explores with a high degree of insight, in considerable depth and/or detail, knowledge issues. All main points are justified and arguments are coherent and compelling. Counterclaims are explored and evaluated. Implications and underlying assumptions of the essay's argument are identified.

D Organization of ideas

- Is the essay well organized and relevant to the prescribed title?
- Does the use of language assist the reader's understanding and avoid confusion? Are central terms explained or developed clearly in a way that assists comprehension?

Note: This task is not a test of "first language" linguistic skills. No account should be taken of minor errors unless they significantly impede communication.

- When factual information is used or presented, is it accurate and, when necessary, referenced? "Factual information" includes generalizations.
- If sources have been used, have they been properly referenced in a way that allows them to be traced (Internet references must include the date on which they were accessed)?

Note: Not all essays require sources or references (see guidance in "Assessment details").

An essay that fails to meet the word limit of 1,200–1,600 words will not score above level 4 on this criterion.

An essay that has no relevance to the prescribed title will score 0 on this criterion.

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	Level 1 is not achieved.
1–2	The essay on the prescribed title is very poorly structured, with little overall organization. It is difficult to understand what the writer intends. Factual information used to support arguments may contain significant inaccuracies. Sources of information and ideas may not be acknowledged and there is no attempt at referencing.
3–4	The essay on the prescribed title is poorly structured, with limited overall organization. It is sometimes difficult to understand what the writer intends. There may be some attempt to explain or explore the meaning of terms but this contributes little to conceptual clarity. Factual information used to support arguments is not always reliable (there may be minor inaccuracies; sources of more important information may be missing or unreliable). Some sources of information and ideas are acknowledged; there is some attempt at referencing but it is not complete, nor sufficiently precise to permit tracing of sources.
5–6	The essay on the prescribed title is satisfactorily structured, with adequate overall organization. In general, concepts are used clearly: if concepts are explained, explanations are generally adequate. Factual information used to support arguments is mostly correct. Most sources of information and ideas are acknowledged; most referencing permits tracing of sources, although some precision may be lacking. The word limit has been met.
7–8	The essay on the prescribed title is well structured, with a clear overall organization. Concepts are used or developed clearly: some explanations are included, where appropriate. Factual information used to support arguments is correct. Sources of information and ideas are acknowledged; most referencing permits tracing of sources. The word limit has been met.

Achievement level	Descriptor
9–10	The essay on the prescribed title is very well structured, with an effective overall organization. Concepts are used clearly and, where appropriate, refined by helpful explanations. Factual information used to support arguments is correct. Sources of information and ideas are acknowledged; all referencing permits tracing of sources. The word limit has been met.

Note

In cases where an essay deserves a high mark for its quality of organization and clarity, but a low mark because of factual inaccuracy or lack of sourcing (or vice versa), examiners will make a judgment about which level to award. In general, more emphasis should be placed on the larger issues (organization and clarity) and less on the more minor ones (factual accuracy and sourcing). An important consideration is the status of the error or unsourced fact in the overall argument. If it is of marginal significance, little or no account should be taken of it. If it is central to the whole argument and undermines the value of the entire essay, then it can be argued that the quality of organization is itself much reduced. Conversely, meticulous acknowledgment of sources cannot improve the organization of a poorly structured essay.

Part 2 Presentation

A Identification of knowledge issue

- Did the presentation identify a relevant knowledge issue involved, implicit or embedded in a real-life situation?

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	Level 1 was not achieved.
1–2	The presentation referred to a knowledge issue but it was irrelevant to the real-life situation under consideration.
3–4	The presentation identified a knowledge issue that was in some ways relevant to the real-life situation under consideration.
5	The presentation identified a knowledge issue that was clearly relevant to the real-life situation under consideration.

B Treatment of knowledge issues

- Did the presentation show a good understanding of knowledge issues, in the context of the real-life situation?

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	Level 1 was not achieved.
1–2	The presentation showed some understanding of knowledge issues.
3–4	The presentation showed an adequate understanding of knowledge issues.
5	The presentation showed a good understanding of knowledge issues.

C Knower's perspective

- Did the presentation, particularly in the use of arguments and examples, show an individual approach and demonstrate the significance of the topic?

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	Level 1 was not achieved.
1–2	The presentation, in its use of arguments and examples or otherwise, showed limited personal involvement and did not demonstrate the significance of the topic.
3–4	The presentation, in its use of arguments and examples or otherwise, showed some personal involvement and adequately demonstrated the significance of the topic.
5	The presentation, in its distinctively personal use of arguments and examples or otherwise, showed clear personal involvement and fully demonstrated the significance of the topic.

D Connections

- Did the presentation give a balanced account of how the topic could be approached from different perspectives?
- Did the presentation show how the positions taken on the knowledge issues would have implications in related areas?
- In awarding the higher achievement levels, the emphasis should be more on the quality of the consideration of connections than on the quantity of connections mentioned.

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	Level 1 was not achieved.
1–2	The presentation explored at least two different perspectives to some extent.
3–4	The presentation gave a satisfactory account of how the question could be approached from different perspectives, and began to explore their similarities and differences.
5	The presentation gave a clear account of how the question could be approached from different perspectives and considered their implications in related areas.

References

Most, if not all, of the quotations in this guide are intended as prompts for discussion. While it is right to try to give appropriate credit, where possible, to their authors, this does not have quite the same necessity as when quotations are intended as authoritative statements, used to establish facts or as foundations of an argument. We have therefore chosen to retain some quotations whose sources we have been unable to identify.

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