

# Global Perspectives and Research (GPR) Information for universities

## What is Global Perspectives and Research (GPR)?

GPR provides students who are planning to progress to university with the opportunity to add breadth and depth to their studies by expanding creative, critical thinking and responsible awareness through the tackling of global issues (Global Perspectives), as well as encouraging focused personal exploration and increased depth of study (Research Report).

Its two articulated components are examined separately and can either be taken as the compulsory core component of the Cambridge Pre-U Diploma, or as a stand-alone qualification which can be combined with Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subjects and/or A levels.

## More detail about Global Perspectives

Global Perspectives both develops students' critical and analytical skills and broadens their understanding of the world. First, it aims to prepare them for engagement in a rapidly changing intellectual environment by:

- Promoting a critical, questioning approach to information that is often taken for granted;
- Developing and promoting disciplined and scholarly research methods;
- Cultivating an interdisciplinary perspective.

Second, it aims to encourage students to engage constructively with issues and ideas of global significance, thus:

- Developing an understanding of some of the key global problems and opportunities that will face them as adults, where they live and work;
- Fostering awareness and understanding of, and respect for, the diversity of perspectives on particular global issues;
- Encouraging an independent outlook and self-reflection through scrutiny of *a priori* assumptions.

Global Perspectives has been designed to form a sound basis on which to progress to the Research Report component. The course is built around a series of topics, each one representing a key global challenge. The topics are organised into five broad generic themes: Ethics, Economics, Environment, Technology, and Politics and Culture.

During their study, students consider at least four topics taken from different themes. For example, genetic engineering, medical ethics and priorities, standard of living or quality of life, ethical foreign policies, or the religious-secular divide may be studied under the Ethics theme. Typically students take Global Perspectives in the first year of study, and by the end of it, they have developed the necessary skills to embark upon a realistic and meaningful research agenda.

## How is Global Perspectives assessed?

For Global Perspectives, students undertake three separate components:

- A written paper comprising one or more sources for critical and comparative analysis;
- An essay involving reconstruction and reflection within the critical path shown below;
- A multi-media presentation.

The written examination and essay are externally assessed. The presentation is marked by teachers and externally moderated.



## The Critical Path

<b>Text containing a particular perspective on a topic</b>	
<b>Critical analysis of an argument</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the conclusion</li> <li>Identify the reasons and (un-stated) assumptions supporting the conclusion</li> <li>Does the conclusion follow from the reasons and evidence?</li> <li>Is the argument valid by definition?</li> <li>Does the evidence give strong or weak support to the conclusion?</li> </ul>	<b>Type of assignment</b> <b>Deconstruction</b> <b>tasks: analysis of an argument or reasoning</b>
<b>Critical reconstruction of the context of an argument</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What evidence or further clarification of terms or concepts do we need?</li> <li>Where do we get the evidence?</li> <li>Are the sources reliable and credible?</li> <li>Are there alternative perspectives?</li> <li>How can we adjudicate between them?</li> <li>Does the evidence lead to a single conclusion?</li> <li>What are the alternative conclusions or explanations?</li> <li>How sure can we be of our conclusion?</li> </ul>	<b>Type of assignment</b> <b>Reconstruction</b> <b>tasks: discussion and evaluation of evidence and of alternative perspectives and their contexts</b>
<b>Reflection: exploring the implications of the argument</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where do our conclusions lead?</li> <li>Are the conclusions significant?</li> <li>What impact do they have on prior views?</li> <li>What further research might help to take this forward?</li> </ul>	<b>Type of assignment</b> <b>Reflection tasks: discussion of lessons learned and challenges faced.</b>
<b>Presenting, Communicating, Collaborating</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the most appropriate way of communicating the findings of the analysis?</li> <li>What questions or challenges arise in discussion, and how might they be answered?</li> </ul>	<b>Type of assignment</b> <b>Presentation</b> <b>tasks: PowerPoint with commentary or web-based presentation</b>

## More about the Research Report

The Research Report builds upon and reinforces learning undertaken for Global Perspectives. Students have been prepared to be aware of the issues involved in choosing a suitable research proposal, identifying an appropriate question, and undertaking a literature review.

The Research Report aims to:

- Prepare students for a way of working in Higher Education**  
 Promoting familiarity with research conventions current in higher education; understanding of the different modes of research enquiry; readiness to reflect critically and respond to review; a capacity for autonomous study and self-management;
- Develop generic and higher order skills of research and analysis**  
 Including the ability to design research proposals; understanding and planning data collection methods; ability to interpret, analyse and base conclusions on results; ability to communicate complex findings;
- Encourage intellectual curiosity**  
 Providing the means of acquiring a deeper knowledge and understanding of the subject matter of the research.

With the guidance of their teachers, students are required to complete a Research Report of between 4,500 and 5,000 words on a topic of their choice. In planning this Report, students are encouraged to undertake an initial literature search and consider methods and techniques of a literature review.

They think about a variety of research approaches including questionnaire design and data collection, survey analysis, and personal research management, and about research ethics and constraints. In producing the Report, students need to provide evidence of engagement with various aspects of the research process, including a critical assessment of a range of research methods, evaluation and referencing conventions. They need to present their research results, demonstrating awareness of good practice in conducting research.

The Research Report gives students a chance to dig still deeper into, for example, a Principal Subject or A level topic, to cross boundaries by doing interdisciplinary work, or to make a new departure by investigating a subject not covered by traditional school syllabuses. An example of a topic to be investigated might be: *Trial by jury is no longer relevant now that many criminal cases rely on forensic or specialist evidence. How far is this true?*

## How is the Research Report assessed?

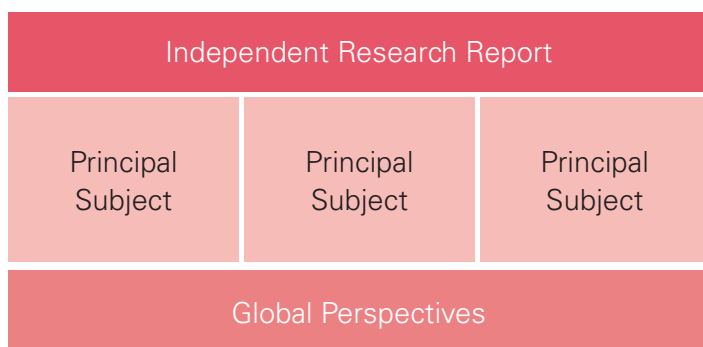
The Research Report is assessed on the basis of knowledge and understanding of the research process, analysis, evaluation, communication, and intellectual challenge of the subject matter. The marking of the report also takes into account the degree of independence on the part of the student in conducting his/her research.

The Reports are internally marked and externally moderated.

## What is GPR's relationship to the overall Cambridge Pre-U Diploma?

GPR forms the core of the Cambridge Pre-U Diploma, encouraging breadth across the curriculum through interdisciplinary study. The Diploma comprises the following:

### Cambridge Pre-U Diploma



## Can GPR be taken alongside other qualifications?

GPR is proving a popular option for students taking a programme of study involving A level subjects, as well as those studying for Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subjects. It is likely that with an increasing number of centres offering GPR, higher education admissions staff will see a growing number of applicants offering GPR instead of, for instance, a fourth AS or A level subject.

## How is GPR graded and what UCAS Tariff does it attract?

Each of the three components undertaken for Global Perspectives, and the Research Report, are aggregated to provide a single grade. These grades operate on the same scale as that used for Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subjects. The table below shows these grades and UCAS Tariff points:

GPR grade	UCAS Tariff Points
D1	Not yet allocated
D2	140
D3	126
M1	112
M2	98
M3	84
P1	70
P2	56
P3	42

## Why are Cambridge Pre-U and GPR relevant for Higher Education?

The Cambridge Pre-U Diploma, together with the various qualifications which can attract the award of a Cambridge Pre-U Certificate (Principal Subjects, GPR and Short Courses) have all been specifically designed to prepare students for entry to Higher Education.

GPR seeks directly to assess generic skills and dispositions relating to critical thinking and enquiry. It provides students with the opportunity to place their personal perspectives in a global context, finding new inspiration and challenges for their studies, and in so doing equips them with the skills required to make a success of their subsequent studies at university. In addition, students gain the ability to undertake independent and self-directed learning and to think laterally, critically and creatively.



## GPR in offer making

A small number of universities have included GPR in the main UCAS offer. Where universities require a fourth subject at AS or A Level then GPR may be considered as an alternative.

“ **Bristol University** values the GPR, and encourages admissions tutors to make two alternative offers to students offering this qualification, one of which specifies achievement in the GPR. ”

*Head of Undergraduate Recruitment and Admissions.*

“ **University of Sussex** welcomes the value of the breadth offered by elements such as Global Perspectives & Research. ”

*Undergraduate Admissions*

“ **University of Exeter** values the Global Perspectives & Research (GPR) element of the Cambridge Pre-U Diploma and its role in preparing students for a successful higher education experience. ”

*Head of Admissions and Student Recruitment*

## University offers which include GPR within the main offer:

An offer from **York University** was made to a student undertaking a mixture of A Levels and Cambridge Pre-U principle subjects as follows:

*Two grade A's at A Level and D3 in Cambridge Pre-U Global Perspectives & Research.*

## US perspectives

“ **Yale University** welcomes applications from students who have taken the new curriculum from Cambridge, 'Global Perspectives & Research' (GPR). We do not currently assign academic or placement credit for this course, but we do consider it an appropriate part of a rigorous and challenging curriculum. ”

“ **Duke University** welcomes students who have taken the new curriculum from Cambridge, 'Global Perspectives & Research' (GPR). GPR puts an emphasis on a number of the skills that students need in order to be successful in their university education. We particularly value the independence of thought, critical thinking and research and inquiry skills that GPR develops. Although the university does not currently assign academic or placement credit for this course, we believe that it is a promising addition to the courses of study that prepare students well for post-secondary education, and would consider it an appropriate part of a rigorous and challenging curriculum. ”

“ **Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)** praise the educational values of GPR, saying that its values are similar to those of MIT, which are:

- Deep understanding with depth and rigour
- Problem-solving, critical thinking, creativity, team-work, independent learning and effective communication
- Promoting an international outlook and cross-cultural awareness. ”

**Learn more!** To view the syllabus, please visit [www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu](http://www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu), contact Customer Services on **+44 (0)1223 553554** or email [international@cie.org.uk](mailto:international@cie.org.uk)