

# GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH

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Paper 9239/12  
Written Exam

## 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**: 'identify', 'as given by the author' and 'solutions', **Question 1(b)**: 'countries', **Question 2**: 'evidence' and 'impact', **Question 3**: 'arguments' 'perspectives', 'judgement' and 'stronger'.

Most candidates did not spend very long on **Question 1** and so left themselves enough time for **Question 2** and **Question 3** which had much higher total marks. **Question 1** only required short answers or bullet points.

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. 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. There should also be explicit reference to perspectives in **Question 3** and reflection on the impact of the evidence in both documents.

Candidates will not gain credit for using material from their own knowledge that is not contained within the documents.

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 develop their answers accordingly.

AOs requiring specific improvement are AO1c (Evaluation) in **Question 2** and 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. 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**. It was specifically mentioned in the second part of the question. This demonstrates that it is necessary to read and understand the whole of the question before answering. In addition, some candidates did not sufficiently address the authors' perspectives in **Question 3** as mentioned in the question. Some candidates also gave only cursory intermediate judgements, or a final judgement which could have applied to any set of documents, and which was not specifically a response to the arguments of the two documents presented.

Many candidates organised their time well. In particular, some candidates 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 number of marks available for 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 strongest responses gave an extended reasoned judgement about which document had the stronger argument.

## **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. This period of time is included within the time set for the exam.

Answers only need to be brief and can be in bullet points. A very small number of candidates chose to leave **Question 1** until after they had answered the other two questions. This is not a recommended approach, because the answers to **Question 1** are found as part of the reading and understanding of the documents. Candidates should also be reminded that the answers to **Question 1** may be towards the end of the documents.

There are two parts to **Question 1**. **Question 1(a)** refers to **Document A** and **1(b)** refers to **Document B**. Both parts of the question are looking for candidates to **identify** points mentioned by the authors. There is no requirement nor expectation that explanation is included. Copying appropriately from the document is acceptable, but there is no need for candidates to copy large parts of the documents in order to answer the questions.

**Question 1(a)** was looking for candidates to identify three solutions to the global coffee crisis as given by the author of **Document A**.

Many gained the full three marks by mentioning, for example, 'fixing distribution problems', 'addressing labour shortages' and 'broader climate action'. Some candidates however, mentioned other parts of the documents, for example: 'end covid 19' or 'moving up the mountain'.

An example of a 3-mark answer was:

- fixing distribution problems
- addressing labour shortages
- broader climate action.

These are all correct answers given in the last paragraph of the document. This response was awarded full marks.

An answer which scored no marks was:

- 80 per cent international trade carried out by sea
- Sold their lands
- Moved onto more profitable crops.

None of these responses are solutions to the coffee crisis.

**Question 1(b)** was looking for candidates to identify two African countries where farmers do not receive a fair price, as given by the authors of **Document B**. There were three possible answers: Ethiopia, Uganda, and Kenya.

An example of a response to **Question 1(b)** which scored one mark was:

Othaya (*not a country*)  
Kenya

### **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.

Candidates should be encouraged to read the question carefully. 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 many candidates did not develop this sufficiently to achieve higher marks. Some candidates just copied the text or considered the good and bad consequences of coffee farming; these candidates did

not score high marks on this question. A very small number of candidates simply described the content of the document. This approach was rewarded with very few marks.

The question was looking for analysis of 'evidence'. There were a small number of candidates whose responses related to language or structure; these parts of their responses were not rewarded with any marks.

Most common discussion points were around the use of statistics, e.g., 'at least 500 billion cups'; 'almost 70 per cent' and sources used e.g. 'United Nations Conference on Trade and Development'. Candidates were able to identify both strengths and weaknesses of the evidence in the documents. Stronger candidates were able to identify that a single piece of evidence could be both a strength or a weakness, e.g., it is a strength to mention a statistic, but a weakness if the statistic is very vague.

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:

- 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 gave several types of evidence with examples, such as: '*it has plenty of relevant quantitative data, with statistics, such as 80% of international trade is carried out by sea*' and '*the Zona Cafetera has warmed by 1.2 degrees since 1980*'. The candidate made a point about statistics and gave two examples.

For **AO1b**, analyse the strengths and weaknesses of evidence, higher scoring responses 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 statistics are taken from. This undermines the argument the author makes since the reader is unable to easily check the claim that is made. The reader does not know if the information is reliable*'. The candidate identified a weakness, quoted it and explained why it was a weakness.

Lower scoring responses only stated strengths or weaknesses with limited explanation, for example: '*A strength is the use of data about 80% of International Trade, provided by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development*'. There is a clear strength recognised with an example, but the explanation is limited. To improve this, the candidate would need to explain why this source is seen to be strong and how it impacts on the argument.

Most candidates provided a balanced response of the strengths and weaknesses. There were very few candidates who focused on just one or the other. It is important for candidates to try to find both as many strengths and as many weaknesses as possible.

For **AO1c**, evaluate 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.

Most candidates attempted to evaluate the impact of pieces of evidence on the overall argument, but to access higher marks they need to develop these ideas further than just simple assertion, such as *'makes it more reliable'*; *'makes the reader trust the argument'*.

Lower scoring responses 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 argument.'*

Higher scoring responses evaluated the impact of the evidence on the argument and included a judgement of its effectiveness. For example:

*'Overall, the evidence strengthens the author's argument in Document A. While there is a lack of citations and evidence is limited to a single source, the author's provenance seems to be strong and statistical evidence has been used. These make the argument convincing, allowing the reader to have a deeper understanding of the issue.'*

### Question 3

This question asked candidates to evaluate the arguments of both authors and consider their perspectives. Candidates were also required to provide a judgement as to which document was stronger, or whether they were both equally strong. There was no correct answer and candidates were free to argue for their preferred judgement.

The most common approach was to directly compare the key components of the arguments of the two documents, one at a time, throughout the answer. The higher scoring responses achieved this well with analysis and clear evaluation of the relative strengths of each document, and followed this with a judgement about which was more convincing.

Alternatively, some candidates chose to evaluate the arguments of both documents separately and then have a concluding judgement. While this approach was acceptable, it tended to lead to fewer points being made and some repetition in the conclusion.

Many candidates were able to pick out the aspects that reflected a strong argument, for example, 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. The first of them was 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, for example:

- describing and explaining the perspectives of the authors of both documents (AO1b), and 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 judgement 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.

Higher scoring responses provided a range of compared key components. This is an example for one component, provenance:

*'The author's provenance in Document A seems to be stronger than in document B. Suhavana Shetty, the author of Document A, has positions like policy analyst and editor at a business and finance and analysis platform. Their knowledge and experience suggest their ability to write about the topic of economics in coffee production. The readers could trust the author because of their research skills, making the argument more convincing. On the other hand, Document B does not provide information about its authors. Selena Wamucii is an online platform about Food and Agriculture. Lack of other information might make the reader doubt the credibility of the author.'*

Candidates compared writing style, the presence / absence of supporting sources, and the validity or source of evidence in many cases but found it more difficult to evaluate the importance of each component beyond simple comments such as 'the author is not qualified' or 'the source is more reliable'.

The best evaluative comments came from the contrast in writing styles in particular the impact of the emotive style of Doc B.

**For AO1b**, analyse and compare perspectives, there was a range of marks, with some candidates scoring very low marks. Some candidates did not provide any analysis of perspectives at all, while lower scoring candidates simply identified perspectives. However, higher scoring candidates compared, described, and explained the significance of the perspectives in both documents.

This is an example of a high scoring response:

*'Document A talks about the increase in coffee rates in the market. The author states reasons for this to be the COVID-19 pandemic and the coffee industry's labour-intensive process, among others. Document B, however, focuses on the exploitation within the coffee industry. The author covers the hard work required, the poor living conditions of the farmers, and compares the state of coffee farmers to consumers. This shows that Document A has a neutral perspective leading towards a positive attitude. Document. B, however, has a strong negative tone through the course of the document.'*

Lower scoring responses only stated the perspective without any analysis, for example the following response in which there is little description, comparison, or explanation:

*'The authors of Documents A and B present different views, arguments, and perspectives regarding global coffee trade. The author of Document A elaborates on the incoming coffee crisis. In Document B, the author focuses on the exploitation of African farmers in their produce of coffee.'*

It was noticeable that some candidates are able to describe and compare the perspectives in the articles very well, but in many cases, they then did not address the other part of the question considering which document was stronger having considered key components. The converse is also true, that candidates who gave very good answers to the comparison of key components of argument failed to consider the identification and comparison of the perspectives in each.

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

Examples of higher scoring responses providing evaluation and illustration are given here. These are examples of several evaluations that were balanced across both documents.

*'Document A has a substantial amount of statistical data backed up by authentic sources such as the ICA and the United Nations. This increases the credibility behind the authors' statements. Although a few loosely supported claims have been stated, credible claims from reputable organisations make up for it. All of the evidence is from subject experts.'*

*'Document B is heavily one sided and only focuses on the African farmers and does not mention the condition of other farmers in other coffee producing nations. This reduces the generalizability of the article as it may not be relatable to global readers. The article also provides first-hand quotes from one farmer. Using such first-hand quotes increases the validity of the article as it provides a more accurate example of the impact of the issue, and is therefore more likely to influence the opinion of the reader.'*

Lower scoring responses gave answers like: *'This evidence weakens the author's text as it is unsourced and unknown if it is reliable data.'*

There is some basic evaluation but no clear illustration nor reasoning as to the impact of this point on the argument. For example, the candidate does not explain why having unsourced data makes the argument less credible.

**For AO1d**, provide a judgement about argument and perspective, higher scoring responses compared key components of the argument throughout their answer. This allowed intermediate judgements to be made when both documents had been evaluated and compared. The candidates then provided a conclusion summarising the intermediate judgements they had made in order to come to an overall conclusion. Lower scoring responses simply made partially reasoned but unsupported judgements. Not all candidates made a clear and reasoned judgement, which is an important part of this question; a response like this would not score highly.

A very small number of candidates made a judgement at the beginning of their response and then tried to justify it. This approach is also acceptable but is not preferred.

High scoring responses completed their answer with comments which summarised the intermediate conclusions throughout the answer, for example:

*'In Document A, the author offers solutions to the issues being discussed. Document B, however, uses quotations and includes snippets of conversations with the farmers in discussion through the document. This offers an insight into the debate, offering first hand evidence of the hardships forced by these farmers. With this, one could conclude that, while document B is persuasive and emotionally appealing, it might lack objectivity. Therefore, document A would be stronger and more convincing in this aspect.'*

A lower scoring response might simply state an unsupported judgement, or might lack clearly expressed support, for example:

*'Even though both documents have the same number of strong arguments, I think that Document A's argument is stronger than Document B because not only does it have weak arguments, but it also contains far less, compared to Document B. This makes Document A look more professional and more reliable than Document B.'*

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

Overall, higher scoring responses linked aspects to examples in the text and with an 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 of candidates 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 AND RESEARCH

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Paper 9239/02  
Essay

## Key messages

Candidates need to give greater consideration to their titles. It is particularly important that title questions set up a debate of global significance. Candidates need to remain focused on their title question throughout the essay.

Ideas for further research need to be relevant to the essay title. The new idea for further research should be supported by explanation and justification as to why it is necessary.

Building coherent perspectives through the synthesis of source material is a core part of the essay. Candidates should make links between their research materials and not treat each source in isolation.

## General comments

Candidates need to plan carefully to ensure they demonstrate all of the skills assessed in this component. There are still too many candidates not addressing all of the assessment aspects in their essays. There are ten different aspects used for assessment that are split across three assessment objectives; the first five relate to research, analysis and evaluation, the next three relate to reflection and the final two relate to communication. Each aspect is given its own heading in this report.

Most candidates were able to choose issues with global significance that derived from the topics listed in the syllabus. Popular topics for focus were Social Inequality, Climate Change, AI Technologies and Urbanisation. The essays were for the most part well researched and made for interesting reading.

## Comments on specific aspects

### **Analysis of Question**

Constructing an effective title question is at the heart of a good essay. The title needs to be concise and set up a debate between contrasting perspectives. The issue raised by the question needs to be of global significance. The question should be considered from different angles, what we refer to as implications. Candidates need to clearly identify these implications. Not all candidates are doing this. A good example from this series can be seen below. It comes from an essay with the title *'Is the impact of technology in developing countries really beneficial?'* Before looking at the short extract it is clear that the question sets up a debate between two contrasting perspectives; 'yes' - technology is beneficial and 'no' - technology is not beneficial to developing countries. The debate clearly has global significance. In the extract the candidate moves to the perspective arguing that technology is not beneficial.

*In contrast to the aforementioned idea, technology has its cons, one of which is an increase in unemployment. The ability of one computer to complete a significant amount of tasks fast compared to human services has led to an increased unemployment, as well. This is evidently observed in Africa where a 14-million net loss of jobs is projected by 2027 (Okoth, 2023).*

Unemployment is clearly identified as an implication of the question. It may well be that later in the essay other source material argues that technology actually increases employment. When implications of the question can support both of the contrasting perspectives then this gives the opportunity for the candidate to compare perspectives (see Comparison of perspectives below).

There were examples of less successful titles, for example, '*Population crash and how it can either bring down countries or uplift them*'. There is no clear debate in the title, in fact the title does not even pose a question. Not only that, the terms within the title are not easily definable. It is recommended that questions begin with 'Should' or 'Are' or 'Is'.

The candidates must remain focused on their question throughout the essay. There were several cases this series where candidates lost focus and consequently moved away from considering the implications of their question and ultimately were not able to reach the higher assessment levels.

### **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.

Synthesis is a skill that underpins Global Perspectives and Research. Candidates are required to make links between their source materials by synthesising arguments and evidence together to build coherent perspectives. Here is a clear example of synthesis found in an essay titled '*Is the gender pay gap justifiable?*'. (The extract is abridged)

*One way to consider the question is in terms of equality legislation. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) equal pay for equal work is everybody's right, which means women should also receive fair compensation as men. It is their right to receive the same compensation when the same tasks are being done by two individuals. The ILO focuses on removing all discrimination based on gender, race, religion, etc. in employment (ILO, 2022) . . . Hence, The Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 was introduced (ILO, 2022). To summarise, it is not justified for women to be paid less as equal pay is a human right.*

*Similarly to the ILO but at a national level, The Legal Service India the Equality act 2010, gives the right for equal pay for equal work for both men and women (Bharadhwaj, 2020). Discrimination based on gender could have several implications on women. It may affect women's psychological and physical stress, mental and physical health, job satisfaction and organisational commitment. If any employer pays an employee lesser, it should be considered as exploitive enslavement and should hold consequences (Bharadhwaj, 2020).*

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 that the gender pay gap is not justifiable as it breaks international and national equality legislation. At the beginning of the extract 'equality legislation' is clearly identified as an implication of the question (see Analysis of Question above). Too many candidates either just juxtaposed sources or treated sources in isolation rather than explicitly synthesising their research material.

### **Range of Sources**

Candidates in this series were able to draw upon a wide range of relevant and credible source material.

Range refers sources that emanate from different global contexts or present arguments and evidence relating to different global contexts. Ideally sources will relate to or come from four different global contexts. Candidates are advised to state clearly the global context of their material. Looking at the extract above (see Building Perspectives) it is made clear that the source '*Bharadhwaj*' is referring to India. Most candidates were able to demonstrate global range in their chosen source material.

Candidates are also required to use the source material to support perspectives. This requires engaging with the source in a way that uses evidence from the source and explains how the source supports the perspective. 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 candidate used about four sources to support each perspective.

### **Appropriateness of Sources**

Critical evaluation of source material is assessed in all components of the syllabus and as such is a core skill. Despite this, there are far too many candidates that do not address this aspect of assessment in their essays. The most successful candidates critically evaluated four sources; two key sources on each side of the debate. As this is a skills-based syllabus, candidates will achieve more if they use one criterion for critical



evaluation per source and fully develop that specific line of interrogation rather than offering several different lines of evaluation and without development. Criteria for evaluation could include, quality of evidence, logic of argument, credibility of author or issues of bias and vested interest. This is not an exhaustive list.

This is one of the better examples of developed critical evaluation from the March series, it comes from an essay with the title '*Does family structure affect the mental health of an adolescent?*'

*Furthermore, Joshi and Kaul's argument lacks reliable sources of information. The article contains the results of a previous study, but it does not specify whether the study was conducted by a credible professional or not. The concerns with the evidence presented from other studies is compounded by the fact that the evidence is selective and potentially biased because it only addresses one aspect of how family structure affects teen mental health. The article does not contain a counterargument. The one-sided nature of supporting evidence calls into question how well this source actually supports the argument that family structure affects the mental health of adolescents.*

### **Comparison of perspectives**

As with other some other aspects, if the candidate does not set up a debate between contrasting perspectives, they will not be able to achieve here. Candidates often present contrasting perspectives but do not actively compare them. There are numerous opportunities in the essay for candidates to offer some comparison. Firstly, candidates will often set up the debate by way of an introduction and in so doing there is an opportunity for comparing the two perspectives. This is likely to be brief and descriptive but nonetheless this is creditworthy. Secondly, as stated above (see Analysis of Question) if the candidate identifies an implication of the question that can be viewed from both of the contrasting perspective then there is the opportunity to clearly juxtapose these two different views. For example a candidate asking '*Should electric vehicles replace the internal combustion engine?*', could consider the economic implications of the question. In so doing they could compare the economic advantages with the economic disadvantages of the move to electric vehicles. Thirdly, it is expected that candidates will compare their perspectives holistically before arriving at their final conclusion.

There were some good examples of perspective comparison submitted this series. Generally, the comparison of perspectives leading to the final judgement is likely to be the most holistic. This is a strong example from an essay with the title '*Are higher prices of products and services targeted towards women reasonable?*'

*Although gender discrimination appears as the motive behind higher prices from a bird's view, one deep probe into the concept of pink tax indicates that it is not the truth as fundamentals of business and economics play a role throughout. The cost of labor and production has to be paid by the consumers for the services and products provided. Businesses need to make profit in order to make products. The government has to play a role in controlling the economy of the country while making sure the beneficiaries are received by all. One of the ways the government does it is by imposing taxes, in this case imposing a tampon tax. In my opinion, these reasons are valid as they are supported by pieces of evidence, such as Dotson(2016) who argued female products have greater production costs. The US case study also showed the impact of federal finances of cutting the tampon tax. However the fact that 500 million women across the globe suffer through period poverty (Menstrual Health and Hygiene, 2023) should not be dismissed. Even though in the short run, the pink tax and tampon tax can be beneficial for the nation in the long run it causes much greater harm to the lives of women and economic growth. Not only does it exacerbate the disadvantages women face along with the income gap leading to financial instability but also impacts economic growth negatively. Women have to spend their lives in poverty, financial instability, and poor mental and physical health as a result of the long run. The long-run damages outweigh the short-run benefits due to the significance of their impacts. Scotland provides menstrual hygiene products for free nationwide and in countries such as Finland, Switzerland, and New Zealand these products are provided for free in schools and colleges (Sullivan, 2022), Mexico, Britain, and Namibia as well as 10 other countries have removed pink tax ('Tampon Tax: Which Countries Still Tax Menstruation Essentials?', 2023). This implies that the economies of these countries can function without imposing the tampon taxes and therefore I think at least the removal of the tampon tax can be taken into consideration worldwide.*

The candidate is balanced in their comparison and demonstrates some critical insight '*However the fact that 500 million women across the globe suffer through period poverty should not be dismissed.*' as they weigh up the contrasting perspectives.

## Consideration of Contrasting Perspectives

If a candidate is highly engaged in the issue raised by the question and possesses a strong viewpoint at the outset it can be difficult to give due consideration to both perspectives. The skill demanded by this syllabus is that candidates approach an issue in a balanced and objective way. Generally candidates demonstrated a maturity and were able to apply the same levels of research, critical evaluation and word-count to both perspectives. The aspect above (**Comparison of perspectives**) also provides candidates with an opportunity to demonstrate they have given due consideration to both perspectives.

## Reflection and Impact on Personal Viewpoint

The skill being assessed here is the ability of candidates to be able to express how engaging with the contrasting perspectives has impacted their viewpoint. Candidates' opinions may have been changed or consolidated. The skill is to reflect upon how specific sources and perspectives impacted the candidate's viewpoint. The following example is an extract from the candidate's reflection. The essay was titled '*Is the impact of technology in developing countries really beneficial?*'

*'Prior to conducting my research, I felt indifferent about the Impacts of technology on developing countries, as I was unaware of the proper pro's and con's of technology affecting underdeveloped countries. After, learning the proper economics behind the topic, while also discovering the immediate disadvantages they cause to the economy, resulted in me feeling a sense of opposition towards their impacts. Research over the long term health concerns they cause also fueled my sense of opposition towards it. Alternatively, as I began to investigate the expansion of education technology brings, I began to empathise with those who couldn't benefit from them. Additionally, countries who would benefit from these expansions were mostly developed and high-income nations, as new innovations are an expensive investment and most economics are not able to afford a purchase such as this, and leads to an inequality between countries, while focusing much on the wealth. However, certain points made me want to change this feeling of disagreement. One such point was the reduction of poverty rates, by the increase in income levels which is influenced by the country's global position due to technology.'*

## Further Research

The strongest responses identify a specific new 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. Many candidates made a passing reference to further research by stating '*more research should be done*' but offered no detail at all. This is not creditworthy. Assessors need to see some development of a clearly identified area for new further research which is relevant to the title question.

## 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 culminating in a supported conclusion. To reach higher attainment levels candidates should use discourse markers effectively to guide the reader through the essay rendering transition from section to section clear and obvious. Discourse markers include terms such as 'on the other hand, furthermore or in conclusion. This is not an exhaustive list. To demonstrate good structure candidates also need to remain focused on their title question and ensure that their essay meets the word count requirements of being between 1750-2000 words.

## Referencing

Candidates are free to use any system of referencing they choose but the Harvard system is recommended. All of the citations in the extracts used in this report have used a Harvard style system. This is the most effective way to make it really clear where sources are being used to support perspectives. Footnote systems are fine though footnotes should only be used for reference details and not extra information or critical evaluation. Candidates need to cite all sources used and make sure the associated references are easily found and carry the appropriate details.

# GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH

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Paper 9239/03  
Team Project

## Key messages

An increasing number of candidates have been using the new syllabus effectively and gaining marks for things such as evaluation of sources and engaging the audience. There is still work to be done around synthesis of sources as this was rarely seen in this series.

There were some interesting topics explored by candidates this series, including electoral systems, animal welfare and water pollution.

## General comments

In the highest scoring presentations, 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.

More successful 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, whereas less successful candidates gave a solution but did not link it to any research or examples.

In a small number of cases, centres presented a joint team presentation. This is not permitted for this component and led to candidates' marks being limited as only the work of each specific candidate could be credited, rather than the presentation as a whole.

It is also important to remember that any reflection on learning or teamwork should be included in the reflective paper as it will not score any marks if it is in the presentation. Some candidates evaluated sources in their reflective paper, which took up valuable space and scored no marks. Evaluation of sources should be included in the presentation.

## **Presentation**

### **AO1 – Research, analysis and evaluation**

#### *A – Individual analysis of the problem*

Most candidates were able to explain their problem, supported by details. The majority looked at the impact of the issue, which enabled them to achieve 3 of the 4 marks available. More depth is needed about the impact of the issue to achieve the full 4 marks. For instance, candidates could explore how the issue impacts different areas or people in greater detail. Those scoring 4 marks did this well and gave a thorough analysis of the issue, perhaps looking at it in different countries, or looking at how different stakeholders are impacted.

#### *B – Range of research undertaken*

To achieve 4 marks, a variety of research must be used – this could be research from different countries, or from different sources – for instance newspapers, journals, and websites. Some candidates made excellent use of primary research, which enabled them to score marks for variety. Most candidates are using research well throughout their presentation so are scoring 3 marks, but some candidates are limiting their marks by only using research when presenting about the issue and not throughout the rest of the presentation.

*C – Evaluation of sources to support the research*

In this series there were limited examples of candidates evaluating and/or synthesising sources. Lots of candidates were able to identify sources, but only a small proportion evaluated them. Some candidates left the identification of their sources until their last slide in their bibliography. On occasion, candidates made points about the position or experience of the author but did not make it explicitly clear whether this impacted positively or negatively on the usefulness of the source. Synthesis involves comparing what two sources say about the same issue; this skill must be clearly demonstrated by candidates in order to achieve higher marks for this criterion.

*D – Justification for the individual solution which is proposed*

The vast majority of candidates identified a solution to their problem. Although some candidates attempted to justify or explain how their solution would work, often this was not supported with evidence. To gain further credit, there is a requirement for the solution to be backed up by evidence. Acceptable forms of evidence include research that has been carried out previously and used to inform the solution, or it could be some form of evidence that is used to show that the solution has worked well elsewhere.

**AO3 – Communication**

*A – Production of an organised argument*

Most candidates were able to make an argument and support it with evidence and so gain either 2 or 3 marks, although 3 marks seemed to be the most common level candidates achieved this session. Most candidates demonstrated some evidence of conscious structure in their presentation. An example of a candidate who scored well for this criterion generated an argument that flowed well and continued to support the points they made with strong evidence. In addition to this, they made effective use of signposting in the different sections of their presentation to help with the overall flow.

*B – Presentation of visual information to support an argument*

Lots of candidates achieved 2 marks for this criterion. This was typically seen where candidates were presenting to their audience and making eye contact but were perhaps not engaging with the presentation or using it to emphasise certain areas of their work. A significant number of candidates did not engage with their visual aids. Most candidates used a PowerPoint presentation but were sitting or standing too far away from the presentation to be able to point out key graphs or pictures. Many candidates who opted for a voice-over presentation didn't spend any time talking through graphs or pictures. The candidates who did score well used their visual aids to illustrate their arguments by talking through graphs and charts that supported their points or explaining pictures they'd included to make the audience aware of specific situations.

*C – Use of language to address an audience*

Overall, candidates made a good effort to engage with their audience. Lots of candidates in this session were able to achieve at least 2 marks. In some cases, candidates scored 4 marks for this criterion. An example of this was a candidate who effectively engaged with the audience throughout their presentation by asking them a variety of questions to which the audience responded. The candidate also used appropriate language to address and include the audience throughout the presentation.

**Reflective paper**

**AO2 – Reflection**

*A – Reflection on the effectiveness of collaboration*

Most candidates were able to discuss some elements of group work or collaborative activities in their reflective paper and so were able to achieve at least 2 marks. In a less successful example, the candidate briefly discussed 'collaboration' but did this only in the context of what they had learnt about their group work. This was mostly credited in AO2b. The rest of the reflective paper was about the topic and learning that took place. More successful candidates tend to offer three or four evaluative comments on their group work, including what they improved upon during the process. To score top marks for this criterion, candidates should evaluate their collaboration through different stages of the team project – for instance in deciding on the topic, how they organised and carried out research, the team meetings and how they helped each other with their presentations.

*B – Reflection on learning*

Most candidates were able to offer some reflection on their learning and it was interesting to see that this was often discussed on two levels. Firstly, what they learnt about the issue or topic discussed in their presentations and secondly, what they learnt about working in a group. Candidates who considered both of these elements in a good level of detail were able to achieve 4 marks. The best way to achieve marks here is for candidates to examine what they knew before undertaking the project and then to reflect on what they have learnt as a result of completing the project in terms of research, the perspectives of team members and the collaborative process.

# GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH

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**Paper 9239/04**  
**Research Report**

## **Key messages**

Global Perspectives and Research is a skills-based qualification. The Cambridge Research Report is assessed against fifteen criteria, and it is important that candidates address all of the areas for assessment. Notable omissions from this series were methods and methodology, critical evaluation and reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of the report's conclusions.

The Cambridge Research Report should be written in continuous prose. There is no requirement to include charts or images. Candidates must not rely on charts or images in order for the point being made to be understood.

Title questions should be developed over time and through dialogue with the teacher. It is important that there is a body of research that supports both of the contrasting perspectives set up by the title question.

## **General comments**

Candidates were able to produce some really interesting and well-researched reports that covered a range of topics and issues. Candidates are free to choose which issues and topics they want for their report's focus. Some candidates prefer to construct broad title questions such as, '*Will the rise of AI have a positive impact on our lives?*' While others preferred more narrowly focused title questions such as '*Does musical theatre exposure equip children with the skills required to address 21<sup>st</sup>-century challenges?*'. Both approaches can be successful if the title question is carefully considered and there are a variety of themes that can be used to explore the implications of the question. It should be noted that unlike AS Level coursework, there is no requirement for the report to have a global dimension.

## **Research Log**

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

For AO1 assessors are looking for planning and the recording of pertinent information. In AO1 candidates should be looking forward and setting out objectives and milestones giving a clear indication of planning, they should also record key information. For AO2 candidates need to demonstrate the skill of stepping back to reflect upon the decisions made and research undertaken. There are still many candidates that do not reflect on the research decisions they have taken.

## **Questions and Perspectives**

Deciding upon a title question is one of the most important parts of the process. There are still candidates who are offering problematics titles. These problems can be broken down into three areas. Firstly, some titles do not set up a debate between contrasting perspectives. For example '*How do human rights contribute to meeting the basic needs of individuals and ensuring their dignity?*' There is no debate in such a question, clear contrasting perspectives are a vital for a successful report. Some 'To What Extent' questions can be too nuanced and the debate between contrasting perspectives is not always clear. For example, '*To what extent does cinema have an impact on society and culture?*' The response to this title is likely to have a very

nuanced discussion about the scale of impact, rather than clearly delineated contrasting perspectives. A better title might be *'Does cinema shape or reflect society?'* Secondly, the title question needs a clear focus and should raise an issue that can be explored through different themes, such as economic, cultural or political to name just a few. If a title question lacks clarity and is convoluted it will be really difficult to consider implications of such a question. For example *'Can the proliferation of crimes related to data security and security concerns be checked in developing countries?'* It is not even clear what this question is asking and what the debate might be. It is really important that candidates can remain focused on their title questions throughout the report, this is difficult to achieve if the title question is not well formulated. Thirdly, the contrasting perspectives raised by the title question must be supportable by research. Candidates need to find several sources supporting each of the contrasting perspectives. Consider the title already mentioned, *'To what extent does cinema have an impact on society and culture?'* There simply will not be any research that argues Cinema has no impact on society and culture. Candidates should define their question after the initial research has begun, not the other way around.

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. Part of the research analysis stage should be finding similarities and differences among the sources referenced. This would be something that candidates could usefully reflect upon in their research logs.

Candidates should not treat each source in isolation as this denies the possibility of making links between materials. Some candidates juxtapose sources together without drawing out the explicit links between arguments and evidence. Although this is creditworthy, to reach the higher attainment levels explicit synthesis should be demonstrated. The abridged example below shows explicit synthesis as the candidate develops a perspective in response to the question *'Is globalisation good for developing countries?'* by considering the cultural implications of the question.

*'Additionally, the claim that adapting to a new culture automatically leads to the loss of a true identity is overly simplistic and fails to acknowledge the dynamic nature of self-discovery. Furthermore, another issue which arises from globalisation is cultural imperialism or westernisation, as argued by Tomlinson (2001) in "Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction", western cultural products like Hollywood movies, fast food chains, and popular music have become ubiquitous worldwide, potentially overshadowing and marginalising local cultural expressions . . . All the claims made by Tomlinson are empirically supported by Kuran and Sandholm's study "Cultural Integration and Its Discontents" (2008). They considered various exogenous and endogenous variables to eliminate bias, constructed an empirical model to assess the benefits and drawbacks of cultural globalisation . . . Finally, to see the real life validity of these claims, let us examine the case study of Jamaica by Gordon (2009). Through interviewing experts with firsthand knowledge and expertise, the study gathered primary statistical evidence. . .'*

The comparison of perspectives is a skill that should be demonstrated throughout the report. Perspective comparisons should precede intermediary and final judgements. Those candidates whose titles do not set up debates will not be able to achieve here. The vast majority of candidates were able to juxtapose arguments and perspectives and this is creditworthy. The highest achieving candidates were able to compare perspectives with reference to evidence and argument and through this comparison arrive at a judgement/intermediary judgement. Those candidates that offered evaluative comparisons that compared the various strengths and weaknesses of the perspectives were the ones who achieved the highest attainment levels. It is anticipated that candidates will offer a more holistic comparison of perspectives before the final judgement is made. Whereas comparisons preceding intermediary judgements are likely to be rooted in a specific theme or implication of the title question.

## Sources

The vast majority of candidates were able to refer to a wide range of credible and relevant source material. It is important however to ensure that the sources referred to are relevant to the question and are used to support a perspective. Candidates are advised to use sources that offer strong lines of argument rather than informative sources which tend to get presented descriptively. There was a tendency to try and weave too many sources into the report and candidates should be more selective in their use of sources. The Principal Examiner would recommend that candidates select approximately six key sources with strong arguments to support each perspective. In order for a source to be successfully used to support a perspective, the candidate needs to present relevant evidence and argument from the source and then explain how the source supports the perspective being built. Higher achieving candidates were able to not only use sources to support perspectives but also use sources to challenge perspectives too. Candidates who make only fleeting references to source material are not able to achieve higher levels here.

The skill of critical evaluation 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. Many candidates focus their critical evaluation on the author's credibility or the source provenance. This is creditworthy, but to reach the higher levels candidates should be using criteria that are more explicitly related to the perspectives or evidence used. Here is an example of some strong critical evaluation from the March series. The example comes from a report titled *'Is globalisation good for developing countries' economies?* The critical evaluation is explicitly focused on the reports' title.

*'However, Santiago et al. only focused on quantitative data, overlooking qualitative dimensions like the impact on small businesses. The method used gained a superficial interpretation of the estimated coefficients and their impact on economic growth was provided which did not go beyond basic descriptions of their magnitude and statistical significance. These are common criticisms of quantitative methods but, as the study relies on real-world data and employs statistical techniques to identify and interpret patterns and trends within the data, which goes beyond just theoretical arguments, which makes the evidence compelling. Large scale studies of this kind have to rely on quantitative approaches and it is possible to consider more focused case studies as a means to corroborate findings. This source significantly contributes to the report by arguing that globalisation is good for developing countries' economies.'*

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

The research proposal form makes clear reference to concepts. It is important to identify potential concepts and topic specific ideas in the preliminary stages of the process. The research proposal forms gives the opportunity for candidates and their teachers to discuss which concepts will be appropriate for the report. 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 a good idea to set out the key ideas and concepts that will inform the report in the introduction and it should be noted that discussion of concepts should be accessible to the lay reader (see Communication section below). For example, in the report *'Is political violence justified?'* the candidate was able to introduce concepts such as: Systemic violence, Just war theory and Pacifism - then later in the report analyse the concepts as perspectives were being built.

Primary research 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.

Methods and methodology remains an area of assessment that candidates do not address in their reports. Those that did generally set out their methodology just after their introduction in a discrete section with a clear heading. This is an effective approach. Many candidates are able to describe their approach and this is creditworthy. However, to reach the higher attainment levels, candidates should argue for their methodology justifying the research methods used.

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. Page 27 of the syllabus provides some helpful information about research methods and methodology.

The vast majority of candidates offered a final judgement. However, many candidates did not offer intermediary judgements when considering specific themes or implications of the question. Intermediary judgments should not respond to arguments put forward by a single source but rather to developed perspectives that consider particular implications of the question. All judgements should link clearly to the title question. The best supported judgements were arrived at by analysis and evaluation of the evidence and arguments presented. There is some crossover here with the comparison of perspectives mentioned above (see Questions and Perspectives).

### Reflection

Many candidates are still offering the type of reflection on perspectives seen in components two (The Essay) and three (Team Project). This type of reflection focuses on how the perspectives engaged with consolidated or changed the candidate's original point of view. In other cases, candidates offered a descriptive account of



what had been learned during the process of producing the report. This is creditworthy, but to reach the higher assessment levels, candidates should reflect upon how the perspectives presented have influenced the report. The best way to do this is in the report's introduction. There are some helpful diagrams on page 15 and 16 of the syllabus that visualise the interplay of topics, themes, issues and perspectives. Candidates should reflect on how the interplay between themes and perspectives will shape the report. Candidates should focus on why particular themes have been selected and how they relate to the contrasting perspectives.

The second aspect for assessment is the candidate's ability to reflect upon the strengths and limitations of their conclusion. Many candidates reflected upon the strengths and/or weaknesses of their research or their methodology but did not always link this explicitly to the conclusion. Many candidates offered thoughts for further research which are creditworthy, but 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 would further research consolidate the report's conclusions.

When reflecting upon the report's conclusions, candidates need to consider both the strengths and limitations of the conclusions reached in the report.

It should be noted that candidates are not required to offer solutions to any of the issues raised.

### **Communication**

The majority of candidates were able to present well-structured reports. Nearly all candidates used headings and for the most part these were very effective in structuring the report. Other areas for consideration here are focus on the question, it is deemed poor structure if candidates veer away from their chosen title. Candidates also need to consider their introductions carefully. It is important that the report follows the structure set out in the introduction. For example, there were cases where candidates set out which themes would be covered but these were then not addressed in the report, which is not effective structure. Candidates should use discourse markers to effectively guide the reader through the report. An effectively structured report will contain both final and intermediary conclusions. The report must be written in continuous prose and must not exceed 5000 words, so any charts and images should be added to the appendix and not appear in the main body of the report. Candidates must not rely on charts and images to convey meaning. The best approach is to avoid including them altogether.

As mentioned above (Concepts, Research Methods and Judgements) the definition of concepts in the syllabus includes reference to subject specific terminology. So, there is a crossover with communication. The skill being assessed here is candidates' ability to engage with subject specific terminology in a way that makes this accessible to the lay reader. Offering long lists of dictionary definitions is not an effective way to do this. Many candidates defined key terms in the introduction and this is fine, but this approach should not be exhaustive. 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.

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.

Most candidates were able to present effective referencing systems, whichever referencing system they chose to use. There are however certain areas where candidates do not demonstrate the skills required for the higher attainment levels. It is important that each citation should have a full reference and this should be easily located in the bibliography. A full reference means that the reader should have enough detail to enable them to find the source without relying on a hyperlink. The references should be set out systematically and logically in the bibliography.