

7.1 EE Student Planning Sheets for Global Politics

Student details (for planning only)

- Student name: _____
- Candidate code: _____
- Supervisor: _____

A. Choosing a Topic (a contemporary political issue)

IB definition (Global Politics): *a political issue is any question that deals with how **power is distributed and how it operates** within social organization, and how people think about and engage in their communities and the wider world on matters that affect their lives.*

Answer these to guide topic selection:

1. **What political issue interests you most, and why?**
(Personal curiosity is fine, but the EE must be a formal research investigation.)

2. **How is this issue clearly “global politics” (not another subject)?**
What makes it about power, political actors/institutions, and contested choices?

3. **Contemporary rule check (within your lifetime):**
 - What key events/policies/developments will you study? (dates)

 - What historical background is necessary *only to understand the present*?

 - Are you avoiding speculation about future events? ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. **Level(s) of analysis you might use (choose and justify later):**
☐ Local ☐ National ☐ Regional ☐ Global ☐ Multi-level (link levels explicitly)
Why this/these level(s) are appropriate:

5. **Who are the key actors and institutions?**
(states, IOs, NGOs, social movements, corporations, courts, media, citizens, etc.)

- Actors:

- Institutions:

6. **Which Global Politics key concepts are most relevant?** (*tick + note how*)

☐ Power _____ ☐ Sovereignty _____ ☐ Legitimacy _____

☐ Interdependence _____ ☐ Human rights _____

☐ Development _____ ☐ Peace _____ ☐ Conflict _____

☐ Equality _____ ☐ Sustainability _____

☐ Globalization _____

(Add others if relevant):

7. **What has already been written about this issue?** (*preliminary reading*)

- What debates/disagreements exist?

- Are there clearly different perspectives (eg government vs NGO vs academics)?

☐ Yes ☐ No (if "No", rethink the topic)

8. **What evidence is realistically available to you?**

- Possible **secondary sources** (academic books/journals, credible datasets, etc.):

- Possible **primary sources/data** (policy documents, speeches, court rulings, interviews, etc.):

- Are you relying only on social/popular media? ☐ No (good) ☐ Yes (revise—IB warns against this)

9. **Feasibility check (4,000 words):**

- Is the topic narrow enough to avoid broad narrative? ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Can you answer it with available sources/methods? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- What will you *not* cover (boundaries)?

10. **“Double-dipping” check (academic honesty):**

Confirm your EE does **not** significantly overlap with GP Engagement Project or other DP work.

☐ Confirmed Notes:

B. From Topic → Title → Research Question (RQ)

Topic area (broad):

Provisional EE title (short, descriptive; *not a question*):

Provisional Research Question (must be a question; focused; researchable):

C. Developing a Research Question (Global Politics version)

Follow these steps (adapted to GP expectations: focus + method + theory + contested perspectives):

1. **Define your political issue precisely**

- Place(s): _____
- Time frame (start-end): _____
- What exactly is being investigated (policy, discourse, impacts, legitimacy, etc.)?

2. Decide the analytical focus (what you will *evaluate/analyse*)

Tick the best fit (you can combine carefully):

- ☐ Effectiveness / impact (on whom? measured how?)
- ☐ Legitimacy / authority / compliance
- ☐ Human rights implications
- ☐ Power distribution (winners/losers; mechanisms)
- ☐ Role of institutions (domestic/international)
- ☐ Comparison (cases/time periods/actors)
- ☐ Discourse/framing (how language constructs the issue)
- ☐ Ethical evaluation (must use clear ethical/political theory)

Notes:

3. Identify theoretical foundations / perspectives you might use

(Examples: realism, liberalism, constructivism, feminism, postcolonialism, critical theories; plus GP concepts.)

- Potential lens/lenses:

- Why these help answer the RQ:

4. Draft your RQ using evaluative wording

Useful stems:

- “To what extent...?”
- “How far can it be argued that...?”
- “How and why has...?”
- “To what extent does [case] provide evidence for [theory/concept]...?”

5. Test your RQ (must be “yes” to most):

- Is it **clearly within your lifetime**? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Is it **specific and sharply focused** (case + time frame + key variables)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Does it invite **analysis and evaluation** (not description)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Can you access a **range of perspectives** for critical engagement? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Can it be answered well within **4,000 words**? ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Does it clearly use **global politics concepts/terminology**? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Revised RQ (after testing):

D. Methodology & Research Design Planning (Focus and Method)

Chosen approach (one main, others supporting):

- ☐ Case study
- ☐ Comparative study
- ☐ Discourse analysis
- ☐ Mixed approach (explain clearly)

Research techniques you will use:

- ☐ Literature review / media review
- ☐ Quantitative data analysis (datasets, indicators, polling, etc.)
- ☐ Interviews (primary)
- ☐ Document analysis (policy, speeches, legal rulings, NGO reports, etc.)

Justification (link method → RQ):

Why these methods/sources are appropriate for answering your RQ:

Case/source selection rules (to avoid “random examples”):

- Inclusion criteria:

- Exclusion criteria:

- Key cases/actors you will focus on:

Ethics & practical constraints (especially if interviewing):

- Informed consent plan:

- Anonymity/confidentiality plan (if needed):

- Risks/bias/positionality you must manage:

- Expected limitations (and how you will address them): _____

E. Evidence / Source Evaluation Planning Sheet (use for *each* key source)

*In Global Politics, source bias and contestation are common—plan to **evaluate value and limitations** and integrate this evaluation into your analysis (not as a detached section).*

Item	Notes
Full reference (author, date, title, publisher/URL)	
Type (academic / government / NGO / media / dataset / interview / other)	
Perspective / interests represented	
What claim will this source help you support or challenge?	
Value/strengths (expertise, data quality, proximity, method, credibility)	
Limitations (bias, missing data, method flaws, agenda, context)	
How will you corroborate/triangulate it? (what other source?)	

F. Building Your Argument (Critical Thinking)

1. Provisional thesis/position (may change):

2. Key sub-questions you need to answer to reach your conclusion:

- SQ1:

- SQ2:

- SQ3:

3. Counter-arguments / alternative explanations you must address fairly:

4. Where will you explicitly apply GP concepts/theory?

(Map concept/theory → section of essay)

G. Required Essay Elements & Presentation (Checklist)

Six required elements (UWCCR guidance):

- ☐ Title page (*Title + RQ + Subject (Global Politics) + Word count; no name/school*)
- ☐ Contents page + page numbers
- ☐ Introduction (*scope, sources, line of argument*)
- ☐ Body (analysis + evaluation integrated)
- ☐ Conclusion (*answers RQ; notes limitations; no new evidence*)
- ☐ References + bibliography (consistent style)

Presentation basics:

- Font: 12pt readable (eg Times New Roman)
- Double spaced
- Pages numbered
- Do **not** include your name/school/supervisor name in the essay

H. Word Count Planning (4,000 words)

Included in word count: introduction, main body, conclusion, quotations, and substantive footnotes/endnotes.

Not included: contents page, maps/charts/annotated diagrams, tables, equations/formulas, citations/references, bibliography, page headers.

Planned target word allocation (optional):

- Introduction: _____
- Main body: _____
- Conclusion: _____
- Total: _____ / 4,000

I. Academic Honesty & Referencing

- Referencing style chosen (APA recommended for GP):

- System for tracking sources (Zotero/Google Doc/other):

- Plan to cite **all** quotes, data, and ideas that aren't your own: ☐ Yes
- Double-dipping risk reviewed with supervisor: ☐ Yes

J. Reflection Prompts (for RPPF / Criterion E: Engagement)

Use these before/during/after each formal reflection session:

1. **Why this political issue, and why now (contemporary significance)?**
2. **How did your topic narrow into a focused RQ?** What did you remove—and why?
3. **Which concepts/theories became more important as you researched (and how did your understanding change)?**
4. **What challenges did you face (biased sources, access limits, data gaps, ethics), and how did you respond?**
5. **What methodological decisions did you make (case selection, technique choice), and what trade-offs did they involve?**

6. **If you restarted, what would you do differently—and what does that reveal about your learning as a researcher?**

(Reminder: the examiner assesses only the first 500 words of reflections.)