



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Global Citizenship (4GL1)
Paper 1

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Introduction

Centres and students should be encouraged by the overall performance in the Summer 2025 iGCSE *Global Citizenship* examination. The average attainment across the paper improved compared to previous sessions, reflecting stronger knowledge, improved skills application, and increased confidence in tackling different question types.

- Multiple-choice questions were answered well, with few candidates encountering difficulties.
- Students also responded positively to the extended response questions (11, 18, and 22b), demonstrating a willingness to present justified arguments and engage with the issues thoughtfully.
- However, some candidates performed less strongly on the 4-mark questions that require entirely knowledge-based responses. A common shortcoming was overly generalised answers, often lacking specific examples or supporting evidence, which limited marks to 2 out of 4. Centres are encouraged to emphasise the importance of precise factual knowledge and evidence-based explanation when answering these questions.
- The 5-mark conceptual / thematic question (22a) continues to test students' grasp of key Global Citizenship terminology. While many candidates handled the question well, some struggled with understanding specific terms (*sovereignty* in 2025 and *global commons* in 2024). It is recommended that all key concepts from the specification be taught explicitly and regularly revisited. Maintaining a student glossary of key terms would be a valuable tool for both ongoing learning and final revision.
- There are concerns with the quality of work done in some centres in support of Section A. These are outlined below.

Section A: Community Action Project

In Section A, many candidates chose Citizenship Actions that were relatively limited in scope, focusing primarily on raising awareness through school presentations, with minimal evidence of tangible impact. While increasing awareness is a valid goal, actions which simply aim to inform an audience (e.g. by showing a PowerPoint on climate change) often lacked the depth necessary for effective evaluation of impact. Candidates in such cases will struggle to analyse whether their aims are fully or partially met, or even to clearly identify what their aims or goals are. Centres are reminded that **all six stages** of the Community Action, as outlined in Theme A of the specification, can be examined in Section A. It is therefore vital that the chosen action allows for each stage to be illustrated, discussed and evaluated within the exam.

Rather than selecting broad or abstract global issues with limited local engagement potential, candidates are more successful when they focus on clear, manageable objectives that are meaningfully linked to the specification themes. The most effective projects share common characteristics:

- Goals that are clearly defined and realistically achievable
- A measurable outcome or impact
- Explicit, sustained connections to one or more of the Global Citizenship themes (B–E).

Projects may be based within the school context, or they may target community-level issues. These could include identifying local social or environmental problems, publicising them and trying to get local councils or other bodies or voluntary organisations to remedy them: road safety, issues involving the elderly, refugees or other vulnerable groups, pollution or food waste. Seeking to engage with local media or government to support a cause could all be part of an excellent plan. Where actions aim primarily to influence opinions or raise awareness on broader topics (e.g. climate change or gender equality), candidates should be supported in establishing a clear baseline of their audience's knowledge, attitudes, or beliefs. This allows for meaningful evaluation of impact after the action is completed.

Centres can guide students by encouraging them to test potential actions against the following six key questions. If the answer to all six is “yes,” then the action is likely to be suitable.

1. Does the action have a clearly defined goal? (e.g., behavioural change, awareness raising)
2. Is the topic directly drawn from, or closely aligned with, Themes B to E of the specification?
3. Is the proposed action likely to make a demonstrable local impact?

4. Do students have the necessary time and resources to carry out the action effectively?
5. Does the action allow students to meaningfully apply key ideas from the relevant theme?
6. Can the success of the action be reliably measured e.g. through surveys, feedback or visible outcomes?

By using these criteria in the planning stages, candidates are more likely to undertake actions that can be successfully described, analysed, and evaluated in the examination context.

Individual questions

1a

Candidates who had undertaken a meaningful Action Project experienced little difficulty accessing the full range of marks. Where an appropriate issue had been chosen, candidates were able to articulate two contrasting views. For example, some recognised that while certain people believe refugees should be offered as much help as possible, others may feel it should not be their country's responsibility. Candidates at the lower end of the mark range were more likely to present two factual statements about their issue rather than expressing viewpoints. For instance, some candidates noted that there are now millions of pieces of plastic in the ocean in relation to their beach clean-up project. Statements like this could not be fully credited as a viewpoint or opinion.

1b

Many candidates performed extremely well on this question, demonstrating a strong command of social science methods. The best answers identified specific techniques, such as the use of closed or open-ended questionnaires. They explained a strength of their chosen method, such as ease of data analysis or the facility to understand issues in depth. Strong responses also acknowledged weaknesses, such as issues related to bias, data unreliability or difficulties in data collection and processing. At the lower end of the mark range, candidates were more likely to make simplistic statements such as: "The internet is a useful tool for research because there is plenty of information... But unfortunately a lot of it can no longer be trusted."

1c

The highest-scoring answers tended to come from candidates who had adopted a meaningful goal for their action plan beyond simply raising awareness of an issue. Some groups of students set specific goals, such as improving school facilities or cleaning a stretch of beach. These responses were often more detailed and more likely to achieve full marks. The best answers also clearly articulated why their goals were important, for example by explaining the consequences of inaction. Candidates in the mid-mark range, typically scoring 3 or 4 marks, tended to make simpler points about raising awareness or encouraging behavioural change, but without deeper justification.

1d

Many candidates scored highly on this question. Most were able to suggest a range of ways in which an issue could be identified, often referencing challenges in their local community or school, linked to social or geographical factors. Many strong responses also identified an appropriate target audience, such as younger students within the school, who may be more open to hearing different views and perspectives.

8

This was an accessible question that most candidates answered competently, meeting the assessment objectives. Responses typically combined ideas from the source with insights from classroom learning. For example, many candidates recognised that participation in global sports can raise a country's global profile, potentially attracting more foreign tourists and contributing to higher GDP. Any such specific references to tourism or GDP could be credited under Assessment Objective 2, while references to the source material supported Assessment Objective 3. Most candidates were able to provide two developed responses, and many scored 3 or 4 marks.

9a

Candidate performance on this question was similar to the previous item. Many candidates in the middle and upper end of the mark range had little difficulty identifying relevant ideas from the source and developing them using their own knowledge and understanding. Strong responses included discussions of colonial and post-colonial themes or highlighted important moral and ethical issues. Lower-mark responses often resulted from misreading the source, leading to factual inaccuracies. A notable number of candidates incorrectly stated that Western countries are being forced to return museum items to their countries of origin because refusal would now be classified as a war crime. The

source does not make this claim and instead presents a more nuanced discussion contrasting historical and contemporary actions by invading powers.

9b

Many candidates made specific reference to peacekeeping forces, United Nations actions to support refugees, or the provisions of the Geneva Convention. These candidates briefly explained the importance of these institutions or cited examples of their impact. Candidates who scored only 1 mark typically offered vague statements, such as “the UN provides emergency aid”, without clearly explaining how or offering examples of the UN’s operational mechanisms.

10a

A range of answers were creditable, as shown in the mark scheme. High-scoring candidates often identified “autocracy” and “absolute monarchy” as their two responses. Lower-scoring candidates either failed to provide two answers or listed “monarchy” without the necessary qualifier “absolute.”

10b

This question was generally well answered and appeared to be one that many candidates found interesting and engaging. Many provided detailed, well-exemplified responses, with the USA and South Korea being common case studies. Others referenced the UK, Japan, Spain or France. Top-mark responses typically identified two specific ways in which culture can be spread. The mark scheme shows that 3 marks could be achieved through one fully developed idea and a second, shorter point.

11

Candidates accessed the higher end of the mark range in a variety of ways. Some used sources A to C to launch into related discussions on whether laws can tackle complex issues like discrimination, hate crimes or colonial-era artefacts in museums. Others drew more extensively on their own knowledge, for example by debating whether laws to manage carbon emissions can help address the unfair impacts of climate change faced by vulnerable communities. The highest-scoring answers were well-balanced, presenting substantial arguments both for and against the statement. These responses acknowledged that while laws can offer a framework for equity and justice, they may fail due to inadequate enforcement or public ignorance. In contrast, mid-range responses tended to argue that laws are helpful but that education is also important, without also evaluating possible limitations of either approach. Lower-mark answers were typically short and one-sided, with minimal evidence or detail.

18a

Unlike questions 8 and 9a, this 4-mark question required candidates to rely solely on their own knowledge and understanding. It therefore discriminated more strongly. High-mark candidates were well-informed about social issues linked to global free trade, investment by transnational corporations or “brain drain” due to international migration. Some showed deeper understanding of colonial legacies, the extraction of raw materials or economic underdevelopment. Candidates scoring 1 or 2 marks often had a general awareness of themes like migration but lacked subject-specific terminology or supporting detail.

18b

This question also discriminated effectively, requiring candidates to apply their knowledge of the Human Development Index (HDI) to explain how it enables country comparisons. High-mark responses correctly identified what the HDI measures, then elaborated on how it allows present-day comparisons of countries through its 0–1 scale or by enabling longitudinal tracking of one country’s development. Lower-mark responses often lacked accurate knowledge of the HDI’s components. Some candidates, for example, incorrectly stated that it measures “income, death rates and birth rates”. The weakest responses paid little attention to the question’s wording, explaining what they thought the HDI measured without addressing how it is used for comparative purposes.

19

This question also discriminated well, as it required candidates to draw on their own understanding of energy issues. High-mark candidates demonstrated strong awareness of governance challenges, referencing the Paris Agreement, net-zero targets or geopolitical concerns related to Russian gas. Others approached the topic more economically or scientifically, highlighting the finite and non-renewable nature of fossil fuels. High-scoring responses also provided clear reasons why some governments might not pursue renewable energy. Common themes included climatic limitations, for example inadequate sunlight in certain regions, or developmental priorities, such as investing in education over energy transitions in low-income countries. Lower-mark responses typically identified relevant themes but failed to develop them. For instance, some stated that countries stop using fossil

fuels because of climate concerns, while others don't invest in renewables because they have "other priorities." Such answers typically scored 2 out of 4 marks.

20a

Approximately half of candidates demonstrated limited specific knowledge of the World Health Organization. Their responses tended to focus on general humanitarian aid, such as food, water, and medical supplies. While important, such items do not fall within the WHO's primary remit. In contrast, candidates with a clearer understanding of the organisation correctly identified its key functions, including vaccination programmes, health education, setting health standards and offering expert guidance. It was encouraging to see that some responses also recognised the WHO's targeted interventions in specific geographical areas or during emergencies, such as supporting marginalised rural communities.

Despite the limited marks available, generalised responses (such as stating that the WHO provides doctors or medicine) were not penalised, although it should be noted that such provisions are only made under specific circumstances rather than as part of the WHO's core operations.

20b

Most candidates were able to attempt this question with confidence, suggesting that the themes were familiar and well-understood. Candidates who scored only 1 mark typically gave vague explanations, such as stating that cyberbullying negatively affects health, without specifying how. In contrast, higher-scoring responses made clearer links to specific health issues such as anxiety or depression. Some candidates also explored wider issues related to misinformation online, including the influence of fake news on public health decisions, vaccine hesitancy, access to unsafe substances or weapons, or unregulated content promoting harmful behaviour. These responses demonstrated thoughtful engagement with the question and often included insightful and relevant examples.

21

Performance on this question was comparable to the other 9-mark extended-response item (Question 11). Many candidates made effective use of the source material. Stronger responses also integrated their own knowledge. Some explored the historical and current impacts of technology on employment through automation, while others raised concerns about the future implications of artificial intelligence on job security. As with Question 11, responses that achieved higher marks were well-balanced, offering detailed arguments and counterarguments, supported by clear examples and reasoning.

22a

Only a small number of candidates showed a basic misunderstanding of the term "sovereignty," occasionally confusing it with monarchy. Those achieving 2 or 3 marks typically recognised the core concept of national self-governance and often referred additionally to governments, laws or territorial boundaries. Some mid-range responses then veered off-course into an outline of national culture (which did not attract additional credit).

At the top of the mark range, candidates were more likely to acknowledge the interaction between national sovereignty and international frameworks or organisations. Effective examples included the UK's departure from the European Union, used to further illustrate the meaning of sovereignty. However, credit was not awarded for simply naming a sovereign state as part of the answer. For example, the statement "China is a sovereign country," was unworthy of an additional mark.

22b

This question required candidates to produce a structured and balanced essay. Key ingredients are an introduction, argument, counterargument and reasoned conclusion. Many candidates showed familiarity with this structure, though some were unable to complete their answers due to time constraints. Centres are advised to give students regular timed practice to build confidence and efficiency under exam conditions.

Some candidates failed to directly address the question, instead offering generic commentary on migration's costs and benefits, which limited their access to higher marks.

More successful responses focused on the central issue: the extent to which migration is the *key* driver of cultural change. These answers often engaged with the role of media, particularly social and streaming platforms, in influencing cultural change at both national and global levels. There were also thoughtful references to historical and contemporary two-way migration flows between European countries and former colonies, and the cultural changes occurring in both groups of countries as a result.

Paper Summary

Considering candidate performance on the 2025 paper, the following recommendations are offered to support future preparation by Centres:

- **Section A (Citizenship Action)** Candidates must explicitly refer to their own Citizenship Action throughout Section A. Responses that remain general or hypothetical are likely to be limited in terms of marks. Centres should reinforce the importance of linking *all* responses directly to the candidate's own experience.
- **Multiple Choice Questions** Although generally well handled, candidates should continue to approach multiple-choice items carefully. Attention to detail and avoidance of rushed or careless errors can make a significant difference.
- **4-Mark Questions** To achieve full marks, responses must move beyond basic statements. Candidates should aim to develop their ideas with supporting detail, explanation or exemplification.
- **9-Mark Questions** High-level responses should offer a balanced consideration of both sides of the argument, each supported by specific evidence. While a reasoned conclusion is not required for full marks, it can strengthen the overall response when included.
- **Question 22a** Candidates are expected to demonstrate a secure understanding of the key concept in focus. Two or three lines of undeveloped explanation are unlikely to achieve the full 5 marks. Centres should ensure students can define and explain core terms in sufficient depth.
- **Question 22b** Progression through the mark levels depends on (1) the ability to present a balanced argument, (2) the quality and clarity of reasoning, (3) the use of relevant evidence, and (4) the strength and coherence of the conclusion. Encouraging students to practise extended responses under timed conditions, with a focus on structure and depth, will support stronger performance in this section.

