

Principal Examiners Feedback

Summer 2016

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
in Global Citizenship (4GL0/ 01)

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Paper Introduction

An excellent standard was reached by the highest-scoring candidates this year. They produced well-argued and evidenced extended writing. In shorter answer questions they followed instructions well and volunteered evidence and examples throughout.

The single greatest hurdle faced by many less able candidates was the striking inability to follow instructions. In question 1 especially, candidates were asked frequently to explain one idea or one fact. The word 'one' was, on each occasion, printed in a bold font to highlight its importance. Examiners reported that the majority of candidates did not follow this instruction, resulting in only one or two marks being scored out of a possible three or four for many question items.

4GL0_01_Q01

Question Introduction

(a) When writing about their 'idea' candidates could, in theory, make reference to any stage of the action (aims, ways of inquiring, ways of presenting, follow-up activities, etc.). Despite being offered an apparently straight-forward task, many candidates struggled to gain full marks. This was because they failed to do as the question asked and explain one idea only. Many listed a range of actions and ideas. In some answers it was unclear exactly what the candidate's own contribution had been because an account was provided of what the entire class had achieved rather than the individual learner.

(b) Most candidates ignored the wording of this question and provided an account of multiple research sources ('I asked my teacher... then I went on the internet... I also spoke to people...'). Among those who rightly restricted their account to an explanation of one source only (usually 'the internet'), many wrote about what they had found out rather than explain a 'way of researching'. A minority of very good answers provided a detailed account of one primary or secondary data source and a few even qualified their response by explaining how they tried to avoid or be mindful of bias or sampling errors, which was good to see.

(c) This question was answered well by many candidates who provided factual evidence of, for instance, refugee numbers in Europe or the scale and rate of predicted sea level rises. Once again, a number of answers failed to gain full marks on account of multiple (disconnected) facts being presented instead of presenting an extended explanation of one important finding.

(d) The mark scheme credited many possible kinds of reason such as ethical, economic, social, political, or legal concerns. Some candidates wrote good answers in which they explained their argument using strong supporting evidence or logic. A few utilised the concept of sustainable development while providing a rationale for urgent action on environmental or social issues. Weaker answers tended merely to assert that the issue was important and repeated the same fact(s) they had put forward in the previous question.

(e) Most candidates correctly grasped that the question focus was the views and perspectives of different groups. Credit was given for a range of either negative views or positive views; the views did not need to cover 'both sides' of an issue or argument. The answers which reached Level 3 usually did so by virtue of providing a wide range of different arguments or issues. Actions tied to climate change fared well because candidates could present a range of reasons why some citizens and states have made limited or no steps towards reducing their carbon footprint. Multiple views were perhaps less easily articulated in relation to some health issues, such as breast cancer awareness. Nonetheless, some candidates who had chosen that issue wrote extremely good answers explaining why views might differ on whether the burden or care costs should lie with the state, charities or individuals.

4GL0_01_Q02a

The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.

4GL0_01_Q02b

The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.

4GL0_01_Q02c

Question Introduction

This question was not answered well. Only a minority appreciated that interdependency is a reciprocal or mutually reliant relationship. Moreover, the focus here - given that the question asked for the term to be explained in the context of migration and 'the global community' - was on interdependency between states, not individuals. Large numbers wrongly thought the term was a synonym for independence. Many explained dependency (referencing Frank and Wallerstein in some cases) rather than interdependency. The term appears in the Specification (page 6). Teachers need to make sure candidates are aware of the meaning of key terms and concepts such as this.

4GL0_01_Q02d

Question Introduction

Most candidates provided a meaningful response. At the bottom end, extremely vague assertions were made that events (in general) help people 'get to know one another'. At the top end, answers were richly detailed (referring to London's Notting Hill Carnival or Mardi Gras, for instance). The best answers also made use of citizenship concepts, such as ethnicity, social norms and community cohesion.

4GL0_01_Q02ei

Question Introduction

High-scoring candidates had clearly paused to consider what constitutes a 'community' and its 'identity' (many had underlined these words). Having identified that religion, ethnicity and nationality could all be used as possible markers, these high-scoring candidates were able to give reasoned and evidenced explanation of possible reasons for disharmony between different communities (different faith groups for instance). Low-scoring answers were written by candidates who clearly had spent very little time considering what the meaning of the question was. Typically, they wrote about disagreements between individual people, rather than communities.

4GL0_01_Q02eii

Question Introduction

Good answers provided multiple (ideally three) grounds for their argument in favour of equality (with most preferring to focus on sexuality rather than age). For instance, an answer scoring three marks argued that equality is logical (because all people are all essentially biologically the same), ethical (it is right to treat all humans fairly, this being the essence of human rights) and moreover it is now illegal to treat gay and straight people differently in many countries. Low-scoring answers often re-stated the question and wrote at length that it is wrong for gay people to be treated differently, but without ever saying why.

4GL0_01_Q02f

Question Introduction

Good answers (examiners reported many were seen explained a wide range of ways in which inter-cultural understanding can be achieved. the best made sustained use of supporting evidence throughout. It was pleasing to see many candidates emphasising the role of education, including the global citizenship course. They therefore integrated an element of evaluation into their explanation by explaining what the *most important way* of achieving change was. While this was not a requirement for Level 3 to be reached, it added clarity to the explanation (which was the requirement for examiners to award the highest level). In contrast, weak answers lacked evidence or rigour and often did little more than assert that 'people must change' without some explanation of how this will be achieve.

4GL0_01_Q03a

The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.

4GL0_01_Q03b

Question Introduction

A broad interpretation of 'function' was allowed. Despite this, many candidates struggled to say much that was meaningful. Many offered a general remark such as: 'To help the world be peaceful with no wars' but added no further detail. With 2 marks available there was an expectation that the explanation would include some element of fact or evidence. Better answers made reference to UN Peacekeepers and a few candidates went as far as to provide an example of their deployment, such as DR Congo.

4GL0_01_Q03di

Question Introduction

This answer was very well-answered by the majority. Most explained slavery as a situation where people are treated as property or commodities and are left without money/ earnings, or have their human rights denied.

4GL0_01_Q03dii

Question Introduction

Some good answers dealt with the practicalities of law enforcement or deep-rooted cultural attitudes that have yet to change. A surprising number of low-scoring answers took the rather odd view that entering slavery is a choice made by people in poverty; these candidates asserted that people choose to become slaves because they cannot earn money any other way.

4GL0_01_Q03diii

Question Introduction

This answer was very well-answered by the majority. Most chose education as their focus. Once again, less able candidates paid little heed to the tariff of 2 marks which was available. They answered bluntly: 'to make sure there is education'. Candidates who were mindful of the tariff extended their explanation. These good answers explained how the Convention of the Rights of the Child recognises the importance of primary education; it stresses that it should be provided freely for girls and boys alike. Despite the fact that CRC has many clauses, only a narrow range of ideas were seen overall. Most wrote about education and only a few dealt with health or freedom from violence.

4GL0_01_Q03e

Question Introduction

Some excellent, well-evidenced answers were seen which scored full marks or close to it. Popular themes included: UN work promoting gender equality; the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals; peacekeeping activities. These good answers maintained a tight focus on the promotion of rights and freedoms. Examples included Rwanda, Uganda, DR Congo, Sudan and Syria. In contrast some very weak answers made little or no reference to the UN. Evidence was provided of changing attitudes over time in certain contexts, such as women gaining the right to vote in the UK. This was then explained erroneously as being an outcome of UN action. Such answers gained some credit for their use of contexts and their understanding of rights and freedoms. However, such responses failed typically to reach the 4-6 mark band.

4GL0_01_Q04a

Question Introduction

This was not a popular question overall, despite its theme being drawn clearly from the Specification. The examiners were most impressed with the quality of the best answers which reached a very high standard indeed for candidates of iGCSE age. These showed familiarity with the BRIC and MINT (Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria, Turkey) groups and understood various ways in which emerging economies are starting to have an impact on global economic relationships, and are changing the map of 'haves' and have-nots'. A few answers even showed awareness of new patterns of lending and assistance funded by China and other BRIC members. They also understood that despite the growth of emerging economies, disproportionate economic power is still held by global companies based in Europe and the USA. Sadly, however, a larger proportion of candidate who chose this question had no clear idea of what is meant by the term emerging economy (EE). They wrote at length about global economic relationships (aid and trade between the 'north' and 'south') while omitting mention of EEs altogether. In such cases it was rare to score half marks. Candidates should be advised not to tackle an essay where they only dimly comprehend one of the key components of the question.

4GL0_01_Q04b

Question Introduction

This was the most popular essay question by a considerable margin. Most candidates were able to shape an effective response which considered both sides of the argument. Some excellent and contemporary examples of renewable energy production were cited as a solution to climate change. These were then contrasted with the on-going problem of 'older' dirty technologies e.g. fossil fuel burning which creates the problem of climate change. Responses reaching the highest level were additionally able to argue that the solution (or failure) might lie alternatively in changing patterns of consumption around the world. A few candidates were fully briefed on the environmental cost of producing solar panels/wind farms/energy efficient buildings and appreciated there are potentially limits to what can be achieved (although market forces may begin to drive accelerated innovation).

Paper Summary

Some knowledgeable candidates still preface their essay with a sentence such as 'I strongly disagree with this view' before reciting a long list of (often factually well-informed) objections to the statement. Such an approach is most likely to result in the candidate failing to reach Level 4 according to the level indicators for this task, irrespective of how much evidence can be presented in support of one side of the view. It is important to remind Global Citizenship candidates that the essay is not designed to test them on the depth of knowledge gained in other subjects, such as science or geography. Rather, it is their ability to acknowledge varied perspectives - before reaching a considered conclusion - that is the key to unlocking the higher levels.

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