



The Chief Examiner Role in Pre-University Anthropology: personal reflections

Marzia Balzani, New York University Abu Dhabi

Given the demise of the Anthropology A-levelⁱ I am possibly the only person who can claim the distinction of having held the position of chief examiner (CE) for both A-level and IB Anthropology. I have worked with the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA)ⁱⁱ awarding body and with the International Baccalaureate (IB).ⁱⁱⁱ Both are two-year pre-university programmes of study in anthropology with curricula designed for the 16-19 age group.^{iv}

Both A-levels and the IB Diploma programme have been the subject of much academic research and media discussion. However, it came as a surprise to discover that there appears to be no published research on the role of Chief Examiners (CEs) in overseeing these qualifications. The institutions which employ them have not systematically collated data on just who becomes a CE, their qualifications and experience, their average age, gender breakdown, other posts held in educational institutions, or just about anything else that might help provide an overview of this group. For the IB I was told that this information is collected on application forms but that it is destroyed after a year for data protection reasons.^v

In this article I describe some of my own personal experiences as a CE with both the IB and AQA, and suggest why it might be a rewarding position for those teaching in universities who are particularly interested in questions of pedagogy.^{vi} While I attempt to provide a balanced account of my work with the IB and AQA, I worked with AQA for only a few years. Having worked with the IB for over two decades I have a more extensive knowledge of that organisation and how it has changed over time than I do for AQA. My experiences of working with the IB and AQA are supplemented with the experiences of past CEs who shared their knowledge and perspectives with me, and with the insights and views of those who work with CEs, including subject and curriculum managers, the head of diploma programme assessment, deputy chief examiners (DCEs), principal examiners (PEs), team leaders and others at both the IB and AQA.^{vii} This does not constitute a methodologically rigorous study, but in the absence of research in this area, I hope it will provide a useful sketch.

Becoming Chief Examiner

When I first applied for a job as an IB examiner, it was not because I wanted to examine even more scripts than I was already doing as a novice university lecturer. Rather my entry into the world of pre-university anthropology examining was more a matter of survival. I had taken up my first lecturer position at a time when there was little emphasis in the university on supporting lecturers to develop teaching skills in their discipline. I had not studied anthropology as an undergraduate and found myself in a department where almost no colleagues had an anthropology training. In the days before the internet provided a ready supply of syllabi to download, I was not even sure quite what an undergraduate anthropology class might look like. A colleague, who happened to be CE for IB English suggested I apply to the IB to become an examiner so that I would at least have a subject guide, examination papers and assessment criteria to review. From the examination scripts themselves I could work out which ethnographies teachers were using and therefore considered suitable for students just starting to discover anthropology.

The first IB DP Social and Cultural Anthropology (SCA) curriculum I received was, in effect, a scaled down version of a fairly traditional undergraduate degree program. By rethinking the weighting of the different elements in the assessment criteria to make them more appropriate for undergraduate level study, developing the parts of the SCA IB DP curriculum to produce coherent semester length classes, and by adapting examination questions and other forms of assessment, including ethnographic research projects, I was able to begin to teach

myself how to teach and organize a systematic undergraduate programme. After several examination sessions I was invited to attend grade award meetings, then to draft examination papers, and eventually to apply for the post of CE.

By the time I became CE for the SCA IB DP I was thus already familiar with the organization, its curriculum, the assessment models, and many of the colleagues with whom I was to work. This was very different from the situation of many CEs who arrived at their first meeting with an important sounding title but with little or no experience of working with an examination awarding organization. Often they had not been briefed about the work to be done or the schedules that have to be met in order to produce, monitor and, when necessary, revise the annual examinations. One incoming CE described arriving at his first IB meeting not understanding any of the in-house acronyms and knowing less about what was going on than anyone else in the room. This was, in his words, the 'imagine yourself set down surrounded by all your gear, alone' moment when he realized that he was 'a beginner, without previous experience' (Malinowski 1983:3). Because awarding bodies now usually provide CEs with an induction these experiences are less likely to be the case today.

CEs are dependent on permanent staff to guide them, explain how things work and why they are done as they are. They work full-time in the examination awarding body, ensure that everything runs smoothly and that CEs and others can carry out their roles as and when required. This gives the impression that CEs step into the pre-university assessment and examination process for intense, but brief, periods a few times a year while the business of keeping things going happens continuously without any need for their presence or disciplinary expertise. While procedurally this may be the case, the input of CEs and DCEs can be called on at any point when questions of content, curriculum or other matters requiring subject expertise arise. I have had occasion to write reports, as CE, when issues considered serious enough to merit investigation and response have arisen.

It so happened that soon after my term as IB Anthropology CE came to an end, the AQA advertised for a CE and PEs for its new A-level Anthropology. By this point I was very familiar with the IB anthropology curriculum, systems and processes. I was curious to learn more about the A-level and recognized that the new course could potentially require significant changes in how undergraduates in anthropology would be taught in future years in UK universities. With the support of my head of department I applied for the post of CE or PE in Anthropology seeing this as benefitting my own university anthropology programme and providing me with a fresh opportunity to work with anthropologists interested in curriculum development, teaching and assessment.

With AQA, while I did not have a formal induction into the role of the CE, there was considerable support and guidance from the AQA assessment team. In addition, I was given materials to read on setting examination papers.^{viii} Paper setting followed clear procedures including scrutiny and revision at the Question Paper Evaluation Committee (QPEC) meetings that the senior examining team were all required to attend. At these meetings, while each PE took responsibility for drafting the paper for her own unit, everyone present worked on every question for every paper, going through each paper word by word, to ensure that the final agreed examination paper was fair and fit for purpose. After the QPEC meetings there are further stages of review before all papers are finally approved by CE and Chair of Examiners (AQA 2012, 3). In very many respects this mirrored the process I was used to following with paper setting for the IB and the same applied also to post-examination report writing and other aspects of the work of a CE which were required by both IB and AQA.

Given that CEs take on many of the roles and tasks of other examiners, there is often little that distinguishes, in practice, a CE from a PE (Principal Examiner) or a DCE (Deputy Chief Examiner). The AQA roles for a CE include those of a PE, lead assessment writer and item reviewer. Thus, as well as being CE, I was PE and assessment writer for one of the A-level Anthropology units, working alongside the three other PEs who each also oversaw a unit.^{ix} As the date for the start of A-level drew near all four A-level PEs developed teaching resources, including schemes of work (SOWs), and all of us took part in sessions where we talked about and discussed the A-level with Anthropology teachers. Between us there was considerable expertise. Two of us were professional anthropologists with doctorates and research publications in our fields and two of us had, already worked with the IB, in my case as an examiner and former CE and in the case of one other PE as an anthropology teacher. The other PEs were both teachers who had considerable experience, in one case including prior work with AQA. One is now preparing to study for her doctorate in anthropology and expects to begin in the near future.

For the IB a CE is typically drawn from the university sector while a DCE is a teacher in an IB school. The combination of a university-based CE and a school-based DCE is, in my experience, one that works extremely

well when complementary knowledge and expertise are shared towards achieving common goals. Both CE and DCE with the IB, as with the CE for AQA, are expected to be subject specialists. The assessment teams that support these qualifications are not always subject specialists but instead have expertise in pre-university teaching and assessment, and keep abreast of both their institutional and governmental requirements. The IB curriculum staff are, however, generally subject specialists in one of the subjects for which they are responsible. They also manage one or more other subjects in which they may have no academic background. During my time with the IB I have worked with only one curriculum manager with post-graduate level qualifications in anthropology. The others have all been very enthusiastic about the discipline and have taken the time to read up on the subject but inevitably could not be expected to have the depth of knowledge or disciplinary confidence that comes with formal academic study and qualification.

What do Chief Examiners do?

Given that much of the work CEs do is also work carried out by other examiners, what it is that CEs specifically bring to examination and assessment? For both AQA and IB the CEs are expected to 'possess management and leadership skills'. For the IB, in addition, the requirement to be able to 'read documents and write reports in English' is explicitly stated and follows from the international reach of the IB DP (IB 2015).

The formal role of a CE with the IB is one in which:

The Chief examiner is principally responsible for setting and maintaining the academic standard for their subject(s). They are therefore closely involved in setting question papers, marking candidates' work, and determining the final grades of candidates.

As such the position of Chief examiner entails a commitment to attend meetings for activities such as question paper editing, examiner standardization and grade awarding. These meetings may be face to face or held online.

As a Chief examiner the post holder is also a member of the examining board for the IB. The examining board ensure that the IB programmes as a whole are coherent and fit for purpose.

A Chief examiner may also be invited to participate in curriculum and assessment development alongside teachers, external consultants, and IB academic staff. However, the IB currently operates a seven year cycle of curriculum review for individual subjects and courses, therefore the exact nature of this involvement will vary according to timing.^x

The specific tasks and essential qualifications include, perhaps rather obviously, subject expertise and teaching experience. Other IB documents outline in more detail the qualifications and requirements of CEs but these, in the main, are similar to the AQA's role description of CEs which, in somewhat more bureaucratic language, are to:

1. Work with the Chair of Examiners and Qualifications Developer to create a plan for how the specification will deliver the subject strategy and ensure that this plan is delivered.
2. Review the exam performance data and use these:
 - to inform the product development plans and
 - to provide advice to lead assessment writers in order to improve future question papers.
3. Produce clear guidance and commissioning documentation for assessment writers on how to create assessments that deliver the subject strategy and specification as a whole.
4. Monitor the production of items, assessments, mark schemes and, where appropriate, criteria for internal assessments, to ensure, and approve formally, that:
 - they meet with appropriate standards and
 - comply with the specification and commissioning guidance given at component level
 - external assessments as a whole cover the assessment criteria, as set out in the specification, and satisfactorily sample the appropriate content
 - they lead the team in taking actions to address any issues that occur during the production processes.
5. Monitor and take appropriate steps to ensure that the assessments, and optional routes, within a specification are comparable in demand (between components, routes and over time).
6. Monitor and take appropriate steps to ensure that, over a reasonable number of years, the examination as a whole will address all the specification content.
7. Monitor the effectiveness of the standardisation and marking processes to ensure that the mark scheme is applied consistently and accurately, and provide a report on the effectiveness of

standardisation and marking to the Lead Assessor, Chair of Examiners and Qualification Developer.

8. Contribute to the awarding process to ensure that the specification standards are maintained at the appropriate level from one year to the next.
9. Check, edit and approve reports on the examination for the specification to ensure that AQA provides clear and consistent messages which are helpful to teachers in gaining a practical understanding of the requirements of the assessments.
10. Coordinate and monitor the development of support material, promotion material, training activities and advisory activities to ensure all material and training is relevant and consistent with the specification.
11. Monitor and advise upon the appointment, performance and development of relevant associates in relation to quality of work and timeliness in producing and delivering assessments and support for the subject.
12. Provide training, mentoring and coaching to associates as required.
13. Undertake training, as required by AQA.^{xi}

In effect, both for IB and AQA the CE role is centered on the maintenance of standards for each examination session and also over time. This is done by overseeing the setting of examination papers, standardising marking, helping to set and confirm grade boundaries, producing teacher support material, contributing when appropriate to curriculum review, and reviewing and writing reports on the curriculum and assessment.

The concern with maintenance of appropriate standards has been part of the justification for the CE role for many decades. CEs are assumed to be able to set an 'absolute' and 'correct' standard against which other examiners can be measured. The problematic nature of this assumption, however, has long been recognized. A document from the Joint Matriculation Board (JMB) from 1928 states:

We have, in fact, imposed the standard of the chief examiner on the whole panel, but what guarantee have we that this standard is the correct one? What units have the chief examiners to measure by? Actually none whatever. They are very experienced examiners, but we have only their opinion to go upon... What can the chief examiner do to maintain the same standard as at an examination held twelve months before? It has been claimed that it cannot be done... Experienced and conscientious examiners vary one from another, they cannot all have got the correct and absolute standard – one or more may [by accident] have found it, but which? There is no means of telling.
(Crofts & Caradog Jones 1928, p. 44 cited in Tattersall 2008, 52).

While ranking candidates in any given examination session is less problematic and more readily achievable, setting a standard for each grade and additionally ensuring that the standard remains the same year after year is an immensely challenging task and one which ultimately, a CE is expected to manage. Clearly this is not possible without considerable expertise and support from the awarding bodies and now routinely includes detailed mark schemes to promote examiner reliability in marking and the use of statistical data to help CEs establish where grade boundaries should be. This, however, is always used in conjunction with more qualitative evaluations of candidate achievement for each examination session.^{xii}

I decided to ask past and present CEs, DCEs, PEs and curriculum and assessment managers with both IB and AQA about the CE role. The answers were mostly ones that could have been expected and had some inevitable overlap. CEs were variously described as needing to be 'primus inter pares', good at teamwork and communication and able to manage differences that arise within their examination teams. One past IB CE, rather self-deprecatingly, stated that as far as he could tell the only necessary role of the CE that could not be performed by other examiners is that of signing off the final grade sheets at the end of each examination session. For another respondent the CE was there to provide an overview of the entire subject:

While a PE is focusing on the detail of setting the standard for particular questions and ensuring that their examiner teams mark to that standard the CE should be thinking about the broader issues of whether the different components are delivering the balance between skills they were intended to, are the standards across the different PE equal, is this year's paper comparable with last year's, and are grades in their subject worth the same as grades in other subjects in their group and with subjects outside their groups?

If a CE is just being 'lead PE' then they are failing to deliver the responsibilities of the role.

One senior manager simply stated that for him a good CE was someone who could 'leave the ego at home, approach tasks with an open mind, [be] willing to learn from others and remember that others can be right'. Another considered a good CE to be someone who would 'pick up the phone'.

In the case of the IB, having a CE from the university sector is, according to one senior manager, a 'regulatory requirement in some countries' where 'university recognition [is] imperative.' Another, however, was not sure that this was indeed the case and pointed out that some of the CEs are not from HE but from schools. For this senior manager the imperative to have CEs from higher education was originally because of the 'need to get the IB DP known in universities for recognition purposes'. This manager did also state, however, that the IB Board of Governors 'continue to prefer that we recruit HE educators to CE positions' and there are advantages for the IB continuing to take this position. One benefit is that CEs can oversee the comparability and consistency of exam sessions in May and November as they do not teach in an IB school and so will not compromise the sessions. Just as importantly a university based CE provides 'academic credibility assurance' and 'has a responsibility to act as a champion for the IB'. This university sector CE position marks one difference between the IB and AQA. With the AQA my impression was that teachers were just as, if not more, likely to be CE. A PE with AQA when asked about this wrote:

... there was a push by the Coalition government to increase the presence of HE teachers in 2010-2015 which resulted in at least one HE representative on each subject team (as far as I am aware). However, it was my general impression that the admin team felt, and feel, that teachers at the level should be involved as they are most directly in contact with the students and materials.

If there is a difference in examination cultures between IB and AQA with regard to which education sector CEs come from, it is one that has narrowed in recent years. While there are good reasons for encouraging university based academics to become involved in pre-university curriculum development and examinations, in both IB and AQA, some of the impetus for this has come from external bodies.

While AQA CEs tend to work in relative isolation from each other, IB CEs are invited to attend CE conferences, in the past annually but now once every eighteen months. At the conferences CEs from different subjects have opportunities to discuss matters in their subject groups and also in plenary sessions which bring together CEs from all six IB DP (Diploma Programme) subject groups and the DP core. In subject group discussions each CE presents the annual report for her own programme and thus makes it possible to compare and discuss common issues that arise within a subject group. Additionally, at these conferences senior managers and department heads give presentations on key developments and strategic initiatives in the organization. Through the CEs' attendance at the conferences other examiners can learn about what is happening in the IB at a more global level than it is usually possible to find out about from attending paper setting or examination meetings alone. This is a cultural difference between the examination bodies and is perhaps one that makes sense for the IB given that each subject taught in the DP is part of a larger programme of study. Such conferences help CEs understand the place of their own subject within the wider DP. It is also evident that different matters take priority during the tenure of different CEs. While I was CE, the IB was particularly concerned with developing its work on ethics and ethical practice, and discussions in CE meetings helped to convey the value of, and develop, the particular IB approach to this. This is now embedded across the DP. More recent CE conference agendas have tackled the move to online marking, the shift from moderation to standardization, practice, qualification and seeding associated with online marking, and examiner training needs to support these changes.

Curriculum Development and the Independence of Chief Examiners

While CEs have no formal role in curriculum review with the IB, and the CE did not have a role in the development of the A-level,^{xiii} CEs are often invited to participate in curriculum reviews. With the IB I have taken part in two curriculum reviews and I was part of the team of examiners involved in revising the A-level specification in 2011 following feedback from teachers on their experiences of delivering the original specification. This latter revision was only to be expected as the A-level was a completely new programme of study and had not benefitted from any piloting or trials with teachers and students before it was launched.^{xiv}

In meetings with teachers before the A-level was first taught I was very encouraged by the number of teachers who stated they had studied anthropology as undergraduates but were teaching sociology, geography or psychology as there were no opportunities for them to teach anthropology at A-level. While these teachers expressed genuine excitement in the prospect of an A-level in anthropology, they also made clear that the

pressures on them to demonstrate good examination results from the outset were onerous. More than once teachers said that they had been allowed to offer A-level Anthropology but that if it did not deliver the grades their school expected with the very first cohort to take the examinations no future cohort of students would be permitted to take the subject. The impact of school league tables and what has become an increasingly assessment driven education system meant that teachers had no option but to get the teaching right first time and to prove this with the grades their students achieved. For these teachers, anxieties about the specification requirements translated into requests for more clarification about what, precisely, the A-level required of them and their students. It was in response to teachers that the A-level specification was revised. Revisions, however, were kept to a minimum. No new content was added. Rather the goal was to re-order the existing content to suggest to teachers how they might approach this in teaching. The idea of teaching through issues and key debates was discussed and eventually accepted. This was not to suggest that any one side of a debate was right, or even that there were only two sides to any discussion. Rather, the aim of the revision was to open up the teaching to engage with different perspectives and to incorporate in a structured and productive learning context the possibility that there might be several contrasting positions, all of which merited consideration and study.

A general perception is that A-levels are subject to national policy shifts while the IB DP is free from such interventions. Hence the independence of CEs within the IB is presumed to be greater than in organizations delivering A-levels. Yet, while it is clear that the Anthropology A-level clearly suffered because of a combination of the timing of educational reforms that foregrounded STEM^{xv} subjects and the increasing marketization of education in the UK, the IB has also been impacted by changes in the educational landscape (Basu 2016).

Bunnell (2015) makes the point that while the number of schools offering the IB DP has either remained constant or grown in number in all other nation states, it has declined from its peak of about 230 schools in 2010 to 144 by 2014 in the UK. Part of the explanation for the decline, particularly in state schools, has to do with the funding of the IB DP which requires students to study six subjects in addition to three core elements^{xvi} but which is only funded to the level of between 3-4.5 A-levels. National funding policy here works against the likelihood that state schools will be able to continue with the IB DP. University admissions also appear to undervalue the IB DP and so do not treat the high achieving IB DP students, in particular, fairly. These are external negative factors that help to explain why the IB DP is not more successful in the UK. There are also some positive factors to consider. The first is that the IB DP has not experienced the 'grade-inflation' that appears to have beset the A-levels and which, as a consequence, are perceived as easier to do well on. Given this perception, students who wish to get top marks may make the apparently rational decision to choose A-levels over the IB DP. Lastly, shifts in political support and government funding for accreditation of the IB DP over time have complicated matters, and the rise of alternative baccalaureate-type awards such as the Cambridge Pre-U^{xvii} have provided competition to the IB DP (Bunnell 2015:390-2).

Also, as one senior IB assessment manager informed me, while the:

IB is an 'exam board' in its own right and does not get validation by any other examination board...[a] number of countries require all examination boards to meet their own national sets of standards in order to 'recognise' the exam board's qualification in that country. The most active country for this is the UK that has a number of independent Regulators who require considerable proof of compliance with their 'general regulations'. The English Regulator is Ofqual while the Welsh Regulator is Qualification Wales.

The IB chooses to allow these government regulators to regulate our qualifications because (a) it allows us to offer qualifications in the country and (b) in the case of Ofqual recognition is seen as a proxy for 'quality assured' in many parts of the world.

For these reasons, while the IB is more independent of national policy shifts in education, it is not immune from the impacts of these. It often also chooses to comply with local national standards for pre-university education.

So, where does this leave the independence of CEs when it comes to curriculum design and innovation? Both IB and AQA have their own curriculum and examination 'house styles'. The A-level Anthropology shares elements with the A-level Sociology just as the IB DP SCA incorporates standard elements shared with other DP subjects. In addition, the suitability of content for the 16-19 year cohort is also considered when setting examinations, marking the professionalization and standardization of practice. For each examination session, the mark schemes and subject reports are the means by which the examining team, led by the CE, can guide current and future

teachers to materials and approaches that are considered most relevant, interesting and fulfil the goals of the programme. Here there is scope for CEs and senior examiners to influence the teaching of anthropology.

Curriculum reviews provide an opportunity for an examining team and external advisors to take a step back from the routine of examination setting and grading. They consider just what, as anthropologists, we want students taking the SCA or A-level Anthropology to learn and take with them, knowing that most will never formally study anthropology again. For those who do go on to study anthropology at university we need to consider what they will take from their pre-university study into their degree programmes. As CE during my first IB SCA curriculum review and as a member of the senior examining team for the second curriculum review I benefitted from spending time with expert teachers, subject managers and curriculum developers discussing anthropology pedagogy.

In the most recent IB curriculum review, with anthropology teachers from the Americas, Australia, Middle East and Europe, who between them teach in a variety of national contexts, in international schools, United World Colleges, state and independent schools, I have been able to engage with world anthropology pedagogies. Within universities, there is very little time spent collectively discussing the teaching of our own discipline. From the inception of an idea to strategies for teaching this in the classroom, these reviews allow a dialogue about a discipline's place in a broader programme of study, how best to assess the progress of students so that they can learn without being taught to a test and can take from their study ways of understanding and thinking critically, whether or not they continue with a formal study of anthropology.

Curriculum developments have meant that over time the compressed degree-style course that characterised the first IB Anthropology programme has become more relevant and interesting while still challenging students to develop high level critical thinking skills. In this respect both IB SCA and A-level Anthropology have much in common. While acronyms and in-house styles may vary there has been a convergence over time with regards to general expectations and goals in pre-university education.

Conclusion

My experience examining as a CE for both IB and AQA have helped me learn from school teachers how to become a better teacher of undergraduates. Some of this has come about through engagement with teachers in the online training workshops I co-wrote and continue to facilitate for the IB. They have taught me to appreciate just how much pre-university students can learn, the enormous variety and creativity of the ways in which school teachers engage their students, and the levels of complexity students are able to work with (cf. Latham 2015). It has also taught me not to underestimate what I can teach a class of first-year undergraduates. Over time I have also had the pleasure of meeting teachers on these workshops who are the enthusiastic former students of the senior examiners I work with. I rediscover how, as teachers, working within institutions that seem to constrain us, we reproduce ourselves, if never quite exactly.

References

AQA. (2012), *Written Evidence submitted by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) to the House of Commons Education Committee*,

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmeduc/141/141we04.htm> (accessed 20 September 2016).

AQA. *Senior Examiner Opportunities*, <http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/examiner/AQA-APP-FORM-G00012-PDF.pdf> (accessed 9 September 2016).

Balzani, M. (2010), 'Social and Cultural Anthropology and the International Baccalaureate: history, practice and future challenges', *Anthropology in Action* 17(2-3):61-70.

Basu, P. (2016), 'Anthropology education and public engagement: Where do we go from here?', *Anthropology Today*, 32(2):3-4.

Bunnell, T. (2008), 'The global growth of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme over the first 40 years: a critical assessment', *Comparative Education*, 44(4):409-424.

Bunnell, T. (2015), 'The rise and decline of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme in the United Kingdom', *Oxford Review of Education* 41(3):387-403.

Cambridge Pre-U: a guide for schools <http://www.cie.org.uk/images/84535-cambridge-pre-u-a-guide-for-schools.pdf> (accessed August 11 2016).

Coleman, S. (2011), 'Teaching Anthropology Today', *Teaching Anthropology* 1(1):3-11.

House of Commons, Business, Innovation and Skills Committee (2016), *The Teaching Excellence Framework: Assessing Quality in Higher Education* <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmbis/572/572.pdf> (accessed 8 September 2016).

IB (2015), Chief/Deputy Chief Examiner Recruitment Policy, <http://www.ibo.org/globalassets/jobs-and-careers/examiners/chief-and-deputy-chief-examiner-recruitment-policy-en.pdf> (accessed 7 September 2016).

IB (2016), 'Almost 150,000 IB graduates celebrate 2016 exam results', *IB Global News*, http://www.ibo.org/news/news-list/almost-150000-ib-graduates-celebrate-2016-exam-results/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=IB%20Global%20News%206%20%202016%20%20English&utm_content=IB%20Global%20News%206%20%202016%20%20English+CID_4ffb532522d60e410dac2ea8865c25c2&utm_source=IB%20Newsletters%20Email%20marketing&utm_term=Read%20full%20article (accessed 7 September 2016).

Latham, S. (2015), 'The case for A-level anthropology', *Anthropology Today*, 31(1):19-20.

Malinowski, B. (1983) [1922], *The Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea*, London: Routledge.

Rivière, A. (2014), 'Ethnography and the Classroom Challenge: Exploring the use and assessment of Ethnography in the IB Diploma Programme', *Teaching Anthropology* 4:2-22.

Street, B. (2010), 'Advancing anthropology in schools: The accreditation of the Anthropology A-level', *Anthropology Today*, 26(2):1-3.

Tarc, P. (2009), *Global Dreams, Enduring Tensions: International Baccalaureate in a Changing World*, New York: Peter Lang.

Tattersall, K. (2008), 'A brief history of policies, practices and issues relating to comparability', in Newton, P., J-A Baird, H. Goldstein, H. Patrick and P. Tymms, *Techniques for monitoring the comparability of examination standards*, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

UK Government, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (2016), *Success as a Knowledge Economy: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, (White Paper) https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/523396/bis-16-265-success-as-a-knowledge-economy.pdf (accessed 8 September 2016).

Endnotes

- ⁱ The last exams for the A-level Anthropology will be in June 2018 with a re-sit only in June 2019. I was the first Chief Examiner (CE) for A-level Anthropology from 2010 to 2012, seeing one cohort through from the start of the qualification to the completion of the four units leading to the A-level award. I resigned my position only because a change of job means I am no longer resident in the UK and so cannot carry out all the duties required. I served as CE for SCA in the IB Diploma Programme (DP) from 2003 to 2008. At that time the IB CE position was a five year non-renewable term of office.
- ⁱⁱ The AQA is an educational charity whose website states that it sets and marks about half of all GCSEs and A-levels taken every year. <http://www.aqa.org.uk/about-us> (accessed 3 September 2016).
- ⁱⁱⁱ The International Baccalaureate Organisation, an educational charity with a pre-history starting in the 1920s, began offering university entrance examinations in the decade from 1962-1973 (Tarc 2009; Bunnell 2008). The most recent examination session, May 2016, saw some 150,000 students take examinations worldwide (*IB Global News*, July 2016). Of these just under 2,500 took the SCA examinations and a further 200 will in the November 2016 session.
- ^{iv} For more details on the current IB SCA program see: Balzani 2010, Rivière 2014. For more on the A level Anthropology see: <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/anthropology/a-level/anthropology-2110> which includes a link to the specification. And for some of the history leading to the accreditation of the Anthropology A-level see: Street 2010.
- ^v A senior member of the IB in response to this stated ‘Our recruitment policy for CEs does of course indicate the essential qualifications and experience for a CE, so given these common requirements why would we need to collate such data?’
- ^{vi} The announcement of the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework in higher education in England due for first assessment in early 2017 may become an incentive to focus on pedagogy in anthropology, though perhaps not as a positive step taken by anthropologists in higher education to develop their knowledge of pre-university anthropology but rather as a reactive and defensive position imposed from outside the discipline (UK Government, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2016).
- ^{vii} Many individuals very kindly responded to my lists of questions and requests for information. I am very grateful to all of them but have taken the decision not to name individuals in this paper.
- ^{viii} I was given some of the materials listed in AQA 2012, 8 fn. 18.
- ^{ix} AQA, ‘Senior Examiner Opportunities’ <http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/examiner/AQA-APP-FORM-G00012-PDF.pdf> (accessed 9 September 2016).
- ^x <http://www.ibo.org/jobs-and-careers/become-an-examiner-or-assessor/becoming-a-senior-examiner/chief-examiner/> (accessed 20 September 2016).
- ^{xi} <http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/examiner/AQA-APP-FORM-G00012-PDF.pdf> (accessed 9 September 2016).
- ^{xii} Tattersall notes that from 1987 ‘examining boards were asked by SEC [Secondary Examinations Council] (still in the full flush of its search for absolute grade criteria) to award A level grades on the basis of examiners’ judgement of the quality of work at three key boundaries, grades A, B and E, the remaining grades being arithmetically determined according to an agreed formula. The shift of emphasis from norm-referencing tempered by qualitative judgements to a weak form of criterion-referencing tempered by statistical data opened the way for a steady annual increase in the percentages of candidates succeeding in A level which, in turn, led to a greater demand for places in higher education’ (2008, 76). The IB also has a similar system with criterion-referenced marking and statistical data to help CEs arrive at the grade boundaries for each examination session. For the IB the three key boundaries are at 6/7, 3/4 and 2/3.
- ^{xiii} The original A-level specification was developed by the RAI Education Committee and presented to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority with AQA (Street 2010:2).
- ^{xiv} The recent IB curriculum review, by comparison, benefitted from trialling some of the new assessments which will become part of the next subject guide. This was only possible because there is an already significant pool of schools, teachers and students who are able to test new styles of questions and new formats for assessment before the curriculum officially begins. This should mean that any revisions that might need to be made can be completed before the new curriculum is launched.
- ^{xv} STEM is an acronym for science, technology, engineering and mathematics.
- ^{xvi} These are the Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge, and CAS (Creativity, Action, Service) which are compulsory elements of the IB DP.
- ^{xvii} The *Cambridge Pre-U: a guide for schools* makes the point that each subject syllabus is ‘supported by university lecturers’ (p.3) and requires the study of three principal subjects as well as global perspectives and research report for the full diploma. Like the IB DP, and now once again the A-level, it is a two year linear course. Cambridge Pre-U subjects in the Social Science category do not include either sociology or anthropology. In many other respects also, the similarities with the IB DP are clear.