

CdM Exams – FAQs

1. What is the focus of the Connaissance du Monde (CdM) oral exam?

The primary focus of the CdM oral exam is on the research process undertaken by the student, and their ability to communicate effectively about this process. While the content of the research project is important, it serves as a vehicle for assessing the student's research skills, critical evaluation abilities, engagement, and quality of communication in English. Examiners will be looking for evidence of increasing knowledge, understanding, interest, skills, and motivation throughout the research journey.

2. Is the "Support Document" compulsory for the CdM presentation, and is it assessed?

No, the "Support Document" is **not** compulsory for the CdM presentation. Furthermore, it is **not assessed**. Students may use it to exemplify or illustrate points they make during their 10-minute presentation. It can be digital (PDF preferred) or on paper. Importantly, this document should not be consulted by teachers in advance of the exam to formulate questions; the focus of questioning must be on what the student says in their presentation and how they *use* the support materials to communicate their ideas.

3. What should the 10-minute student presentation include and how should it be structured?

The 10-minute presentation should cover the key steps of the student's research journey, from the definition of the research question through to an explanation of findings, including a reflection on the effectiveness of the research process and the international partnership. The analysis presented should emanate from the research, demonstrating critical evaluation rather than a simple description of sources. Students should be advised to think carefully about the structure of their presentation which needs to clearly articulate the research question and its relevance to Connaissance du Monde themes, explain the methodology employed, and evaluate the sources, engagement with any partners, and the overall impact and personal impact of the research. Visual aids like a basic digital pdf or an A4 handout are encouraged to help explain complex information. Students should also explain all key terms and abbreviations, assuming the examiners have limited prior knowledge of the specific topic.

4. How should the mock exam differ from the final CdM oral exam?

The mock exam for final exam preparation will differ in that it will only involve the presentation, with no subsequent Question and Answer (Q&A) session. General feedback will be provided based on an Assessment for Learning (AfL) model. The mock exam may utilise video tools like FLIP or Speaker Coach within Microsoft Teams. Its purpose is to allow teachers to review presentations so they can give oral advice to students, enabling them to make amendments to their work.

5. What kind of feedback should teachers provide to students on their mock presentations?

Our guidelines follow guidance from UK's Joint Council of Qualifications (JCQ) regarding coursework. Teachers will provide feedback in an oral form after reviewing the candidates' presentations and support materials. They may not correct the presentations directly or give detailed written feedback. The aim of the feedback is to guide students in understanding the demands of the assessment criteria and to

encourage them to take the initiative in making improvements. Generally, one review should be sufficient for this purpose.

6. What are the key areas that examiners will focus on during the 10-minute Q&A discussion after the presentation?

The 10-minute discussion (Q&A) will focus on the research process and the student's research skills, including their ability to critically evaluate their sources and research partnership. Examiners will aim to elicit evidence of higher-level key points related to the process and the skills developed throughout the research journey. Questions will likely revolve around the formulation of the research question, the critical evaluation of the process, sources, and partnerships, the level of student engagement, and the organisation of the research. Sample questions are available via the ASIBA website.

7. What is the "best-fit" model in relation to the assessment criteria for the CdM oral exam?

The "best-fit" model signifies a holistic approach to assessment. Examiners will consider the entirety of the student's performance – the presentation, their engagement with the research process, and their communication skills – to determine which key point descriptor from the assessment criteria best encapsulates their overall achievement. The focus is on the big picture rather than getting bogged down in minor details or attempting to precisely match every aspect of the performance to specific criteria. If there is doubt about whether a student has reached the next level, the quality of their communication will be a determining factor and the principle of "benefit of doubt" should be applied.

8. What advice is given to examiners regarding their approach during the CdM oral exam?

Examiners are advised to focus on the research process and the quality and clarity of communication, understanding that the content of the presentation is merely a vehicle for these key skills. They should not need to see the research question or support document in advance, as the student's ability to explain these is part of the assessment. Examiners should try to put aside any prior knowledge of the student or their topic to avoid bias and should focus on what the student has done well, not penalising them for errors. Questions should only relate to the research process, and examiners should adopt a "positive marking" approach, giving the student the benefit of the doubt if unsure about their level.