GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

Paper 9239/11
Paper 11

Key messages

Candidates should ensure they read the paper carefully, looking at the key words, in order to answer the questions set. This applied in all questions, for example in **Question 1:** 'impacts', 'consequences', 'children' and 'adults'; **Question 2:** 'evidence' and **Question 3:** 'convincing'.

Some candidates spent too long on **Question 1** and so left less time for **Question 2 and Question 3** which had higher total marks. Most candidates provided a balance of the quantity and quality of answer in **Question 2 and Question 3** and recognised that **Question 3** had a higher number of marks.

To gain higher marks in **Questions 2 and 3** there should be clear development of the points made. For example, making a point, explaining it in the context of the document and illustrating it using information or quotes from the text. So, not just stating **what** a strength or weakness may be, but also **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 order to access Level 3 marks.

So, candidates should provide brief and relevant references from the documents to support their evaluation of evidence and argument otherwise the answer is generalised, containing only assertions or claims. They should also explain what impact this has on the argument or chosen evidence which goes beyond a generic statement like 'weakens/strengthens'. They need to explain how the assessment does this.

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.

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 reference or explanation, except when answering an identification question in **Question 1** will not gain credit.

General comments

There was little evidence of candidates misunderstanding the documents and most showed a good understanding of the demands of the questions. Some candidates did not pay careful enough attention to the key words in the questions. For example, specific reference to children and adults in the separate parts of **Question 1**.

Most candidates organised their time well. However, some spent too long on **Question 1** so left less time for **Questions 2 and 3** which were worth most of the marks. It is important to recognise the value of each question and to write an appropriate amount. There was little clear evidence of planning for the longer questions. If it had been included, the key words may have been addressed more fully and the assessment and judgement better structured.

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 they 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 appeared to be well-prepared with a clear understanding of the aspects of evidence and argument that they were looking for in the documents.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Question 1 provides an encouragement for the candidate to fully read and understand the detail of Document 1. The question was divided into two sections. The first required identification of impacts on children of not being registered at birth. The second looked at the consequences of statelessness on adults and required identification and explanation.

Identifications could be copied directly from the text, but explanation required using the text rather than just quoting it. For explanation this involved correct paraphrase, correct precis or correct synthesis of parts of the text. There is a need to reflect the author's thoughts and meaning without introducing the candidate's own knowledge.

Question 1

(b) The key points were: children cannot access health care, cannot go to school and when they grow up, they cannot register their own children. Most candidates managed to get two of these for maximum marks on this question.

The following example was typical for higher scoring candidates on **Question 1(a)** scoring both marks.

'One impact is that hospitals do not treat Romani who are not registered at birth. Besides that, these children cannot go to school.'

Some did not look at the impact, instead looking at the cause which was not creditworthy. For example:

'One impact of Romani children that cannot be registered at birth is that they do not have legal status. Another impact is that they do not have valid personal records or documents.'

(b) This question was split into two **parts (i)** identify two consequences for adults and **(ii)** explain one of the consequences.

Most candidates maintained the structure of the question, but others combined **(i)** and **(ii)** together. The structure is there to help the candidates, so those combining the parts generally had answers that were vague and disconnected and so did not score as highly.

For identifying consequences **(Question 1(b)(i))** common fully scoring answers were:

'More parents will be forced into less and less secure work. More Roma will be pushed to the margins of society, ignored, persecuted and excluded.'

Some only identified one consequence: *'More Romani parents are forced to do dangerous work in order to be able to feed their families.'* 'Dangerous' was accepted as an interpretation of less secure. In this case only one consequence was given so only one mark was scored.

In **Question (b)(ii)** one of the consequences needed to be explained. Some use of the candidate's own words, paraphrasing or synthesis of the document was required. Also, use of the candidate's own knowledge was not accepted.

A good two-mark answer was:

'Roma parents cannot get a formal job as they need a personal ID which they do not have as they are not registered. The only jobs they can get are insecure as they must work to feed their families.'

Question 2

This question was generally well answered with most candidates correctly assessing the evidence rather than simply the argument. It was pleasing to see in **Question 2** that candidates had generally read the requirements of the question carefully. The question required an assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the evidence used by the author to support their claims.

The highest achieving candidates recognised that the author used a range of primary sources who had a good understanding of the issues of the Roma people. Higher scoring candidates recognised this point, named suitable examples from the document and explained why this showed strong evidence. This, three stage approach (point, illustrate, explain) tends to lead to higher marks.

Higher scoring candidates also recognised that the author was suitably qualified to access and select appropriate information and therefore justify their evidence. This was highlighted by the author being a Romani activist and working in the same organisation as their named source of evidence – Dorde Jovanovic. This showed the ability to select first-hand access to, and empathy with, local evidence. 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.

For weaknesses, higher scoring candidates saw that the much of the evidence, despite being from named first-hand sources, was not supported by figures, including instead unsupported sweeping statements, like 'because of ethnicity she faces daily discrimination.' Again, higher scoring candidates explained how both these limitations had a negative impact on the reliability of the evidence.

The difference between higher and moderately scoring candidates was usually defined by the appropriate explanation of the strengths and weaknesses. Many identified weaknesses and often illustrated them from the document but lacked developed explanation. Lower scoring candidates made basic statements without illustrating, explaining or developing them.

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

'A strength is that the author included first-hand personal testimony from European stateless Roma such as Elena who is from Macedonia and Stefan from Montenegro. These personal stories from Roma from different parts of Europe strengthens the evidence because it gives a clear indication of the problems stateless Romani experience. This clearly impacts on the author's view about statelessness.'

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

'It is a weakness that unreferenced claims are made. It is stated that 'new research highlights shocking numbers of Roma not just left behind but actively excluded'. There is no source of this claim and it is not supported by statistical evidence identifying how many Roma are excluded. Therefore, some statements are made that weakens the evidence as the reader does not know if this claim is correct or simply made up by the author.'

Both show the idea of: point made, point illustrated from the document and point explained in the context of the argument. The first example also identifies the impact of the evidence on the view of the author.

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 candidates 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. Judgement of which, if any, is more convincing is a key part of the answer. Higher scoring candidates gave a series of intermediate judgements following the evaluation of an aspect covered by the authors of the documents.

Lower scoring candidates tended to directly compare 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 relative credibility of the authors and the amount of supporting evidence provided. Candidates achieving the higher marks gave clear examples from the documents and their impact on the overall assessment, while lower scoring answers simply relied on a formulaic approach of what should constitute a strong argument without using supporting examples and evidence. The lower scoring answers were consequently superficial and relied, at best, on undeveloped and unexplained quotes from the text.

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.

Examples of strong evaluation of the arguments are:

'(The author of) Document 2 mentions more credible sources making it more convincing. She mentions the UNHCR which is from the United Nations, so internationally respected and Marie Huchsermeyer who is a professor at a South African University. These sources are from across the world and thus provide a more balanced and global perspective. In contrast, the author of Document 1 only relies on the views from Roma sources. He mentions one statement from the UN but does not develop it in his argument and so has a much more limited global view.'

Another example of a higher scoring candidate evaluating the difference between Document 2 and Document 1 and providing an intermediate judgement:

'The evidence provided in Document 2 provides more balance. Swider does not focus on the negative aspects of statelessness and not having a nationality. She also demonstrates how refusing a nationality can be safer and better for human rights by using the Armenian as an example. Lee in Document 1 merely focuses on the advantages and importance of not being stateless using the Romani people as an example. Document 2 is therefore more convincing as it has a more balanced argument and conclusion.'

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 the questions set. This applied in all questions, for example in **Question 1: '**negative impacts', 'identify', 'explain' and 'measures'; **Question 2: '**evidence' and **Question 3: '**convincing'.

Some candidates spent too long on **Question 1** and so left less time for **Question 2 and Question 3** which had higher total marks. Most candidate provided a balance of the quantity and quality of answer in **Question 2 and Question 3** and recognised that **Question 3** had a higher number of marks.

To gain higher marks in **Questions 2 and 3** there should be clear development of the points made. For example, making a point, explaining it in the context of the document and illustrating it using information or quotes from the text. So, not just stating **what** a strength or weakness may be, but also **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 order to access Level 3 marks.

So, candidates should provide brief and relevant references from the documents to support their evaluation of evidence and argument otherwise the answer is generalised, containing only assertions or claims. They should also explain what impact this has on the argument or chosen evidence which goes beyond a generic statement like 'weakens/strengthens'. They need to explain how the assessment does this.

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General comments

There was little evidence of candidates misunderstanding the documents and most showed a good understanding of the demands of the questions. Some candidates did not pay careful enough attention to the key words in the questions. For example, specific reference to identify and explain in the separate parts of **Question 1**.

Most candidates organised their time well. However, some spent too long on **Question 1** so left less time for **Questions 2 and 3** which were worth most of the marks. It is important to recognise the value of each question and to write an appropriate amount. There was little clear evidence of planning for the longer questions. If it had been included, the key words may have been addressed more fully and the assessment and judgement better structured.

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 they had a secure grasp of the arguments being presented. There was some evidence that answers to **Question 3** were rushed or incomplete, most likely because that more time had been spent on **Questions 1 and 2.**

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.

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Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Question 1 provides an encouragement for the candidate to fully read and understand the detail of Document 1. The question was divided into three parts. **1(a)** required identification of negative impacts of urbanisation. **1(b)** required explanation of how cities are addressing poverty. **1(c)** asked for impacts of measures that governments need to make.

Identification in **1(a) and 1(c)** could be copied directly from the text as could simple correct explanations **in 1(b),** but detailed explanation **in 1(b)** 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 the author's thoughts and meaning without introducing the candidate's own knowledge.

Question 1

(a)   The key points were: worsening economic inequality, poor urban infrastructure such as congested roads…and unsanitary conditions in slum areas. Most candidates managed to identify two of these to access both marks for this question.

The following examples were typical for higher scoring candidates on **Question 1(a)** scoring both marks.

'The two negative impacts of urbanisation are that economic inequality is getting worse and cities may have poor urban infrastructure like unreliable power systems.'

'The two negative impacts of urbanisation…are poor infrastructure leading to people living in congested areas like slums facing unsanitary conditions. There is also a rise in economic inequality in urban areas.'

The second example covers all three possible answers, but only two (like the first example) were credited.

Some did not look at the impact, instead looking at the cause which was not creditworthy. Others introduced their own knowledge of urbanisation and did not link it to the author's viewpoint.

(b)   This question required explanation rather than identification. Simple explanations could be worth one mark, but only fully developed answers could achieve two marks. Although simple explanations could be close to the author's words or copied from the text, developed answers needed to be expressed in the candidate's words by at least paraphrasing or synthesising the author's views.

'Cities are addressing poverty by introducing programmes which provide households with cash incentives for healthcare, education and job training, such as 'Opportunity NYC: Family Rewards programme'. This would promote education and training skills hence eradicating poverty.'

(c)   This was another identification question so answers could be copied directly from the text. Brief answers were acceptable. The two relevant points were: Governments will need to supply necessary services and infrastructure; and design a national urbanisation strategy. Care was needed to not include measures that were already in place like measures to improve air quality.

A brief answer as below could achieve both marks for this sub-question.

'The governments will need to supply the necessary public services and infrastructure. Furthermore, they must design a national urbanisation strategy to identify urban development priorities.'

Question 2

This question was generally well answered with most candidates correctly assessing the evidence rather than simply the argument. It was pleasing to see in **Question 2** that candidates had generally read the requirements of the question carefully. The question required an assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the evidence used by the author to support their views.

The highest achieving candidates recognised that the author used a range of relevant data. These higher scoring candidates recognised this point, gave suitable examples from the document and explained why the use of relevant, quoted data showed strong evidence to support the author's view. This, three stage approach (point, illustrate, explain) tends to lead to higher marks.

Higher scoring candidates also recognised that the author was suitably qualified to access and select appropriate information and therefore justify their evidence. This was highlighted by the author being a Deputy Director of UNHDR. This showed the ability to select reliable data on urbanisation and appropriate evidence. 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.

For weaknesses, higher scoring candidates saw that much of the evidence, despite being from named first-hand sources, was not supported by exact figures as they were rounded and generalised. Again, higher scoring candidates explained how both these limitations had a negative impact on the reliability of the evidence and that readers might not be convinced by its reliability.

The difference between higher and moderately scoring candidates was usually defined by the appropriate explanation of the strengths and weaknesses. Many identified weaknesses and often illustrated them from the document but lacked developed explanation. Lower scoring candidates made basic statements without illustrating, explaining or developing them.

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

'A strength of the evidence in Document 1 is that the author is a United Nations Director, thus an experienced professional. This is a strength as being a UN Director the author will have access to all sufficient resources and research that he can include in his article. This increases the reader's trust towards the author and also increase the reliability and credibility of the arguments.'

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'There are also some weaknesses. The author has given some unsupported data like' more than two-thirds of the world's population is projected to be living in urban areas' and 'by 2030, new houses will be built for 3 billion people'. The author has not given any source for this data and the reader has to rely on the author's credibility to believe in it. The data is also vague and rounded giving another reason to not fully believe the author's argument.'

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GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

| Paper 9239/13 |
| Paper 13 |

Key messages

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Cambridge Assessment
International Education

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GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

| Paper 9239/02 |
| Paper 2 |

Key messages

- Contrasting perspectives presented by candidates should have a global dimension. Candidates should inform their essays with argument and evidence that pertains to different global contexts.
- Critical evaluation of source material remains an integral part of the assessment criteria. Too many candidates are omitting this aspect of the essay.
- Essays should maintain focus on the debate between the contrasting perspectives set out in the title. Some candidates are offering lengthy descriptive sections defining key terms and historical context instead of remaining focused on the issue raised in the title.

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 Artificial intelligence, Impact of the internet, Medical ethics and priorities, Climate change, Genetic engineering and Gender issues, amongst others. There is a list of topics published in the syllabus. From these broad topics candidates were able to focus in on specific global issues.

When completing the Essay component candidates are assessed against seven different criteria. All the criteria have equal weighting. To ensure candidates meet the majority of the assessment criteria they must present a debate between contrasting perspectives that are responding to an issue of global significance. It should also be noted that addressing all of the assessment criteria within the word count requires candidates to plan their essays carefully.

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 seen as more than a point of view, a perspective is a response to an issue that is informed by a range of arguments and evidence. For a perspective to be deemed a global perspective it should be informed by arguments and evidence pertaining to different global contexts. When candidates decide which issue to focus upon, it is important that they choose a global issue. A global issue is one that extends beyond a local or national context and would be experienced by people the world over. Therefore, global perspectives are likely to be informed by different cultural, geographical and political contexts.

Candidates should choose a title that sets up a debate between globally contrasting perspectives. Some candidates restrict their ability to develop a global dimension with title questions that are limited to a specific geographic context, for example, '*Should the government of the US reform their healthcare system to boost public health in America'.* Although the question offers the potential to develop contrasting perspectives, focussing specifically on the US will prevent candidates from reaching higher levels at criteria 4 and 5 (Empathy for Perspectives and Globality of Perspectives).

It was pleasing to see 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. Candidates that successfully make links across the research material are more likely to achieve higher levels at Criterion 6 (Analysis of Perspectives). In the example below the

candidate synthesises two sources (The Guardian and Greenpeace) in support of the perspective arguing against fast fashion.

"The Guardian revealed that 'about 3.5 million people in the UK are involved in making their own clothes and 433,000 of them only started sewing in the last 12 months' implying that consumers are starting to understand the fatal impacts of fast fashion and have taken an interest into making and fixing garments. Greenpeace also claimed that if consumers get into the habit of mending their clothes the 'it would save some of the estimated 350,000 tonnes of garments that go into landfill sites each year.' This is because purchasing new clothes increases the electricity and water usage along with toxic chemicals . . ."

Many candidates are now demonstrating the skill of evaluating their perspectives before reaching a final conclusion. This can usefully be done by weighing up the quality of the evidence and reasoning of each perspective holistically, moving beyond the more specific source evaluation that is assessed at criterion 3 (Analysis of Sources).

Source Material

The example above taken from an essay on fast fashion put forward arguments and evidence that pertained to different global contexts; Bangladesh, US, China and Indonesia. In so doing the candidate was able to develop globally contrasting perspectives. The other global dimension candidates need to consider is the provenance of their source material.

To reach higher attainment levels candidates should gather relevant and credible source material from publications with a range of global provenance. This is assessed at Criterion 2 (Source Selection). One of the best sourced essays seen this series explored perspectives on Universal Basic Income. The candidate was able to select highly credible and relevant sources from the UK, US, India, Australia, Indonesia as well as material produced by international organisations such as the World Band and the International Monetary Fund. It is worthwhile candidates stating briefly but explicitly where their source material emanates from if the details in the bibliography do not make the provenance clear.

Having read and analysed their chosen 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.

Candidates should not be using more than six key sources to support their globally contrasting perspectives. It is very difficult, in a 2 000-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. There are still candidates submitting essays that make reference to 15 or more pieces of research material, consequently they will not be able to demonstrate full understanding of their material.

Critical evaluation of source material remains a key skill for assessment in this component. The candidate should demonstrate why the source is worthy of being used but also acknowledge any weaknesses it may contain. The most successful candidates will evaluate a source with reference to one or two evaluation criteria. 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.

Below is a developed yet succinct piece of critical evaluation from this series.

'In this study the authors looked at the effect mandating vaccinations has on the willingness of participants to get a vaccine. A weakness of the source is found in the participants included in the experiment. The average age of the participants was 23 years old which is not representative of a large population. This is not helped by the fact that only 293 people were used for the experiment. A larger sample size would have increased the significance of the study substantially.'

Here the candidate makes specific reference to the source material then identifies and explains a weakness in the method used. To reach the top levels for criterion 3 (Analysis of Sources) a candidate should offer four well developed pieces of critical evaluation across the source material.

It is perfectly reasonable to critically evaluate four different sources using four different criteria, this would demonstrate a range of evaluation skills.

Some candidates are still offering partially developed and/or generic evaluation, for example, '*Although Forbes is not a scholarly source, it can still be valuable to demonstrate the impact of certain movements around the globe. The magazine covers trending news and movements, so it can be an indicator of the relevancy of, for instance, a certain campaign.*' Although the candidate mentions the specific source, they do not fully explain how it demonstrates impact of certain movements or why relevancy is important.

Conclusions

It was pleasing to see many more reflective conclusions in this series. To reach the higher levels for criterion 7 (Conclusion and Reflection) candidates are required to present a supported and reflective conclusion. The candidates are asked to reflect upon how engaging with contrasting perspectives has impacted their thinking about the issue. In essence candidates should ask themselves how has the process of producing the research essay developed their opinion on the issue. Here is one of many strong examples, '*I initially expected little positive information about trade between China and Africa, or how China wants to slowly but surely colonize Africa, and I was indeed humbled by the research I had done that opposed my judgements. I found out how much infrastructure such as 10,000 km roads, 6,000 km railways and a large number of hospitals and all this largely to promote local and continental development, and billions China has invested willingly to African counties. The way I once perceived China as a dominator of the market has still not changed, but I learned that in spite of all the negative views, China is helping developing counties in Africa even though it comes with strings attached. (sic)*'

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 that 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.

There are still too many candidates omitting their ideas for further research or simply offering generic statements such as '*To further develop my conclusion further research should be done*'. However, there were some strong examples of developed further research that clearly emanated from the process of constructing the research essay. It is perfectly possible to do this in a succinct way, for example this piece of further research emanates directly from the developed critical evaluation exemplified above in this report.

'*Future research that would be necessary is a repetition of the study done by Betsch and Böhm, but on a larger scale and with a more realistic setting. This is necessary because the results as they are now, are of too little statistical significance because of the small sample size. If a repetition of the study shows the same effects but on a larger scale it is possible viewpoints on the issue at hand might change*'.

Communication

Most candidates were successful in communicating a logical and coherent debate. The essay should remain focused on the title question and that question should be answered in the conclusion. Of equal importance is the structure of the essay. Candidates should present a well-balanced and clearly structured essay. The purposeful use of discursive markers that act as structural signposts for the reader are an effective way to achieve this. Successful candidates used discursive 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 discursive markers such as; in contrast or on the other hand. Other useful discursive signposts include; in conclusion or on reflection.

Finally, and in line with good research practice, candidates must offer full referencing of their source material via citations and a bibliography. Use of any accepted referencing system is fine, the key point is that it should be effective. Assessors often need to check references so the relationship between citation and bibliography should be easily discerned and consistently applied.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

**Paper 9239/03
Team Project**

Key messages

Issues were more effectively defined when they moved beyond dictionary definitions.

Successful presentations evaluated strengths and weaknesses when differentiating perspectives.

Successful conclusions cited specific pieces of evidence.

Reflective papers worked well when they were evaluative and balanced in the space they gave to each criterion.

General comments

Definition of issue and range of research

Many presentations began by defining the issue with a dictionary, or other similar, definition of their key ideas. Stronger presentations explored the positive and negative impacts of the issue and showed how these were related to one another and the candidate's perspective.

Presentations were more successful in showing their range and depth of research when they referenced this explicitly in what they said. Weaker presentations demonstrated research only by listing it in a bibliography at the end. When the issue selected was drawn authentically from the candidate's own experience it was easier for their presentation to make use of a genuine variety of sources of research.

An example of a well-defined issue was a presentation on water scarcity which began with information on the overall context of how much water there is on the planet before moving on to examples of its shortage in the candidate's local region of Pakistan and then explaining why this was the case.

Differentiation of perspective

The majority of candidates identified the perspectives of the other members of their team alongside their own. Some candidates gave further information about the different perspectives of their team in the reflective paper, which could not be given credit as differentiation of perspective should be done during the presentation. Candidates who achieved higher levels evaluated specific strengths and weaknesses of their own and alternative perspectives, comparing them with one another. Those who simply asserted that their own perspective was stronger, although having some value, did not achieve higher levels in a sustained way.

Structure of argument and support

The best candidates made connections between their points and enabled them to move to higher levels. When individual points were elaborated in more detail, this also achieved higher marks.

Conclusion and solution

It is important for conclusions to be linked to specific evidence from the preceding presentation, and for solutions to be linked to the conclusion. Where this happened, the recommendations made by candidates were more convincing and scored higher marks. Successful solutions also listed and explained reasons why the solution was an effective remedy to the issue outlined in the presentation.

Some candidates presented a range of solutions, without identifying one that they felt would be more effective than the others or showing how the solutions might work together to address the issue. This tends to suggest that they had begun to develop a solution, rather than having arrived at one.

Presentational methods

Visual aids should be individual to each candidate's presentation: group posters used by all members of the team as a backdrop make it harder for them to reference their own visual support as part of their argument. Where candidates engaged with specific aspects of maps or charts they were able to use this visual information as evidence to support their arguments. Some candidates started to do this by using phrases like 'as you can see from the graph', but were only fully successful when the graph was displayed for long enough for there to be a clear explanation so that the visual aid formed a substantive part of the argument.

Reflective paper

Evaluation of collaboration

Weaker responses described the work done by their team as a narrative of their teamwork achieved at a lower level. Better responses included the beginning of evaluative comments, for example where the reflective paper identified how the teamwork could have been improved and allowed candidates to access Level 3. Responses which included sustained evaluation of specific strengths and weaknesses candidates scored more highly. Where only strengths were identified (for example, 'my team worked really well together') evaluation was partial. The best responses also identified weaknesses, or points where collaboration could have been improved.

Reflection on learning

Successful reflection on learning identified specific things the candidate had learnt about their topic when undertaking their research and compared these to what they knew before. Successful reflective papers balanced this criterion with the evaluation of collaboration, giving both equal space, and did not confine the reflection on learning to the last paragraph. Listing of the views of other members of the team or asserting the need for further research was not in itself sufficient to gain credit in this criterion. This is an example of successful reflection on learning during a project on the economic impact of Covid-19:

'I am now aware that there are many economic topics that have been impacted by Covid-19 such as the changes to corporation tax, and any future complications even after herd immunity is achieved. I also learnt why governments spent billions of pounds on economic stimulus packages and why these were effective in mitigating some of the immediate impacts of the pandemic.'

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH

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Paper 9239/04
Paper 4

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Key messages

- Logs should be effective working documents showing the progress of thought and knowledge
- Analysis should go further than describing and explaining series of sources
- Evaluation should use a variety of critical criteria and techniques

General comments

The reports were evidence based and most were appropriately referenced. When the choice of question allowed, there were generally different perspectives and the best work showed a critical sense and an awareness that overall views should be tested and assessed. For many candidates, the process of independent research and the critical engagement with evidence can be challenging, as can the writing of an extended report which has to maintain a focus on the research question. The reports were therefore varied in the degree of analysis and evaluation, the crucial higher level skills tested by this qualification. However, in terms of educational value and preparation not only for future study but also for some vital life skills in dealing with an increasing amount of information and making decisions based on evidence, this was obviously a worthwhile undertaking and the suggestions for improvement below should be seen in that general context.

AO1 Research. Centres mostly offered clear rationales for the allocation of levels and marks for this. Moderations looked carefully at the evidence provided by logs. These were seen in different ways by candidates and centres. Some offered a quite limited survey of material used in the report, recording the accessing of mostly web-based sources with some description of content. Others submitted a personal diary of consultations, progress and emotions. However, the aim of the log is to record academic and research issues encountered and to show the engagement with the issues and how research is developing critical thinking about the question. The best logs showed clear insights into the way that candidates were approaching the issues, using evidence, considering methodology and developing their thinking.

AO1 Analysis. This was the strongest element in that many reports were able to select relevant materials supporting different perspectives and explain conflicting arguments and evidence. Obviously, the range of evidence used varied, as did the depth of research. The best reports took as their starting point the analysis of different perspectives using a range of evidence which was synthesised to establish an overall viewpoint. In order to do this, obviously a range of sources does need to be studied, but some reports stopped short of using the material and were content to offer descriptions of the evidence consulted. The result was less the establishment of contrasting evidence than a sort of review of research findings in which different sources were outlined. Even if the sources were broadly grouped into different viewpoints, the effect was one of 'work in progress'. It is of course important that evidence is relevant to the question rather than to the topic. Less successful reports saw the task as more of a project in which information was gathered and presented rather than a report which established different viewpoints and treated the evidence supporting them critically in order to reach a conclusion about a specific issue.

AO1 Evaluation. Understanding evidence is an important skill but as the Report is intended to build on the critical skills developed earlier, critical evaluation of evidence and the overall viewpoints it supports is an essential element. This is the real point of the qualification but is still relatively neglected. Simply setting out competing perspectives has value but the higher-level thinking skill involves testing those perspectives in order to reach an informed judgement. Evaluation is often not helped by dividing the topic into aspects and considering these as 'perspectives' For example, a discussion about mandatory vaccination could have different aspects – legal, moral, medical, political. However, these aspects should be analysed and the

evidence for and against mandatory vaccination weighed in order to reach conclusions which inform the overall judgement. Too often, the aspects are simply explained and the vital element of supported judgement neglected. Another issue is the range of criteria used to assess evidence and views. Merely saying that there is a counter view is not really assessing validity. If for example, the Austrian Chancellor argues as he has done for mandatory vaccination and the British health minister argues that it is unethical, who has the more convincing viewpoint and why? Merely juxtaposing these different views does not lead to a judgement. Also consideration of the position of the people holding different views may not help much. In the case above, both are senior political figures, both have detailed information, both have responsibility for their people, but the conclusions they reach are different. Looking at the origins of evidence can be helpful, but it is not the only or in many cases the best way to make a judgement and the nature of arguments, the basis of the viewpoints, the underlying assumptions behind them and the degree to which they are supported by other evidence should be some of the critical criteria deployed. In some cases, there is no evidence of any critical evaluation so the reports take on a different nature from that intended by the qualification – that of researching information and explaining views. Again, this is not without value, but it is not the real aim of the paper.

AO2 Reflection. Going back to the basics of the qualification, reflection is a vital element in any decision making, however small. Did the scope, nature and necessary limitations mean that conclusions might be questioned? Did the way research was approached and conducted have an impact on the way personal views changed and developed? This is about the research process – the methodology adopted, the research issues which arose and should relate to the actual research, not simply be a personal reflection on the experience. Going back to the example of mandatory vaccination – if a decision were to be taken to support this, was the data sufficient? Were counter arguments sufficiently considered? Were the implications carefully enough considered? The reflection is specific to the issue and not just a sort of personal musing or a repeat of the conclusions drawn.

AO3 Communication. Though there were some cases where communication impeded comprehension, generally this is a strong aspect of the reports. However, an important part is the oral communication in which, in an interview, candidates justify findings, choice of materials and methodology. This is often not commented on by centres who use the Oral Communication form for general comments on the work of the candidate and not how effectively in a discussion conclusions and approach are justified.

Finally, some advice about the choice of topics. Now that centres are assessing the questions set it is particularly important that there is a real possibility of discussion rather than simply explanation or providing a series of reasons or consequences. There should be resources available to support different overall perspectives and the questions should be phrased in such a way as to lead to the sort of critical judgements expected in the assessment criteria.

To return to the context of the opening part of this report, there is much valuable and thoughtful work done and there is no intention to belittle the commitment and real interest shown by candidates. The comments above are intended to help them with the preparation for and marking of the research reports not as criticism of either centres or learners who have the respect of moderators for engaging in a demanding but rewarding task.