



India Matters

0447 Newsletter 1 May 2009

This Newsletter for 0447 IGCSE India Studies sets out to support subject teachers in Pilot schools, aiming to keep Centres informed and seeking to encourage the spread of ideas and the exchange of good practice. Please keep in touch with feedback. Thank you.

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India Matters will be published every other month and eMailed to every contact address we have in each Pilot Centre. All India Studies teachers in your Centre should have a copy so please circulate it to everyone involved. There is no restriction on photocopying.
Thank you.

Welcome to the first issue of *India Matters*, the Newsletter for teachers of CIE new IGCSE India Studies syllabus.

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With *India Matters* issue 1, we also sent you

- a first draft Scheme of Work for the Pre-course, and
- revised Resources Lists.

The Pilot Group

Seventeen schools have told us that they plan to join the first Pilot group and start teaching in academic year 2009-10. Some Pilot Group teachers have already met each other at their video conference venue. From mid-July, everyone will be able to talk to everyone else via the eDiscussion Forum (further details in the next issue). Regular dialogue and discussion will be key characteristics of this Pilot. We hope to publish the complete list of Pilot Group schools in issue 2.

As a Group, we will need your advice over the next two years, please. A Pilot course allows us to try out the syllabus together and refine it in the light of practical experience. The current syllabus text was created in consultation with teachers and university academics, but only in teaching it will we really know if there are any areas where it needs further development.

So, please keep a note of any issues that occur to you and your colleagues as you teach the course for the first time. Every two or three months, we will hold a discussion via the online eDiscussion Forum to think through and settle all such matters - for incorporation into the syllabus for the 2012 examination.

The Pilot is a partnership, between schools as well as between schools and CIE.

Video Conference INSET, 27 April 2009

Teachers from Pilot schools gathered in Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Delhi and Mumbai for the inaugural in-service training meeting. We hope that you found the conference informative and useful. Mike, Nigel and I certainly enjoyed meeting you and discussing the course with you.

The next conference will be a workshop in India in September. See you there.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, do please eMail us. Once the eDiscussion Forum goes live in mid-July, they should be posted there.

Teaching Paper 1: a coordinated support structure

- When will teaching begin in your centre?
- Will you teach themes one at a time?
- Do you have ideas about the order in which you might teach the themes?

One strategy would be for the Pilot group to teach the themes in a coordinated order in sub-groups of two to four schools. Several schools would thus be teaching the same theme at the same time so they could support each other with advice and materials as well as share problems and experiences. The expertise gained by each sub-group would then be available to the whole Pilot group in

teaching the rest of the syllabus. If such groupings operated across academic year 2009-10, everyone would have given and received help on everything, e.g.

Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4
Sub-group A	Sub-group B	Sub-group C	Sub-group D
Sub-group B	Sub-group C	Sub-group D	Sub-group A
Sub-group C	Sub-group D	Sub-group A	Sub-group B
Sub-group D	Sub-group A	Sub-group B	Sub-group C

The same could be done in 2010-11 with the three Case Studies of Paper 2.

Would you be willing to join in such an arrangement? If so, do you have any preferences about which sub-group you would wish to join? Please let us know as soon as possible.

Earlier syllabus drafts

Please destroy all copies of the syllabus you have which do not say "Pilot syllabus for examination in June 2011" on the front. Earlier drafts produced for the various consultation stages during 2008-09 will all be incorrect.

Guides to Teaching

The syllabus: defines the required content (breadth and depth).

The Assessment Objectives: define the required skills.

Together, they define the required approaches that teaching needs to take.

The Specimen Papers: provide a general impression of the assessment, but should not be taken as meaning that they show the only question-types that will be used. A good syllabus uses a range of question styles and avoids a formulaic approach. Questions will focus on the application of knowledge and understanding in contexts familiar and less familiar. Some will range across the syllabus, encouraging connections to be made between different topic/concepts.

To prepare your candidates for all three components, you will need to employ a teaching style that emphasises and develops

- critical enquiry
- individual initiative
- problem-solving
- independent learning

Scheme of Work: Pre-course

A first draft Scheme of Work was eMailed along with this Newsletter. We would very much value your feedback and suggestions for improvements. Thank you. When the eDiscussion Forum goes live, the file will be posted there.

Future INSET

- Workshop (in India), September 2009
general coverage (including teaching strategies)
- Video Conference (India & Cambridge), April 2010
special focus on papers 2 & 3.
- Workshop (in India), September/October 2010

Workshop Sept 09

1. A one-day workshop for classroom teachers, held during the period 14th to 19th September. Pencil it in your diary now!
2. Are there any specific issues that you would like us to address?
3. Our plan is to hold the workshop in Mumbai or in Bangalore. Would anyone be unable to attend the workshop if held in either city?

Please let us know as soon as possible. Thank you.

Revised Resources Lists

The Lists in the syllabus have already been expanded and a copy was eMailed to your Centre's contact along with this Newsletter. When the eDiscussion Forum becomes operational, the file will be posted there and taken out of the syllabus book. We aim to update the eLists on the Forum several times each year and would welcome suggestions for books and web-based resources to be added, together with corrections/revisions. Thank you.

Topics for Paper 3 for 2012: suggestions please

As you know, the three topics will change every year and will be published one year ahead of the examination. The 2011 questions (syllabus p.18) were suggested by teachers during the consultations in 2008-09.

We now need topics and questions for 2012. Please send in your thoughts. They should relate to contemporary India and not duplicate issues covered by the examination syllabus for Paper 1 or Paper 2. Thank you.

Once we have a series of suggestions, we will circulate them and ask for feedback so that Pilot Group teachers may pick the three to be used in 2012.

Please keep in touch.