The engagement project

IB DP Global Politics internal assessment: the engagement project

The engagement project

- choose a **political issue** that is **debatable**, **globally connected** and possible to engage with;
- plan first-hand engagement that is purposeful, recorded and ethical;
- research and compare sources and perspectives;

The engagement project (2)

- write the report with analysis through key concepts and an honest **reflection**;
- at HL, write an evidence-based recommendation.

Choosing the issue

- **debatable** : different groups really disagree;
- **globally connected** : a local example of a global debate, or a global debate felt locally;
- **engageable** : you can actually meet people, visit places or join activities connected to it.

Engagement and research

- **Engagement** is first-hand experience of the issue.
- It must be purposeful (chosen to answer your question) and recorded (notes, interview transcripts, a diary, photographs where allowed).
- Follow basic **research ethics** : ask for **informed consent** before an interview, keep people anonymous if they ask, and never put anyone at risk.
- **Research** adds published sources: official documents, statistics, news reports and academic studies.

Writing the report

- Engagement: interviews with six riders at a rest station (with consent; names not used); a conversation with a staff member at a community service centre for riders; two hours observing pick-ups at a busy shopping centre.
- Research: national guidelines on delivery riders' rights issued in 2021; platform statements on how delivery times are set; news reports; a study of platform work in another country.

Writing the report (2)

- Analysis: the app's algorithm sets the agenda (a hidden face of power): riders cannot negotiate times, only accept or refuse orders. The guidelines gained legitimacy with riders when they produced visible changes (longer time limits), but riders said that pay per order still depends on the platform alone.
  Interdependence: platforms need riders, but each rider depends far more on the platform (asymmetric).
- **Reflection**: six riders at one station are not all riders; riders may not speak freely to a student; the platforms did not agree to an interview, so their **perspective** comes only from public statements.
- HL recommendation: an evidence-based proposal, such as publishing how delivery times are calculated, with the reasons from the evidence and the likely objections.

Sources for this lesson

- International Baccalaureate, *Global Politics guide* (first assessment 2026), internal assessment criteria.
- Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and others, guidance on protecting the labour rights of workers in new forms of employment (July 2021).
- UK Supreme Court, *Uber BV v Aslam* [2021] UKSC 5 (19 February 2021).
- International Labour Organization, *World Employment and Social Outlook 2021: The role of digital labour platforms in transforming the world of work*.

Common errors

- Choosing an issue that is not political (no one disagrees about it, or no one has power over it).
- Engagement that is only reading or watching videos; it must be first-hand.
- Interviewing people without consent, or putting yourself or others at risk.

Common errors (2)

- Describing the engagement as a diary instead of analysing what it shows through key concepts.
- Using only sources that share one **perspective**.
- At HL, writing a recommendation with no evidence or with no thought about who would carry it out.

Key terms

- **Engagement project**: the internal assessment: a report of up to 2,000 words on a **political issue** you engaged with first-hand.
- **Political issue**: a question about power, rights or resources on which people disagree.
- **Engagement**: first-hand involvement with an issue, such as interviews, volunteering or observing meetings.

Key terms (2)

- **Recommendation**: at HL, a separate evidence-based proposal for how the issue could be addressed.
- **Perspective**: the point of view of an actor, shaped by its interests and values.

Check yourself

- 1.
- What are the word limits and weights of the engagement project at SL and HL? 2.
- Turn "food-delivery riders" into a political question that uses a key concept. 3.
- Give two kinds of first-hand engagement for that question. 4.