

## Worked example answer to an IGCSE Global Perspectives exam Question 4 in the format of the 2025 exam spec.

A government wants to reduce crime.

The following actions are being considered:

- increasing the number of police and prisons
- improving prison conditions and training
- supporting offenders in the community.

Which one of these suggestions would you recommend to the government and why?

In your answer, you should:

- state your recommendation
- give reasons and evidence to support your choice
- use the material in the sources and/or any of your own ideas
- consider different arguments and perspectives.

### Skills and approaches

Reread the sources in [the Insert](#) and underline any **evidence** you might use in your answer. (Note that the question says you are not limited by the sources. You can also make reference to your own knowledge and experience to support your arguments.)

Then brainstorm the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal. Here are some criteria you can use:

#### Effectiveness and Impact

- **Short-Term:** How well does this proposal address the immediate issue? Will it solve the problem quickly, fully, or only partially?
- **Long-Term Impact:** Could this proposal lead to lasting change? Does it tackle the root causes of the issue or just the symptoms? Does it have additional benefits?
- **Evidence:** Is there evidence in the sources or from similar situations that shows this proposal is likely to succeed or fail?

#### Cost and Feasibility

- **Cost:** Is this proposal affordable? Compared to the other options, does it make good use of resources (e.g. money, time, expertise)?
- **Feasibility:** Is this proposal practical and realistic to implement? Are there existing structures or systems that could support it? Are there any problems that would make it difficult to put into practice?

#### Perspectives and Support

- **Who Benefits:** What groups (e.g. individuals, communities, governments) benefit most from this proposal? How might they view it positively?
- **Opposition:** Could certain groups or individuals oppose this proposal? Why? Are there cultural, political, or economic reasons why this action might face resistance?
- **Ethics and Fairness:** Is this proposal ethical, fair, and just? Will it be accepted by most people involved?

## Risks and Unintended Consequences

- Are there any risks, uncertainties, or possible negative side effects?

Weigh up the pros and cons of each proposal to select the proposal which you think is the best choice overall. Here are some notes to prepare an answer to the question above:

Increasing the number of police and prisons
+ Straightforward, popular
- Might lead to lots of prisoners without reducing crime (example of USA)
Improving prison conditions and training
+ Rehabilitation
+ Develop skills to rejoin society
- Can learn crime from other criminals
Supporting offenders in the community
+ Rebuild lives
+ Find a place in society, reduces reoffending
+ Cost effective – don't need prison buildings, offenders work & pay taxes
- Not deterrent? But aligns with restorative justice

Based on this, we'll choose to support the third proposal.

One last thing before we write our response. Let's recheck the list of requirements in the question:

- state your recommendation
- give reasons **and evidence** to support your choice
- use the material in the sources and/or any of your own ideas
- consider **different arguments and perspectives**.

The things in bold are the things we must be extra careful not to leave out of our response.

- Make sure you prepare at least one piece of **evidence** from the sources or your direct experience. In our worked example we will use the information from Source 1 about prison populations in various countries. We can use it as evidence because the source says it comes from university research. However, some of the sources in the Insert are unreliable, so be careful of using them as "evidence". If we want to use a **factoid** from the Insert (a "factoid" is something which looks like a fact but might not be true), we could say something like "Pedro doesn't give a source for his claim that 50 per cent of criminals go back to prison again" but if it is true, then..."
- Be sure to include **at least two perspectives**. We started thinking about this above by asking who benefits and who might oppose your recommended plan.
  - It is easy enough to include **a perspective which supports your plan**, e.g. "I agree with Luna that we need to "give prisoners a place in society" to help them to avoid reoffending.
  - But we should also mention someone or a type of person who would probably **disagree with our choice**, acknowledge any valid concerns they have, and explain why we aren't persuaded by their perspective. In the worked example below we use the perspective of the newspaper in Source 3, who thinks that prisons protect society from criminals. We can concede that we need to be protected, but we give a couple of reasons why we think they're wrong that prisons are the best way to get that protection.

Guidance	Example response
<p><b>Introduction</b> State your <b>recommendation</b> clearly, then give a single sentence <b>overview</b> of why this action is the best choice.</p>	<p>To reduce crime, I recommend that the government prioritise supporting offenders in the community. This approach tackles the root causes of criminal behaviour, provides cost-effective rehabilitation, and helps criminals reintegrate into society.</p>
<p><b>Main Section: your recommended action</b> Using a section heading can clarify the structure of your answer. Explain what the recommended action entails. Explain its <b>benefits</b> and the reasons why this action is <b>effective</b>. Use evidence where possible.</p> <p><b>Sustainability</b> (long-term solution) and <b>cost-effectiveness</b> are often good supporting reasons.</p> <p><b>Consider different perspectives/arguments</b></p> <p>Linking to a <b>key principle</b> can strengthen your argument.</p>	<p><u>Evaluating the recommended action</u></p> <p>Many offenders commit crimes because they are struggling with challenges such as unemployment, lack of education, and addiction. Community-based support offers a long-term solution to crime by addressing its root causes. By providing mentorship, counselling, and jobs, we give offenders the tools to rebuild their lives and contribute positively to society. Pedro claims that "50 per cent of criminals go back to prison again". He doesn't give a source for this, but if it is true then it really shows that criminals should be carefully monitored after release anyway. It would be more efficient to get started straight away on their rehabilitation in society.</p> <p>This approach could be less expensive because the staff who support criminals in society can work in offices instead of needing specially built prisons. Moreover, in community-based programmes, convicts can work to earn their living and pay taxes instead of being supported by other taxpayers.</p> <p>One problem with this plan is that it might leave people who believe in revenge and punishment feeling unsatisfied. Source 3 represents that perspective, saying that prisons should be "harsh". I can empathise with the feeling, but I don't think two wrongs make a right. I agree with Pedro's perspective instead, because it is based on the principle of minimising harm.</p>
<p><b>Evaluate the rejected options</b></p> <p>Critique the least preferable option, highlighting its limitations. Support your criticism with <b>reasons</b> (and <b>evidence</b> if</p>	<p><u>Evaluating the rejected options</u></p> <p>Increasing the number of police and prisons would be the least attractive option. Countries like the USA can have very high imprisonment rates (629 per 100,000 people [Source 1]), yet still struggle with high crime rates. Therefore, it seems that simply increasing police and prisons may just lead to more</p>

<p>possible). This is also a good place to critique a perspective you disagree with.</p> <p>Critique the second-best option, perhaps <b>conceding its merits</b> but explaining why it is less effective than your chosen action. This shows balanced thinking in your response.</p>	<p>prisoners rather than less crime. Source 3 argues that prisons protect them from criminals, but there are two problems with that argument: firstly, many prisoners reoffend when they are released, so prison postpones instead of fixing the problem; Secondly, criminals can be closely monitored in society to reduce their threat to others.</p> <p>Improving prison conditions and training is a better alternative than building more prisons, since it focuses on rehabilitation. I agree with Luna that providing decent living environments, education, and internet access can help prisoners develop skills and prepare to rejoin society. However, this approach is limited because it still involves bringing criminals together where they can be a bad influence on each other.</p>
<p><b>Conclusion</b> Restate your choice (Anything further is unlikely to make good use of time and space.)</p>	<p>In conclusion, supporting offenders in the community is the best of the three options.</p> <p>430 words</p>

From the summer 2024 zone 3 paper<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> CAIE have released example answers for the 2025 specimen paper, which is the only new paper available at the time of writing. To complement that resource rather than compete with it, this question is selected from an older paper, (summer 2024, zone 3). The wording of Q4 has not changed in the syllabus update. The guidance and the worked example offered here are written in alignment with the 2025 specimen paper's mark scheme.

The mark scheme does not indicate that one of the options is correct. It is not critical which one you choose, because each of them will have pros and cons which you can use to make an argument. For example, here is an alternative response which champions a different option:

To reduce crime, I recommend that the government increase the number of police officers and prisons. This approach focuses on deterring crime, ensuring public safety, and enforcing the rule of law effectively.

### Evaluating the recommended action

Increasing the number of police officers ensures a stronger law enforcement presence in communities. Source 3 represents the perspective of people who would appreciate a visible and active police force to deter potential offenders. It also reports that a local police officer mentioned that there are not enough police to catch criminals, which further highlights the need for more officers to ensure crimes are addressed swiftly and effectively. A greater number of police officers also helps to reassure the public, improving their sense of security in their communities.

Building more prisons is essential to remove dangerous individuals from society and reduce the risk they pose to law-abiding citizens. According to Source 2, prisons protect the public by taking criminals out of the community and punishing those who commit serious crimes. This is supported by the argument in Source 3 that harsher punishment is necessary to stop crime. If offenders are locked away, they cannot commit further crimes, which is a practical and immediate way to improve public safety.

This solution is also straightforward for governments to implement, as police forces and prison systems already exist. Expanding these systems requires predictable funding and resources, making it a practical and manageable strategy compared to starting entirely new programmes. While it may not solve the deeper causes of crime, it provides an immediate and effective way to reduce crime rates and maintain order in the short term.

### Evaluating the rejected options

Some people may argue that supporting offenders in the community is a better option because it addresses the root causes of crime, such as unemployment or lack of education. Pedro, in Source 4, suggests that community programmes, like guidance from mentors or employment opportunities, can help offenders become good citizens. However, these programmes carry significant risks, as offenders may not comply or could reoffend while participating. This could put public safety at risk, which is unacceptable when dealing with serious crimes.

Another alternative is improving prison conditions and providing training for inmates, as Luna mentions in Source 4. While this approach focuses on rehabilitation, it does not address the immediate need for more prison spaces to house offenders. Overcrowding remains a significant issue globally, and improving prison conditions alone cannot solve this problem. Additionally, some members of the public may believe that prisons should prioritize punishment over comfort, so this option might not get everybody's support.

In conclusion, increasing the number of police officers and prisons is the most effective way to reduce crime, especially in the short term.