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**Science Engagement Programme**

**COVID-19 Students’**

**Policy Challenge**

**Instructions**

INSTRUCTIONS

How to approach the writing of a policy brief?

**Step 1:** Study the application form where the requirements for the brief are defined. This should help you gain a better understanding of the assignment requirements.

**Step 2:** Read carefully the students’ guides for writing policy briefs that are listed on the links below. Study these instructions having in mind the requirements set in the application form. Choose one which you think is the most useful to you or use tips and advice from each of them.

They will guide you through the process of drafting the policy brief and help you approach more effectively some elements of the policy brief such as: research strategy, using evidence, writing style; identifying and defining of problem, etc. We also encourage you to do additional research and find more useful sources.

To access the guides, please click on the links below:

[University of Waterloo](https://lib.uwaterloo.ca/web/assignment-planner/policy-brief)

[University of Trent](https://www.trentu.ca/academicskills/how-guides/how-write-university/how-approach-any-assignment/how-write-policy-assignment#_Policy_Brief_(Briefing)

[University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/policy-briefs/)

Additionally, you can read some [good examples](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/policy-institute/assets/policy-idol/policy-idol-2019.pdf), too.

**Step 3:** Search, read, analyse and draft. Identify the problem you want to address. Find as many relevant sources as you can! Try to find the newest research, data and statistics. Make sure you understand all aspects of the problem. Do your own research. Look for solutions from different contexts and fields.

**Step 4:** Self-assess your draft policy brief against the evaluation criteria set below, and do necessary adjustments, if needed.

Eligibility criteria

The COVID-19 Students’ Policy Challenge is open to submissions from entrants meeting the following eligibility requirements:

* Between 18 and 30 years of age;
* Enrolled as Bachelor or Master student during the 2020–2021 academic year at any University (public or private);
* International students are also eligible;
* Interested participants may submit individually or in teams of two or three;
* Only one team member needs to submit the proposal, but all members’ identification information should be included. If you’re submitting as part of a group, please cc all group members in the e-mail;
* All team members should meet eligibility criteria and be available to participate in the final conference if selected as finalists.

Format of the contest

The contest has two parts: the written submissions and the oral presentation (online). Each part is weighted 50% in the final evaluation score.

**Part 1** **– Policy brief submission (by December 8).** Eligible students are invited to submit the policy brief that address a problem identified under one out of two challenge prompts:

**Challenge #1:** How to respond to and recover from COVID-19 by strengthening social justice and protecting the most vulnerable?

**Challenge #2:** How to respond to and recover from COVID-19 in a manner that helps building resilience to climate change?

The policy brief must be written in the Application Form according to instructions included in it and sent by e-mail to [Sara.Cabarkapa@britishcouncil.me](mailto:Sara.Cabarkapa@britishcouncil.me). Policy briefs will be evaluated against the criteria set below (see evaluation criteria. Top five submissions will advance to the online final.

**Part 2 – Oral presentation (second half of January).** Following the preparation meeting with the project team, finalists will pitch their proposals to the jury members in an online event. Each finalist will have 3 minutes for the oral presentation which can be accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation or any other visual aid tool. This will be followed by questions from the jury panel consisting of policymakers, NGO leaders and donor representatives.

Evaluation criteria

**Table 1: Written submission evaluation criteria** **(50% of the overall score)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Weight | Category | Criteria |
| 35% | Problem statement | Clarity of explanation of the problem in focus  Effectiveness of evidence provided relevant to the problem  The quality of explanation of the root causes of the problem  Relevance of the problem to the selected challenge prompt |
| 40% | Policy Option | Well explained shortcomings of the current approaches to the problem, with clear arguments why it doesn’t work  Identified key elements of the current policies that need to be changed  Originality and uniqueness of the proposed policy  Convincing argumentation and evidence on why the proposed policy will resolve the problem presented  Clearly articulated benefits of the proposed policy |
| 25% | Policy recommendations | Specific and detailed course of action |

**Table 2: Presentation evaluation criteria (50% of the overall score)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Weight | Category | Criteria |
| 30% | Depth of Knowledge | Demonstrated knowledge of the subject matter being analysed  Demonstrated understanding of the literature on the subject matter  Presentation focused on background, research, and analysis relevant to the policy area or proposal  Effective responses to questions proposed by the judges |
| 35% | Completeness of  Presentation | Effective explanation of the proposal by the speaker  The most important relevant aspects of the policy area being analysed and discussed |
| 35% | Presentation | Effectiveness and professional demeanour of the speaker  Appropriateness of the visual aid and usefulness of the visual support for the presentation (Graphs, Plots, etc.) |

Prizes

* 1st Place: Voucher in the amount of 1500 GBP for online courses at universities in the United Kingdom.
* 2nd Place: Voucher in the amount of 1000 GBP for online courses at universities in the United Kingdom.

For any additional questions regarding the competition, please, contact [Sara.Cabarkapa@britishcouncil.me](mailto:Sara.Cabarkapa@britishcouncil.me).