GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

> **Paper 9239/11**
> **Written Exam 11**

Key messages

Candidates should ensure they read the paper carefully, looking at the key words, to answer all the questions set. This applied in all questions, for example in **Question 1(a)**: 'identify', 'economic reasons', 'as given by the author', **Question 1(b)**: 'groups of protesters' 'named by the author', **Question 2**: 'evidence' and 'impact', **Question 3**: 'perspectives', 'judgement' and 'stronger'.

It was pleasing to see that far fewer candidates spent too long on **Question 1** and so left themselves much more time for **Question 2** and **Question 3** which had much higher total marks. **Question 1** only requires short answers or bullet points, and most candidates answered in this way. However, candidates should be aware that the responses to **Question 1(a)** might be found anywhere in **Document A** and responses to **Question 1(b)** might be found anywhere in **Document B**.

To gain higher marks in **Questions 2** and **3** there should be clear development of the points made. For example, making a point, illustrating using information or appropriate quotes from the text and explaining it in the context of the document. 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 perspectives in **Question 3** and reflection on the impact of the evidence in **Question 2**. In both documents, judgements are required.

Candidates will not gain credit for using material from their own knowledge that is not contained within the documents. Copying from the document is acceptable in the identification questions in **Question 1** but not for analysis and evaluation in **Question 2** and **Question 3.**

The marking approach is closely linked to the Assessment Objectives (AOs) given in the syllabus. These AOs are split into distinct aspects so candidates should be aware of what they are assessing and to develop their answers accordingly.

AOs requiring specific improvement are: **AO1c** (Evaluation) in **Question 2** and **AO1b** (Perspectives) in **Question 3.**

General comments

There was little evidence of candidates misunderstanding the documents and many showed an understanding of the requirements of the questions and adapted to the direction given. However, several candidates did not respond effectively to the need to explain the impact of the evidence on the author's argument in **Question 2**. This was specifically mentioned in the second part of the question emphasising the need to read and understand the **whole** of the question before answering. Equally some did not address the authors' perspectives in **Question 3** as mentioned in the question. Some also gave only cursory intermediate judgements or a final judgement that could have applied to any set of documents.

Many candidates organised their time well. In particular candidates who were brief and focused in their answers to **Question 1** and confined their answers to assessing evidence in **Question 2** leaving more time for **Question 3** which was worth over half the number of available marks. It is important that candidates recognise the value of each question and to write an appropriate amount.

Some answers to **Question 3** were not fully developed or supported by precise references to the documents. Stronger responses selected relevant and appropriate points from the documents and evaluated their significance as part of the argument. Stronger answers also considered the authors' perspectives and compared them in both documents.

The rubric of the paper requires candidates to write in continuous prose.

While concise answers in **Question 1** are acceptable and encouraged, in **Questions 2** and **3** full paragraphing in an essay format, rather than bullet points, should be used.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Question 1 encourages candidates to fully read and understand the detail of both documents before starting the questions. The question paper indicates that approximately 15 minutes should be used for this. It is included within the time set for the exam. Answers only need to be brief and can be in bullet points. A few candidates chose to leave **Question 1** until after they had answered the other two questions. The answers to **Question 1(a)** and **1(b)** are found as part of the reading and understanding of the documents. These answers are relatively straight forward to extract and record and so answering the questions in order is a recommended approach.

There are two parts to **Question 1**. **1(a)** refers to **Document A** and **1(b)** refers to **Document B**. Candidates are encouraged to answer both questions before proceeding to **Question 2**.

Both parts of the question are looking for candidates to **identify** points mentioned by the Author. There is no requirement nor expectation that explanation is included. Copying appropriately from the document is acceptable.

Question 1(a) was looking for candidates to **identify** economic reasons for peoples anger as given by the author of **Document A.**

Many gained the full three marks by mentioning, for example, 'increase in train fares', 'rising fuel prices' and 'economies have crashed'. A significant number suggested 'suspicious election results in leftist Bolivia', however as this was not an economic reason it could not be rewarded. Some mentioned 'corruption' and 'crime' which are also not economic reasons.

An example of a 3-mark answer was:

* *Increases in train fares*
* *Rising fuel prices*
* *Growth has started to stagnate*

A 1-mark answer was:

* *Corruption scandals have swept through Latin America.* [not an economic reason]
* *Crime and Violence are on the increase.* [not an economic reason]
* *The economy has crashed, economic growth has started to stagnate* [two economic reasons that were both considered to be the same point about the worsening state of the economies in Latin America]

Question 1(b) was looking for candidates to **identify** two groups of protesters named by the author of **Document B**. There were only two identified by the author: 'Black Lives Matter' and 'New Left' and so those were the only creditworthy answers. Groups of protestors such as 'Lifelong activists' or 'Casual participants' could not be accepted as they are not named groups. Candidates generally identified both correct answers or neither of them.

An example of an approach to **Question 1(b) giving 1 out of 2 marks** was:

* *Black Lives Matter Protesters* [Correct]
* *Racism protesters* [Not a named group of protesters]

Question 2

This question was generally well answered with most candidates correctly assessing to some extent the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence used by the author to **support** their argument. Some candidates concentrated more on the assessment of the argument which was not expected in this question. There was a

specific requirement in the question to explain the impact of the evidence on the author's argument. Most candidates attempted some explanation, but few were able to develop this sufficiently to achieve higher marks. The question was looking for analysis of 'evidence' and so answers that related to language or structure were not credited in this question.

Most common discussion points were around the provenance of the author, the statistics and sources used, the unsourced data, and vague statistics. Candidates seemed better able to address strengths accurately and so answers can be unbalanced. In many cases evidence later in the answer had less discussion.

Candidates were assessed on Assessment Objective 1 (**AO1** – research, analysis, and evaluation.) The three aspects were: Identifying evidence (**AO1a**), Analysing the strengths and weaknesses of evidence (**AO1b**), and evaluating evidence (**AO1c**). Many candidates gained high marks for **AO1a**. Marks for **AO1b** showed the greatest range. Many candidates scored lower marks for **AO1c**.

A clearly structured approach for some was to:

- Identify a type of evidence (**AO1a**)
- give an example from the document (**AO1a**)
- assess whether it is a strength or weakness (**AO1b**)
- explain why it is a strength or weakness (**AO1b**)
- evaluate the impact of the evidence on the argument (**AO1c**)

For **AO1a** – Identify evidence – candidates were expected to give examples from the document to illustrate the **types** of evidence rather than providing a general answer that could apply to any document. Without examples, candidates could not gain more than half marks.

For example, '*…this is a great strength as it is backed up by numbers*.'
This identifies the use of numbers as evidence but does not offer any examples of numerical data from the document. Use of this approach throughout would gain less than half marks.

A higher scoring candidate for this aspect would give several types of evidence with examples, such as: '*it has plenty of relevant quantitative data, with statistics such as '53% of Latin Americans feel corruption has gotten worse'* The candidate made a point about statistics and gave an example.

For **AO1b** – Analysing the strengths and weaknesses of evidence

Higher scoring candidates analysed a range of evidence and looked for a balance between strengths and weaknesses. They also gave clear explanations as to **why** they were considered to be strengths or weaknesses rather than just stating a point.

For example: '*One weakness is that the text does not always clearly cite where the information is from, instead just stating, 'experts say.' This is weak evidence as the Author has not identified who the experts are and what their area of expertise is. This means we do not know if those 'experts' are qualified to comment on the citizens' faith in democracy and so cannot be sure their evidence is valid.*' The candidate identified a weakness, quoted it and explained why it was a weakness.

Lower scoring candidates concentrated on strengths rather than weaknesses (or the opposite) and only stated them with limited explanation.

For example: '*A strength is the authors use of credible sources such as 'Sergio Guzmán, director of Colombia Risk Analysis''. There* is a clear strength recognised with an example, but the explanation is limited. To improve, the candidate would need to explain why this source is seen to be credible.

For **AO1c** – evaluating evidence – candidates were expected to evaluate the impact of the evidence on the argument. This ranged from making a simple assertion, through some evaluation of the impact, to evaluation that included a judgement.

For example, lower scoring candidates used simple assertion without explaining why or how there is an impact on the argument. '*This evidence is strong because it supports the author's claim'.*

For example, higher scoring candidates evaluated the impact of the evidence on the argument and included a judgement of its effectiveness. '*When comparing these strengths and weaknesses it is reasonable to*

conclude that the evidence used in Document A consists of more strengths than weaknesses and this is more positive for the argument. The author uses a range of examples coming from reputable sources and statistical evidence. The authors strong provenance convinces the reader that apparently unsourced evidence has been chosen with care and can be considered valid in supporting the claim that people in Latin America are losing faith in democracy.'

The evaluation is well explained and there is an emphasis on the impact throughout this section. There is a judgement at the beginning which is then explained.

Question 3

The question asked candidates to evaluate the arguments of both authors and consider their perspectives. Candidates were also required to provide a judgement as to whether **Document A** was stronger than **Document B**, **Document B** was stronger than **Document A,** or they were both equally strong.

The most frequent approach was to directly compare the key components of the argument of the two documents throughout the answer. The higher scoring 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 for their preferred judgement. It was equally possible to evaluate the arguments of both documents separately and then have a concluding judgement. This tends to lead to fewer points being made and repetition in the conclusion.

Many candidates were able to pick out the aspects that reflect a strong argument, for example, the credibility of the authors and the amount of supporting evidence provided. Candidates achieving the highest marks gave clear examples from the documents and then explained the impact on the overall argument culminating in an intermediate judgement.

There were two assessment objectives used – **AO1** (Research, analysis, and evaluation) which was separated into four aspects. Identify and compare key components of arguments (**AO1a**), Analyse and compare perspectives (**AO1b**), Evaluate arguments (**AO1c**), Provide a judgement about argument and perspective (**AO1d**). The second assessment objective was **AO3** – communication.

The highest scoring responses adopted a structured response to answering the question by methodically:

- describing and explaining the perspectives of the authors of both documents (**AO1b**)

then:

- identifying and comparing key components of the argument (**AO1a**)
- evaluating the relative strengths of the key components of argument using appropriate examples and analysis of impact (**AO1c**)
- giving an intermediate judgement (**AO1d**)
- coming to a reasoned judgment as to which argument, if either, is stronger in a final conclusion. (**AO1d**)

For **AO1a** – Identify and compare key components of arguments – many candidates gained high marks as they were able to compare a range of key components of arguments from both documents. Some lacked comparison in their answer so were unable to achieve more than half marks.

For example, higher scoring candidates provided a range of compared key components. This is an example for one component – provenance, '*The author of Document A has a Master's Degree from Columbia University's 'School of International and Public Affairs' (US), with a focus on human rights, Latin America, and conflict resolution. This gives her the relevant education in the subject of human rights from a well-respected University. Her focus was also on the geographical area represented in the article. Document B was written by an associate professor at the University of North Carolina (US) who studies the interaction between digital technology, artificial intelligence, and society. She is also linked to a prestigious university, but her specialist knowledge is less relevant to the specific situation in America which does not seem to relate to of digital technology or AI, making her less of an expert.'*

For **AO1b** – Analyse and compare perspectives – there was a range of marks as some candidates did not provide any analysis of perspectives, while lower scoring candidates simply identified perspectives, often from just one document. However, higher scoring candidates compared, described, and explained the significance of the perspectives in both documents.

An example of a high scoring candidate is: '*The author of Document A being based in Mexico focuses entirely on protests from a Latin American viewpoint. In these countries it is implied by the authors tone within the article that protests are not working as of yet but are an essential catalyst for change. This line of thinking is sustained throughout, with the author stating that how governments respond would 'shape the next chapter of democracy'. On the other hand, Document B has a more US focused scope and a more positive stance on the effectiveness of public movements. From their American standpoint protests not only have worked countless times in the past, but they are more successful than would appear on the surface. In the authors opinion protests are a long-term vehicle for change both in individuals and society as a whole. Being focused on the way protests affect society it is clear by the authors tone that they consider both immediate and long-term effects of public movements*'.

Lower scoring candidates only stated the perspective without any analysis, for example: '*Document B's argument is about the positive impact of protests*' There is no description, comparison, or explanation.

For **AO1c** – Evaluate Arguments – Higher scoring candidates evaluated the key components of arguments that had been identified with clear illustration from and balanced reference to both the documents. Lower scoring candidates simply made unsupported points about the argument and may only have referred to one document.

An example of a higher scoring candidate providing evaluation and illustration is given here. This is one part of several evaluations that were balanced across both documents. '*Unlike Document A who considers all the countries in Latin America, Document B only considers evidence from protests in the USA, specifically Black Lives Matter and the New Left. This weakens the article as there is no evidence that the success of specific protests in the USA can be said to mean that all protests would cause long term change. Evidence from two movements cannot necessarily prove that all protests cause changes to people and society. This weakens the article because the conclusion cannot be proven to apply to the particular country the reader of the article comes from, and so is unconvincing*'.

Lower scoring candidates gave answers like: '*Document B does not provide any cited sources. This evidence weakens the author's text as it is unknown if it is reliable data or just the authors opinion.*'
There is some basic evaluation but no clear illustration nor reasoning as to the impact of this point on the argument. For example, why does having unsourced data make the argument less credible.

For **AO1d** – Provide a judgement about argument and perspective – Higher scoring candidates compared key components of the argument throughout their answer. This allowed intermediate judgements to be made when both documents had been evaluated and compared. They then provided a conclusion summarising the intermediate judgements they had made in order to come to an overall conclusion. Lower scoring candidates simply made partially reasoned but unsupported judgements.

High scoring candidates completed their answer with comments like this which summarised the intermediate conclusions throughout the answer: '*Overall Document A was stronger than Document B as it made use of a wide array of sourced evidence compared to B's complete lack thereof, creating a more balanced and considered argument than B. Document A also used more precise statistics further improving its arguments credibility. Whilst both Authors have impressive credentials the author of Document A's specialist knowledge was more relevant to her claims. However, Document B's author provided a clearer supported conclusion based on a logical argument. In all other aspects they were as strong as each other, and as result Document A presents a stronger more credible overall argument.*'

A lower scoring candidate might simply state an unsupported judgement, for example: '*In Documents A and B arguments are expressed regarding the effectiveness of protests. While both documents offer a good argument, Document B's is stronger and more balanced than Document A's* '

For **AO3** – Communication – higher scoring candidates produced a clearly written, well-structured and logical argument focused throughout on the question. Lower scoring candidates produced arguments that lack clarity, had an uneven structure, or did not always link to the question.

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

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

| Paper 9239/12 |
| Written Exam 12 |

Key messages

Candidates should ensure they read the paper carefully, looking at the key words, to answer all the questions set. This applies in all questions, for example in **Question 1**: 'identify', 'different', 'as given by the authors', **Question 1(a)**: 'different reasons…', **Question 1(b)**: 'different groups of people', **Question 2**: **'evidence'** and 'impact', **Question 3**: 'perspectives', 'judgement' and 'stronger'.

Some candidates spent too long on **Question 1** and so left themselves short of time for **Question 2** and **Question 3** which had much higher total marks. **Question 1** only required short answers or bullet points, with many following this approach.

To gain higher marks in **Questions 2** and **3,** there should be clear development of the points made. For example, making a point, illustrating it using information or appropriate quotes from the text and explaining it in the context of the document. Instead of just stating **what** a strength or weakness may be, the candidates should also explain **how** or **why** it is a strength or weakness. In **Question 2,** a reflection on the impact of the evidence on the argument is required. There should also be explicit reference to perspectives in **Question 3**. In both questions, judgements are required to assess how well the argument is supported with evidence in **Question 2** and which, if either, argument was considered the stronger in **Question 3**.

Candidates will not gain credit for using material from their own knowledge that is not contained within the documents. Copying from the document is acceptable in the identification questions in **Question 1** but not for analysis and evaluation in **Question 2** and **Question 3.**

The marking approach is closely linked to the Assessment Objectives (AOs) given in the syllabus. These AOs are split into distinct aspects, so candidates should be aware of what they are being assessed on and develop their answers accordingly.

AOs requiring specific improvement are: AO1c (Evaluation) in **Question 2**, AO1b (Perspectives) and AO1c (Evaluation) in **Question 3**.

General comments

There was little evidence of candidates misunderstanding the documents and many showed an understanding of the requirements of the questions and adapted to the direction given. However, many candidates did not respond effectively to the need to explain the impact of the evidence on the author's argument in **Question 2**. This was specifically mentioned in the second part of the question, emphasising the need to read and understand the **whole** of the question before answering. Equally, some candidates did not address the author's perspectives in **Question 3** as mentioned in the question. Some candidates also gave only cursory intermediate judgements or a final judgement that could have applied to any set of documents.

Most candidates organised their time well. However, some spent too long on **Question 1** and **Question 2**, leaving less time for **Question 3** which was worth over half the number of available marks. It is important to recognise the value of each question and to write an appropriate amount when answering.

Some answers to **Question 3** were not fully developed or supported by precise references to the documents. Stronger responses selected relevant and appropriate points from the documents and evaluated their significance as part of the argument. Stronger answers also considered the authors' perspectives and compared them in both documents.

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

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Question 1 encourages candidates to fully read and understand the detail of both documents before starting the questions. The question paper indicates that approximately 15 minutes should be used for this, which is included in the time set for the exam. Answers only need to be brief and can be in bullet points. Some candidates wrote long answers which inevitably restricted the time available for the much higher number of available marks in **Question 2** and **Question 3**.

There are two parts to **Question 1**. **1(a)** refers to **Document A** and **1(b)** refers to **Document B**. Candidates are encouraged to answer both questions before proceeding to **Question 2**.

Both parts of the question are looking for candidates to **identify** points mentioned by the author. There is no requirement or expectation that explanation is included. Copying appropriately from the document is acceptable.

Question 1(a) was looking for candidates to **identify** different reasons that the International Olympic Committee (IOC) should consider a permanent location for the Olympic Games, according to the author of **Document A**.

Few candidates gained both marks as most gave different examples of the cost factors (human, environmental, financial) rather than finding another reason (self-sufficiency and sustainability). This required reading the whole document, as the second reason was near the end.

An example of a 2-mark answer was:

The two different reasons the IOC should consider…would be:

- *It will minimise further costs associated with the Olympics,*
- *It would be more self-sufficient/sustainable [by reducing human costs and environmental costs].*

An example of a 1-mark answer was:

- *High financial cost of hosting the largest sporting event in the world at a new location for one time use. [correct]*
- *High environmental costs like climate change, deforestation and human costs like economic stagnation… [Repetition as the answer again considers the cost as a reason]*

Question 1(b) was looking for candidates to **identify** three different groups of people who will pay for the Olympic Games in Calgary as given by the author of **Document B**. Most candidates gained three marks by mentioning private sponsors, the IOC and taxpayers.

Some gave three of the following: 'taxpayers', 'the public', 'Albertans', 'Calgarians', 'Canadians' which were not different as they essentially made up the same group of people. These candidates gained only 1 mark.

Question 2

This question was generally well answered with most candidates correctly assessing, to some extent, the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence used by the author to **support** their argument. There was a specific requirement in the question to explain the impact of the evidence on the author's argument. Many candidates attempted some explanation, but only some were able to develop this sufficiently to achieve higher marks. The question was looking for analysis of **evidence** and so answers that related to language or structure were not credited in this question.

Most common discussion points were around the sources of evidence (strengths and weaknesses) and the use of plausible global evidence. Also, the use of relevant statistics, where named and illustrated, were a

strength, but use of estimates and predictions were a weakness. Candidates seemed better able to address strengths accurately and so answers could be unbalanced.

Candidates were assessed on Assessment Objective 1 (AO1 – research, analysis, and evaluation.) The three aspects were: Identifying evidence (AO1a), Analysing the strengths and weaknesses of evidence (AO1b), and evaluating evidence (AO1c). Most candidates gained high marks for AO1a. Marks for AO1b showed the greatest range. Many candidates scored lower marks for AO1c with a significant number not addressing the impact on the argument at all.

A clearly structured approach for some was to:

- identify a type of evidence (AO1a)
- give an example from the document (AO1a)
- assess whether it is a strength or weakness (AO1b)
- explain why it is a strength or weakness (AO1b)
- evaluate the impact of the evidence on the argument (AO1c)

For AO1a – Identify evidence – candidates were expected to give examples from the document to illustrate the **types** of evidence rather than providing a general answer that could apply to any document. Without examples, candidates could not gain more than half marks.

A higher scoring candidate for this aspect would give several types of evidence with examples, such as: '*The author uses statistical evidence such as 12.6 billion USD, 1.5 – 2 million people...*' The candidate made a point about statistics and gave examples. Another type of evidence would be the use of sources, so a strength would be: *"The author has given evidence from some large organisations like 'Japan's National Audit Board'…"*

For AO1b - Analysing the strengths and weaknesses of evidence

Higher scoring candidates analysed a range of evidence and looked for a balance between strengths and weaknesses. They also gave clear explanations as to **why** they were considered to be strengths or weaknesses, rather than just stating a point.

For example: '*The author uses statistical evidence such as 12.6 billion USD, 1.5 – 2 million people and reduces Japan's GDP by 1.4 percent. Numerical evidence helps the audience visualise the impact of hosting the Olympics at a different venue every four years. This shows that there is tangible evidence, and that research has been done to gather the number making it unlikely that the evidence is fabricated.*' The candidate identified a strength, illustrated it and then explained why it was a strength. This one statement covers both AO1a and AO1b.

Lower scoring candidates concentrated on strengths rather than weaknesses (or the opposite) and only stated them with limited explanation.

For example: "*The author is an editor at 'Sports Law Journal' so the author has first-hand experience.*" There is a clear strength recognised with an example, but the explanation is limited. To improve, the candidate would need to explain why having first-hand experience is seen to be strong and how it impacts on the credibility of the argument. (Link to AO1c)

An example of a weakness is: "*Document A includes a variety of statistical data but most of the figures are vague and roughly allocated, such as: 'cost of roughly 12.6 billion USD', 'nearly 28 billion USD' and 'up to 1.4 percent.*" This gives an illustrated example of vague statistics, but it lacks explanation as to why this is a weakness.

For AO1c – evaluating evidence – candidates were expected to evaluate the impact of the evidence on the argument. This ranged from making a simple assertion, through some evaluation of the impact, to evaluation that included a judgement.

For example, lower scoring candidates used simple assertion without explaining why or how there is an impact on the argument. '*…this increases the credibility of the document and helps to trust the article more.*'

Higher scoring candidates evaluated the impact of the evidence on the argument and included a judgement of its effectiveness: '*Alexander did not cite the source that mentioned that Japan's GDP can be reduced up*

to 1.4 percent, or, 1250 acres of land was offered by Greece, who knows if any is accurate. It could easily have been forged, exaggerated, or understated by Alexander himself to strengthen his claims that the Olympic Games are harmful to Japan's GDP. Therefore, the lack of relevant source reduced the authoritative value of the article, weakening Document A.'

The evaluation is well explained and there is an emphasis on the impact throughout this section. There is a judgement at the end.

Question 3

The question asked candidates to evaluate the arguments of the authors of both documents and consider their perspectives. Candidates were also required to provide a judgement as to whether Document A was stronger than Document B, Document B was stronger than Document A, or they were both equally strong.

The most frequent approach was to directly compare the key components of the argument of the two documents throughout the answer. The higher scoring 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 one correct answer and candidates were free to argue for their preferred judgement. It was equally possible to evaluate the arguments of both documents separately and then have a concluding judgement. However, this tends to lead to fewer points being made and repetition in the conclusion.

Many candidates were able to pick out the aspects that reflect a strong argument, for example, the credibility of the authors and the amount of supporting evidence provided. Candidates achieving the highest marks gave clear examples from the documents and then explained the impact on the overall argument culminating in an intermediate judgement.

There were two assessment objectives used – AO1 (Research, analysis, and evaluation) which was separated into four aspects: Identify and compare key components of arguments (AO1a), Analyse and compare perspectives (AO1b), Evaluate arguments (AO1c), Provide a judgement about argument and perspective (AO1d). The second assessment objective was AO3 – communication.

The highest scoring responses adopted a structured response to answering the question by methodically:

- describing and explaining the perspectives of the authors of both documents (AO1b) then
- identifying and comparing key components of the argument (AO1a)
- evaluating the relative strengths of the key components of the argument using appropriate examples and analysis of impact (AO1c)
- giving an intermediate judgement (AO1d)
- coming to a reasoned judgment as to which argument, if either, is stronger in a final conclusion. (AO1d)

For AO1a – Identify and compare key components of arguments – many candidates gained high marks as they were able to compare a range of key components of arguments from both documents. Some lacked comparison in their answer so were unable to achieve more than half marks.

For example, higher scoring candidates provided a range of compared key components. This is an example for one component – style and tone: "*The language used in Document B is informal and vague, for example '…and hell, even have fun'. While the language in Document A on the other hand is more formal. This makes the argument for Document A stronger as the tone is neutral, objective and formal.*"

For AO1b – Analyse and compare perspectives – there were a range of marks seen. Some candidates did not provide any analysis of perspectives, while lower scoring candidates simply identified perspectives, sometimes from just one document. However, higher scoring candidates compared, described, and explained the significance of the perspectives in both documents. A significant number started with an analysis and comparison of the perspectives as part of an introductory paragraph which was a successful approach.

An example of a high scoring candidate is: '*[The author of] document A discusses this from a more economic viewpoint, dominantly explaining the fall in GDP, the large cost and that how being a host is harmful to the country's economy. Document B sheds light on the possible benefits of being a host country for social and economic reasons. It mainly discusses the values and solidarity between countries that may arise from this.*'

There is a direct comparison between the two documents with clear recognition that Document A looks at the problems of hosting but claims that a permanent site will be beneficial overall. Document B is optimistic about the advantages of hosting the Olympics in Calgary and has a perspective that encourages local people to support it.

Lower scoring candidates only stated the perspective without any analysis or explanation, for example: 'Documents A and B both talk about the Olympic Games. The author in *Document A is talking globally and how it affects cities, environmentally and economically. Document B focusses on Calgary, Alberta and why it should be conducted there.'* There is no description, comparison, or explanation.

For AO1c – Evaluate arguments – Higher scoring candidates evaluated the key components of arguments that had been identified with clear illustration from and balanced reference to both the documents. Lower scoring candidates simply made unsupported points about the argument and may only have referred to one document.

An example of a higher scoring candidate providing evaluation and illustration is given here. This is one part of several evaluations that were balanced across both documents: '*Although the job positions of Document B's authors are higher in rank, the job of document A's author, Alexander, is more related to the issue of sports in an international context. This shows that Alexander has dealt with these issues more often than the authors of Document B, Collins and Pittman, who would have focussed more on the policies of Canada. This shows that Alexander has expertise in this topic and is a more reliable source of information as he knows which information is likely to be false.'*

Lower scoring candidates gave answers like: "*Document B relies on only one source, a report by 'Canadian Broadcasting Corporation News' to show potential for cost overruns of the games. This shows a lack of adequate research into the article and a lack of validation."*

There is some basic evaluation but no clear illustration or reasoning as to the impact of this point on the argument. For example, in what way does relying on only one source to support the argument make the argument less credible?

For AO1d – Provide a judgement about argument and perspective – Higher scoring candidates compared key components of the argument throughout their answer. This allowed intermediate judgements to be made when both documents had been evaluated and compared. They then provided a conclusion summarising the intermediate judgements they had made in order to come to an overall conclusion. Lower scoring candidates simply made partially reasoned but unsupported judgements.

High scoring candidates completed their answer with comments like this, which summarised the intermediate conclusions throughout the answer: '*In conclusion, the argument in Document A is stronger than that of Document B as it has more global relevance, wider thematic application, diversity in evidence and source and uses a more formal and serious language/tone making the argument more convincing and reliable to the reader than the argument in Document B.'*

A lower scoring candidate might simply state an unsupported judgement, for example: '*Document A is stronger than Document B as it provides a better argument with multiple evidence and data to support. Document A had the most impact due to its more strengths in the argument.'*

For AO3 – Communication – higher scoring candidates produced a clearly written, well-structured and logical argument focused throughout on the question. Lower scoring candidates produced arguments that lack clarity, had an uneven structure, or did not always link to the question.

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

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

Paper 9239/13
Written Exam 13

Key messages

Candidates should ensure they read the paper carefully, looking at the key words, to answer all the questions set. This applies in all questions, for example in **Question 1**: 'identify', 'different', 'as given by the authors', **Question 1(a)**: 'different reasons…', **Question 1(b)**: 'different groups of people', **Question 2**: **'evidence'** and 'impact', **Question 3**: 'perspectives', 'judgement' and 'stronger'.

Some candidates spent too long on **Question 1** and so left themselves short of time for **Question 2** and **Question 3** which had much higher total marks. **Question 1** only required short answers or bullet points, with many following this approach.

To gain higher marks in **Questions 2** and **3,** there should be clear development of the points made. For example, making a point, illustrating it using information or appropriate quotes from the text and explaining it in the context of the document. Instead of just stating **what** a strength or weakness may be, the candidates should also explain **how** or **why** it is a strength or weakness. In **Question 2,** a reflection on the impact of the evidence on the argument is required. There should also be explicit reference to perspectives in **Question 3**. In both questions, judgements are required to assess how well the argument is supported with evidence in **Question 2** and which, if either, argument was considered the stronger in **Question 3**.

Candidates will not gain credit for using material from their own knowledge that is not contained within the documents. Copying from the document is acceptable in the identification questions in **Question 1** but not for analysis and evaluation in **Question 2** and **Question 3.**

The marking approach is closely linked to the Assessment Objectives (AOs) given in the syllabus. These AOs are split into distinct aspects, so candidates should be aware of what they are being assessed on and develop their answers accordingly.

AOs requiring specific improvement are: AO1c (Evaluation) in **Question 2**, AO1b (Perspectives) and AO1c (Evaluation) in **Question 3**.

General comments

There was little evidence of candidates misunderstanding the documents and many showed an understanding of the requirements of the questions and adapted to the direction given. However, many candidates did not respond effectively to the need to explain the impact of the evidence on the author's argument in **Question 2**. This was specifically mentioned in the second part of the question, emphasising the need to read and understand the **whole** of the question before answering. Equally, some candidates did not address the author's perspectives in **Question 3** as mentioned in the question. Some candidates also gave only cursory intermediate judgements or a final judgement that could have applied to any set of documents.

Most candidates organised their time well. However, some spent too long on **Question 1** and **Question 2**, leaving less time for **Question 3** which was worth over half the number of available marks. It is important to recognise the value of each question and to write an appropriate amount when answering.

Some answers to **Question 3** were not fully developed or supported by precise references to the documents. Stronger responses selected relevant and appropriate points from the documents and evaluated their significance as part of the argument. Stronger answers also considered the authors' perspectives and compared them in both documents.

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

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Question 1 encourages candidates to fully read and understand the detail of both documents before starting the questions. The question paper indicates that approximately 15 minutes should be used for this, which is included in the time set for the exam. Answers only need to be brief and can be in bullet points. Some candidates wrote long answers which inevitably restricted the time available for the much higher number of available marks in **Question 2** and **Question 3**.

There are two parts to **Question 1**. **1(a)** refers to **Document A** and **1(b)** refers to **Document B**. Candidates are encouraged to answer both questions before proceeding to **Question 2**.

Both parts of the question are looking for candidates to **identify** points mentioned by the author. There is no requirement or expectation that explanation is included. Copying appropriately from the document is acceptable.

Question 1(a) was looking for candidates to **identify** different reasons that the International Olympic Committee (IOC) should consider a permanent location for the Olympic Games, according to the author of **Document A**.

Few candidates gained both marks as most gave different examples of the cost factors (human, environmental, financial) rather than finding another reason (self-sufficiency and sustainability). This required reading the whole document, as the second reason was near the end.

An example of a 2-mark answer was:

The two different reasons the IOC should consider…would be:

- *It will minimise further costs associated with the Olympics,*
- *It would be more self-sufficient/sustainable [by reducing human costs and environmental costs].*

An example of a 1-mark answer was:

- *High financial cost of hosting the largest sporting event in the world at a new location for one time use. [correct]*
- *High environmental costs like climate change, deforestation and human costs like economic stagnation… [Repetition as the answer again considers the cost as a reason]*

Question 1(b) was looking for candidates to **identify** three different groups of people who will pay for the Olympic Games in Calgary as given by the author of **Document B**. Most candidates gained three marks by mentioning private sponsors, the IOC and taxpayers.

Some gave three of the following: 'taxpayers', 'the public', 'Albertans', 'Calgarians', 'Canadians' which were not different as they essentially made up the same group of people. These candidates gained only 1 mark.

Question 2

This question was generally well answered with most candidates correctly assessing, to some extent, the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence used by the author to **support** their argument. There was a specific requirement in the question to explain the impact of the evidence on the author's argument. Many candidates attempted some explanation, but only some were able to develop this sufficiently to achieve higher marks. The question was looking for analysis of **evidence** and so answers that related to language or structure were not credited in this question.

Most common discussion points were around the sources of evidence (strengths and weaknesses) and the use of plausible global evidence. Also, the use of relevant statistics, where named and illustrated, were a

strength, but use of estimates and predictions were a weakness. Candidates seemed better able to address strengths accurately and so answers could be unbalanced.

Candidates were assessed on Assessment Objective 1 (AO1 – research, analysis, and evaluation.) The three aspects were: Identifying evidence (AO1a), Analysing the strengths and weaknesses of evidence (AO1b), and evaluating evidence (AO1c). Most candidates gained high marks for AO1a. Marks for AO1b showed the greatest range. Many candidates scored lower marks for AO1c with a significant number not addressing the impact on the argument at all.

A clearly structured approach for some was to:

- identify a type of evidence (AO1a)
- give an example from the document (AO1a)
- assess whether it is a strength or weakness (AO1b)
- explain why it is a strength or weakness (AO1b)
- evaluate the impact of the evidence on the argument (AO1c)

For AO1a – Identify evidence – candidates were expected to give examples from the document to illustrate the **types** of evidence rather than providing a general answer that could apply to any document. Without examples, candidates could not gain more than half marks.

A higher scoring candidate for this aspect would give several types of evidence with examples, such as: '*The author uses statistical evidence such as 12.6 billion USD, 1.5 – 2 million people...*' The candidate made a point about statistics and gave examples. Another type of evidence would be the use of sources, so a strength would be: *"The author has given evidence from some large organisations like 'Japan's National Audit Board'…"*

For AO1b - Analysing the strengths and weaknesses of evidence

Higher scoring candidates analysed a range of evidence and looked for a balance between strengths and weaknesses. They also gave clear explanations as to **why** they were considered to be strengths or weaknesses, rather than just stating a point.

For example: '*The author uses statistical evidence such as 12.6 billion USD, 1.5 – 2 million people and reduces Japan's GDP by 1.4 percent. Numerical evidence helps the audience visualise the impact of hosting the Olympics at a different venue every four years. This shows that there is tangible evidence, and that research has been done to gather the number making it unlikely that the evidence is fabricated.*' The candidate identified a strength, illustrated it and then explained why it was a strength. This one statement covers both AO1a and AO1b.

Lower scoring candidates concentrated on strengths rather than weaknesses (or the opposite) and only stated them with limited explanation.

For example: "*The author is an editor at 'Sports Law Journal' so the author has first-hand experience.*" There is a clear strength recognised with an example, but the explanation is limited. To improve, the candidate would need to explain why having first-hand experience is seen to be strong and how it impacts on the credibility of the argument. (Link to AO1c)

An example of a weakness is: "*Document A includes a variety of statistical data but most of the figures are vague and roughly allocated, such as: 'cost of roughly 12.6 billion USD', 'nearly 28 billion USD' and 'up to 1.4 percent.*" This gives an illustrated example of vague statistics, but it lacks explanation as to why this is a weakness.

For AO1c – evaluating evidence – candidates were expected to evaluate the impact of the evidence on the argument. This ranged from making a simple assertion, through some evaluation of the impact, to evaluation that included a judgement.

For example, lower scoring candidates used simple assertion without explaining why or how there is an impact on the argument. '*…this increases the credibility of the document and helps to trust the article more.*'

Higher scoring candidates evaluated the impact of the evidence on the argument and included a judgement of its effectiveness: '*Alexander did not cite the source that mentioned that Japan's GDP can be reduced up*

to 1.4 percent, or, 1250 acres of land was offered by Greece, who knows if any is accurate. It could easily have been forged, exaggerated, or understated by Alexander himself to strengthen his claims that the Olympic Games are harmful to Japan's GDP. Therefore, the lack of relevant source reduced the authoritative value of the article, weakening Document A.'

The evaluation is well explained and there is an emphasis on the impact throughout this section. There is a judgement at the end.

Question 3

The question asked candidates to evaluate the arguments of the authors of both documents and consider their perspectives. Candidates were also required to provide a judgement as to whether Document A was stronger than Document B, Document B was stronger than Document A, or they were both equally strong.

The most frequent approach was to directly compare the key components of the argument of the two documents throughout the answer. The higher scoring 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 one correct answer and candidates were free to argue for their preferred judgement. It was equally possible to evaluate the arguments of both documents separately and then have a concluding judgement. However, this tends to lead to fewer points being made and repetition in the conclusion.

Many candidates were able to pick out the aspects that reflect a strong argument, for example, the credibility of the authors and the amount of supporting evidence provided. Candidates achieving the highest marks gave clear examples from the documents and then explained the impact on the overall argument culminating in an intermediate judgement.

There were two assessment objectives used – AO1 (Research, analysis, and evaluation) which was separated into four aspects: Identify and compare key components of arguments (AO1a), Analyse and compare perspectives (AO1b), Evaluate arguments (AO1c), Provide a judgement about argument and perspective (AO1d). The second assessment objective was AO3 – communication.

The highest scoring responses adopted a structured response to answering the question by methodically:

- describing and explaining the perspectives of the authors of both documents (AO1b) then
- identifying and comparing key components of the argument (AO1a)
- evaluating the relative strengths of the key components of the argument using appropriate examples and analysis of impact (AO1c)
- giving an intermediate judgement (AO1d)
- coming to a reasoned judgment as to which argument, if either, is stronger in a final conclusion. (AO1d)

For AO1a – Identify and compare key components of arguments – many candidates gained high marks as they were able to compare a range of key components of arguments from both documents. Some lacked comparison in their answer so were unable to achieve more than half marks.

For example, higher scoring candidates provided a range of compared key components. This is an example for one component – style and tone: "*The language used in Document B is informal and vague, for example '…and hell, even have fun'. While the language in Document A on the other hand is more formal. This makes the argument for Document A stronger as the tone is neutral, objective and formal.*"

For AO1b – Analyse and compare perspectives – there were a range of marks seen. Some candidates did not provide any analysis of perspectives, while lower scoring candidates simply identified perspectives, sometimes from just one document. However, higher scoring candidates compared, described, and explained the significance of the perspectives in both documents. A significant number started with an analysis and comparison of the perspectives as part of an introductory paragraph which was a successful approach.

An example of a high scoring candidate is: '*[The author of] document A discusses this from a more economic viewpoint, dominantly explaining the fall in GDP, the large cost and that how being a host is harmful to the country's economy. Document B sheds light on the possible benefits of being a host country for social and economic reasons. It mainly discusses the values and solidarity between countries that may arise from this.*'

There is a direct comparison between the two documents with clear recognition that Document A looks at the problems of hosting but claims that a permanent site will be beneficial overall. Document B is optimistic about the advantages of hosting the Olympics in Calgary and has a perspective that encourages local people to support it.

Lower scoring candidates only stated the perspective without any analysis or explanation, for example: 'Documents A and B both talk about the Olympic Games. The author in *Document A is talking globally and how it affects cities, environmentally and economically. Document B focusses on Calgary, Alberta and why it should be conducted there.'* There is no description, comparison, or explanation.

For AO1c – Evaluate arguments – Higher scoring candidates evaluated the key components of arguments that had been identified with clear illustration from and balanced reference to both the documents. Lower scoring candidates simply made unsupported points about the argument and may only have referred to one document.

An example of a higher scoring candidate providing evaluation and illustration is given here. This is one part of several evaluations that were balanced across both documents: '*Although the job positions of Document B's authors are higher in rank, the job of document A's author, Alexander, is more related to the issue of sports in an international context. This shows that Alexander has dealt with these issues more often than the authors of Document B, Collins and Pittman, who would have focussed more on the policies of Canada. This shows that Alexander has expertise in this topic and is a more reliable source of information as he knows which information is likely to be false.'*

Lower scoring candidates gave answers like: "*Document B relies on only one source, a report by 'Canadian Broadcasting Corporation News' to show potential for cost overruns of the games. This shows a lack of adequate research into the article and a lack of validation.*"

There is some basic evaluation but no clear illustration or reasoning as to the impact of this point on the argument. For example, in what way does relying on only one source to support the argument make the argument less credible?

For AO1d – Provide a judgement about argument and perspective – Higher scoring candidates compared key components of the argument throughout their answer. This allowed intermediate judgements to be made when both documents had been evaluated and compared. They then provided a conclusion summarising the intermediate judgements they had made in order to come to an overall conclusion. Lower scoring candidates simply made partially reasoned but unsupported judgements.

High scoring candidates completed their answer with comments like this, which summarised the intermediate conclusions throughout the answer: '*In conclusion, the argument in Document A is stronger than that of Document B as it has more global relevance, wider thematic application, diversity in evidence and source and uses a more formal and serious language/tone making the argument more convincing and reliable to the reader than the argument in Document B.'*

A lower scoring candidate might simply state an unsupported judgement, for example: '*Document A is stronger than Document B as it provides a better argument with multiple evidence and data to support. Document A had the most impact due to its more strengths in the argument.'*

For AO3 – Communication – higher scoring candidates produced a clearly written, well-structured and logical argument focused throughout on the question. Lower scoring candidates produced arguments that lack clarity, had an uneven structure, or did not always link to the question.

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

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

| Paper 9239/02 |
| Essay |

Key messages

Candidates must analyse different implications of their title question. Each new section of the essay should clearly identify which implication is being considered. Quite often, this can be done through making reference to a specific theme that can provide a lens through which to consider the question.

Candidates must address all of the areas of assessment when completing their reports. Common omissions from this series included critical evaluation of source material, comparison of perspectives and reflection.

Candidates should not try to include too many different sources in their essay. Making reference to eight different sources is plenty. Candidates should select sources that originate from or relate to at least four different global contexts.

General comments

Most candidates were able pose title questions that set up debates between contrasting perspectives and that raised issues with global significance. Particularly popular this series were issues such as Artificial Intelligence, Animal Testing and Tourism. The essays were, for the most part, well researched and made for interesting reading. Essays must not exceed the 2000-word limit and bibliographies should be uploaded as a separate document when submitting candidates' essays.

Comments on specific aspects

Analysis of Question

Devising a title question that sets up a debate between contrasting perspectives in response to an issue of global significance is the foundation of a successful essay. The most successful title questions are brief and clear. It is recommended that questions begin with 'Should' or 'Are' or 'Is'. It is also important to ensure that there is research available to support the contrasting perspectives inherent in the question. For example, one candidate offered the question '*Is globalisation changing the world?*'- they were highly unlikely to be able to find research to support the 'no' perspective. A better version of this question would be 'Is globalisation beneficial for societies?'

Candidates are required to identify and analyse different implications of the question. Each time a new implication is considered the candidate should identify it clearly. Here are two examples from the current series: the first example comes from an essay titled '*Should the minimum legal drinking age be raised?*', the candidate begins a section of the essay by stating '*Another argument concerns the economic aspect of increasing the minimum legal drinking age.*' The candidate clearly identifies that the economic implications of the question are going to be analysed. The second example comes from an essay titled '*Should animal testing be banned?*' The candidate identifies their last implication of the title question by stating, '*Finally, banning animal testing can be justified by medical reasons.*' From there, the candidate goes on to analyse the medical dangers of using animal testing for drug research with supporting research. Candidates should clearly identify the implications they choose to analyse and ensure that they are consistently addressing the title question. It is recommended that three or four implications are considered for each essay.

Building Perspectives

If the title has not signalled a debate and the response is descriptive or one-sided, candidates will not be able to meet the assessment criteria for this aspect.

Candidates are required to make links between their source materials by synthesising arguments and evidence together to form coherent perspectives. Synthesis is a skill that underpins Global Perspectives and Research. There are still some candidates who treat each source in isolation and therefore are not able to demonstrate the skill of synthesis. Here is a clear example of synthesis found in an essay titled '*Is the UN an effective international body in the 21st century?*':

'*Tharoor (2011) goes on to mention the structure* [of the UN] *being heavily dependent on the victors of the Second World War and hence would be outdated for modern times, which is corroborated by Ivan Levy's (2022) article, which also highlights a weakness of the United Nations caused by its predominant western viewpoint caused by the make-up of the Security Council.*'

The link between the two sources is made explicitly clear and the candidate uses one source to support another as they build the perspective that argues against the premise that the UN remains an effective international organisation, analysing the cultural implications of the question. The most successful candidates will be able to demonstrate synthesis on both sides of the debate.

Range of Sources

In terms of range, assessors are looking for sources that originate from different global contexts or present arguments and evidence relating to different global contexts. Ideally, sources will relate to or come from four different contexts. Candidates should make clear which global context their research originates from or which global context it relates to. In this example from an essay titled '*Should vaping be banned?*' the candidate writes: "*The research presented in the article 'Vape Sector Boosts Economy' (2023) highlights the economic boost in the United Kingdom's economy, revealing the benefits of the vape sector.*" It is made clear that the evidence and argument relates to the United Kingdom. Later in the same essay, the candidate writes: '*According to research released in 2019 by the US Department of Health and Human Services, 37% of seniors in high school reported vaping'.* The candidate makes it clear that the research originates from the US. It is also creditable to use sources from global institutions such as the United Nations or the Pan-African Council.

Candidates are also assessed on their ability to engage with the arguments put forward by their selected source material. Candidates who tried to use too many sources were able to demonstrate range but not engagement. Candidates should be encouraged to be more selective in their research and use six to eight relevant sources with global range to support their essays. The most successful candidates used about four sources to support each perspective.

Appropriateness of Sources

Critical evaluation of source material is a skill that is assessed right across the Global Perspectives and Research syllabus. There are still too many candidates that do not address this skill in their essays. Candidates may evaluate the evidence provided by the source, the reasoning and argument put forward by the source or the credibility of the author, amongst many other potential criteria for assessment. To reach higher attainment levels, candidates need to develop their source evaluation and show critical insight. There is a tendency for candidates to make a series of assertive or partially developed points rather than a single developed point. The following two examples exemplify the difference:

'*While the author's main strengths involve a variety of expert-linked opinions on the subject as evidence and a balanced argument, their primary weakness is that a lot of the solutions or perspectives may be theoretical and show a small number of statistics of actual experimentation involved with it, however, their statistical base for the present-day information is quite strong*.'

The first example makes four or five different points, all of which are creditable at the lower attainment levels. However, to reach the higher attainment levels, a more developed and focused line of critical evaluation is required. This can be seen in the second example below where the candidate evaluates the researcher's method for gathering data:

'*The Youth Self-Report used in the investigation to measure behavioural problems was the version of Achenbach's questionnaire intended for adolescents aged 11 to 18. The questionnaire is a standard data*

collection method that is repeatable, as were all steps and methods listed within the report in scientific terminology. A potential drawback to the use of a questionnaire is the possibility for mental model bias, of which individuals aged 11 to 18 have the possibility of changing or returning false answers when being asked to assess their own emotional and behavioural problems, in which proper answers may only be returned by a child psychiatrist or behavioural professional.'

Comparative Evaluation

Candidates should offer a critical comparison of contrasting perspectives which leads to a supported judgement. Assessors are looking for candidates to weigh up the strengths and weaknesses of each perspective before arriving at a final judgment. To do this effectively is likely to use up approximately 200 words of the 2000-thousand-word limit. There are too many essays that simply arrive at a final judgement without any explicit comparison of perspectives. There were, however, some good examples of perspective comparison submitted this series. Generally, the comparison of perspectives will come toward the end of the essay before the final judgement is made. Although lengthy, what follows is a strong example from this series. It comes from the same essay about the UN which is referenced above:

"Perspective One (for the UN) is compelling due to the structuring of the articles, especially prevalent with Norley and Terlingen's pieces, thereby making it more credible due to the logical approach taken. The referencing of statistical citations from reliable sources, such as the WHO, adds reputability due to the recognisability and trust in the organisation. Perspective One also uses multiple sources, leading to more accuracy in their writing, which subsequently adds validity and trustworthiness. Norley and, subsequently, Perspective One regularly quote from book-based sources such as 'Baylis' and 'UNEP', adding a layer of known credible specialists to the arguments. However, on average, Perspective One has the slight weakness of being older sources, meaning they hold less accountability for reflecting today's statistical information and findings.

Perspective Two (against the UN) features a more convincing conclusion-based analysis and evaluation, strengthening the stated evidence presented. The qualitative evidence supports all the points, such as the regular mention of the Brahimi report, an undeniably distinguished and trustworthy source of information quoted heavily by Jacobson. Furthermore, unlike Perspective One, Perspective Two features a wider variety of global perspectives, allowing for a more significant interpretation of the argument and a wider breadth of perspectives, giving credibility to its arguments. Perspective Two also utilises several recent reports, such as by Levy, providing substantial credibility and trust in statistical relevance to modern times. Although, the minor hindrance to Perspective Two is that Jacobson and Levy's argument is weak in that it shows a partial bit of bias in their work, which is reflected in the sources they chose.

However, overall, although Perspective One features a coherent structure and makes use of several credible sources, Perspective Two also has seasoned specialists embedded in their work and doesn't suffer from the issue of dated work. Therefore, in conclusion, even if the United Nations has its fundamental benefits in peacekeeping and health-related missions and boasts a myriad of successful humanitarian missions, its flaws are too glaring to ignore, thereby reaching the judgment that the United Nations is not an effective international body in the 21st century."

Consideration of Contrasting Perspectives

The Global Perspectives and Research course is designed to ensure candidates encounter a wide variety of perspectives relating to topics and issues with global significance. In so doing, candidates develop the skill of engaging with challenging perspectives in a fair and objective manner. Candidates need to be able to demonstrate that both of their contrasting perspectives have been given equal treatment in terms of word count, quality of research, critical evaluation of source material and in terms of the tone of language used. Assessors should not know what the candidate's final judgment will be until they reach the essay's conclusion. Candidates this series did demonstrate maturity and fairness in the way they engaged with perspectives that clearly challenged their original viewpoint.

Reflection and Impact on Personal Viewpoint

Although this remains an aspect of assessment that some candidates omit from their essay, plenty of essays demonstrated thoughtful reflection. It is likely that a candidate's point of view will have been changed or consolidated when researching and writing the essay. Assessors are looking for candidates to be able to express this with explicit reference to the perspectives presented. This is a strong example from an essay titled '*Is IVF ethical?*':

'In conclusion, my perspective hasn't changed and although I still feel IVF is ethical, the research has shown me that it can be unethical and things need to be done. For example, when researching the cost of IVF it shocked me that it can be up to $3000 for 1 round. This altered my view and made me rethink my perspective because it's so expensive and not everyone can afford it. I have learnt that IVF removes diseases from patients for a better quality of life confirming my perspective that IVF is ethical and when researching I found that it has also been used as a population growth technique. Without studying this topic I wouldn't have connected IVF to population growth and this has bettered my understanding of the benefits of IVF. Overall the evidence shows that IVF is ethical.'

Further Research

The strongest responses identify a specific area for research and then develop some details about the potential research. To reach the higher attainment levels, candidates should offer some reasoning as to why this research should be undertaken, for example, addressing gaps in their initial research. Here is a strong example from an essay titled '*Is tourism beneficial?*':

'Further research is required to explore additional reasons, evidence, perspectives, and opinions, which would increase certainty in the judgments and conclusions made. Further research focusing on a more diverse range of individuals, and from less developed countries, is required to enhance the comprehensiveness of the study. This new approach is important because while professors play a significant role in researching and understanding tourism, it is ultimately the experiences and perceptions of the local civilians that determine the true impact and benefits, and therefore enhance my confidence in the conclusion.'

Structure

Most candidates were able to present essays with an organised structure. These essays had a clear introduction followed by the main body of the essay and ended with a supported conclusion. The most successful candidates used clear discourse markers as the essay moved from section to section. This allowed candidates to clearly identify which new implication of the question they were going to analyse and which perspective was being supported or challenged.

Referencing

Candidates need to cite all sources used and make sure the associated references are easily found and carry the appropriate details. It should be clear to the assessor which source is being used at any particular point in the essay. Harvard style referencing is recommended and is exemplified in the 'Building Perspectives' section of this report. Footnote systems are fine, though footnotes should only be used for reference details and not extra information or critical evaluation.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

| **Paper 9239/03** |
| **Team Project** |

Key messages

There was a notable increase in the number of candidates embracing the requirements of the new mark scheme this series.

An interesting range of issues were explored this session, including problems related to diverse topics such as: fast fashion; Artificial Intelligence; inequality and quality of life; climate change; pollution; education policies and the global energy crisis. There was evidence of improvement in areas of candidate responses under the new mark scheme. For instance, it was encouraging to see more candidates making full use of the 10-minute presentation time frame to present their research and arguments in an organised and structured way and to actively engage with their audience. However, there were other areas which require further improvement, such as support for solutions and the use of visual aids to support arguments.

General comments

In the best examples, candidates evaluated sources to support their research with some degree of synthesis. They were also able to interact with their visual information, engaging the audience through use of language which presented a clear and fluent argument.

Where this was less successful, candidates presented a group poster with an audio presentation attached and did not interact with or explain the details on their poster. On occasion, candidates submitted a group poster and audio attachments without a clear indication of which audio track was their submission.

In more successful examples, candidates justified their individual solutions with reference to examples where this had already been tried. Some candidates were also able to give detailed evidence and description of why their solution would work. Less successful candidates gave a solution but did not link it to any research or examples.

Presentation

Individual analysis of the problem

Problem analysis was generally quite well done, and most candidates were able to score 3 or 4 marks on this criterion. The skill of analysis requires candidates to explain their issue clearly and then go on to identify and explore the effects or consequences of the problem and the problems arising from it for the various stakeholders, e.g., consequences for the environment; the animal kingdom; different human communities; governments and their services etc. Candidates scoring the full 4 marks recognised the need to be consistent in their analysis of the problem and were systematic in their exploration of its causes and its wide-ranging consequences, in many cases looking at the impact both locally and globally. Candidates scoring 3 marks generally analysed the problem quite well in terms of identifying the cause(s) and its impact, but this was not done consistently in terms of carrying the analysis through the presentation. In the main, the reason candidates scored below 3 was due to a lack of clarity on the nature or range of the problem so that the problem was not well-defined. This often led to candidates' responses being overly descriptive in nature, rather than analytic, and lacking a clear direction.

Some candidates are still giving dictionary definitions of their issue, which is not necessary – it would be more beneficial for them to spend the time explaining what their issue is and the impact of it.

Range of research undertaken

The candidates' performance in this section was generally satisfactory, with most demonstrating a commendable effort in utilising detailed research to support their presentations. It was evident that candidates recognised the importance of substantiating their ideas with credible and relevant information. However, while an initial inclination towards research was demonstrated, there remains a need for consistent and sustained support of the presentation's focus throughout.

Some candidates' research was very detailed indeed and was used to support all aspects of their explanations and arguments, both on the nature and impact of the problem and the development and impact of the proposed solution. This showed that the research was being used in a well-focused way and generally earned candidates a mark of 3 for this criterion.

Some candidates had undertaken primary research, which is one way to achieve variety in research- a requirement for 4 marks. Some examples of this primary research included conducting surveys about the chosen issue and undertaking field trips for research.

Other ways that a variety of research could be achieved is, for instance, by comparing and contrasting the issues surrounding a common global problem in a range of different countries with varying needs and concerns, such as LEDCs and MEDCs, Eastern and Western countries etc. Alternatively, a social problem might be examined in detail from a wide variety of different angles, such as the medical, academic, technological, and ethical issues it encompasses. Some candidates were unable to move beyond 2 marks on this criterion; this was often because they confined themselves to looking at the problem from a narrow viewpoint, often at a very local level. For instance, while a candidate may choose to examine the issue of obesity in their local area, they would need to ensure their research was detailed enough in scope and depth to warrant a mark of 3 and not comprised simply of various health data for their local area confirming that obesity is an issue that needs to be solved.

Evaluation of sources to support the research

Some candidates identified sources but did not attempt to evaluate them. In many cases, candidates identified lots of sources throughout the presentation but could not gain more than 1 mark because there was no attempt to evaluate them. There were a minority of candidates who did not identify their sources in their presentation at all, which meant that they gained 0 marks for this criterion.

In the main, those candidates who achieved 2 marks did so by stating whether or not a source was reliable by commenting on how up to date the information was or whether the information had come from a reputable source, such as a government report or a reputable journal. There was evidence of synthesis in only a few responses, where candidates made explicit comparison or contrast between the information contained in 2 or more sources in order to show how the information in the sources supported/complemented or contradicted each other in relation to the argument being presented.

Justification for the individual solution which is proposed

Responding to this criterion proved challenging for many candidates. Most identified a possible solution to the team's problem and their own perspective but provided limited evidence to support their solution or demonstrate its effectiveness. Some candidates spent the vast majority of their presentation describing/analysing their team's problem while allotting too little time to develop and justify their own individual solution. Another issue was that some candidates presented all of the solutions found by the team, which left them much less time to develop their own solution. There is no longer any requirement to mention the perspectives or solutions that other members of the team had.

The responses scoring the full 4 marks on this criterion were characterised by their consistent use of detailed evidence showing why their chosen solution would solve the problem effectively. For instance, a candidate's research might have identified a solution used in a different context, (such as in another country, or another field of study) with data available to prove its effectiveness. The candidate might then adapt the solution to suit their own context and use the data to prove how it would work for them. Candidates would be well advised to bear in mind the need for evidence as proof of effectiveness when considering possible solutions.

Production of an organised argument

Most presentations showed some degree of structure and contained some well-argued individual points, allowing them to achieve 3 marks. However, many lacked the degree of 'flow' that comes with clear verbal signposting throughout the presentation to indicate to the audience where the presentation is heading and thus be considered well-structured and argued for 4 marks. Structurally, candidates need to use verbal cues such as, 'At the start of the presentation I looked at… so now I'll move on and look at how this links to…' etc. Without this kind of consistent signposting, the presentation can end up seeming like a series of discrete sections without any real linkage. The quality of argument is also important for this criterion. If a candidate simply presents information with little or no evidence of any developing argument, then the presentation cannot be said to be well-argued, or have well-argued points and is therefore unlikely to move beyond 2 marks.

Presentation of visual information to support an argument

Visual support was generally underused. Slides would support the overall discussion and occasional direction to a slide with graphical information might occur, but more creative and engaging methods were not seen. Most of the candidates encountered significant difficulties in this particular section of their presentations. While most included visually appealing and relevant material, they struggled to utilise it effectively to support their arguments and provide evidence. Rather than leveraging the visual material as a powerful tool to enhance their presentations, candidates often treated it as mere background imagery. They did not integrate the visuals into their narratives and explanations, resulting in missed opportunities to strengthen their arguments and engage the audience on a deeper level.

Some candidates continue to present a single slide which has been created by the team and which essentially represents each of the different perspectives that the whole team has considered and into which individual soundtracks have been embedded. This approach is not ideal, as it does not serve candidates well either on this criterion, or AO3b. Some candidates chose to embed video or audio clips within their presentations as a means to convey additional information, such as survey interviews or expert opinion on the issue. This can be a sensible approach and bring some variety to the presentation, provided such clips are used with purpose in order to further enhance the audience's understanding of the issue or strengthen the candidate's own arguments. Clips are not helpful if they simply echo what the candidate is saying and take up valuable presentation time in the process. Marks in the upper range of the mark scheme can only be accessed when a candidate's work shows that presentation tools, whether they be slides containing data or graphics; audio or video clips, or indeed other items such as models, have been carefully selected to play an integral role in conveying the candidate's argument.

Use of language to address an audience

Candidates seemed to be more prepared to engage with the audience in this exam series. This was more successful when candidates used key phrases such as 'here you can see' or 'let me show you' or 'let's look at this problem together'. Some candidates were able to take this further by asking rhetorical questions as well as using key phrases to engage with the audience. Questions used included: 'why do you think this is?' or 'how can we overcome this problem?'

The highest scoring candidates combined all of this with an attitude of being very much at ease with their audience, sometimes introducing elements of humour, colloquialisms or direct appeals, where appropriate.

Reflective paper

Candidates were probably more effective overall at evaluating their teamwork than their learning, and some spent a disproportionate amount of time writing about this aspect of the project, at the expense of reflecting on what they learnt from it. Even so, many candidates tended to present a narrative based on a sequence of events involving themselves and their teammates, rather than evaluating how such happenings affected their ability to collaborate.

Reflection on the effectiveness of collaboration

While candidates demonstrated a strong understanding of the collaborative activities undertaken, they encountered difficulties when it came to providing in-depth and well-structured evaluations. Candidates are required to provide sustained analysis and critical assessments of the outcomes and effectiveness of the collaborations. Some candidates used this as an opportunity to criticise their colleagues in an unconstructive manner, which hampered the evaluation.

Candidates score well on this criterion when they focus their reflective evaluations on the key milestones of the team project process, namely: problem definition; the research process and findings; presentation preparation and delivery. In focusing on these project milestones, candidates need to consider not only what went well in their processes and what did not go so well, but why, and what positive and/or negative effects this had both on their ongoing progress, the ultimate completion of the project and how those processes could have been improved to achieve better outcomes. It is important for candidates to remember that this is a team project and to consider how individual actions/inactions and different approaches interact with and impact on each other, ultimately affecting the team as a whole.

Reflection on learning

Candidates were able to describe but few took the opportunity to evaluate their learning experience. The idea of reflecting on before and after was not really evident in many cases. There was a great deal of description of the problem and repetition of what the presentations had revealed rather than an individual examination of the personal learning experience.

The dominant tendency in their reflection on learning was for candidates to list what they had learned about their team's issue or about working on a team project, rather than to evaluate how this learning had affected their thinking about either of these. Some attempts at such evaluation focused more on emotional impact ('I was staggered to learn that…') but didn't describe the impact this had on their thinking or behaviour.

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Key messages

Formulating a successful title question requires dialogue between the teacher and the candidate. It is important that title question sets up a debate between contrasting perspectives which can be supported by a range of research.

Candidates should consider a minimum of three different implications for the title question. This is best done thematically. The candidates should set out in their introduction which themes will be used to analyse the implications of their title question. Having analysed an implication of the question, candidates should reach an intermediary judgment before moving on to the next implication.

Candidates must address all of the aspects of assessment when completing their reports. Common omissions from this series were critical evaluation of source material, methodologies and reflection on perspectives and conclusions. Critical evaluation of source material must happen within the report and not in the research log.

General comments

The foundation of a successful Cambridge Research Report is the formation of a clear and unambiguous title question that sets up a debate between contrasting perspectives. Title questions can be tightly focused or broad in their outlook but it is vital that there is available research that clearly supports each of the contrasting perspectives inherent in the title. There were some really well-constructed title questions this series and popular topics were scientific innovation, tourism, changing identities and sustainable futures. Candidates should remember that there is no requirement for the report to have a global dimension and providing solutions to issues raised is not required.

Research Log

There is no set format for the Research Log, although exemplars are available in the syllabus and from other training materials. There was a wide variety of formats adopted by candidates, but the most successful formats were grid based with headings and dated entries. A weekly or fortnightly reflective entry that evaluates planning, decisions and research is recommended.

The Research Log requires candidates to plan ahead as well as reflect on research decisions taken. Many Research Logs read like diaries detailing what the candidate did and when. Although this is creditworthy, it often results in very descriptive entries that will not be able reach the higher assessment levels. For AO1, assessors are looking for planning and the recording of pertinent information. Candidates should outline what their next steps will be and why. For AO2, assessors are looking for reflection on the decisions that have been made. Candidates should consider the impacts of the decisions they have taken. Candidates should also record research findings and reflect on how research findings may shape the direction of the research journey. Candidates need to be aware of the distinction between the skill of recording information about their research and the actions they are planning, and the skill of stepping back to reflect on the decisions made and research undertaken.

Questions and Perspectives

The process of formulating a research question needs to be given far more consideration. Title questions should be formulated through discussion with teachers after some initial research has been undertaken. It is really important that the contrasting perspectives inherent in the title question can be supported by research.

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Too often, this was not the case. For example, consider the question 'Should the future usage of CRISPR-Cas9 technique be regulated?' No doubt there is much research that is both critical and supportive of current regulations but it is extremely unlikely that any research would be found that argues that there should be no regulation the of CRISPR-Cas9 technique.

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to consider different implications of their chosen question. A successful title question from this series was, 'Are pressure group tactics effective at bringing about change?' The candidate was able to consider the implications of the question using three themes: social, economic and political. It is important that the candidate sets out the themes or implications of the question to be considered in their introduction. By doing so, the candidate may then reflect on how the interplay between themes and perspectives have shaped the report (see Reflection section below).

Many candidates use the 'To what extent' prefix to their questions but care needs to be taken that there is a debate inherent in the question. For example, the title question 'To What extent does Education affect the Development of a Country' produced a very nuanced debate and the delineation of contrasting perspectives was not always clear. Such a question may have been better framed like this: 'Is Education the main driver for a Country's Development?'

In the Cambridge Research Report, candidates are required to make explicit links between their research materials, showing clearly how different sources can be woven together to build perspectives. This is the skill of synthesis. Those candidates who treat each source in isolation will deny themselves the possibility of making links between materials. Candidates Who juxtapose sources without drawing out the links between arguments and evidence can gain credit but not at the higher assessment levels.

The extract below is from a report exploring the possible impacts of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The candidate sets out the position of Willemink and Noël, who argue in favour of AI's potential in medical diagnosis and then develops the point through synthesis with the study undertaken by Ozbey et al.

'*Many medical entities, including Willemink and Noël (2018), have recognized the potential of Generative AI in meeting these demands. They said that it will improve the radiology workflow as they can assist practitioners in identifying a diagnosis and also improve the overall quality and efficiency of CT images, which correlates to reducing radiation doses. The potential of this is evident in a study conducted by Ozbey et al. (2023), where they used generative models to create a technique named Adaptive Diffusion Priors for image reconstruction, specifically for MRI. This technique involves utilising diffusion models to improve the authenticity of the generated images and has been demonstrated to be much more efficient and less time-consuming compared to older techniques. This led the researchers to conclude that their GAI has the potential to create a more swift and dependable method for image reconstruction*.'

It is important that candidates offer comparisons of perspectives that help inform judgements. Candidates should offer comparisons throughout the report as they come to the end of a particular theme. In the AI example used above, the candidate is exploring the implications of the question for the medical and healthcare industries. Having set out in the introduction that they would consider the implications of AI for the economy, education and healthcare, the candidate then put forward arguments supported by research for and against AI in each of those arenas. Toward the end of each thematic section, the candidate compared the merits of the contrasting perspectives before arriving at an intermediary judgement (see Concepts, Research Methods and Judgements below).

It is anticipated that candidates will then offer a more holistic comparison of perspectives before the final judgement is made. There are still too many candidates who present contrasting perspectives and then offer a final judgement without ever comparing the strengths and weaknesses of the contrasting perspectives.

Sources

Candidates need to be judicious in selecting which source material to use. As stated above, the candidate needs to be able to find research that actively supports the contrasting perspectives inherent in their title question. There was a tendency for some candidates to make inferential leaps that were not supported by research. This is likely to happen when candidates find evidence, apply it to their question and then claim assertive links. For example, a candidate from the current series explored legalising drugs in their report, focusing on the theme of crime. Having researched crime statistics of several countries with different approaches to drug legislation, they then asserted that the latter must cause the former. Without the support of research, this inferential leap is no more than a claim by the candidate. Assessors are looking for candidates to use sources with clear and strong lines of argument, not descriptive or informative sources

with which the candidate can make inferences. The link between a well-constructed title question and the availability of supporting research is fundamental for a successful report.

The most successful reports were those where candidates demonstrated detailed analysis of selected research material and then put forward the arguments of the authors whilst making links between their research material. It is recommended that a candidate uses approximately six sources to support each implication of the title question. Candidates do not need to consider more than three implications of their title question, so no report should be using in excess of twenty sources. There is still a tendency for candidates to use too many sources. Some candidates were citing six or seven sources per page, so there was no opportunity to demonstrate understanding and engagement with research material.

It is also important that candidates are able to not only use sources to support perspectives but also that they use sources to actively challenge perspectives, too. For example, see the extract below:

'*Seppe Segers and Heidi Mertes' argument challenges the prevailing international policy stance, which often condemns such genetic interventions due to concerns regarding potential threats to human dignity. While this condemnation has been widespread, Segers and Mertes assert that there has been a paucity of critical examination regarding the relationship between this emerging technology and the fundamental concept of human dignity...*'

Candidates should critically evaluate their key sources using a range of evaluative criteria. This is a skill that is assessed right across the Global Perspectives and Research syllabus, yet still too many candidates are not offering any critical evaluation of the sources they select.

Although creditworthy, many candidates do not move beyond evaluation of the author's credibility or the source provenance. To reach the higher levels, candidates should be using criteria that are more explicitly related to the perspectives or evidence used. In the example below, the candidate compares approaches of data gathering by two different studies with explicit reference to the topic under discussion- the commercialisation of football:

"*Choluj, Gerard and May's (2019) case study makes use of 'internet-mediated' interviews of Legia Warsaw fans, which reduces the overall reliability of its findings as the respondents may be biased towards their club, hence its conclusion was inevitably definitive in opposing commercialisation. However, Busse and Damiano's (2019) method is more credible as the sample used is suitable to compare cultural changes and differences from 'the old traditional times' and the current 'modern football', hence making their findings and conclusion more acceptable.*"

It is not necessary to critically evaluate every source and it is recommended that candidates evaluate two or three key sources on each side of the debate.

Concepts, Research Methods and Judgements

In the context of the Cambridge Research Report, concepts are defined as terms or ideas which are relevant to the subject area of the chosen topic. These usually have specialised meanings which are specific to that subject. By engaging with relevant concepts, candidates are demonstrating academic engagement and rigour. It is important that candidates are able to employ concepts in a manner that is accessible to the reader (see Communication section below). The examples of candidates' work used in this report have been selected to illustrate appropriate levels of complexity and conceptual engagement. Extracts have illustrated broad conceptual ideas such as 'human dignity' as well as topic-specific ideas such as 'Adaptive Diffusion Priors'. To be able to achieve here, it is crucial that the candidates select credible and relevant research for analysis.

Some candidates decided to undertake primary research. It should be noted that this is **not** a requirement. It should also be noted that candidates should not be engaging with primary research that may break ethical guidelines or compromise their safety. Teachers should give due consideration to any proposed primary research before giving their approval in the research proposal form.

Do consider whether the primary research is actually going to inform the debate; quite often, primary research did not extend beyond asking peers what they thought about the topic in very broad terms.

The vast majority of reports contained a discrete methodology section and this is deemed an effective approach. Candidates should also return to their methodology when reflecting on the strengths and limitations of the conclusions reached (see Reflection section below).

Candidates should understand methodology to refer to the set of methods which are most suitable for use within a particular subject area. Candidates demonstrate understanding of their methodology when they are able to explain why the methods they have chosen are the most appropriate ones for their report. There was a tendency for some candidates to explain at length why it was that they were not doing primary research. Although this is creditworthy, it is important that the candidates focus on the methods they are going to use more than those they are not.

As referenced above (Questions and Perspectives), candidates need to consider several implications of their title questions. This may be done by looking at the question through the lens of different themes. When each implication has been considered, it is expected that the candidates will reach an intermediary judgment. Ideally, a candidate will make two or three intermediary judgements before their final judgement. Many candidates were able to do this, though sometimes the judgements were assertive rather than based on the evidence presented. A well-supported judgment is likely to follow on from a comparison of perspectives where the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence and argument supporting each perspective are evaluated. It should be noted that candidates are not expected to offer solutions to the issues raised in the report. There were some reports that offered solutions rather than a final judgement or conclusion to the report.

Reflection

Many candidates chose to reflect on how the perspectives engaged with had consolidated or changed their original point of view. This was often presented at the end of the report. This is creditworthy, but to reach the higher assessment levels candidates should reflect upon how the perspectives have influenced the report. The best way to do this is in the report's introduction. The interplay between themes and perspectives is important and the candidate should reflect on why they have chosen to consider their title question through the lens of the themes outlined and how these themes are linked to perspectives. For example, a popular issue for candidate reports is the death penalty. In such a report, a candidate is highly likely to consider the ethical implications of the issue. The candidate should explain why this is the case and how the theme of ethics will link to particular perspectives and thus shape the report. Below is an extract taken from a report from this series:

"I have decided to consider the issue of Electric Vehicles with reference to three different themes; environmental, economics and political. The report will focus most on the environmental theme because the drive to reduce harmful emissions is at the heart of the move toward replacing the internal combustion engine with battery power. Not only that but the environmental theme also underpins many of the arguments against Electric Vehicles, given that the lithium extraction process is considered to be highly damaging to ecosystems in South America. A report that seeks to answer the question 'Should drivers be compelled to choose Electric Vehicles?' could not do so without considering the environmental implications . . ."

It is really important that the candidate keep in mind the strengths and limitations of the conclusion when addressing this aspect of reflection. Many candidates offered thoughts for further research, which are creditworthy. However, to reach the higher levels, candidates should consider further research explicitly in the light of the conclusions reached in the report, for example, by asking how further research would consolidate the report's conclusions.

Candidates may consider other areas of the report in terms of the strengths and limitations of the conclusions reached, for example: the range of research, the efficacy of the research log, the selection of themes or the methodology employed are just some areas that could be used to reflect upon the conclusions reached.

Communication

Candidates need to offer a clear introduction that sets out the report's perspectives, themes, and methodology. The report should follow the structure set out in the introduction. Candidates should use headings and discourse markers to effectively guide the reader through the report. The report should be focused on the title question throughout. An effectively structured report will contain both final and intermediary judgements. The report must be written in continuous prose and must not exceed 5000 words. Several candidates included charts and tables and used phrases such as 'looking at the table below', which is not recommended. Candidates are welcome to add tables or charts to the appendix but they must not be relied upon to convey meaning or develop a point.

When candidates engage with concepts and subject specific terminology, they should make them understandable to the reader through their explanations and arguments. This is the skill of communication

assessors want to see. Offering long lists of dictionary definitions is not an effective way to do this. Many candidates defined key terms in the introduction, which was fine, but this approach should not be exhaustive.

It is strongly recommended that candidates use a Harvard-style system of referencing as this allows for greater clarity when assessors are judging how well sources have been used to develop perspectives. In the extracts presented throughout this report, the referencing style demonstrated makes it clear how and where sources are being used. Although different subject areas use different referencing systems and candidates are free to use any appropriate system, the Harvard referencing system is recommended as this makes it clear to assessors where and how sources are being used to support perspectives.

All reports should have a separate bibliography and each citation should be referenced in the bibliography. The bibliography should be organised in a logical fashion and each reference should contain appropriate detail. Many candidates were able to demonstrate exemplary referencing systems, however there were some candidates who offered no more than a URL, which is not considered an appropriate format.