

# GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

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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. This was particularly relevant in **Question 2** where several candidates described the strengths and weaknesses of the argument rather than addressing the evidence used by the author.
- The length of each answer should reflect the number of marks available. Some candidates spent too long on **Question 1** leaving insufficient time for the demands of **Question 3** which was worth almost half of the total marks for this paper.
- To gain higher marks in **Questions 2** and **3** there should be clear development of the points made. This may show consideration of, not just **what** a strength or weakness may be, but also **how** or **why** it is a strength or weakness. Candidates should also 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. So, they should 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 their assessment does this.
- In **Question 3** the strongest responses reached a supported judgment about the relative strength of the arguments in both documents. This was achieved by evaluating, for example, sources, evidence, perspectives and arguments. Weaker responses simply compared the content of the two documents.
- Candidates did not gain credit for using material from their own knowledge that is not mentioned in the documents. Equally, copying sections from the documents, without any relevant supporting comment, except when asked to identify in **Question 1(a)** and part of **1(b)(i)** did 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 (e.g. 'evidence') in **Question 2**.

It was encouraging to see some candidates applying a higher-level skill by comparing the arguments put forward in the documents in **Question 3** and coming to a judgement of which, if either, was stronger. However, many candidates simply compared content or repeated, without evaluation, the arguments of the authors. Stronger answers often showed evidence of clear planning for the higher mark questions and this certainly helped candidates structure their answers in a coherent and logical manner.

Some candidates ran out of time. The allocation of time relative to the number of marks available is an important issue. Many candidates spent too much time on **Question 1(a)** and **1(b)** where a few lines would have been enough. This had a detrimental impact on the amount of time spent, particularly, on **Question 3** that was worth nearly half of the total marks.

In **Question 1(a)** and **1(b)(i)** where the command word is 'identify', candidates could look to be more concise and accurate. The best answers simply select the appropriate words of the author.

In **Question 1(b)** some candidates combined both **parts (i)** and **(ii)** into the same answer. Although this was not penalised, for clarity, the two parts would be better separated.

Some answers to **Question 3** were not fully developed or supported by precise references to the documents. Stronger responses selected relevant and appropriate brief 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. Stronger responses also reached a supported judgment of the relative strength of the two documents either as a conclusion, or better, by a series of intermediate conclusions throughout the answer.

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, rather than bullet points should be used. It is not appropriate to include a table of strengths and weaknesses in **Question 2**.

### Comments on specific questions

#### Question 1

- (a) As an 'identify' question the best answers simply and concisely stated the words of the author without paraphrasing or expanding. **Question 1** provides an encouragement for the candidate to fully read and digest the detail of Document 1. The key words were '...documents...required to support a gun license application'. This referred to specific documents, like '...a ration card and income tax returns.' The application form itself is not a supporting document nor is evidence of gun training.
- (b)(i) This was also an 'identify' question so two simple statements showing different reasons that men fire guns at weddings were required. These were: '...attention-seeking' and '...displays their position in society' were appropriate. In this part there is no requirement to explain these points. Most candidates correctly identified these directly or paraphrased the author's meaning. The ideas of men's lack of confidence or making men feel in control were linked to gun ownership, not specifically to the firing of guns at weddings.
- (ii) This question required explanation of one of the attitudes identified in (b)(i). Explanation requires the candidate to show clear understanding of the authors' meaning by using their own words and interpretation or paraphrasing the words of the author. Simply copying verbatim from the document is not considered to be explanation. It is also not appropriate for candidates to introduce anything from their own knowledge. They need to address what the author mentioned in Document 1.

An example of a 2-mark answer: (Context and impact)

*'Men in India display their position in society by firing guns at weddings because only upper caste, economically privileged men own guns. So, the men can show off their higher status with the fact that they own a gun.'*

An example of a 1-mark answer: (Context only)

*'Owning a gun and being able to fire it is a symbol that you belong to upper caste.'*

*'It's a way to be noticed in a noisy, chaotic crowd'*

#### Question 2

It was important in **Question 2** to read the requirements of the question carefully. The question required an assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the evidence used by the author in Document 1. Although most candidates addressed the question by assessing the evidence, some incorrectly concentrated on the argument. Those addressing the argument usually included reference to evidence so were able to score some marks but spent time on points of argument that were not creditworthy.

The highest scoring candidates recognised that the author had a familiarity with India and, as a journalist, she was able to research and provide evidence and examples of the (mis) use of guns. She was also able to understand the culture and provide evidence related to festivals and weddings. There were a number of sources used, like the NCRB and the Economic Times and the mention of psychologists.

For weaknesses, higher scoring candidates recognised that the psychologists were not named or cited and that this led to mistrust of the evidence as it could have been made up by the author. There is detailed evidence of how to obtain a gun licence but no source for this information.

The difference between higher and moderately scoring candidates was usually defined by the appropriate explanation of the strengths and weaknesses, not just identifying them but developing them and illustrating them from the document. Many candidates made basic statements without explaining or developing them.

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

*'There were many references to Indian tradition which adds greatly to the relevant information in the text as it gives necessary context to the understanding of the issue. It is understood that the author, being an Indian journalist, speaks from her own experience and knowledge of their culture, acting as an interested and credible first-hand source.'*

*'Having statistics (like 3,655 gun-related deaths) provided by a government organisation, the NCRB, is not something to be overlooked. This gives reliability as they are official facts and numbers.'*

The second example could have been further developed by referring to the accuracy of the numbers provided. They are not rounded and do not appear to be estimates.

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

*'Mostly, this article lacks evidence to support the author's viewpoint. For example, when she states '...psychologists assume men use guns due to their lack of confidence' she does not cite any specific psychologist, making her evidence vague and generalised. She also states that 'firing guns is attention-seeking' but does not provide a relevant study to support this making her point to be considered an assertion.'*

### Question 3

The overall standard of response to **Question 3** has continued to improve. The most frequent approach is to directly compare the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two documents throughout the answer coming to intermediate judgements. The strongest candidates achieved this well with analysis and clear evaluation of the relative strengths of each document. There was no correct answer and candidates were free to argue that Document 1 or Document 2 was stronger or that both were equally strong. The highest scoring candidates assessed at least two outcomes before giving a final judgement. Some 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 is a Level 1 answer.

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 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. Such answers were consequently superficial and relied on undeveloped quotes from the text.

A small number discussed the argument of the author of Document 1 separately from that of Document 2 and then attempted to synthesise the arguments to come to an overall judgment as to which was the stronger. This approach was only partially successful for these candidates as the more sophisticated evaluation came at the end of the answer and was often limited in its scope. There is also a risk of running out of time.

Both approaches saw lower scoring candidates feature much narrative description in their answer, particularly quoting extensively from what the authors stated rather than undertaking evaluation of the strength of the arguments. This limited the marks that could be credited.

Some candidates evaluated the theme of the argument in terms of their own attitudes to gun control. This is not appropriate as the question requires evaluation of the authors' arguments.

The strongest responses adopted the first approach 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. For example:

*'In some ways Document 1's argument is stronger than Document 2's. Iyengar (Doc 1) uses many credible and relevant sources such as 'NCRB' and the 'Economic Times' to support their evidence. Thus, it is credible and verifiable. Meanwhile, Siddiqi (Doc 2) does not provide any sources and much of Document 2's evidence becomes sweeping statements. For example, Siddiqi mentions '...boys as young as 11 were carrying automatic weapons'. However, without a supporting source this evidence is not reliable. In effect Iyengar's evidence is stronger than Siddiqi's so the argument in Document 1 is better supported and therefore stronger.'*

This gives a developed evaluation of the relative strengths of the authors in relation to sources of evidence.

*'Document 2 is stronger than Document 1 as Siddiqi (Doc 2) provides solutions to the problem he presents in his claim. Both authors claim the dangers of gun ownership in Asian countries, but only Siddiqi proposes possible solutions to help diminish the problem. For example, having the National Database and Registration Authority take control over Pakistan's gun register and initiating a name and shame campaign exposing people who own illegal weapons.'*

This gives a clear, opposite viewpoint with another intermediate judgement, clear explanation and illustration.

Some candidates seemed to be looking for a formulaic approach to the question by making 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.

Some candidates scored less well on **Question 3** as they appeared to be limited by time as the structure of the answer appeared rushed or incomplete. Care should be taken to allocate time appropriately, especially in **Question 1** according to the number of marks available for each question.

# GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

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Paper 9239/12  
Paper 12

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- To gain higher marks in **Questions 2** and **3** there should be clear development of the points made. This may show consideration of, not just **what** a strength or weakness may be, but also **how** or **why** it is a strength or weakness. Candidates should also 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. So, they should 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 their assessment does this.
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It was encouraging to see some candidates applying a higher-level skill by comparing the arguments put forward in the documents in **Question 3** and coming to a judgement of which, if either, was stronger. However, many candidates simply compared content or repeated, without evaluation, the arguments of the authors. Stronger answers often showed evidence of clear planning for the higher mark questions and this certainly helped candidates structure their answers in a coherent and logical manner.

Some candidates ran out of time. The allocation of time relative to the number of marks available is an important issue. Many candidates spent too much time on **Question 1** where a few lines would have been enough. This sometimes had a detrimental impact on the amount of time spent, particularly, on **Question 3** that was worth nearly half of the total marks.

In **Question 1(a)** and **1(b)** where the command word is 'identify', candidates could look to be more concise and accurate. The best answers simply select the appropriate words of the author.

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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, rather than bullet points should be used. It is not appropriate to simply include a list or table of strengths and weaknesses in **Question 2**.

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significance and impact on the argument. This demonstrated that they had a secure grasp of the arguments being presented. Stronger responses also reached a supported judgment of the relative strength of the two documents either as a conclusion, or better, by a series of intermediate conclusions throughout the answer.

### Comments on specific questions

#### Question 1

- (a) As an 'identify' question the best answers simply and concisely stated the words of the author without paraphrasing or expanding. **Question 1** provides an encouragement for the candidate to fully read and digest the detail of Document 1. The key words were '...reactions from people in the art world (to the response of an Indian newspaper to complaints)'. This referred to specific people in the art world, namely Gopan and Vattakuzhy. The question referred to the reaction of these people to the response of the newspaper, not what the newspaper did. So, answers like '...a war against the image and shock...were required.' MF Husain was also in the art world, but he left India years before the newspaper apology, so this was not an acceptable answer.
- (b) This was an 'identify and explain' question so two statements identifying different actions taken by the Indian authorities and then explaining these actions were required. While the identifying task can be copied straight from the document, the explanation requires the candidate to show clear understanding of the authors' meaning by using their own words and interpretation or paraphrasing the words of the author. Simply copying verbatim from the document is not considered to be explanation. Several candidates did not note the key word 'different' in the question so, incorrectly, gave 2 examples of banning art works. For example, using both *The Satanic Verses* and *The Da Vinci Code*.

An example of a 4-mark answer is:

*'The Indian state banned Salman Rushdie's book 'The Satanic Verses' due to pressures from a Muslim group as the book was accused of offending the faith in religion. This action was taken to prevent various outbreaks that could occur as a result of religious groups taking offence, including protests.*

*In another case, The High Court and Supreme Court ruled in favour of modern artist MF Husain as they did not find his sketch of a nude goddess an expression of insult for which he was accused by extremist groups. This was because the Indian authorities looked at the traditional perspective from which the sketch had evolved.'*

This candidate's answer considers two different actions and explains each of them by paraphrasing the author's words and using their own words.

#### Question 2

It was important in **Question 2** to read the requirements of the question carefully. The question required an assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the evidence used by the author in Document 1. Although most candidates addressed the question by assessing the evidence, some incorrectly concentrated on the argument. Those addressing the argument usually included reference to evidence so were able to score some marks but spent time on points of argument that were not creditworthy.

Some candidates used a list, table or brief bullet point approach. In these cases, there was a lack of context, explanation or illustration which seriously limited the level and mark credited. Answers should be written in prose and contain more than simple description to achieve higher marks.

The higher scoring candidates recognised that the author used a wide range of evidence from reliable sources like the Indian Government, the law courts and named artists like Goban and Vattakuzhy. They also recognised that there were different perspectives, for example, from the religious groups and Ezhava community that gave balanced evidence. The examples used, like 'The Last Supper' and 'Da Vinci Code' were all relevant.

For weaknesses, higher scoring candidates recognised that although historical examples were given there was no source for the information. This led to possible mistrust of the evidence as it could have been made up by the author.

The difference between higher and moderately scoring candidates was usually defined by the appropriate explanation of the strengths and weaknesses, not just identifying them but developing them and illustrating them from the document. Many candidates made basic statements without explaining or developing them.

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

*'The author uses voices of artists themselves who are feeling 'oppressed' at the offence being taken Present day examples such as 'Tom Vattakuzhy and playwright 'C Grogan' are both examples of artists who are affected by the offence. The interview-based evidence and artist examples provide an insight into what the artists are feeling. This largely resonates with what the author is arguing for and is therefore strong evidence that is able to support the argument. Moreover, the author uses the name 'M.F Husain' who is highly recognised to support her argument. This historic evidence allows the readers to gauge the plight of the artists not only in the present day, but also in the past'*

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

*'The article only seems to produce examples of people who are offended and not of people who are fighting for artists' rights. The article shows no evidence of the acceptance of cultural, traditional and social perceptions on art. The author does not acknowledge the sentiment of these ethnic groups which is a weakness. There is a lack of balance in the evidence as it largely only favours her viewpoint.'*

### Question 3

The most frequent approach is to directly compare the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two documents throughout the answer, coming to intermediate judgements. The strongest candidates achieved this well with analysis and clear evaluation of the relative strengths of each document. There was no correct answer and candidates were free to argue that Document 1 or Document 2 was stronger or that both were equally strong. The highest scoring candidates assessed at least two outcomes before giving a final judgement. Some 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 is a Level 1 answer.

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A small number discussed the argument of the author of Document 1 separately from that of Document 2 and then attempted to synthesise the arguments to come to an overall judgment as to which was the stronger. This approach was only partially successful for these candidates, as the more sophisticated evaluation came at the end of the answer and was often limited in its scope. There is also a risk of running out of time.

Both approaches saw lower scoring candidates feature much narrative description in their answer, particularly quoting extensively from what the authors stated rather than undertaking evaluation of the strength of the arguments. This limited the marks that could be credited.

Some candidates evaluated the theme of the argument in terms of their own attitudes to gun control. This is not appropriate as the question requires evaluation of the authors' arguments.

The strongest responses adopted the first approach 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. For example:

*'The claim in Document 2, 'In the past Middle Eastern countries was elitist, limited to state galleries and museums' and 'thankfully, some American organisations recognise that art can help dialogue' are largely unsubstantiated and vague (some). However, to make reference to the past Document 1 uses the example of M F Husain. This example is well stated and contextual, whereas the claim in Document 2 is largely unsubstantiated which weakens the argument. In this light Document 1 is stronger than Document 2.'*

This gives a developed evaluation of the relative strengths of the authors in relation to quality of evidence.

*'Document 2 includes a survey which provides statistical representations of young Arabs' views about the Middle East, objectively proving that young Arabs have more progressive views for the future. She also provides a testimony from a Saudi artist who claims that. '...art is revolution.' This strengthens the argument as she used both objective data and emotive, primary sourced statements showing the extent of the problem.'*

This gives a clear, balanced viewpoint with clear explanation and illustration. This builds to evaluation of Document 1 in order to come to a judgement.

Some candidates seemed to be looking for a formulaic approach to the question by making 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.

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# GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

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Paper 9239/13  
Paper 13

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Paper 9239/02  
Paper 2

## Key messages

- It is essential that both teachers and candidates are familiar with and fully understand the assessment criteria and syllabus aims.
- The choice of essay question must provide opportunities to develop globally contrasting perspectives.
- Sources selected should offer firmly supported judgements or conclusions based on some combination of evidence, reason, argument, experience, authority or opinion.
- Evaluation of sources and perspectives should form a substantial element of candidates' essays.
- When concluding, candidates should take the opportunity to display the skill of reflection, Assessment Objective AO2, when considering the impact of perspectives on their own standpoint and making suggestions for further research.

## General comments

The work seen by examiners in this series was of quite variable quality, with a minority of candidates achieving at higher levels, whilst a significant number of candidates struggled to reach mid-level 3. The major reason why candidates struggled centred on their inability to develop contrasting perspectives which were differentiated globally or because clear contrast, whether global or not, was absent.

As with any academic essay, planning is key to success and only a minority of submissions displayed significant deficiencies in this respect. Many candidates utilised the permissible word length very well. Few candidates exceeded the permissible word length and Centres appear to be communicating the importance of this limit to their candidates with essay word length noted at the end of the essay. Essays substantially shorter than the advised minimum length of 1750 words were more common. The suggested lower limit is not counted in the same way, but examiners may find it difficult to award at higher levels. This particularly applies to criterion 3, as a very good or excellent understanding of source material cannot be demonstrated or in the case of criterion 5 where perspectives are neither detailed nor full.

Essays were, generally, well-structured and followed accepted conventions making them easy to read and understand candidates' thinking and direction. Highly successful candidates displayed a particularly good level of planning, when striking the necessary balance between the presentation of evidence, analysis, evaluation and synthesis in order to address all assessment criteria.

An informed and thoughtful consideration and wording of the essay title or question is the starting point for a successful essay. The best titles are concise and leave little room for confusion as to the candidate's aims. For instance, *'Is it ethical to have an abortion?'*, or, *'Should the death penalty be legal?'*, offer questions which are clear and, as they call into question ethics and values, contrasting perspectives may be developed in differing global contexts. Conversely, many titles do not serve this purpose as is the case with, *'How can the effects of HIV be controlled worldwide?'*. Quite often, essay titles took an all-too common form as in, *'To what extent should video games be considered a sport?'*. The tendency here is to provide an answer which is descriptive and framed in terms of degree rather than offering any contrast. In a quite different example, a candidate asks, *'Is there life after death?'*. It is difficult to see how this question could be reasonably answered given its hypothetical nature and the absence of sources addressing the question. Finally *'Is dance a more artistic expression?'*, is open-ended with limitless possibilities and creates problems for the candidate in providing an adequate answer. Precision will help to focus candidates' minds.

Only a minority of candidates appear to understand the centrality of globally contrasting perspectives when planning and writing their essays. Their starting point is to articulate precisely what these perspectives are and why they are global in character. Arguments and evidence are analysed and evaluated for one perspective and then for the other. Having clearly established the terms and content of the debate, they

move on to synthesising the evidence for both perspectives lending them coherence and order, explaining the particular strengths or weaknesses within each perspective before offering a comparative evaluation which will lead them to a supported conclusion. Essentially, candidates who follow this process are thinking in terms of perspectives throughout the essay. Without doubt, this process of reconstruction is not an easy one but necessary if candidates are to achieve at a higher level.

Many candidates encountered difficulties in developing globally contrasting perspectives, limiting the opportunity to achieve at higher levels, whilst a significant number struggled to develop contrasting perspectives, limiting their achievement to lower levels. Some of the recurring issues which contributed to these difficulties follow:

- Some candidates' research was framed by questions which appeared to offer little hope of developing a contrasting perspective, as in, *'To what extent does damage to the ozone layer reflect its consequences on earth?'* Little effort was made to develop the contrasting perspective that there are no consequences. This might be due to the inherent difficulties of evidencing that possibility, instead of which the candidate discussed measures which might serve to mitigate the consequences. Whilst this approach might be considered to result in the development of another perspective, it must be understood that it is a complementary rather than contrasting perspective.
- Quite often, candidates will research a topic which has the potential for contrast across differing global contexts, as in *'Should human cloning be banned?'* The candidate undertook worthwhile research, presenting arguments both for and against but which were not contextualised with specific regions or nation states. Nor were they clearly differentiated as a consequence of levels of economic development, differing political systems or with differing cultural or religious traditions. This approach fails to engage with differentiated human experience and the perspectives developed, whilst contrasting, were not globally contrasting.
- Alternatively, candidates frame their question in terms which preclude global contrast, as in, *'Should VAR be implemented in the English Premier League?'*, or, *'Are transgenic crops beneficial for Argentina?'* Whilst it is possible to introduce global contrast, more often than not, when questions are framed in such narrow terms, it is not.

## **Comments by criterion**

### **Criterion 1: Communication**

Criterion 1 focuses on communication skills, essay structure and the quality of citations and referencing. Almost universally, candidates are well-versed in essay structure and, on the whole, examiners find essays generally clear in their direction and easy to follow. Candidates commonly achieve at level 3 with a substantial number achieving at level 4 as their command of English is very good. Just a small number of candidates reach level 5 by virtue of the quality of expression, use of a wide-ranging vocabulary and complex sentence structure. Many candidates could improve their level through quite simple measures including careful proof reading, removing common and repetitive errors, the use of 'signposting' to guide the reader through the different stages of the essay and appropriate paragraphing. It is encouraging to see that many candidates are utilising a substantial introduction to successfully convey the purpose and direction of the essay, identify contrasting perspectives with examples and define key terms. One candidate investigating humanitarian intervention situated the arguments thus, *'On one hand, local corrupt rulers commit crimes against humanity, leading many to call for the more civilized countries to step in. Others argue that overthrowing leadership would lead to even more uncertainty, both in the short and long term. The justifications for military interventions are oftentimes unclear: the analysis of whether it is truly for the purposes of humanitarianism or purely a plan to benefit one side isn't explored thoroughly enough. When conclusions can be made, the time to reconsider has already passed'*.

Whilst the quality of communication and essay structure is the main determinant of level, examiners take careful note of the quality of citations and referencing which may impact this level positively or negatively. Citations should clearly indicate the source used on that page without ambiguity and then appear in the bibliography. Many candidates use the briefest in-text citation which is inadequate and, quite often, not all citations appear in the bibliography or appear in a bibliography listing many sources which have not been used. Others use only web addresses which are ineffective as they frequently omit the author's name and date of original publication. An increasing number of centres are encouraging their candidates to use numbered citations which are translated into full, footnoted citations which is highly effective and has the added advantage that they do not contribute to the overall word count of the essay.

### **Criterion 2: Source selection**

Criterion 2 examines the quality of source selection. A significant minority of essays were reliant on fact-based sources, which were descriptive and devoid of argument. Whilst their inclusion may have some value, they are less open to meaningful analysis and evaluation when addressing the third criterion. Many essays, including some which were particularly well formulated, were entirely reliant on Western sources, limiting them to Level 3 for this criterion. Additionally, by using limited sources it can then be difficult to develop perspectives with global contrast. Many candidates from centres which are not in the West base their research entirely on Western sources when local sources which are readily at hand would improve their achievement for this criterion and, probably, for others also. In order to achieve at higher levels, candidates are required to access sources which demonstrate global contrast. The term global should be understood in a wider context than, simply, geographical region. Sources may originate from differing cultural, religious or political systems or traditions as well as from countries or regions with differing levels of economic or industrial development. It can be a challenge for candidates to locate Anglophone sources of contrasting provenance, but the higher-achieving often made good use of international English-medium news outlets, like Al Jazeera, the Straits Times, the Cape Argus and China Daily. When deciding on an essay title and the research they intend to pursue, candidates need to be aware of the range of sources they can access. One candidate who asked the question, *'Is social media tearing us apart?'*, used sources originating in Indonesia, Hong Kong and Turkey in addition to several Western sources and achieved at the highest level.

### **Criterion 3: Analysis of sources**

Criterion 3 concerns the treatment of sources in terms of analysis and evaluation and should be considered as containing two distinct elements, both of which require fulfilment for high achievement. A key issue here (and linking to the previous criterion) is one of quantity or quality. In order to achieve well for criterion 2, sources should be detailed or full and detailed. In order to achieve well for criterion 3, analysis should show a very good or full understanding and critical evaluation should be undertaken across a range of criteria. It is difficult to see how any of the above can be achieved with a large number of sources. The strongest essays tend to be limited to a relatively small number of principal sources with, perhaps, other sources used to provide background data, facts or corroboration. Successful candidates used relatively brief, yet telling, quotations from sources followed by critical analysis and few candidates achieved less than Level 3. Occasionally, candidates incorporate lengthy quotations from sources which is not helpful as this limits the candidates' own work within the permissible word length. The outcomes for evaluation were very mixed. Many candidates offered no evaluation although an increasing number do so. At the lower levels, evaluation is both formulaic and simplistic, restricted to assertive comments on bias and the author's credentials and biography (sometimes at great length). Successful candidates assessed the credibility of the sources' claims and implications for the candidate's conclusions about their focal question. In an essay investigating animal research, the candidate identifies both strengths and weaknesses of a source in a relatively brief paragraph as follows, *'The strength of this source mainly lies in its appeal to emotion. For example, poignant words such as "pain" and "distress" are used to illustrate how cruelly laboratory animals are treated, which is quite effective in persuading the audience. However, although this type of language may stir the emotions of the readers, the argument contains inductive reasoning and produces an invalid conclusion, since it is based on a minimal selection of specific examples, and no evidence is given to prove that these instances are representative of the majority of the procedures.'*

### **Criterion 4: Empathy for perspectives**

The next three criteria assess perspectives. To demonstrate a developed dimension of global contrast, candidates must explore how perspectives on a topic differ in differing global contexts (e.g. that GM crops might provoke concerns about agri-industrial monopolies in MEDCs but offer scope to avert starvation in LEDCs). Asserting generically that a topic is of inherent global relevance (e.g. that gay people face discrimination in many countries/everywhere or that climate affects us all) attracts little or no credit for developing global contrast. Specifically, Criterion 4 examines a candidate's capacity to present perspectives in a balanced way, as well as displaying empathy for alternative perspectives by way of acceptance or understanding of an opposing view and especially one they do not agree with. This does not necessarily need to be overtly stated as an essay which gives equal room and treatment to contrasting perspectives is indicative of a measure of empathy. However, this balance, coupled with a clear appreciation of opposing views, will raise the level of achievement. One candidate researching into an EU ban on palm oil wrote, *'After much deliberation, I believe that both the environment and people's wellbeing are indispensable; we can't sacrifice one for the other. Farmers' dependence on palm oil shouldn't be an excuse for reckless deforestation, but the EU's strong measures may lead to unpredictable consequences. I think the EU's target of phasing out palm oil by 2030 is too quick, and they should wait until a better alternative has been found.'*

*However, the limiting of subsidies could be a good way to incentivize farmers to plant palm trees correctly and reduce the damage to the forests’.*

### **Criterion 5: Globality of perspectives**

Criterion 5 involves an assessment of the character and quality of the perspectives developed. The majority of candidates had little difficulty in developing contrasting perspectives and many developed global dimensions and global contrast. A smaller number offered little or no contrast as a consequence of generating a single or vague perspective. It is essential that candidates have undertaken sufficient research and reading in order to clarify, in their own minds, which perspectives are relevant to the topic they are researching, the degree of contrast they generate and the extent to which they can be globally differentiated. With this in mind, they must be prepared to modify their approach or, quite possibly, consider a different area of research. Only when perspectives are globally contrasting can candidates access levels 3, 4 and 5. To reach high levels candidates need to consider multiple global contexts. The best candidates demonstrated an awareness of how and why these differed – e.g. by exploring how differing cultures, economies and histories have formed different perspectives. Examiners will also consider the breadth and range of arguments assembled in developing perspectives.

### **Criterion 6: Analysis of perspectives**

Criterion 6 assesses candidates’ understanding and evaluation of perspectives. This is a key area for development across the majority of centres, as candidates rarely synthesise the arguments derived from sources into clearly delineated perspectives. Stronger candidates are able to analyse and evaluate the relative strengths of arguments in terms of their contribution to perspectives as well as evaluate the relative strengths of perspectives. Not only do perspectives become coherent as a consequence of this work, but so does the conclusion which, to a large extent, is justified as a result. Having said that, many more candidates are outlining perspectives in their introductions as well as offering some explanation of their contrasting nature and global character, possibly supported by some key data. Not only is this beneficial to the candidate in providing focus but also to the examiner who, from an early stage, has a clear idea of the candidate’s intent. Candidates’ work benefits from analysing and explaining contributing arguments but it is essential that they understand they are the building blocks used to construct and develop perspectives; the central aim of this component.

### **Criterion 7: Conclusion and reflection**

Criterion 7 assesses the quality of the conclusion and the level descriptors indicate that examiners are looking for several contributing factors. The starting point is a supported and balanced conclusion which should emerge from a consideration of the relative merits of developed perspectives. Better conclusions go beyond generic and noncommittal acknowledgements that both perspectives have some merit or simple summaries of competing arguments. Candidates are also assessed on their capacity for reflection and it is important to note that examiners are not looking for reflection on the work processes or research undertaken. Whilst it is important that candidates should develop their learning skills, reflection on this should not form any part of the conclusion. Candidates should reflect on their findings; what are the implications and consequences for their personal standpoint, other people, communities or nation states? Included within one candidate’s conclusion was, *‘The role of censorship has changed. Censorship is meant to protect society from a spread of harmful information and fear. We censor ourselves daily; avoiding certain topics because they can be insulting or are a taboo to talk about, keeping thoughts to ourselves as they may not be socially acceptable, or avoiding cursing in front of children. Censorship is something that comes naturally to humanity and is an integral part of life. Though in the hands of a government, it can be turned into a weapon against civilians or journalists, controlling what information does reach us and what doesn’t. Where it goes wrong is the lack of clear international or even local laws on journalism and censorship’.* This extract is indicative of a candidate reflecting, more broadly, on the question

Finally, a further element of reflection is required whereby the candidate makes suggestions for further research which they could undertake, rather than the generic need for further research by academics, experts or the world at large. This element was commonly overlooked altogether and reduced candidates’ marks. Successful candidates accept that their research is limited or incomplete and go on to consider how they may further their own understanding, as well as indicate specific research to achieve this.



# GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

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Paper 9239/03  
Team Project

## **Key messages**

Issues benefit from being defined in a variety of ways, supported by relevant research.

Differences between perspectives should be explained and justified.

It is important to control the length of arguments up to the eight minute limit for the presentation.

Reflective papers should give specific and detailed examples to support judgements about collaborative work and learning.

## **General comments**

### **Individual Presentation**

#### **Definition of the Issue**

The first step towards a successful Team Project presentation is the candidate's definition of the team's issue. This gives rise to the exploration of the problem in response to which the candidate is presenting their solution. This was done in a variety of different ways, and there is more than one successful method which can be used. In general, presentations which took a statement rather than a question as their title were better able to use this to define the issue. One presentation, on mental health issues in young people, was able to successfully define its issue by doing so in a variety of different contexts which built up successive layers of detail. Mental illness is first defined as '*a pattern in behaviour, thought, or emotion, which is seen as abnormal and can cause problems with social, work, or familial activities*' then specific examples such as '*clinical depression*' are given and then finally the '*Blue Whale challenge*', popularised through the internet in several countries including Russia and India, is explained as a process which '*starts off by telling someone to do harmless little tasks such as sitting down on a chair or touch a tree, but it eventually becomes darker and darker telling someone to cut themselves or punch someone nearby, and ended on the 50th day with suicide*'. In that way, the full picture of the issue which has been chosen is successively revealed.

Detailed and focused research also worked well in other presentations to support the definition of an issue. One presentation, on waste from single-use plastic, worked quickly and concisely to define the problem from a variety of different sources of research:

*'According to the Environmental Protection Agency, a staggering 75 per cent of total plastic waste created ends up either in landfills or the natural environment, with only 9 per cent being recycled. Around 50 per cent of the plastic we produce is used for plastic packaging, which is responsible for over 64 per cent of total marine plastic waste. Approximately 80 per cent of the marine plastic waste comprises everyday plastic items such as bags, bottles and straws which have found their way to the ocean, carried commonly by rivers. The United Nations Education Program has warned that microplastics, small particulates of plastics that have discharged from big chunks via sunlight, pose a threat to both maritime life and humans who ultimately consume them.'*

#### **Differentiation of Perspectives**

Candidates who stated their own perspective and those of the other members of their team were able to access higher levels. Those who engaged with those other perspectives and more fully differentiated their own, justifying its distinctive strengths as part of their argument, scored higher still. For example, a presentation on the problem of poverty not only focused on educational approaches to alleviating it, but also

explained why education offered a more effective and long-term strategy than either making welfare payments or increasing employment through economic reforms. Simply stating the different perspectives allows candidates to make some progress but is not sufficient in itself.

### Structure of Argument

It is important that candidates control the structure of their argument so that it fits within the eight minute running time. Presentations which exceeded this could only be credited for the first eight minutes and consequently could not be awarded marks for the conclusion, or parts of the conclusion. Presentations which were significantly less than eight minutes made it harder for candidates to elaborate an argument which defined and supported their issue then moved to a conclusion and solution.

### Conclusion

Conclusions were at their strongest where a solution was proposed and linked to relevant research and argument. This meant that the solution was justified and not simply stated. Presentations were also strengthened where the solution was fully relevant to the issue and problem which had been previously explained, and did not emerge suddenly.

### Presentational Skills

Successful presentations combined the effective design of visual materials with sustained audience engagement. These included slides containing visual information and evidence which candidates used explicitly to support specific stages in their arguments, and the use of language, gesture and other aspects of personal performance which recognised the presence of an audience and engaged with them in order to strengthen the candidate's arguments.

### Reflective Paper

The reflective paper consists of two distinct parts which are given credit: an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the collaborative work of the group, and a reflection on the learning which the candidate has achieved in undertaking the project. Successful instances of this picked out examples of how team members had worked together and highlighted both strengths and weaknesses. Reflective papers which included both of these elements tended to score well, and sustained, evidenced explorations scored highly. Candidates scored less well when either or both were omitted, so credit could not be given. The following extract from a reflective paper illustrates well a careful reflection on learning. It is written in response to the issue of whether Western countries should send aid to sub-Saharan Africa:

*'Before I had done this research, I actually did not had a really clear opinion on this topic. Of course I heard about some people who gave a lot of money, and others who did nothing. My cousin goes to Africa every year to build houses etc. and I was always quite impressed that he did that. Is it really useful to go to Africa and help these people, if they can not maintain the wells they dig, for example? In addition, if Western people go there to help the children, it is so hard for the African children to see these people go home again. They got close to these persons and now they are leaving again. Maybe we think too quickly that we can personally do something there with almost no preparation. It would be better in my opinion to only send people who are good informed and specialised in what they are going to do. Because if we do something, which is needed I agree, it needs to be useful as well.'*

The candidate here takes the opportunity of the reflective paper to thoughtfully question their views and experiences in relation to the issue and shows some specific ways in which these have been developed by the experience of doing the project.

# GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH

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Paper 9239/04  
Paper 4

## Key messages

- Reports should be sure to explore the implications of questions asked and to respond to the demands for higher order thinking skills.
- Evaluation of perspectives should demonstrate sustained and supported critical thinking.
- There should be clear reflection on the findings of the report and the methods used in the body of the report.

## General comments

The aim of moderation is to try to support centre marking wherever possible and to understand why marks have been awarded in order to assess whether the marking criteria have been applied consistently and appropriately. To assist centres, it may be helpful to explain why centre marking was accepted.

In terms of AO1 Research there was a considerable amount of agreement because the analysis made of the centre assessed researched skills was largely consistent with the marks given. Where the logs clearly reflected the process of research and have been maintained through the research period, then higher level marks could be accepted. Most centres recognised when there was less developed use of logs, for instance in merely recording the content of evidence selected, the marks were appropriately given at a lower level.

Where marks for AO1 Analysis were accepted, marking recognised the range of sources used and their relevance to the investigation. Higher marks were reserved for accurate and relevant use of a range of evidence, duly referenced in building up different perspectives and when conclusions were derived from relevant evidence. There were some strong reports which used sharply pertinent and often challenging evidence which was well understood and used effectively. Where there was a narrower range and where there was more description than analysis of source material or when there were large sections of the report which did not show how information or arguments were based on evidence, then accurate centre marking noted this and took this into account when awarding marks. Where answers did not address the question and where evidence was not chosen with sufficient discrimination to respond to the terms of the topics studied, then accurate marking kept to the lower levels of the mark scheme.

Acceptable marking for AO1 Evaluation saw a distinction between developed and well supported evaluation which demonstrated higher order thinking skills of judgement and judgements which were not so sustained. Comments which were based on assertions or were over reliant on noting the origin and nature of evidence were not scored over highly, a distinction was made between true corroboration and comments which merely noted that their sources agreed or disagreed. There was an understanding that simply juxtaposing views as opposed to developing corroboration by reference to evidence in different sources should not be over-rewarded. Where there was little or no specific evaluation of evidence or different views and overall perspectives, but simply explanation or description, successful marking did not hesitate to use the lower mark range.

In terms of communication of argument, there was clear explanation of why marks had been awarded on the basis of the oral interview and the information was not about the work itself but rather the candidate's ability to explain and justify findings. Marks for the conveying of arguments clearly were justified by the clarity of explanation and judgements. As with the other assessment objectives, an appropriate rank order of merit was clear, and the comments were directly linked to the demands of the assessment objectives. Marking which was accepted drew a clear distinction between the communication of argument and the general accuracy of writing.

When assessing the key element of reflection, marking which was accepted recognised higher level analysis which was specifically related to the topic and considered the methodology adopted, explaining how research had modified or confirmed views and considered the adequacy of conclusions, a vital part of the critical path. There was an understanding that more general comments or less developed reflection of personal experience not well related to the actual research should not be over rewarded. Accurate marking focused on what is contained in the report itself rather than what might have been implicit in the log, since that was assessed as part of AO1 Research.

Marking which was accepted showed a clear understanding of the requirements of the assessment objectives and often had valuable marginal annotation relating to analysis and evaluation. More descriptive or irrelevant sections were clearly indicated and when there was evaluation, the quality of that evaluation was indicated. The overall marks for each assessment objective were consistent with the marginal comments and also with the final overall comments.

It was very helpful to moderators that so many centres were able to mark in line with the requirements of the assessment objectives and to show with clarity why marks had been awarded.

### ***Areas for development***

As was often noticed by centres, it is important for reports to focus on the question. It is not just a matter of not veering from the topic but being aware of the implications of the requirement for higher order skills of discussion and judgement and not merely demonstrating a viewpoint. Stronger answers kept a balance between two perspectives, both of which had credibility. This is important or else the report is not looking at viable alternatives but making an obvious case for a viewpoint which offers little viable challenge. One-way defences of a position do not demonstrate the skill of weighing competing evidence and considering alternatives in a sympathetic and empathetic way. There is no need to believe in a position which may seem untenable. One may have very passionate views say about a woman's right to choose to have an abortion.

However, if one has chosen to discuss the issue then alternative views should be explored, understood and their basis respected even if in the end the evidence leads one to a contrary conclusion. But reports should do more than summarise the different views and arguments on both sides, however sympathetically with reaching a judgement. The view may be hedged with all sorts of qualifications but in the end a critical approach to a problem should lead to a conclusion. The Reflection may show that there were limitations in methodology and range of evidence which is quite acceptable. However, simply describing evidence is not really enough. So, between the dogmatic and the indecisive there is a happy medium which if developed and based on a critical examination of evidence and views deserves respect by markers and moderators.

What is outlined above does need not only widen research but the ability to step back and think through the whole research process. Sometimes the development of that thinking was very clearly, effectively and sometimes movingly shown in a log. Sometimes the log seemed dry and cold, showing little emotional or personal involvement in the investigation and remaining a record of the note taking of websites, books or articles. The keeping of a log is a key element in developing the sort of engaged analysis that results in some of the very striking and developed analysis that was offered by the strongest reports.

As has been stated before the main area for development remains the evaluation of evidence and views. Clear evaluative vocabulary is often helpful here and being aware of a counter view is not in itself evaluation unless both sides are tested and the evidence underpinning subject to critical assessment. This key element is an extension of the skills learnt and deployed in the earlier units so it is important that the Research Report is not seen as a stand-alone and separate 'project' and that candidates understand that it is not the detailed content that is being assessed but the use of it to support a sustained discussion.

Obviously in such a complex exercise there is always room for development and improvement but once again the initiative and energy shown by candidates in engaging in independent research and organising their time and the material collected into coherent and mostly well written extended reports is the main feature for celebration. Teachers who have facilitated this even when the actual results are variable in terms of the assessment objectives should be congratulated as should students who have tackled this rewarding task.