

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 8987/11

Written Paper

Key Messages

- The amount of time spent answering each question should be allocated according to the number of available marks.
- The key skill needed to score high marks is that of evaluation, supported by precise reference to the passage and in relation to the actual question set.
- A 'perspective', can be political, economic or social or global versus local, it is not simply the view of a passage.
- **Question 3** required candidates to consider both Documents and go beyond a simple comparison of the content and evaluate the provenance, content and perspectives to reach an overall judgement. This question brings together the skills that have been tested individually in the previous questions.
- Brief and relevant quotations from the Documents should be used to illustrate a point and to support arguments otherwise the answer is generalised or no more than a series of assertions.
- Candidates will not gain credit by bringing in material from outside the Documents.
- The strongest candidates reached a supported judgement about the issue under consideration.
- Candidates must number their questions. There were a significant number who either gave no indication of where one question ended and another began.

General Comments

Candidates were able to access both passages and most were able to use the information to address the questions, engaging with the issues, arguments and views put forward in both Documents. Stronger answers show a careful reading of the Documents and an ability to select relevant, but concise quotations to support the argument being pursued. Most candidates are clearly aware that the key skill required for this paper is evaluation and there is certainly more evidence of this in response to **Question 2**, but many would improve their performance if it was also applied to the final question. However, evaluation must not be seen in a vacuum, it must be done in relation to the question set. Candidates do need to ensure that they allow sufficient time to fully address the complex demands raised by the final question. Although there was little evidence that candidates ran out of time, there were some responses to the first question that were too long, either because the candidate felt they needed to include everything, or because they drifted from the focus of the question. Candidates should apply similar skills to the final question as they have displayed in the previous question, rather than drift into a simple comparison of the content of the two Documents.

Question 1

Most candidates were able to identify two reasons, although there were some responses where the reason was not closely linked to the 'developing world', which was the actual focus of the question. However, those who mentioned that big business had been able to dominate at the expense of the developing world and that there had not been an even distribution of wealth, with the developing world losing out, were able to score the two marks. Candidates were asked to identify and therefore a brief point was all that was required to score a mark, any further elaboration did not gain credit and took away valuable time that could have been more profitably used on the later questions. There were a number of reasons that candidates might have given, but they should ensure that they are distinct and clearly linked to the actual question.

Question 2

In order to score well candidates needed to focus on the 'arguments' in Document 1. It is also important for candidates to support their arguments by precise reference to the actual document under consideration. This will also prevent candidates from producing an answer which is largely based on sweeping generalisations and therefore lacks conviction. The stronger answers avoided simply listing the strengths and weaknesses, but identified key issues and discussed them, reaching a judgement as to whether it was a

strength or weakness and then used these interim conclusions to reach an overall judgement in the Document. This is illustrated in the example below where the candidate considers the economic strengths, then considers the strengths of the argument, before proceeding to discuss the weaknesses and reach an overall judgement about the issue under consideration. The response is also strengthened by the use of concise but relevant quotations from the Document, which prevent the candidate from falling into the trap of sweeping generalisations, which is often a characteristic of weaker answers.

A key strength of the argument is the consideration of the economic impacts concerned with 'wealth', the political conditions of an 'undemocratic' country and the ethical implications of globalisation on the 'global poor.' By acknowledging a number of perspectives, as well as applying this in a global context it serves to strengthen the arguments credibility and makes it a more compelling judgement reached through a consideration of differing viewpoints that all synthesise with this argument. However, upon closer examination, the use of emotive language such as 'salvation' and 'losers of globalisation' not only creates a false dichotomy between the 'losers' and the 'winners', failing to acknowledge the moderate impacts of globalisation; it also impacts on the neutrality of the argument which is considerably weakened. Indeed, the provenance suggests that the 'One World net's Globalisation Guide' has an agenda to promote 'sustainable development' thus implying an inherent agenda against globalisation that can be picked up from the criticism of its 'rapid acceleration.' This lack of objectivity may explain the lack of specific evidence and speculation, suggesting that the perspective 'of the world's poorest countries' creates a one-sided argument. Therefore, as the writer uses emotive language to appeal to the moral senses of its readers and only promotes the perspective of the poor demonstrates that the argument is not truly balanced.

This approach is also seen in a shorter paragraph, where the candidate attempts to consider the different perspectives that might have been discussed by the author. Once again, the candidate has used short, but apposite quotations to focus precisely on the actual question and has reached a balanced conclusion at the end.

A clear strength of the article is the global breadth of its discussion, exemplified by reference, however fleeting, to 'sub-Saharan Africa' and 'South Asia' amongst others. An issue this causes, however, is the lack of clear discussion of direct impact on single nations to exemplify the issues argued to be caused by globalisation. To discuss the issue on a micro scale as well as the macro would strengthen the argument, allowing statistics to be more easily woven into the argument.

There are a significant number of candidates who are able to evaluate both strengths and weaknesses, but in order to reach the very top marks would benefit from an overall conclusion which reaches a considered judgement, based on the preceding paragraphs, as illustrated below:

Although, upon first glance, it appears as though the argument is coherent and shows a logical line of reasoning, there are considerable weaknesses that outweigh this. The weakness of the argument being two-fold; sweeping generalised claims that show a lack of specificity as well as the failure to fully develop a counter argument by using expertise. Therefore the weaknesses outweigh the strengths.

This conclusion leaves the reader in doubt about the overall view of the candidate, and why they have reached their judgement. Obviously it is very important that the conclusion does reflect what has been argued in the earlier paragraphs and does not contradict or introduce a new line of thought.

Question 3

Candidates continue to find this the most demanding question. However, it brings together the skills that have been tested on earlier questions, which are frequently ignored when tackling this question. The most common mistake is to simply compare and describe the content or to evaluate, but with no link between the evaluation and the actual question set. There are a significant number who show little ability to go beyond comparing the views of the two documents. As this is the most demanding question, candidates would be well advised to allow a disproportionate amount of time to address it. It might help candidates if they produced a plan, which indicated how the points and evaluation relate to the actual question, rather than see the documents in a vacuum. Candidates should also check to ensure that they have reasonably balanced coverage to the two Documents. There is often a tendency to either ignore Document 1, because it has been considered in the previous question, or to focus excessively on it because they have a clearer understanding of its line of argument because they have already considered it.

Once again, candidates would be well advised to support their arguments by precise reference to the Documents, but need to avoid lengthy quotations that detract from the overall argument. It might help some candidates if they decided the line of argument they were going to take in the first paragraph and pursued

that throughout their answer. They would need to explain why the other view is less valid as help to ensure that the argument is consistent and that there is an answer to the actual question set.

Candidates should identify a few key points that they want to make and thoroughly interrogate the issue in relation to the question and reach a judgement on the issue as is seen in the example below:

Whilst Document 2 is able to rely on the results from a 'global source of public opinion', it relies too heavily on this, using phrases such as 'majority' which are not clarified. It does focus on a wider aspect of factors than Document 1, such as 'national economies', 'the environment' and 'trade', yet Document 1 is stronger both because of recognising the counter argument, claiming people think there are 'broadly positive' affects of globalisation, but also the fact that it undermines the counter argument which is effectively supported by Document 2. Document 1 recognises that 'Internet technology' has increased 'knowledge', and this is supported by Document 2, stating that younger people who use the Internet more, are more positive about globalisation, yet the fact that Document 1 goes on to undermine this by focusing on 'extreme poverty' therefore undermines the argument in Document 2. Therefore, although Document 2 does not support the view of Document 1, this view is made stronger by aspects of Document 2 successfully being refuted by the first argument.

The Documents offer candidates a large range of issues that they could consider and it is not expected that they will address them all. However, the points they choose to make must be linked to the question, but should also be thoroughly discussed as was seen in the example above. The candidate considers a range of points about the issue, looking at the nature and origin of the source, the perspectives and the use of counter argument, showing a very thorough discussion of the issue.

Another area where responses could be improved is in developing their judgements in the conclusion as this can often help raise the overall quality of the response. As with the previous question, the interim judgements should form the basis of the overall judgement and candidates should ensure that the conclusion does follow logically from the earlier points they have made. The following example highlights such an approach in relation to question 3:

Though Document 2 holds strength in examining the implications of globalisation, its inability to offer a clear line of argument to counter the view of Document 1 that 'globalisation has been the salvation for many but a curse for the poor' is central to its weakness. Though it makes points which tend to counter this view, including suggested negative impacts of globalisation on developed nations, such as outsourcing, these are not construed into a cogent argument supporting or challenging the view of Document 1. Although Document 1 falls down in its lack of statistical evidence and examination of counter arguments, it offers sufficient examples to support a reasoned conclusion, despite not explaining the tie between globalisation and inequality. Document 2 makes such a link in terms of environmental factors, yet despite making points to counter the view of 1, thus not supporting it, an argument is not purveyed to directly challenge it. Considering this, Document 1 offers the stronger of the two perspectives, and whilst Document 2 does not support its view, it does little to challenge its conclusions.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 8987/12

Written Paper

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General Comments

Candidates were able to access both passages and most were able to use the information to address the questions, engaging with the issues, arguments and views put forward in both Documents. Stronger answers show a careful reading of the Documents and an ability to select relevant, but concise quotations to support the argument being pursued. Most candidates are clearly aware that the key skill required for this paper is evaluation and there is certainly more evidence of this in response to **Question 2**, but many would improve their performance if it was also applied to the final question. However, evaluation must not be seen in a vacuum, it must be done in relation to the question set. Candidates do need to ensure that they allow sufficient time to fully address the complex demands raised by the final question. Although there was little evidence that candidates ran out of time, there were some responses to the first question that were too long, either because the candidate felt they needed to include everything, or because they drifted from the focus of the question. Candidates should apply similar skills to the final question as they have displayed in the previous question, rather than drift into a simple comparison of the content of the two Documents.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

- (a) Those candidates who understood the command 'summarise' were able to score well on this question, but there were some who did not use their own words to explain what the main arguments were, or drifted away from the main arguments and simply put the evidence used to support the arguments into their own words and therefore did not score well. There was a range of arguments within the Document and the question asked candidates to identify the 'main' arguments, not just one. There were a number of arguments within the Document and this was reflected in the strong answer below:

The main argument of the Document is that a significant number of languages are under threat and will not survive into the next century. This will mean, Davis argues, that cultural traditions will die, whereas Davis argues that cultural diversity should be championed and also that it will be lonely for those whose language does die. The Document argues that that the decline is due to economic power, which the endangered cultures are unable to resist and adapt to.

Candidates who considered only one argument or simply copied out large chunks of the text did not score well. There were only four marks available so candidates did not need to go into great detail to score highly.

- (b) As with the previous question, this question did not carry a large number of marks and therefore candidates were not expected to write at length. Candidates were asked to identify two pieces of evidence and were awarded one mark for each relevant piece; there was no requirement for them to explain the evidence, simply selecting appropriate evidence which supported the main argument was sufficient to score the marks. Most candidates were able to identify the decline from 6000 spoken languages and the fate of the Penan in South East Asia and thus scored two marks.

Question 2

In order to score well the focus of the responses had to be on the arguments and not the evidence, although the quality of the evidence used to support the arguments could be discussed if it was linked to the argument. Most candidates were able to discuss the weaknesses of the argument, but were less convincing in discussing the strengths and there were some answers where the latter was dismissed with only cursory coverage. Most candidates adopted a 'list like' approach, where they considered the strengths and then the weaknesses, but reached no overall judgement. Stronger answers avoided simply listing the strengths and weaknesses, but instead discussed a point and then reached a judgement about it; for example there was consideration of the author's appeal to emotion to convince the reader of the consequences of the death of a language, which was very persuasive, but could be countered by the argument that in order to appeal to emotion the author had to select extreme examples.

Question 3

Candidates continue to find this the most demanding question. However, it brings together the skills that have been tested on earlier questions, which are frequently ignored when tackling this question. The most common mistake is to simply compare and describe the content or to evaluate, but with no link between the evaluation and the actual question set. It might help candidates if they produced a plan, which indicated how the points and evaluation relate to the actual question, rather than see the documents in a vacuum. Candidates should also check to ensure that they have reasonably balanced coverage of the two Documents. There is often a tendency to either ignore Document 1, because it has been considered in the previous question, or to focus excessively on it because they have a clearer understanding of its line of argument because they have already considered it.

Candidates needed to consider whether Document 2 reinforced the key concerns raised by Document 1. Weaker answers did this by simply comparing the views offered by the two Documents on a range of issues. However, stronger answers went beyond a comparison of the content and analysed both the evidence and the provenance. There were a number who argued that Document 2 did not reinforce the argument in Document 1 as it was more optimistic, but then questioned the reliability of that view given the author of the Document. Many were able to consider the validity of the evidence used to support the views put forward and this allowed even weaker candidates to display some evaluative skills, which took them out of the lowest level.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 8987/13

Written Paper

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GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 8987/02

Essay

Key Messages

- Candidates must ensure they choose a question which enables them to fulfil the criteria for assessment.
- Candidates should ensure their scripts, as well as the file names of those scripts; carry their name, candidate number and centre name and/or number.
- Most candidates were able to stay well within the word limit of 2000 words, but they are reminded that an essay of fewer than 1500 words is unlikely to contain sufficient development or detail.
- Candidates should be encouraged to read the syllabus and ensure their essay is addressing the criteria of assessment.
- Candidates should always remember the word global. This does not have to appear in their title, but both their question and their treatment of it need to be global.

General comments

There was a very good range of topics, and it was clear that many centres use this course to develop discussions on significant issues. It is also clear that candidates take the essay and their chosen subject seriously, and while there was a variety in the quality of response, with some candidates showing a stronger understanding than others, there were clear signs of development. No question was answered either frivolously or in a way that showed a complete misunderstanding of the task. Without exception, candidates wrote as if their question was important to them. This commendable approach led to some strong, thoughtful and thought-provoking answers.

The issue of globality is important. First the subject needs to be global. A subject which is not cannot attain the higher bands of the mark scheme, as these are interpreted in a global context by examiners – an argument which is not developed globally, for example, is insufficiently developed, however profound or complex it may be. There were a few candidates who chose non-global questions. One wrote about the effects of higher tuition fees in his country. To the candidate it was clearly important, but it would be very hard to demonstrate how this could be significant to the inhabitants of other continents.

Some subjects are regional, such as the Arab Spring, or the dwindling rain forests. They do, however, impact on other parts of the world, and it is this wider context which candidates must ensure they address. Even ethical questions, which we consider to have universal relevance, need to be answered in a way that shows an appreciation of the widest possible range and contrast of perspectives, and often different regions, cultures or religions have differing perspectives.

To make answers fully global in treatment, not only do differing global perspectives need to be identified and developed, but the choice of sources needs to be as globally diverse as the question will permit. An essay on a question emerging from the Arab Spring needs to include local as well as Western sources. If a candidate is writing about the rainforests, it would be good to include the views and perspectives from the inhabitants as well as from Greenpeace. Many of this session's essays would have benefited from more research at the stage of finding sources.

One pitfall to avoid is the choice of contrasting academic sources on an issue: academics working in the same faculty in the same university may have utterly divergent views on an issue, but if they are colleagues it is hard to portray their perspectives as globally differing.

The following are some illustrations of ways in which candidates could make better use of their material. One very frequent limiter is candidates' ability to evaluate their chosen sources as shown in the example below:

...also due to the position held by Michael Moore as a well-known film director, he may have a vested interest in persuading people of how destructive guns are, in which he may gain financially from commercial success as he is seen to be promoting a positive message as well as being glorified in the media as being a modern day hero, which may result in an expansion of his fan base along with an increase in popularity. Here what the candidate sees as evaluation is in fact speculation/assertion. A comment like this, to be valid, needs to be supported. This is a researched essay, and speculation which might be valid when facing an unseen source under timed conditions is not creditworthy when there has been the opportunity to check.

In another example:

The article was written by Andrew Livingstone, a reporter whose expertise and previous stories are not mentioned making him seem unreliable. Livingstone's ability to perceive is strong, he received a close account story of everything Khadr's mother has been told. There is no reason for the author to hold bias or have vested interest on the topic (even though the article was negatively written), it is unlikely he will benefit from it. Here the candidate is clearly aware of the language of reasoning, and may well have studied Critical Thinking. However, the previous comment applies. The candidate must find evidence of ability to perceive and bias. In fact the candidate missed a real opportunity. If Livingstone had been used just as a spokesman for Khadr's mother, and the evaluation had been focused on her as the source, and her perspective, a much more global outcome would have been attained. Examiners always look for the widest possible range of source: in the context of the essay she was much more relevant than the journalist.

One final example:

However, it should be noted that is the president of the of Queensland, Australia, and the chair of the of Australia. Considering this, it is clear that he has a bias and an agenda. In his paper, ... he cherry picks information regarding evidence that will support his claim that organic farming methods produce just as much or more than conventional farming methods, which ultimately weakens his argument. The accusation of cherry-picking is a serious one. If a candidate is going to attack a source in this way there needs to be evidence. Unfounded accusation is worse than speculation, especially when the candidate had the opportunity to check the facts.

The quality of evaluation of the sources is a major discriminator between the answers in this examination. It should be noted finally that candidates are required to be aware of the limitations of their evidence and the potential for further research. The former often emerges in the context of the evaluation, but thought about the latter is difficult, and needs to be integrated into the argument to attain the top grades.

Comments on specific questions

There are no specific questions set – however, candidates would benefit from reading the full guidance on question choice which is to be found in the Principal Examiner's reports from earlier sessions.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 8987/03
Presentation

Key Messages

- Candidates will benefit from taking the time to construct effective questions
- Sources should be clearly selected and can be compared and combined
- The resource booklet is a starting point for independent research
- Focused, effectively structured argument is a feature of successful presentations

General Comments

The centres entering for this session produced an interesting and engaging range of work which, at its best, produced sophisticated and compelling arguments which drew authentically on a wide range of sources from contrasting perspectives. The following report highlights these strengths and also pinpoints some areas for development where candidates could refine their approach and improve their performance. Centres should, however, read what is here in conjunction with previous Principal Examiner's reports for this paper, in particular that for June 2012, which sets out and exemplifies some of the fundamental principles for successful achievement.

Setting Effective Questions

Effective question-setting remains an essential starting point for success. Presentations need to be based on questions rather than statements and should also focus on a debate, with globally contrasting possible views. 'How the London Olympics affected London businesses' is therefore less effective in its focus on explanation rather than argument and its limitation to a single London perspective on the London Olympics. 'Should the Olympics transcend national disputes?', on the other hand, poses a question which is focused on a clear debate and generalises its argument to a contrast between Olympic and national values which can be judged against a range of global examples. In some cases, candidates did fashion questions which were centred on a debate, but had difficulty locating a clear basis for judgement. For example, the question 'Is the level of commitment required to achieve Olympic success at too great a cost?' would have built on its achievement by clearly defining what constitutes 'too great a cost', perhaps by setting specific factors against one another.

Making Use of Sources

The use of sources is another area where there are clear differences between levels of candidate achievement. As has been stated in previous reports for this component, an underlying principle is the development of supported arguments, where sources are chosen, analysed and evaluated in order to substantiate claims, and candidates become critical of claims which are not backed up in this way. The mark scheme responds to this by making a distinction between sources which are only 'used' in Levels 1 and 2, 'selected' in Levels 3 and 4, and 'synthesised' in Level 5. An example of the minimal use of sources is this, where sources are listed in the bibliography and have clearly been used to make claims, but there is no specific acknowledgement that they are being drawn upon:

Human Rights are rights inherent to all human beings whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language or any other status. These rights are all interrelated, independent and indivisible.

We can compare this with the specific selection of a source in order to support a claim:

In the 2006 Le Québécois Libre article "In Defence of Steroids" Jasmin Guénette argues that anti-doping efforts should not be run by the government.

Here, the source is picked out and clearly cited in order to locate a specific claim or argument. The strongest candidates were able not only to cite sources, but to precisely combine them in order to support their arguments:

Tim Tebow, an American footballer, fails to make a stronger case than Fahey in support of the perspective sportspeople should be role models, but his argument has some limited strength that supports the perspective Fahey also put forward.

Building on the Resource Booklet

Candidates are invited to use the resource booklet as a common starting point for engaging with contrasting perspectives in order to create independently researched, supported arguments of their own. Candidates at a few centres misunderstood this instruction and all did very similar questions which were entirely based on the resource booklet with no additional research at all. Another consequence of relying on the booklet for all the sources used is that some, almost inevitably, become less sharply relevant to the question chosen. Candidates can engage with just one source from the booklet if they choose, as long as they grapple with the argument it is making or the evidence it is presenting as a starting point for their own case. For example, one candidate chose to present on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands territorial dispute between China and Japan on the basis that Document 1 lists a number of international political conflicts linked to the Olympics. The resource booklet offers great flexibility to candidates to continue their own research, but within this some engagement with the explicit topic of the document is expected.

Presenting a Coherent Argument

The mark scheme for this paper places significant emphasis on the construction of a focused, effectively structured argument. Candidates who were conscious of this tended to produce presentations which were more convincing. One candidate did this by including a section entitled 'understanding the question', where they paused to consider the meanings and parameters established by their question, and used this to guide the remainder of their presentation. Other more successful candidates used the structure of their presentation to give proper space to each side of a debate, rather than just explaining and arguing for one view. The strongest presentations had an excellent focus on global argument and supported this with the realistic assessment of a broad and sophisticated evidence base.

Comments on Specific Questions

There are no specific questions set for this paper.