

Commentary candidate evidence

Candidate 1

The evidence for this candidate has achieved the following marks for each element of this course assessment component.

Section A – Research topic/issue

The candidate has clearly identified an appropriate modern studies topic which relates to international issues. The candidate identifies their hypothesis as 'Guantanamo Bay should continue'. The candidate also uses this section to state four clear aims for their research.

Section B – Research methods

The candidate was awarded **10 marks**.

The candidate begins by referring to their first method of research as a video interview of a former detainee at Guantanamo Bay, Source G on the Research Sheet. The candidate then goes on to explain why they chose the method as it backs up allegations made about the camp and provides evidence to support this – **this was awarded 1 mark**.

The candidate then goes on to state a further strength of this method was that the interviewee answered questions simply and in enough detail – **this was awarded 1 mark**.

The candidate then identifies a weakness of this method was that the interview could have been biased as the detainee was a prisoner in the camp and could exaggerate the facts – **this was awarded 1 mark**.

The candidate goes on to make a vague point relating to the interviewee's background which was not awarded any marks. The candidate then offers an improvement to this method suggesting that next time they would conduct an interview with a guard to compare views – **this was awarded 1 mark**.

The candidate identifies their second research method as a survey on Guantanamo Bay done by the public. The candidate states that they chose this method as it was a way of seeing the public's views on the camp – **this was awarded 1 mark**.

The candidate goes on to identify a strength of their survey was that it allowed them to ask people their age and gender to show how older and younger people have different opinions – **this was awarded 1 mark**.

The candidate then goes on to state that another strength of this method was that they used closed questions that provided clear answers – **this was awarded 1 mark**.

The candidate then goes on to state that a weakness of the method was that there was no background information given on their survey so some people may not have known about the camp so could not give full answers – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

The candidate goes on to state that a weakness of the survey was that some questions were harder than others to answer due to their length and that one person skipped a question – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

Finally, the candidate suggests that next time they could provide some background information to help users complete the survey – **this was awarded 1 mark.** In the final part of this paragraph the candidate gives a second improvement regarding the use of closed questions but this has already been mentioned, therefore no marks were awarded for this point.

Section C – Research findings

The candidate was awarded **6 marks.**

The candidate begins by stating that they found out from Source A that Guantanamo Bay was opened by George W Bush in 2002 after the 9/11 terror attacks – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

They also state that they found out from Source E that the USA have gained a lot of tactical and strategic intelligence from interrogating detainees – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

The candidate's second paragraph provided a finding from Source B that states American taxpayers pay around \$11million per detainee in Guantanamo Bay – **this was awarded 1 mark.** The team checked the accuracy of the statistic provided.

The candidate then goes on to state a finding from Source G related to the treatment of the detainees in Guantanamo Bay – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

The candidate then goes on to state that they found out from Source C that when Guantanamo Bay holds terrorist leaders, groups find it harder to carry out attacks without that person – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

The candidate asked if detainees should be stripped of their human rights – 6 said no and 3 said yes – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

The candidate then goes on to state that people surveyed had heard negative things about Guantanamo Bay – **this was awarded 1 mark.** Finally, the candidate states that 5 people said yes Guantanamo Bay should be shut down compared to 4 who said no - **this was awarded 1 mark.**

In the final paragraph of the findings the candidate states that Source F states that suspected terrorists don't have access to a lawyer and don't get a fair trial – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

The candidate receives full marks for this straightforward findings section which provides 9 basic findings.

Section D – Research conclusions

The candidate was awarded **4 marks.**

The candidate begins by stating that they have disproved their hypothesis that 'Guantanamo Bay should continue'. This is not worthy of credit on its own but the candidate does go on to provide justification to prove their hypothesis – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

The candidate then makes a conclusion about their second aim stating that there is no real evidence that Guantanamo Bay is effective in fighting terrorism – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

The candidate makes the third conclusion that Guantanamo Bay is controversial as there are not enough positives to justify the negatives like abuse – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

The candidate provides a final conclusion from their final aim that the public have mixed opinions about Guantanamo Bay – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

The candidate finally makes a recommendation that they should shut down Guantanamo Bay and move the remaining detainees to a high security prison in their own country so they can go through a fair and proper trial – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

Overall, the candidate was awarded 20/20 for their assignment.

Commentary on candidate evidence

Candidate 2

The evidence for this candidate has achieved the following marks for each element of this course assessment component.

Section A – Research topic/issue

The candidate has clearly identified an appropriate Modern Studies topic which relates to International Issues – Drones are effective in combatting terror. The candidate also uses this section to state three aims for their research.

Section B – Research methods

The candidate was awarded **7 marks**.

The candidate begins by referring to their first method of research – their survey, Source 3 on the research sheet. The candidate states that one advantage of this method was the fact that they could ask questions tailored to their aims, meaning they wouldn't get any unnecessary information – **this was awarded 1 mark**.

The candidate goes on to say that another advantage was the fact that they could ask closed questions, meaning that they would only get answers that they needed. This was not awarded any marks as the advantage of closed questions is about allowing easier analysis of data and this part of the response lacked clarity.

The candidate gives a disadvantage of the method, stating that a majority of participants were white and under 30, meaning that the data collected may not represent society as a whole – **this was awarded 1 mark**.

They give another disadvantage of the method, stating that they mainly asked people they knew which meant that they may have felt like they had to answer the question the way they thought the candidate wanted them to – **this was awarded 1 mark**.

The candidate then states that if they were to use this method again that they would open it up to a more diverse range of people in order to represent society as a whole – **this was awarded 1 mark**.

The candidate continues by discussing their second method – an article from the Guardian newspaper online. They begin by saying that an advantage of using this method was the accessibility of the website and that it was easy to gather information from the website. This point lacks development and is awarded no marks. The candidate goes on to say that another advantage of the method is that it is by an established news publication and that this makes it likely to be

reliable and accurate. The candidate makes an evaluative comment about the 'likelihood' of the information being reliable as it is from 'an established' news publication and **this was awarded 1 mark.**

They go on to give a disadvantage of the method: the fact that the article is almost five years old means that some information will be outdated – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

Another disadvantage of the method is given, which states that the Guardian is regarded as a left-wing publication, meaning that there is a possibility of political bias within the article – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

The final sentence about the YouGov poll is actually a finding and the candidate has already used and gained credit for two separate methods. The candidate is awarded no further marks here.

Section C – Research findings

The candidate was awarded **5 marks.**

The candidate begins by looking at their first aim – 'Do drones kill civilians?'

The candidate states that around one third of casualties in 16 years of the US drone campaign in Yemen were civilian. This is copied from the research sheet and was awarded no marks. They then state that bad intelligence provided by prisons that use torture can lead to civilian deaths – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

The candidate then looks at aim 2 – 'Are drones more effective than other methods?' The candidate states that drones are ten times more likely to kill civilians than manned aircraft. There is too much reliance on the heading on the research sheet here; it is copied so is awarded no marks.

They then state that drones are more likely to cause outrage among locals – **this was awarded 1 mark.** The candidate further states that this means that the use of drones may stir up anti-Western feelings in some parts of the world – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

The candidate finally looks at aim 3 – 'What is the public opinion of drones?' The candidate uses their survey to pose the statement, 'The use of drone strikes against terror groups is ethical'. They found that a majority agreed with this statement – **this was awarded 1 mark.** They also asked 'do you believe drone strikes to be effective in combatting terror groups?' The candidate found that a majority of participants answered yes to this question – **this was awarded 1 mark.**

Section D – Research conclusions

The candidate was awarded **3 marks**.

The candidate begins by stating that, no, drone strikes are not effective in combatting terror groups. This is due to the fact that they kill civilians and are not as effective as other methods. This is a basic conclusion with development of the point and **is awarded 2 marks**.

The rest of the paragraph down to the comment 'the public believe drone strikes to be effective' is repetitive of findings and not given any credit.

The final sentence in the paragraph states that strikes are not effective in combatting terror groups and recommends using manned aircraft instead. **This is a recommendation and awarded 1 mark**.

Overall, the candidate was awarded 15 out of 20 marks for the assignment.