

INDIA STUDIES

Paper 0447/01
Core Themes

General comments

Approximately the same number of candidates sat this paper this year as did in June 2015. Overall, the standard was comparable to last year with well-prepared candidates showing an ability to identify relevant facts together with reasoned explanations that produced strong answers. There were candidates who relied on identifying details and general facts as the basis for their responses. Answers revealed some evidence that teachers have encouraged their pupils to consider a range of points of view and concentrate on key aspects which they then support with detailed specific explanation.

Comments on specific questions

Question 2 on India's Economic Development was not as popular as **Questions 1, 3** and **4**.

It was noted that less well prepared candidates tended to focus on description in their responses to parts **(b)** and **(c)** questions.

Knowledge required for the **(a)** parts of questions caused some problems in **Questions 1(a)** and **2(a)**. Candidates answering **1(a)** were not always factually correct and much of the content in candidate responses was very general. Many candidates who answered **Question 2(a)** focused on giving specific company names rather than identifying different manufacturing industries in private ownership.

Many more candidates gave reasoned explanations in parts **(b)** and **(c)** of questions, supported by relevant facts. There were few very strong answers as candidates tended not to provide balanced justifications supporting detailed contentions.

Questions 1(b) and **1(c)** were fairly well answered with good candidates compiling responses containing relevant knowledge, specific detailed examples and supported arguments.

Question 2 on India's Economic Development was answered by fewer candidates. Stronger candidates were able to identify key issues and support important facts with reasoned arguments. There was some evidence of more confident answers being provided by the more able candidates.

Question 3 on Social and Cultural Developments within Indian Society was also answered by many candidates. Good knowledge was seen in **Question 3(a)**. **Question 3(b)** showed more candidates providing credible explanations of factual details and appropriate arguments focussed on the social policies of the UPA since 2004. Overall, this improved standard of responses continued in **Question 3(c)** with some good explanations and relevant details on gender equality, with some answers advocating alternative views to the seriousness of gender inequality.

Similar comments apply to **Question 4** on India and the World as those highlighted in **Question 3**. Several candidates included accurate, detailed facts accompanied by reasoned explanations in **Questions 4(b)** and **4(c)**. There was evidence that candidates had prepared well for this topic and again revealed confidence in their explanations.

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Paper 0447/02
Case Studies

Key messages

- Stronger answers supported their explanations with precise local material and examples.
- Unsupported or generalised assertions are not convincing and do not constitute analysis.
- Candidates should ensure they focus on the command terms in the questions, such as 'how effectively', and not simply write all they know about a topic.
- In **Section A** part (c) questions, candidates need to produce a balanced answer, considering both the successes and failures in dealing with the issue in the question, and then reach a balanced judgement so the issue of 'how effectively' is addressed.
- In **Section B** part (c), candidates should follow the four-part structure outlined in the question itself. This will ensure that all aspects of the question are addressed. Equal weight needs to be given to each part because each is worth five marks.

General comments

Stronger candidates' responses had a far greater range of specific material and examples to support their arguments. This helped to improve the overall quality of their responses and makes the argument more convincing. However, there are still general areas of technique that Centres and candidates could improve further and it is worthwhile reiterating the advice given in the past about the demands of each type of question.

- In order to improve their performance, many candidates should give much greater attention to the number of marks awarded for each part of a question and then write an answer whose length fits its value. In **Section A** part (a), a significant number of candidates wrote at great length when this question type required them only to identify problems or issues for just 2 marks. This can be done in a couple of sentences or even in bullet points.
- In **Section A** part (b), candidates need to be aware of the difference between 'describe' and 'explain'. In no question are they simply asked to describe issues, but in a number of answers this is all that candidates offered.
- In **Section A** part (c), candidates need to ensure that they write balanced answers and consider both sides of the debate. Then they need to go on to write a justified conclusion that follows on from the arguments that they have just made. Only such an answer can access the higher mark levels. However, it was encouraging to see an increased number of responses take such an approach.
- **Section B**: in many ways, similar advice applies to this as to **Section A**. Candidates need to pay attention to the number of marks awarded and use that as a clear guide to how much they should write. In answering part (a), they should explain only three problems and these must be drawn from the source, not their own knowledge, because they cannot score more than the six marks available. In answering part (b), they must use both the source and their own knowledge if they want to reach the higher marks within a level.
- For **Section B** part (c), candidates will benefit greatly if they follow the structure that is outlined in the question itself because this will ensure that all aspects of the question are addressed. Equal weight needs to be given to all four parts of the question as there are five marks for each one.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates were able to identify two problems, although it is advisable to ensure that the problems identified are distinct and can be clearly linked to climate change. A number mentioned issues such as droughts and floods, whilst others considered the impact on water supply through the impact of climate change on groundwater reserves.
- (b) As mentioned above in the general comments, the key to a successful answer is focusing on explanation, in other words why the management of energy resources is an important issue for India. There was some mention of the problem of oil supplies, but few really developed this or linked it to financial problems that could follow. Similarly, few considered the problem of reliance on wood and the impact that can have on the natural environment. Many answers did consider the issue of water, although this could have been linked to the area of high rainfall being on the border with Pakistan and the tensions in the area.
- (c) The question asked candidates to consider a range of pollution problems, but most did not distinguish between urban and rural. Although candidates were not penalised for a more generic answer, it would have been helpful to show some discrimination and this should have been possible, particularly between urban/industrial and rural. There was also an opportunity to give precise local or regional examples and this was taken up by stronger responses. There were comments about dealing with increased traffic problems in urban areas and also the difficulty in disposing of waste, whilst some also commented on the problem of water pollution. Rural pollution was managed less well and in some answers was ignored.

Question 2

- (a) Although a number of candidates were able to give two reasons, this was not always the case. Most mentioned the issue of radical Islam or the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan, but few considered government policies in the area or the role of Pakistan.
- (b) As with **Question 1(b)**, the crucial factor is focusing on 'explain' and not simply describing. Responses were usually able to offer some reasons, but in a number of answers candidates offered only a limited number of reasons or even just one reason, even if the points or point was well developed. Weaker answers often resorted to generalisations and showed only a limited understanding of the wider context.
- (c) Although many responses showed a sound awareness of the disputes over Jammu and Kashmir, there were only a few that were able to address the issue of 'how serious'. Most produced a list of problems and how some of the issues have been resolved, or at least lessened, without really considering how serious. Some candidates were aware of more recent developments and these points gave their answers added relevance. Others were too focused on more long term issues and produced responses which were based more on the history of the disputes.

Question 3

- (a) There were a number of answers that did not focus on the content of Source A and this limited the marks that could be awarded. Some that did use Source A simply identified the problems and did not go on to explain them, which was essential if the higher marks were to be accessed. However, those that did identify and went on to explain the problems scored well.
- (b) Most responses were able to make use of Source B in addressing the question, and it was encouraging that most produced a balanced response, looking at both the successes and failures. However, there were only a few answers that went on and reached a balanced judgement, considering 'how successful', which should have been the focus of the response. As a result, a number of good answers reached Level 5, explaining both success and failure, but did not reach Level 6.

- (c) As in previous years, candidates often started this question well, but did not maintain the levels of depth of explanation or analysis throughout the response. It has already been noted that each part of the question carries 5 marks and therefore it is essential that equal weight and time are given to the last part of the exercise, particularly explaining one disadvantage of the approach chosen and how this might be overcome. Most gave a good explanation of the reasons for the choice made and were able to explain why the others were rejected.

INDIA STUDIES

Paper 0447/03
Research Portfolio

Key messages

- Plans must relate to specific investigations.
- Bibliographies must only contain sources actually used.
- The reflection must be related to the conclusions reached.
- The coursework report must be written in an hour.

General comments

There was a great deal of research done but Centres must understand the nature of the task and its place in the qualification as a whole. Candidates choose one of the board's three titles. They consider its meaning and implications and then make a plan about how to research and write the report. They do their independent research, making notes and gathering ideas and supporting information. They then bring their notes and any evidence they have collected – books, articles or notes from websites or interviews or material downloaded from the internet – and write up the report in class in an hour. The final report is not intended to be lengthy or out of keeping with the general demands of IGCSE. It is intended to be long enough for the candidate to present different views and to be able to show evaluation of the views to reach a personal conclusion. It is not intended that the report is written in advance and downloaded during the hour. It may be typed, but the result should be no longer than an hour's work under controlled conditions.

What should be done outside the controlled writing time is the plan, the bibliography and the reflection on the conclusions reached. Some Centres had not adopted this practice. It is not appropriate or necessary that IGSE candidates produce very extended answers stretching to thousands of words, sometimes with long downloaded quotations from websites or books. The writing should be in the candidates' own words, not paraphrased from material consulted.

Comments on specific parts of the coursework

Plans

Most candidates produced a plan, but it was sometimes overly generic and aspirational. If, for instance, the topic was whether Sanskrit should be a national language, then the plan might have focused on how the candidate was going to find relevant material, how that material was going to be organised and what different sorts of arguments were going to be considered. The plan should have related to the title rather than being so general that it might have applied to any title. Bearing in mind that the plan carried only a small number of marks, a lengthy digest of the intended report was obviously not required. The plans should have broken down the topic into different areas and different views and should, of course, have followed some initial research and thinking about the topic.

Bibliography

Bibliographies should only include works consulted by the candidate. Not all of these works may actually be quoted or referenced and some may be to help with the understanding of the background to the topics. Doing an internet search and writing down every article or book which appears, is not necessary. A short bibliography of sources, which are appropriate to the subject and to the age group of the candidates, is all that is required.

Reports

Reports written in an hour should focus on analysis and explanations which lead to judgements. Clear and concise explanations of different viewpoints and a judgement on the validity of the views in order to reach a supported conclusion will score highly. There were a lot of strong analyses and many candidates offered a range of different views on the issues in the questions. However, some responses were overlong and included long descriptive passages to 'set the scene' or lengthy quotations from sources. Candidate responses on cinema were less analytical and the lengthy descriptions of films did not always relate sufficiently to the question. It is important that a distinct conclusion is reached and that reports do not simply outline different arguments.

Reflection

The reflection element depends on the candidates actually making a judgement based on what he or she has studied, considered and evaluated. Sometimes this reflection was not related to the actual judgement made about the questions set. Once a judgement has been made, the candidate should then consider its implications and whether the process of research and the sources used were sufficient for that judgement to be convincing. There should be consideration of what else might have been investigated, whether the material on which the judgement was based was sufficient and what else might be looked at. When this was attempted it was often related to the topic as a whole and not to the specific judgement in the conclusion. General comments about research and personal problems or achievements were not required.