GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

Paper 9239/11
Paper 11

Key messages

Candidates should ensure they read the paper carefully, looking at the key words, to answer all the questions set. This applied in all questions, for example in **Question 1: '**different ways in which China is not a Superpower yet', **Question 2: '**evidence' and **Question 3: '**convincing'. A number of candidates incorrectly focused on the author's argument in **Question 2** rather than the evidence.

Some candidates spent a long time on **Question 1** and so left less time for **Question 2 and Question 3** which had higher total marks. Some candidates did not complete **Question 3**, which may have been due to time management issues.

To gain higher marks in **Questions 2 and 3,** there should be clear development of the points made. For example, making a point, illustrating using information or quotes from the text and explaining it in the context of the document. Instead of just stating **what** a strength or weakness may be, candidates should also explain **how** or **why** it is a strength or weakness. There should also be explicit reference to the documents in **Question 3** and reflection on the impact of the evidence in **Question 2**.

In **Question 2,** candidates should provide brief and relevant references from the documents to support their evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence. There were some examples of candidates using generic statements about types of evidence without linking it to the document. Answers could have applied to any document so one of the skills required in the assessment was missing.

Question 3 required candidates to consider both documents and go beyond a simple comparison and description of the content. The candidates need to focus on an evaluation of the provenance, perspectives, evidence and argument to reach an overall judgement as to whether one of the documents was more convincing than the other or if they were both equally convincing.

Candidates will not gain credit for using material from their own knowledge that is not mentioned in the documents. Equally, copying sections from the documents without explanation or evaluation, except when providing a simple explanation in **Question 1,** will not gain credit.

General comments

Most candidates showed a good understanding of the documents and demands of the questions. However, several candidates did not pay careful enough attention to the key words in the questions. For example, 'evidence' in **Question 2** where a significant number of candidates focused incorrectly on the constituents of the argument.

Most candidates organised their time well. However, a significant number spent a long time on **Questions 1** and **2,** leaving insufficient time for **Question 3,** which was worth nearly half the number of marks. It is important to recognise the value of each question and to produce an appropriate amount of text in the response.

Some answers to **Question 3** were not fully developed or supported by precise references to the documents. Stronger responses selected relevant and appropriate quotes from the documents and evaluated their significance and impact on the argument. This demonstrated that the candidates had a secure grasp of the arguments being presented.

The rubric of the paper requires candidates to write in continuous prose. While concise answers in **Question 1** are acceptable, in **Questions 2 and 3** full paragraphing in an essay format, rather than bullet points, should be used.

Many candidates concentrated too heavily on the author's argument in **Question 2** when the key word in the question was 'evidence'.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Question 1 provides encouragement for the candidate to fully read and understand the details of Document 1. The key words in the question refer to the different ways in which China is not yet a Superpower. As the question required explanation of three **different** ways, higher scoring candidates created their own structure by writing a paragraph on each one. Lower scoring candidates tended to mix ideas and frequently only provided simple explanations.

Candidates needed to focus on the idea of Superpowers raised by the author, rather than more general points about 'developing countries' or 'rich nations'.

Candidates scored one mark for a simple explanation and one mark for a developed explanation. Simple explanations could be copied directly from the text. A development point required using the text rather than just quoting it. This involved correct paraphrase, correct precis or correct synthesis of parts of the text. There is a need to reflect on the author's thoughts and meaning without introducing the candidate's own knowledge.

Simple explanation could be just naming the different ways. For example, 'in science and technology', 'in soft power' and 'not a free democracy'. This was worth 3 marks, so a maximum of half-marks for this question.

The following example shows where three ways are simply explained by copying directly from the document (3 marks):

'China has much to learn in the traditional sciences, academic research and education.' (Reference to Science and Technology)

'Perceptions of China in the US and Europe are generally negative.' (Reference to soft power)

'…its willingness to embrace modernity in governance.' (Reference to China not being a free democracy)

Some candidates simply started with a list of benefits and then developed them further.

'China lacks soft power. It suffers a lack of popularity abroad, but China can not fully accept that. African countries have a generally positive view of China. Even though African countries have a generally positive view of China, Europe and the US have a generally negative view.'

This scored two marks. One for the first sentence, which is a simple explanation. The second for the development of the reasons which are paraphrased and reworded.

Question 2

This question was generally well answered with many candidates correctly assessing the evidence rather than simply the argument. However, several concentrated on the argument.. Those concentrating on the argument were able to score some marks for their reference to evidence, but this was rarely more than half the marks.

Higher scoring candidates recognised that the author was suitably qualified to access and select appropriate information and therefore justify his evidence. This was illustrated by the length of time the author had been a journalist and the location where they were working (China and Hong Kong). In an 'evidence' question the provenance of the document and the credibility of the author is particularly relevant when it shows the author's ability to research and select appropriate evidence.

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For weaknesses, higher scoring candidates saw that apart from the IMF and Pew Research the evidence was largely unsourced. These higher scoring candidates explained how the lack of sources creates limitations and a negative impact on the reliability of the evidence as the reader did not necessarily trust the information being provided.

The difference between higher and moderately scoring candidates was defined by whether there was explanation of the strengths and weaknesses. Many candidates made basic statements without explaining how the evidence, or lack of it, impacted the argument. Moderately scoring candidates identified some evidence and illustrated it from the document but did not explain its significance. Lower scoring candidates simply identified evidence without illustration or explanation. Higher scoring candidates were able to make a point, illustrate it from the document and explain the significance of the point in the context of the argument.

For strengths of the evidence, the highest achieving candidates used examples such as:

'The author occasionally refers to the sources that he has used to support his statements and sufficiently manages to do so to positively contribute to the strength of the argument. For example, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Pew Research are two widely recognised and prestigious institutions working on the confidence of the reader to confirm that he used data is credible and reliable.'

For weaknesses of the evidence the highest achieving candidates used examples such as:

'The author fails, almost every time, to mention his source. For example, in the section on science and technology, it says that there is much to learn in the traditional sciences, academic research and education. There is no credit given to who said or any evidence to support it which makes the statement unreliable. It cannot be checked and could be made up.'

Question 3

The most frequent approach was to directly compare the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two documents throughout the answer looking at their different perspectives. The strongest responses achieved this well with analysis and clear evaluation of the relative strengths of each document and were able to make a judgement as to which was more convincing. There was no correct answer and candidates were free to argue that Document 2 was more convincing than Document 1 or the opposite. It was also possible to argue that both were equally convincing. In all cases justification for the final judgement was required.

Some candidates directly compared the content of the documents without evaluating their relative strengths. This simplistic/undeveloped approach which describes a few points comparing the two documents was rarely marked higher than level 1.

Many candidates were able to pick out the aspects that reflect a strong argument e.g., the credibility of the authors and the amount of supporting evidence provided. Candidates achieving the highest marks gave clear examples from the documents and explained their impact on the overall argument.

The strongest responses adopted a structured response to answering the question: methodically evaluating the relative strengths of the argument (with intermediate judgements), using appropriate examples and analysis of impact, before coming to a reasoned judgment at the end.

Here are a few examples of strong evaluation of the arguments:

'Document 2 by Joshua Walker initially presents the idea that this text will be more biased. This is because it addresses his role as CEO of the Japan Society, whose purpose is to incentivise an understanding between the US and Japan, meaning he is more likely to put forward a favourable point of view. As the article continues his bias is shown again, an example is 'I believe the World needs' showing that he is talking about his own point of view rather than a global one.'

'Document 1 is more convincing as it provides statistical evidence for the IMF, for example 'China's PCI was USD 10,000'. This strengthens the argument as it provides evidence to back up his point about China being an underdeveloped country. Document 2, however, has no statistical evidence to back up their argument, instead it is just based on the authors' opinions and knowledge which weakens the argument.'

This example gives a good final supported judgement relating to the relative convincing nature of the two arguments. When reading this example, it is important to recognise that this is a summary, providing a

judgement based on points raised in detail throughout the answer. There were intermediate conclusions throughout the answer of which this is a summary.

'In conclusion…I believe Document 1 ends up being more convincing than Document 2 due to the fact that Document 1 is unbiased, uses more formal language and presents the issue of why China is not a Superpower from a global perspective. Document 2 although it has some convincing factors had many weaknesses like it is biased and that ideas are not supported by a source. This means that it is much less convincing than Document 1.'

Higher scoring candidates linked aspects to examples in the text and with explanation of why this supported the argument. Middle scoring candidates made a point and illustrated it from the document but did not explain why this was more convincing. A small number made assumptions based on preconceived ideas about what makes a good argument, rather than reading and evaluating the documents clearly. Candidates are required to engage critically with the documents, rather than make generalised comments that could apply to any document.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

Paper 9239/12
Paper 12

Key messages

Candidates should ensure they read the paper carefully, looking at the key words, to answer all the questions set. This applied in all questions, for example in **Question 1b:** 'explain how different political leaders have used migration in election campaigns', **Question 2:** 'evidence' and **Question 3:** 'convincing'. Some incorrectly focused on the author's argument in **Question 2** rather than the evidence.

Several candidates spent a long time on **Question 1** and so left less time for **Questions 2 and 3** which had higher total marks. Some candidates did not complete **Question 3**, which could have been due to time management issues.

To gain higher marks in **Questions 2 and 3** there should be clear development of the points made. For example, making a point, illustrating using information or quotes from the text and explaining it in the context of the document. Instead of just stating **what** a strength or weakness may be, the candidates should explain **how** or **why** it is a strength or weakness. There should also be explicit reference to the documents in **Question 3** and reflection on the impact of the evidence in **Question 2**.

In **Question 2** candidates should provide brief and relevant references from the documents to support their evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence. A number of candidates misread the question and spent time on assessing the aspects of argument rather than evidence.

Question 3 required candidates to consider both documents and go beyond a simple comparison and description of the content. The candidates needed to focus on an evaluation of the provenance, perspectives, evidence and argument to reach an overall judgement as to whether one of the documents was more convincing than the other, or if they were both equally convincing.

Candidates will not gain credit for using material from their own knowledge that is not mentioned in the documents. Equally, copying sections from the documents without explanation or evaluation, except when identifying and providing a simple explanation in **Question 1,** will not gain credit.

General comments

Most candidates showed a good understanding of the documents and the demands of the questions. However, several candidates did not pay careful enough attention to the key words in the questions. For example, 'evidence' in **Question 2** where some focused incorrectly on the constituents of the argument.

Most candidates organised their time well. However, a significant number spent a long time on **Questions 1** and **2** leaving insufficient time for **Question 3,** which was worth nearly half the number of marks. It is important to recognise the value of each question and to write an appropriate amount of text in the response.

Some answers to **Question 3** were not fully developed or supported by precise references to the documents. Stronger responses selected relevant and appropriate quotes from the documents and evaluated their significance and impact on the argument. This demonstrated that the candidates had a secure grasp of the arguments being presented.

The rubric of the paper requires candidates to write in continuous prose. While concise answers in **Question 1** are acceptable, in **Questions 2 and 3** full paragraphing in an essay format, rather than bullet points, should be used.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: Many candidates spent too long on this question. Short bullet points are sufficient.

The question encourages candidates to fully read and understand the detail of Document 1.

The question was separated into two parts. **Question 1(a)** required simple identification of two reasons why Filipino migrants are 'always hiding'. This could be answered in short bullet points.

In Question 1(b), there was a need to explain how two different political leaders have used migration on election campaigns. As an explanation question worth 4 marks, a simple and developed explanation was required for each political leader's election campaign. Simple explanations could be copied directly from the document, but developed explanations needed paraphrasing or synthesis of the author's words or rewriting by the candidate. A development point required using the text rather than just quoting it. There is a need to reflect on the author's thoughts and meaning without introducing the candidate's own knowledge.

Simple explanations could have been for example that Thatcher was elected on a popular platform for stopping migration and for Trump, migration was a popular issue among the US electorate.

Here are some examples of higher scoring responses:

Question 1

(a)   *Filipino migrants are 'always hiding' because while some are entering the UK legally some are entering illegally, …migrants also have to deal with visa restrictions [as they overstay their visa]*

(b)   *'Margaret Thatcher used migration as the key issue she would tackle during her campaign which enabled her to win the election [Simple] She used illegal Filipino migrants as easy targets due to their unsupportive government and weak community'. (Developed)*

'Another politician who used migration in an election campaign is Donald Trump who introduced more immigration rules and proposed a border wall in order to reduce illegal migrants [Developed] as it was a key issue during the 2016 election campaign' (Simple)

Both answers for the two politicians scored two marks. One for the simple explanation as shown. The second was for the development of the ways used by the politicians which are paraphrased and reworded.

Question 2

This question was generally well answered with many candidates correctly assessing the evidence rather than simply the argument. However, a significant number of candidates concentrated on the argument. Those concentrating on the argument were able to score some marks for their reference to evidence, but this was rarely more than half the marks.

Higher scoring candidates recognised that the author had personal experience as a Filipino journalist, was able to access and select appropriate information and therefore justify her evidence. This was illustrated by her involvement with campaigning for Filipino's rights. In an 'evidence' question the provenance of the document and the credibility of the author are particularly relevant when it shows the author's ability to research and select appropriate evidence to support the argument. Higher scoring candidates recognised the significance of the named organisations (DOS, DHS and DFA) as they were part of government with strong reliability.

For weaknesses, higher scoring candidates saw that some of the evidence was unsourced. Also, the statistics used were generally vague and rounded. These higher scoring candidates explained how the lack of sources, in some cases, creates limitations and a negative impact on the reliability of the evidence as the reader did not necessarily know where it originated and so would not trust the information being provided.

The difference between higher and moderately scoring candidates was defined by whether there was explanation of the strengths and weaknesses. Many candidates made generic statements without explaining how the evidence, or lack of it, impacted the argument. Moderately scoring candidates identified some evidence and illustrated it from the document but did not explain its significance. Lower scoring candidates

simply identified evidence without illustration or explanation. Higher scoring candidates were able to make a point, illustrate it from the document and explain the significance of the point in the context of the argument.

For strengths of the evidence, higher achieving candidates used examples such as:

'The author gives evidence with sources of authority. She gives evidence from the US Department of Homeland Security and Department of Foreign Affairs in The Philippines. This shows that the evidence used is credible and reliable as the author would know that these organisations would have the information relevant to this and would also have the resources to collect accurate information'

For weaknesses of the evidence higher achieving candidates used examples such as:

'Sources have been left out throughout the document. For example, 'In August 2016…among the electorate', 'reports say he has not built the wall' 'too many oppose it'. So, this evidence used in an attempt to validate the opinions of the author is not sourced and largely vague [Who wrote the report? Who opposed it?].'

Question 3

The most frequent approach was to directly compare the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two documents throughout the answer looking at their different perspectives. The strongest responses achieved this well with sustained analysis and clear evaluation of the relative strengths of each document and were able to make a judgement as to which was more convincing. There was no correct answer and candidates were free to argue that Document 2 was more convincing than Document 1 or the opposite. It was also possible to argue that both were equally convincing. In all cases justification for the final judgement was required.

Some candidates directly compared the content of the documents without evaluating their relative strengths. This simplistic/undeveloped approach which describes a few points comparing the two documents was rarely marked higher than level 1.

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Examples of strong evaluation of the arguments are:

'Document 2 is much stronger when compared to Document 1. The author is a lawyer and Executive Director of the National Maritime Polytechnic and served as Philippine's Labour Attaché to several countries. The achievements of the author in Document 2 are more impressive compared to the author of Document 1 who is a Filipino journalist. Having the article be written by an author of great expertise and credibility ensures the readers that the data used in the claim are valid and reliable and more likely to be motivated by their claim. The author also makes clear his stance by suggesting he is against mass migration of Filipino workers.'

'A strength of Document 2 is the use of global examples where the Filipino people have migrated to, such as: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Hawaii, California…These help the readers to visualise that the Filipino people have migrated to a wide variety of places for work and hence make the issue more prominent. However, Document 1 only mentions about people migrating to US and UK which does not have the same global impact as Document 2.'

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'In conclusion…Document 2 has a clear set of opinions, a credible author, a reasonable and possible conclusion and emotive language such as 'destroying the family', 'slaves' and 'human dignity' that connects with the reader's heart. It also includes some statistical data such as '12 million in 200 countries' that connects to the reader's mind. Overall, this makes Document 2 more convincing.'

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GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

Paper 9239/13
Paper 13

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'A strength of Document 2 is the use of global examples where the Filipino people have migrated to, such as: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Hawaii, California…These help the readers to visualise that the Filipino people have migrated to a wide variety of places for work and hence make the issue more prominent. However, Document 1 only mentions about people migrating to US and UK which does not have the same global impact as Document 2.'

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GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

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Paper 9239/02
Paper 2
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Key messages

- It would be beneficial for the candidates to try and identify gaps in their essay where further research might prove useful or suggest another specific area for further research that emanates from the essay presented.
- Source material must be critically evaluated. Candidates should consider the merits of their research material by evaluating some of the following: the provenance of publication, author credibility, the proximity of the author to the issue, quality of evidence and aspects of argument, such as balance and bias.
- When conducting research for the essay, candidates should select diverse source material that originates from different geographical regions.

General comments

Much of the work seen by Examiners was of good quality and demonstrated engagement with a range of global topics. Popular topics included Migration and work, Technology and lifestyles, Alternatives to oil, Urbanisation, Climate change and Gender issues. There is a list of topics published in the syllabus. From these broad topics candidates were able to focus in on specific issues that presented globally contrasting perspectives.

When completing the Essay component, candidates are assessed against seven different criteria. All the criteria have equal weighting. Addressing all of the assessment criteria within the word count requires candidates to plan their essays carefully. Some essays omitted to address all the criteria. Some key omissions were critical evaluation of source material, the development of globally contrasting perspectives and identifying areas for further research.

This Principal Examiner Report for Teachers will consider four broad areas of assessment: Perspectives, Sources, Conclusions and Communication. Condensing the seven different assessment criteria into these broader areas of focus will address the interplay between them. It should also enable teachers to see some of the areas where improvements would be welcome as well as examples of successful practice from this series.

Perspectives

A perspective should be understood as a coherent world view which is a response to an issue. When candidates decide which issue to focus on, it is important that they choose a global issue. A global issue is one that extends beyond a local or national context. Therefore, global perspectives are likely to be informed by different cultural, geographical and political contexts.

Choice of title is very important. '*Should plastic packaging be taxed?*' is a title that enabled the candidate to develop contrasting perspectives which were informed by arguments and evidence emanating from the developed and developing world. Plastic use and waste is clearly a global issue. Environmental, ethical and economic themes were used to inform and shape globally contrasting perspectives.

This title, '*Is Chinese urbanization a success story?*' is very specific and likely to locate the debate in a single geographic context. Candidates that develop contrasting perspectives but without a global dimension cannot achieve higher levels at criteria **Empathy for Perspectives** and **Globality of Perspectives**.

This year many candidates offered titles that began '*To what extent'.* This was not always effective, as a debate between contrasting perspectives may not emerge. A stronger title is one that begins 'Is' or 'Should',

such as '*Should citizens be required to carry ID cards?*'. Here the debate is clear. A question such as '*To what extent are ID cards useful for national security*' does not present the same opportunities for a debate between clearly contrasting perspectives. Some candidates are still using 'How' in their title questions. For example, '*How can climate change affect society?*'. This title led to a purely descriptive essay that did not contain a debate between contrasting perspectives.

Candidates are required to build contrasting perspectives by synthesising research material into a coherent response to an issue of global significance. There was evidence of more candidates moving beyond working at a source level. Although some candidates still treat each piece of source material individually, increasingly candidates are able to synthesise arguments and evidence from a range of sources.

'Firstly, Shahzard argues that the main dilemma of fossil fuels is the ill side effects their usage creates coupled with the fact they are a finite resource. The dilemma includes the fact the fossil fuels are not sustainable, implying that they will eventually run out and that they emit large amounts of harmful gasses when burned. This last point echoes the United Nations report 'Renewable energy – powering a safer future' which states that fossil fuels account for over 75 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions and almost 90 per cent of all carbon dioxide emissions, making them the biggest cause of global climate change.'

The candidate makes explicit links between two different sources and successfully builds the perspective that argues against the continued use of fossil fuels through the successful synthesis of research material.

Source Material

Once candidates have decided upon their issue, they need to engage in focused research in order to select globally diverse source materials that are credible and relevant. Having read and analysed their sources, candidates are required to demonstrate their understanding of the selected material. The candidate needs to be able to present the arguments emanating from the source in a clear and logical manner. It is better to select research material that contains an argument rather than descriptive and informative sources. As shown above, synthesising arguments and evidence from different sources is important for building perspectives.

Candidates should aim to select and use sources from about four different global contexts. To reach the top level each perspective should be informed by source material emanating from two different global contexts. Using international sources of information such as the United Nations or the World Economic Forum is perfectly acceptable. If the referencing does not make it clear where the source material emanates from, it is worthwhile the candidate stating where the source material was produced, for example, a candidate might write 'this research was written by Professor Ahmed who is a researcher at Cairo University, Egypt'.

Candidates should not be using more than six key sources to support their globally contrasting perspectives. It is very difficult, in a 2000-word essay, to demonstrate full understanding of research material if too many sources are employed. Selecting the right source material is a key research skill.

It is important to remember that Global Perspectives and Research is a skills-based course. One of the skills assessed is the critical evaluation of source material. There were many candidates that omitted this aspect of the essay. In essence, the candidate should demonstrate why the source is worthy of being used but also acknowledge any weaknesses it may contain. As this is a skills-based course it is important that candidates interrogate their source material with reference to different evaluative criteria. Many candidates assess the credibility of the author for each of their research materials and in so doing are essentially demonstrating the same skill repeatedly.

It is reasonable to critically evaluate four different sources using four different criteria, this would demonstrate a range of evaluation skills. For example, candidates could offer evaluation of argument which might include consideration of assumptions, rhetoric, counter-argument, bias, reasoning or conclusions. Or candidates could offer evaluation of evidence which might include consideration of primary evidence, secondary evidence, quantitative and qualitative data, facts, opinion and relevance. Lastly candidates could offer evaluation of the context of the source which might include consideration of the publisher, author, date, or location.

It is important that candidates move beyond assertive evaluation. Some candidates offered generic and undeveloped evaluation, for example, '*A weakness of this article is that the evidence used in the article is not cited. This is a weakness because it makes the evidence less reliable.*' This could be said of any source and lacks specificity and exemplification. In the next example the candidate's evaluation is specific but underdeveloped: '*The downsides of this survey include that participants were mostly Swedish born and 'did*

not express strong religious beliefs'; taking different demographics into account could produce different opinions.' This is a useful approach to critical evaluation that attempts to scrutinise the author's methodology, but the candidate has not developed the evaluation enough. A more developed example can be seen below.

'Schneider was among the many experts that contributed to the first ever comprehensive examination of queerbaiting . . . This proves she has had previous experience in academic writing about queerbaiting and thus has expertise and a substantial reputation. In her study she demonstrates the ability to see and there is no clear indication of vested interest or bias.'

Four pieces of developed critical evaluation across a range of sources would demonstrate high level skills for this assessment criteria (**Analysis of Sources**). Candidates must strike a balance when critically evaluating their research material. Too much emphasis on critical evaluation will not leave space for candidates to demonstrate full understanding of their source material.

Conclusions

Candidates are required to plan their essays carefully and leave adequate space for the conclusion. **Conclusion and Reflection** is an important part of the essay and in terms of assessment the candidates are required to do three things in the conclusion: offer a supported conclusion, reflect on the process of completing the essay and make suggestions for further research.

The quality of reflection continues to improve. Candidates this series were able to offer evaluative reflection that considered fully the impact of contrasting perspectives on their standpoint. Here is one of many strong examples: *'In the beginning, I viewed the debate from a pro-ES cell perspective, as I strongly believed that since embryos from IVF clinics would face destruction in the end, using them in research would have been a better use rather than simply discarding them. However, through the study in Sweden, I learned that IVF embryos could be given to other couples hoping to conceive through this method, which made me realize that throwing away unused embryos was not the only option. Additionally, through further research, I slowly grew more sympathetic to anti-embryonic stem cell perspectives, especially that of Germany's sensitivity towards human experimentation…'*

A supported conclusion is one that follows on logically from the debate presented by the candidate. It is highly likely that having presented two contrasting perspectives the candidate will then evaluate each perspective before arriving at a final conclusion. Candidates move beyond source evaluation to consider the perspectives holistically with reference to strengths, weaknesses, implications and reasoning. A conclusion leading on from this process will naturally be supported. If the essay has been balanced and both perspectives treated fairly, the candidate's final judgement should not be obvious before reading the conclusion.

The final aspect to consider in the conclusion is the suggestion for further research. Many candidates are omitting this element of their conclusion. Firstly, it is important that the further research is specific. This requires the candidate to move beyond a generic statement suggesting further research would be useful, to offering some detail about the nature of the proposed further research. Secondly, to reach higher levels the further research suggested should arise from the process of producing the research essay. For example, the candidate may have found new questions emerging from analysis of the arguments and evidence used. Here is a successful example from the November series.

'My research is still limited on this subject so my research question cannot be fully answered. I think more research should be done on an economic level and also further research on a social level, as I have almost exclusively researched arguments based on a technical level. I suggest that further research could be done exploring the difference in government expenditures towards the military and how many countries in the world would even be able to fund A.I. in the military. Through this the research would be more complete . . .'

Communication

Most candidates were successful in communicating a logical and coherent debate. To reach the higher attainment levels for this criterion, candidates need to structure their essays effectively. Discourse markers can act as signposts guiding the reader through the essay and at the same time be useful in demonstrating a clear structure.

Successful candidates used discourse markers such as *firstly*, *secondly* or *finally* to show the order of ideas. Many candidates were able to indicate the start of a new perspective using discourse markers such as *in contrast* or *on the other hand*. Other useful discourse signposts include *in conclusion* or *on reflection*.

Although offering some context around the issue chosen for the essay is useful, this should not be too extensive. Some candidates have very lengthy and descriptive introductions and take too long to get to the debate. It is also important that the essay remains focused on the title question, and to reach the top level the title question should be explicitly addressed in the conclusion.

Finally, candidates must offer full referencing of their source material via citations and a bibliography. This is important as assessors will use the referencing to check the provenance and credibility of the research material. If the assessor cannot navigate the referencing system easily, then judging **Source Selection** becomes difficult. Not only that, but accurate referencing is also an important academic skill required in many fields.

For referencing to be considered effective, it should be consistent and functional, this means that the relationship between citation and the bibliography is readily discernible. There are still a small number of candidates using footnotes for adding extra information or critical evaluation. Footnotes should be used for referencing only.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

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Paper 9239/03
Team Project
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Key messages

Presentations should not exceed the 8-minute time limit. In cases where presentations did exceed the time limit, the overrun was not sufficient to have a detrimental effect on the final mark. Successful presentations explore their issue locally and globally and are backed up with thorough research.

The best presentations differentiated perspectives by exploring other perspectives and explaining why the one chosen is the best throughout.

The structure of a good presentation is aided by discourse markers.

Candidates scored well when there was a clear conclusion at the end of their presentation, which was based on what they had presented so far. Some candidates lacked a conclusion, which limited their marks. Good candidates were also able to explain why their solution was effective.

Successful candidates made explicit references to visual aids to help back up their argument – for example the use of graphs to support the explanation of the issue.

Reflective papers should focus on evaluation of the group work – what went well, and what could they improve on – how would they learn from it and change their teamwork if they were to do another project like this? Candidates should also reflect on their learning – explaining what they have learnt about the issue from doing this project. Candidates who gave specific examples of what they had learnt both from their own research, and from their teammates' perspectives had the strongest reflective papers.

General comments

Presentation

Definition of issue and range of research

Most candidates defined their issue adequately. The most successful were very focused in their definition, paying particular attention to the wording used and this served them well when it came to the conclusion/s they drew at the end of the presentation. In weaker responses, issue definitions were sometimes vague or imprecise. Definitions that comprised a general statement, such as 'Inequality'; 'The Pandemic', or 'Artificial Intelligence' often reflected a lack of forethought and resulted in a lack of focus and structure, with research that seemed to be incidental to the topic and argument, rather than directing them.

There was evidence of some excellent research. The most successful responses showed a breadth of often very academic research being used in a purposeful and focused way to underpin and develop a logical and coherent argument throughout the presentation. Specific sources were used to support and reinforce the points being made on an ongoing basis. In such presentations, there was also conscientious and consistent citation of sources. It is important that candidates make specific reference to their research throughout the presentation as a list of 'works cited' at the end does not provide additional credit.

In less successful presentations the research tended be used almost as an afterthought, rather than an integral part of the argument. Some presentations showed little evidence of any in-depth research at all, with candidates relying exclusively on their own prior knowledge of the topic. Research is a key element in the skills that the syllabus aims to develop. Candidates should also remember the global nature of this syllabus. Some presentations focused solely on an issue in candidates' own local area and did not explore/link it to similar issues elsewhere and this resulted in research that tended to be very narrow.

Some candidates simply defined the words contained within their title. At times this was unhelpful as the definition became too literal and not linked to the issue, this stopped them from achieving the higher marks for this level.

Differentiation of perspective

Most candidates were able to list their other team perspectives to achieve a Level 3 but very few explained how/why their perspective was different. One example however where a candidate does differentiate the perspectives is in a presentation on overpopulation in Mumbai. She explains her teammates' solutions but also explains why her solution is better/more effective. She examined clearly why her teammates' solutions would not work, enabling her to achieve a high level for this criterion.

Candidates need to bear in mind that evidence of sharp differentiation of perspectives needs to be present consistently for a Level 5 to be awarded for this criterion. There was evidence of the use of a single backdrop PowerPoint slide listing the different team perspectives and focuses on the issue, but with no explicit speaker reference to these and this meant that the candidates could not move beyond Level 2 on this criterion.

Structure of argument and support

Most presentations were 'structured' to some degree with some supported judgments, although the quality of this varied considerably. The strongest presentations had obviously been well thought out and planned and the lines of argument were always clear and followed logically on from each other, resulting in a highly coherent whole. The research that had been undertaken was used in a very purposeful way in these stronger presentations to support the overall argument that was being developed, as well as to elaborate/justify the points being made. For a presentation to be 'well-structured and argued', there must be discourse markers present to direct the audience's attention as to how the argument is developing. Some presentations were very segmented, with candidates dividing their response into separate categories, for instance 'Inequality in the workplace'; 'Inequality in education'; 'Inequality in the home' etc. Such an approach rarely leads to a well-structured or coherent response. The purpose of research is not just to find out more about the topic for its own sake, but to use what has been found to identify a focus and develop an argument and then to use various sources in the research to support and lend credibility to that argument. Less effective presentations consisted of a list of factual points and background to the issue, rather than a debate of the issue.

Conclusion and Solution

The quality of conclusions varied considerably. In strong presentations, the conclusion was a logical outcome of all the evidence that had been presented and candidates underpinned this by drawing together and reiterating all the key milestone points of their argument. In weaker presentations, the conclusion was almost an afterthought and consisted of a single sentence with no elaboration or recap to show how this crucial point had been arrived at. In some presentations, there was no discernible conclusion at all and the candidates simply stated their solution(s). The assessment criterion states that the conclusion is: 'limited'; 'partly based'; 'mostly based' or 'based' on the evidence that has been presented through the course of the presentation and therefore effective conclusions must reference what has gone before. Some solutions were well-considered and practical, with thought given to how they might be implemented to address the issue by an evaluation of the strengths and limitations of their solution, sometimes in comparison with the solutions proposed by teammates. However, other candidates simply presented solutions with little elaboration or thought to the practicalities of their implementation. Candidates should remember that solutions should be their own and not the team's overall solution, or indeed existing 'solutions' which have not been modified to suit the context of their own local issue. Candidates need to make clear in their presentation how their solution is effective. There were many candidates who explained how their solution was effective, but to score the top level for a conclusion candidates must justify that their solution is innovative.

Presentational methods

Many candidates have considered carefully how they can use the graphs and charts on their PowerPoint slides to move their arguments forwards, rather than having them as a backdrop without referring to them. In the most effective presentations, graphs and charts were used as an integral part of the presentation in order to convey key points of the argument to the audience and these were often coupled with images of direct and highly relevant images that were also elaborated upon and referred to directly in terms of the issue. Weaker presentations were characterised either by single slide presentation boards that were not referred to at all, or slides that were relevant to the issue but were not really made use of either to elaborate or to make

the argument more impactful. Candidates should always remember that what they are conducting is an active presentation to an audience, rather than a pen and paper exercise. They should also remember that their overall task in the presentation is to clearly define their issue and articulate its importance on the local and global platform supported by information and arguments taken from research and ultimately leading to their proposed solution to the issue. They need to do this in the most persuasive and effective way possible. Some centres had candidates who had submitted a single slide as the media content for all members of a team – this limited their marks as candidates did not engage with it to support their presentation.

Reflective Paper: evaluation of collaboration

Evaluation of collaboration was generally well carried out and most candidates understood the difference between narration and evaluation. Some reflective papers were limited to an explanation that the team all worked well together and there were no inconveniences or disagreements, however, there is still much that can be evaluated, not just in terms of what each member contributed, but more importantly, how all of this affected/improved/impacted the progress/advancement of the project.

Reflective Paper: reflection on learning

There were some excellent evaluations on learning. The very best responses considered in depth not only what they had learned from their own research as well as that of their teammates and how this had impacted their view of the issue, as well as their own behaviour/practice, but also what further research they might be interested in pursuing in relation to the issue. Weaker responses tended to be characterised by comments that focused on what collaborative/research/presentational skills they had acquired, or by suggesting very generalised research that was not really focused on the context of the issue they had addressed.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

Key messages

*   The chosen title should give opportunities to discuss an issue with credible perspectives.
*   The chosen sources should offer views which can be evaluated.
*   Reflection should be based on the research and its findings.

General comments

The work seen was based on evidence and there were indications of serious research which often showed a high level of interest. The evidence submitted by centres on the process of research was usually consistent with the marks suggested for this element and indicted that candidates had responded positively to the demands for independent study. Most offered logs which showed the progress of research and went beyond simply recording what had been read.

Some titles restricted what could be achieved in terms of demonstrating the key skills required by the assessment objectives. Titles should allow contrasting perspectives to be established about an issue. That issue should give rise to meaningful debate. If the answer is fairly obvious, there is limited point in the question. The titles should also offer the opportunity for evaluation and not just description or explanation. Some Reports persisted in seeing 'perspectives' as aspects or elements of the topic. There were considerations of, for example, the legal 'perspective' or the 'economic perspective' but this often led to explanation of viewpoints, not evaluation. The phrasing of questions which used the formulation 'Why?' or 'What?' often did not lead to a discussion of different overall views. For example, 'What measures could be taken to deal with climate change?' could lead to explanation of different types of measures but it would be misleading to label these 'perspectives'. A perspective is an overall view which might have different aspects and be supported by different types of evidence, and it is the job of the Report to look critically at these and to reach a supported judgement.

The question chosen should allow for a meaningful debate. Therefore, for example 'Should we travel by train?' would not be a strong title. The search for a reason not to travel by train might well lead to strained and implausible arguments and there is no literature devoted to reasons for and against train travel. However, there are different views on topics such as whether consumers should boycott 'fast fashion' or whether international armed intervention is justified on humanitarian grounds. When choosing titles it is important to check that contrasting evidence which is credible and worth investigating exists. Some candidates explained in their reflection that they had been unable to find much evidence for a contrasting view. This raises a question why this topic was chosen by the candidate.

The difference between a report and a project is that the report must be evidence-based and must assess the evidence for different viewpoints and not seek to convey information for its own sake. Some reports started with two or more pages of background information, which was not necessary. Some reports started by a literature review. This is not the best way of getting directly to the establishment of different perspectives and the evaluation of evidence. There was also a tendency for different views to be established by the candidate without a reference to evidence. This is more an essay than an evidence-based report. The unreferenced view was supported by some factual evidence which was difficult to evaluate. The perspectives should be based on views and interpretations which have been researched rather than general arguments which the report does not acknowledge. Evidence should be referenced and should be evaluated using a range of appropriate critical criteria. However, there is no point in choosing evidence which is obviously inadequate simply for the sake of demonstrating that. For example, a source which is twenty-five years old is of little use in dealing with an issue that has raised more recently. Also, evaluation simply by reference to the origin of evidence is not always meaningful. Experts often disagree because they have used different methodologies or start with different assumptions. The arguments they deploy and the basis of their findings

should be considered. Some reports spent a long time explaining the results of personal questionnaires, but these should be carefully considered before time is spent on them.

There were some well-developed evaluative analyses of evidence and viewpoints but in general, this was not as strong as the actual choice of research materials and the analysis of different sources. The evaluation as opposed to the deployment of evidence remains an area for development and the critical techniques developed in the earlier units should be carried over and extended in the research reports.

Most reports, if not all, had a separate section on Reflection, which was helpful. The Reflection element is a key part of the Critical Path and allows candidates to consider conclusions reached in the light of the methodology chosen and the range and adequacy of the evidence. It also allows them to reflect on the way that research modified preconceptions. The focus must be on the specific research, not the experience of research in general. Personal reflections in themselves are of limited value. As with any decision, the ability to stand back and reflect is vital.

As this is the last session in which centres mark reports it is appropriate to reflect on the very great deal of work done by centre markers over the life of the qualification and to extend thanks for the great care and commitment shown. The experience of independent research is a hugely valuable skill for candidates and the results have been highly interesting and demonstrated a very high level of personal commitment and interest. Thank you to everyone involved for facilitating this.