GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH

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', 'journalists' actions', 'as given by the author', **Question 1(b):** 'ways that independent journalism should be protected' 'named by the author', **Question 2:** 'evidence' and 'impact', **Question 3:** 'perspectives', 'judgement' and 'stronger'.

It was pleasing to see that very few 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. 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 perspectives, 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: AO1b (Explanation) in **Question 2,** and AO1b (Perspectives) and AO1c (Evaluation of key components) 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 fully to the need to explain the impact of the evidence on the author's argument in **Question 2,** although more candidates are taking note of this requirement in the question**.** This was specifically mentioned in the second part of the question. Candidates were often able to give limited reasons as to why a piece of evidence was strong or weak but were unable to fully develop this into a clear explanation. It is important that candidates 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 evaluations of the key components that might have applied to any document.

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 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, full paragraphing in an essay format should be used in **Questions 2 and 3**, rather than bullet points. Where paragraphs were used to make one point within each, it helped candidates to track the separate points they were making, develop them and conclude the impact or strength. This helped to avoid repetition of points, such as several instances of cited sources. It also aided the flow of their argument, as the specific points were readily visible at the beginning of each paragraph.

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 and copied directly from the text. 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 straightforward 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** <u>two</u> examples of journalists' actions that have led governments to control journalists, as given by the author of Document A.

Many gained both marks by correctly identifying 'sharing information with the outer world' and 'intentionally ridicule and defame the armed forces'.

A 1–mark answer was:

- *Sharing information with the outer world and introduction of the penal code.* The second part is an action by government not journalists.
- *Intentionally ridicule the armed forces and a report entitled 'Canaries in a coalmine?'* The second part is not a specific action that led to controls, but a report about repression of journalism.

Question 1(b) was looking for candidates to **identify** <u>three</u> ways that independent journalism should be protected, as mentioned by the author of Document B**.** There were four possible answers that were acceptable:

- (Democratic countries must) begin treating attacks on journalists as attacks on democracy/prosecuting attacks with heavy criminal penalties.
- Governments should be held accountable.
- (Policymakers should) ensure journalism's economic survival/public funding/an EU wide fund.
- (Democratic governments should) use the upcoming World Press Freedom Conference to start progress globally.

An example of an approach to **Question 1(b)** awarding 2 out of 3 marks was:

- *Governments should be held accountable.* (correct answer)
- *Policymakers should ensure journalism's economic survival.* (correct answer)
- *There should be an EU wide fund.* (This is a repeated idea as it was part of the explanation of the need for journalists' economic independence.)

An example of an approach to **Question 1(b)** giving 1 out of 3 marks was:

- *Governments should be held accountable.* (correct answer)
- *Women face an added layer of intimidation.* (a need for protection not a measure of protection)
- *Journalists are dependent on financial support from the government.* (This is already in place and therefore not a proposal by the author.)

An example of an approach to **Question 1(b) giving 0 out of 3 marks** was:

- *Journalists report on the events shaping our world.* (A reason they should be protected not a way to protect them.)
- *Treating attacks. (*An incomplete section of text from the correct part of the document that does not actually identify the proposed method of protection.)
- *Limiting questions at press conferences.* (A reason they were unable to do their job and hence need protection, not a way to protect them.)

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 opened with an introduction about the perspective of Document A which is not required and so cannot be credited. Some candidates assessed key components of the argument rather than evidence provided by the author. Neither of these skills were rewardable in **Question 2**. Explanations for why a piece of evidence was strong or weak was often limited to 'more trustworthy', 'expert' or 'can't be fact checked'. More development is required for an explanation to be credited under AO1b. There was a specific requirement in the question to explain the impact of the evidence on the author's argument or claim. Candidates were clearly more prepared for this part of the question and demonstrated this skill more effectively in this paper than seen previously. Most candidates attempted some impact, but few were able to develop this sufficiently to achieve the highest marks. The question was looking for analysis of 'evidence' and so answers that related to language, counterargument or structure could not be credited.

Most common discussion points were around the provenance of the author, the statistics and sources used, the unsourced data, limited global scope 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.

Some candidates approached their answer by attempting to analyse and evaluate each paragraph from the document in turn. As the types of evidence are spread across the document this led to repetition of, for example, the strengths or weaknesses of statistics which could not be credited twice.

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 AO1c showed the greatest range. Many candidates scored lower marks for AO1b.

A clearly structured approach for some was to:
- identify a type of evidence (AO1a)
- give an example of that type of evidence from the document (AO1a)
- clearly assess whether it **is** a strength or weakness (AO1b)
- provide a developed explanation of **why** it is a strength or weakness (AO1b)
- evaluate the impact of the evidence on the argument/author's claim/the reader (AO1c).

The strongest answers used paragraph format to explain in turn each strength/weakness including the impact. They gave judgements at the end of strengths and of weakness, followed by an overall judgement weighing up the strengths and weaknesses and the overall impact of all the evidence.

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 response for this aspect would include several types of evidence with examples, such as: '*it has plenty of relevant quantitative data, with statistics such as 34% of all attacks were recorded in Islamabad'.* 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.

Strong answers used a 3–pronged approach to fully demonstrate the skill of explanation of why evidence was strong or weak.

For example, *'The author has the ability to see, which is a strength **because** they have first–hand experience of what is happening to journalists in Pakistan **and so** can provide and source inciteful information.'*

For example, '*One weakness is that the text does not always clearly cite where the information is from, instead just stating, 'China arrested four journalists on charges of sharing information with the outside world.' This is weak evidence as the author has not identified where this information came from, and the expertise of the author that provided it. This means we do not know if the report is only hearsay or rumour and so cannot be sure their evidence was not just chosen to specifically support their claim.*' The candidate identified a weakness, quoted it and explained why it was a weakness.

Lower scoring responses 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 'World Freedom Index 2021'.* There is a clear strength recognised with an example, but there is only limited explanation. 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, authors claim or on the reader. This ranged from making a simple assertion, through some evaluation of the impact, to evaluation that included a judgement.

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

The most common kind of answers for AO1c identified an impact with a simple evaluation such as *'the use of credible sources such as World Press Freedom Index make the argument more reliable as the sources have used data from a range of countries that can be fact checked.'*

A more developed evaluation of impacts could be, for example, '*the impact of the statistics on the reader is that it broadens their understanding of the topic, as they can see the size and significance of the problem and are more likely to support the authors claims.'*

Higher scoring responses included an evaluation of the impact of the individual pieces of evidence on the argument and then included an overall judgement at the end of the effectiveness of all the evidence. For example, '*In conclusion there is more strong evidence provided by the author than weak. Although some sources are not cited, the examples they highlight such as the arrest of journalists in China are not essential to support the overall claim. The data provided by World Press Freedom Index and the research from Gohdes and Carey provide sufficient evidence and support the opinions made by Kahn, whose first–hand ability to see in Pakistan may be considered more important in this topic than him not having fully completed his MPhil and so potentially having limited experience.'*

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. Each of these conclusions can be equally valid.

The most frequent approach was to initially attempt to identify and describe the perspectives of each document and then directly compare the key components of the argument of the two documents throughout the answer. Successful responses achieved this well with analysis and clear evaluation of the relative strengths of each document and included 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. This approach can also encourage candidates to consider different key components from each document and so there is no direct comparison between the two, which limits access to higher marks even though many key components are identified.

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. It is important that candidates do exemplify the key components using the documents rather than merely using a list of pre-learned key components that might apply to any document.

There were two assessment objectives used. AO1 (research, analysis, and evaluation) was separated into four aspects. Identify and compare key components of arguments (AO1a), analyse and compare perspectives (AO1b), evaluate arguments (AO1c) and 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:

- identifying, 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. The strongest responses included a small number of good comparisons to score highly and were limited to 3 or 4 key components, allowing the candidate to use their time more profitably by demonstrating other skills.

For example, higher scoring responses provided a range of compared key components. This is an example for one component – global reach, '*The author of Document A provided evidence mainly from Pakistan, with a single uncited mention of an example from China, whereas the author of Document B provided 3 countries China, Egypt and Saudi Arabia where most journalists were arrested as well as other specific examples of intimidation such as in Algeria, Hong Kong, Thailand and Venezuela giving Document B a much wider global reach.*'

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. Candidates seemed much more prepared to attempt this part of the question in this series.

An example of a high scoring response is: '*The author of Document A believes that the restriction of journalists around the world will allow for the repression of human rights on a greater scale. The author of Document B however believes that independent journalists should be protected because their job is vital to providing information around the world and making sure everyone knows people in power are doing things*

wrong. Document A focuses on the limitations placed on journalists while making a connection between that and the deterioration of people's rights. Document B's claim talks of the threats independent journalists have endured ending the article with a call to action for governments to protect journalists' livelihoods. Therefore, although both articles talk about journalism Document A focuses more on the connection between that subject and the rest of the world, while Document B ties the state of journalism and the importance of their work together. The author of Document A makes his claim as he is based in Pakistan and has seen repression of journalism first hand, whereas the author of Document B's claim is rooted in his professional experience working with independent journalists worldwide.'

Lower scoring responses simply stated what the document was about, or the theme of the documents from the stem of the question, or the title of the article without any analysis, rather than identifying the author's opinion. For example, *'Both documents have different views about press freedom'*, *'Document B's argument is about preventing the death of independent journalism'* *'Document A claims that freedom of expression is under attack'*. There is no identification or description of the author's claim, or any comparison, or explanation.

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

An example of a higher scoring response providing evaluation and illustration is given here. This is one part of several evaluations that were balanced across both documents. *'Document B uses a wider variety of global evidence and examples. Whilst Kahn mainly focuses on the situation in Pakistan, Willems refers to several countries such as Algeria, Hong Kong, Kenya and the Netherlands. This shows that the author has made sure to understand the depth of the problem under the context of several locations. His argument, therefore, comes across as more relevant to the person reading the document as it's applicable in more than one scenario, and so its significance is greater justifying the need for action.'*

An example of a lower scoring response is: *'Document A provides uncited sources. This evidence weakens the author's text as it is unknown if it is reliable data or just the author's 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 having unsourced data makes 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.

An example of a high scoring response is: *'In conclusion, Document B is the more credible article. This is because the author is ahead of the author in Document A, who is still studying. He also uses a more global viewpoint which makes his main argument more relatable. Although both documents are relatively up to date, one being from 2021 and one from 2020 – with B being older, Document B has stronger credibility with more unbiased sources. He also writes and concludes the article in a more positive way unlike the author of Document A who has a more negative tone. Document B looks at the problem with violence against journalism from start to finish and also provides a few possible solutions which gives it a more completed sense and more credibility.'* This candidate summarised the intermediate conclusions throughout their answer.

A lower scoring response often stated an unsupported judgement, without comparison for example, *'Document A is stronger because of where the author lives and works and the sources they use.'*

For AO3 – communication – higher scoring candidates produced a clearly written, well–structured and logical argument focused on the question throughout. Lower scoring candidates produced arguments that lacked clarity, had an uneven structure, were in bullet points 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 AND RESEARCH

Paper 9239/12
Written Examination

Key messages

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

Very few candidates spent too long on **Question 1** and so left themselves ample 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. 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**.

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 perspectives, 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 develop their answers accordingly.

AOs requiring specific improvement are: AO1b (Explanation) in **Question 2** and AO1b (Perspectives) and AO1c (Evaluation of key components) 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. Several candidates did not respond fully to the need to explain the impact of the evidence on the author's argument in **Question 2** which was specifically mentioned in the second part of the question. Candidates were often able to give limited reasons as to why a piece of evidence was strong or weak but were unable to fully develop this into a clear explanation. It is important that candidates 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 intermediate evaluations of the key components that might have applied to any document.

Many candidates organised their time well. In particular, candidates often gave a brief, focused answer to **Question 1** and confined their answers to assessing evidence in **Question 2**, leaving more time for **Question 3** which was worth over half of the available marks. It is important that candidates recognise the value of each question and 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, rather than bullet points, should be used. Where paragraphs were used to make one point within each, it helped candidates to track the separate points they were making, develop them and conclude the impact or strength. This helped to avoid repetition of points. It also aided the flow of their argument, as the specific points were readily visible at the beginning of each paragraph.

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 within the time set for the exam. Answers only need to be brief and can be in bullet points and copied directly from the text. A few candidates chose to leave **Question 1** until after they had answered the other two questions. The answers to **Question 1a** and **1b** are found as part of the reading and understanding of the documents. These answers are relatively straightforward 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 **three** disadvantages of Bitcoin for Salvadorans, as given by the author of **Document A**. There were four possible answers:

- too complex for everyday use
- requires internet access
- will not work for pupusa vendors, bus drivers or shopkeepers
- sending remittances via Bitcoin may cost more than money transfers/Bitcoin is not free/the cost of acquiring Bitcoins.

Almost all candidates scored two or three marks for this question.

An example of an approach to **Question 1(a) giving 2 out of 3 marks** was:

'It requires internet access which is not available in many parts of El Salvador. The Bitcoin initiative has attracted some angry protestors. Anyone wanting to send Bitcoins must first acquire them and it can cost a lot more than a money transfer to El Salvador.' (Only the second and fourth bullet points are mentioned. The point about 'angry protesters' is taken from the document but is not a disadvantage of Bitcoin itself.)

An example of an approach to **Question 1(a)** giving **1 out of 3 marks** was:

'According to Document A, sending Bitcoin is not free: anyone who wants to send Bitcoins must first acquire Bitcoins, and also the cost of first acquiring Bitcoins via a Bitcoin ATM can cost more than the money transferred to El Salvador.' (Only one bullet point is mentioned.)

An example of an approach to **Question 1(a)** giving **0 out of 3 marks** was:

'Bringing wealthy Bitcoin enthusiasm to El Salvador, will generate jobs and help provide financial inclusion to thousands outside the formal economy, tourism and business development strategy.' (No disadvantages are mentioned, only advantages.)

Question 1(b) was looking for candidates to identify **two** countries where cryptocurrency mining takes place, as given by the author of **Document B**. There were only two correct answers.

Many gained both marks by correctly identifying **Cambodia** and **China**.

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

'Cambodia and Singapore' (This only identifies one country correctly.)

An example of an approach to **Question 1(b)** giving **0 out of 2 marks** was:

'The two countries where cryptocurrency mining take place are Colombia and Southeast Asia.' (Colombia is not mentioned in the text. Southeast Asia <u>is</u> mentioned but is not a country.)

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 opened with an introduction about the perspective of **Document A** which is not required and so cannot be credited. Some candidates assessed key components of the argument rather than evidence provided by the author. Neither of these skills were creditable in **Question 2**. Explanations for why a piece of evidence was strong or weak was often limited to 'more trustworthy', 'expert' or 'can't be fact checked'; more development is required for an explanation to be credited under AO1b. There was a specific requirement in the question to explain the impact of the evidence on the author's argument or claim. Most candidates attempted some impact, but few were able to develop this sufficiently to achieve the highest marks. The question was looking for analysis of 'evidence' and so answers that related to language, counterargument or structure were not credited in this question.

Most common discussion points were around the provenance of the author, the statistics used, and the unnamed sources, such as the 'pupusa vendors'.

Some candidates approached their answer by attempting to analyse and evaluate each paragraph from the document in turn. As the types of evidence are spread across the document this leads to repetition of, for example, the strengths or weaknesses of statistics which could not be credited twice.

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 AO1c showed the greatest range. Many candidates scored lower marks for AO1b.

A clearly structured approach for some was to:

- identify a type of evidence (AO1a)
- give an example of that type of evidence from the document (AO1a)
- clearly assess whether it is a strength or weakness (AO1b)
- provide a developed explanation as to **why** it is a strength or weakness (AO1b)
- evaluate the impact of the evidence on the argument or author's claim or on the reader (AO1c).

Stronger answers used paragraph format to explain in turn each strength/weakness including the impact. They gave judgements at the end of strengths and of weaknesses, followed by an overall judgement weighing up the strengths and weaknesses and the overall impact of all the evidence.

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,

'The author does not provide sources to his points and mostly only provides vague and non-cited claims.'

This identifies the lack of named sources as a weakness of the evidence but does not offer any examples from the document. Repeated use of this approach throughout would gain less than half marks.

A higher scoring candidate for this aspect would give several examples, such as:

'However, the author also includes claims that are unsupported which negatively impact the argument. He says that 'Bukele's goals seem to be to get Bitcoiners around the world' but does not name the source of this claim. Another example is that 'Bukele seem to be trying to expand the El Zonte experiment on a national scale'. Again, Lee doesn't name the source of this claim.'

For AO1b – Analysing the strengths and weaknesses of evidence - Stronger 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:

'Throughout the document, the author has used quantitative and statistical data to provide relevant information to support his argument. For example, he used the figure '2 per cent' to indicate GDP percentage collected from remittances from Salvadorans living abroad. He also uses figures (2.9 per cent) to validate average cost beyond USD 200 of documental evidence. He is constantly providing exact figures which makes them plausible because they are not approximations.'

The candidate identified a strength, quoted it and explained why it was a strength.

Weaker responses concentrated on strengths rather than weaknesses (or the opposite) and only stated them with limited explanation. For example:

'The strengths of the evidence provided in the fourth paragraph would be that they provided the data and statistics that supports the credibility of Bitcoin use. He noted that more than 20 per cent of El Salvador's GDP is from remittances from Salvadorans living abroad, claiming that 'fees can be upwards of 50 per cent' for money transfers.'

This is a clear strength recognised with an example, but there is only limited explanation. To improve, the candidate would need to explain why this information is seen to be credible.

For AO1c – Evaluating evidence – Candidates were expected to evaluate the impact of the evidence on the argument, author's claim or on the reader. This ranged from making a simple assertion, through some evaluation of the impact, to evaluation that included a judgement.

For example, weaker responses used simple assertion without explaining why or how there is an impact on the argument, for example:

'Certain claims similar to Bukele's announcement concerning Latin American country have not been backed up by any proof or informational evidence. So, claims and arguments in relation to Bitcoin are weak as they do not have any evidence information alongside. Moreover, the lack of evidence only makes it harder for the author to support his argument.'

A more developed evaluation of impacts could be, for example:

'The author includes the World Bank's estimates to get the cost of sending money from the US to El Salvador. Illustrating his point that sending Bitcoin is difficult and not free. This adds credibility and verifiability along with quantifiability to his argument as the issue can be quantified and information can be verified through his sources provided, in turn making his argument more credible.'

The evaluation is well explained and there is an emphasis on the impact throughout this section.

Stronger responses evaluated the impact of the individual pieces of evidence on the argument and then included an overall judgement at the end of the response, focussing on the overall effectiveness of all the evidence.

'In conclusion, despite the article having notable strengths in the presentation of the article and the authors' credentials, the weaknesses outweigh them and ultimately hinder the impact of the audience on the authors' argument.'

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 whether **Document A** was stronger than

Document B, **Document B** was stronger than **Document A,** or they were both equally strong. Any of these conclusions can be equally valid.

The most frequent approach was to initially attempt to identify and describe the perspectives of each document and then directly compare the key components of the arguments of the two documents throughout the answer. The strongest responses achieved this well with analysis and clear evaluation of the relative strengths of each document and included 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. This approach can also encourage candidates to consider different key components from each document and so there is no direct comparison between the two, which limits access to higher marks even though many key components are identified.

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. It is important that candidates exemplify the key components using the documents rather than merely using a list of pre-learned key components that might apply to any document.

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), and Provide a judgement about argument and perspective (AO1d). The second assessment objective was AO3 – Communication.

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

- identifying, 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 arguments 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 AO1(a) – 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. The strongest responses included a small number of good comparisons, limited to 3 or 4 key components, which allowed the candidate to use their time more profitably on demonstrating other skills.

For example, stronger responses provided a range of compared key components. This is an example for one component – the author's background:

'However, their backgrounds are similar as Document A's author is a journalist who particularly comments on tech-related topics due to his master's degree in computer science from Princeton (U.S.) which gives him a similarity to comment on the issue. On the other hand, ASEAN largely comments on topics related to geopolitics and the environment, meaning it too has past experience allowing it to provide informed opinion and to comment accurately on the issue.'

For AO1(b) – Analyse and compare perspectives – There was a range of marks as some responses did not provide any analysis of perspectives, while lower scoring responses simply identified perspectives, often from just one document. Stronger responses compared, described, and explained the significance of the perspectives in both documents. Candidates seemed much more prepared to attempt this part of the question in this series.

An example of a high scoring response is:

'Document A states that even if crypto does not benefit in the long-term, El Salvador could still see some benefit from Bitcoin-friendly jurisdiction, as it will bring in more tourists and businesses. To prove his point the author gives an introduction of Bitcoin in El Salvador. He mentions that it has defects, but he emphasises the advantages of bringing Bitcoin in and the ways it can and has benefited El Salvador. On the other hand, Doc B much like Doc A also points out and sees expansion potential in Bitcoin, as stated in the perspective as

well. However, he presents a potent warning to developers and others around it on the eventual implications it may bring. Doc A somewhat points out the benefits Bitcoin may bring to El Salvador while Doc B stresses the defects it may bring globally. In doing so B provides an adequate introduction to Bitcoin and emphasises its defects in vast areas all over the world.'

Weaker responses only stated what the document was about, or the theme of the documents from the stem of the question, or the title of the article without any analysis, rather than identifying the author's opinion. For example:

'In Doc A, the author discusses that Bitcoin is too complex for everyday use, and it requires internet access which is not available in many parts of El Salvador. In Doc B, the author discusses how Bitcoin mining has to be solved by solving complex algorithms with specialised computers.'

There is no identification and only a little description of the authors' claims, and very little comparison, or explanation.

For AO1(c) – Evaluate Arguments – Stronger responses evaluated the key components of arguments that had been identified with clear illustration from, and balanced reference to, both the documents. Lower scoring responses made unsupported points about the argument and may only have referred to one document.

An example of a higher scoring response providing evaluation and illustration is given here. This is one part of several evaluations that were balanced across both documents.

'In terms of evidence, Document A uses both quantitative and qualitative evidence. Specifically, statistics from official sources such as the World Bank and expert opinions such as Jake Mallers, the CEO of a Bitcoin payment start-up. This provides quantifiability to his argument as well as verifiability and reliability— information can be checked and comes from credible sources. Similarly, Document B also uses expert opinions such as Max Krause, a researcher at Oak Ridge Institute, and statistics such as those on the value of cryptocurrencies. However, these statistics are unsourced and not specific, which makes them less credible and discredits the authors' arguments.'

Weaker responses gave answers, containing only simple evaluation, for example:

'Further, Document B gave much evidence as to why cryptocurrency has a negative impact but there was no evidence to how cryptocurrency is useful and much easier way of making transactions. This makes the author in Document B very less understanding of the opportunities that the new technology brings.'

There is some basic evaluation but no clear illustration nor reasoning as to the impact of this point on the argument.

For AO1(d) – Provide a judgement about argument and perspective – Stronger responses compared key components of the argument throughout. This allowed intermediate judgements to be made when both documents had been evaluated and compared. A conclusion was used to summarise the intermediate judgements that had been made in order to come to an overall conclusion. Weaker responses simply made partially reasoned but unsupported judgements.

High scoring responses were often completed like this which summarised the intermediate conclusions which had been presented throughout the response:

'In conclusion, Doc. B has a stronger argument than Doc. A due to a clear and overall purpose, persuasive readers, strong use of statistics from different sources and global examples. Despite Doc A being from a southeast Asian publication it lacks bias towards those countries and provides a more convincing argument.'

A lower scoring response might simply state a mostly unsupported judgement, without comparison, for example:

'To conclude, Document B is stronger than Document A. In my opinion, Document B is neutral, has clarity, and uses a lot of strong evidence to support its arguments. So, Document B is stronger than Document A in my opinion.'

For AO3 – Communication – Higher scoring responses were clearly written, well-structured and included logical argument focused throughout on the question. Lower scoring responses included arguments that lacked clarity, had an uneven structure, were in bullet points or did not always link to the question.

Overall, the strongest responses linked aspects to examples in the text with explanation of why this supported the argument. Middle scoring responses 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 AND RESEARCH

Paper 9239/13
Written Examination

Key messages

Candidates should ensure they read the paper carefully, looking at the key words, to answer all the questions set. This applied to all questions, for example in **Question 1(a):** 'artificial intelligence technology', 'cities', 'a reduction in travel times' and 'as given by the author', **Question 1(b):** 'traffic congestion' and 'given by the author', **Question 2: '**evidence' and 'impact', **Question 3:** 'perspectives', 'judgement' and 'stronger'.

Very few candidates spent too long on **Question 1** and so left themselves ample 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. 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**.

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 perspectives, 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: AO1b (Explanation) in **Question 2** and AO1b (Perspectives), AO1c (Evaluation of key components) 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. Several candidates did not respond fully to the need to explain the impact of the evidence on the author's argument in **Question 2** which was specifically mentioned in the second part of the question. Candidates were often able to give limited reasons as to why a piece of evidence was strong or weak but were unable to fully develop this into a clear explanation. It is important that candidates 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 intermediate evaluations of the key components that might have applied to any document.

Many candidates organised their time well. In particular, some candidates often gave a brief, focused answer to **Question 1** and confined their answers to assessing evidence in **Question 2**, leaving more time for **Question 3** which was worth over half of the available marks. It is important that candidates recognise the value of each question and 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, rather than bullet points, should be used. Where paragraphs were used to make one point within each, it helped candidates to track the separate points they were making, develop them and conclude the impact or strength. This helped to avoid repetition of points. It also aided the flow of their argument, as the specific points were readily visible at the beginning of each paragraph.

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 within the time set for the exam. Answers only need to be brief and can be in bullet points and copied directly from the text. 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 straightforward 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 name **two** cities that have had a reduction in travel times, as given by the author of **Document A**. There were only two correct answers.

Many candidates gained both marks by correctly identifying **Hangzhou** and **Pittsburgh.**

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

'The city of Pittsburgh has installed the Surtac intelligent transfer signal control system at 50 intersections. The second city is Saudi Arabia.'

An example of an approach to **Question 1(a)** giving **0 out of 2 marks** was:

'In the capital in Delhi the drivers spent up to 58 per cent in traffic and another state is Asia.'

Question 1(b) was looking for candidates to identify **three** negative consequences of traffic congestion in cities, as given by the authors of **Document B**. There were four possible answers that were acceptable:

- lower air quality/increased automobile emissions/greenhouse gases
- increased fuel consumption
- supply chain problems/wasting time/long waits in delivery of raw materials or products
- increased journey times.

An example of an approach to **Question 1(b) giving 2 out of 3 marks** was:

'Congestion increases automobile emission, and it reduces the air quality. During the rush hour traffic emissions of carbon monoxide and oxides of nitrogen were very high. Long waits in the delivery of raw materials and finished products to customers.' (Only the first and fourth bullet points are identified.)

An example of an approach to **Question 1(b) giving 1 out of 3 marks** was:

'Artificial intelligence technology has reduced in ways which is causing the traffic to be really bad in most cities which is causing drivers to spend most of their time stuck in traffic.' (Only one bullet point is identified.)

An example of an approach to **Question 1(b) giving 0 out of 3 marks** was:

'For the first example the cities in China are probably facing more challenges than any other city.' (Does not address question at all.)

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 opened with an introduction about the perspective of **Document A** which is not required and so cannot be credited. Some candidates assessed key components of the argument rather than evidence provided by the author. Neither of these skills were creditable in **Question 2**. Explanations for why a piece of evidence was strong or weak was often limited to 'more trustworthy,' 'expert' or 'can't be fact checked'; more development is required for an explanation to be credited under AO1b. There was a specific requirement in the question to explain the impact of the evidence on the author's argument or claim. Most candidates attempted some impact, but few were able to develop this sufficiently to achieve the highest marks. The question was looking for analysis of 'evidence' and so answers that related to language, counterargument or structure were not credited in this question.

Most common discussion points were around the background of the author, the sources used, and the precise statistics.

Some candidates approached their answer by attempting to analyse and evaluate each paragraph from the document in turn. As the types of evidence are spread across the document this leads to repetition of, for example the strengths or weaknesses of statistics which could not be credited twice.

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 AO1c showed the greatest range. Many candidates scored lower marks for AO1b.

A clearly structured approach for some was to:

* identify a type of evidence (AO1a)
* give an example of that type of evidence from the document (AO1a)
* clearly assess whether it **is** a strength or weakness (AO1b)
* provide a developed explanation as to **why** it is a strength or weakness (AO1b)
* evaluate the impact of the evidence on the argument or author's claim or on the reader (AO1c).

Stronger answers used paragraph format to explain in turn each strength/weakness including the impact. They gave judgements at the end of strengths and of weaknesses, followed by an overall judgement weighing up the strengths and weaknesses and the overall impact of all the evidence.

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,

'Some key strengths of the evidence in Document A were that the document's evidence was valid because it came from and was given by an author, a journalist. The document also focuses on major issues in specific cities, and what was done to try and resolve the issues in those cities.'

This identifies the background of the author and also the inclusion of relevant evidence from different cities but does not offer any examples or illustrations. Repeated use of this approach throughout would gain less than half marks.

A higher scoring response would give several examples for each of the points made, for example,

'In Document A, the author uses both qualitative and quantitative evidence. The document includes statistics to show the impact of AI traffic management. The author states that this kind of technology 'reduced travel times by 26 per cent and wait times at intersections by 41 per cent' in Pittsburgh.'

The candidate made a point about statistics and gave two examples.

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

'The evidence used in the document is also supported by the authors' use of credible sources, including scientists and the heads of technology companies. For example, he references a professor of robotics, and Wang Jian, the chairman of a Chinese tech giant. By including quotes and information from relevant professionals in the field, the author creates more credibility, and the evidence given becomes more significant.'

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

'Another weak piece of evidence used was in the 7th paragraph. This reduced travel times by 26 per cent and wait times at intersections by 40 per cent. As mentioned before, this statistic is weak, not nearly enough explanation is given for it to be strong.'

This is a clear weakness recognised with an example, but there is only limited explanation. To improve, the candidate would need to explain why this information is seen to be credible.

For AO1c – Evaluating evidence – Candidates were expected to evaluate the impact of the evidence on the argument, author's claim or on the reader. This ranged from making a simple assertion, through some evaluation of the impact, to evaluation that included a judgement.

For example, weaker responses used simple assertion without explaining why or how there is an impact on the argument, for example:

'The writer also provides data analysis which is a type of evidence that supports his argument.'

The most common kind of answers for AO1c identified an impact with a simple evaluation, such as:

'He sources back to Wang Jian to make his statements that AI can help reduce traffic. He also sources that AI can reduce traffic by giving us numbers and percentages. The change in numbers backs his statement and proves it credible.'

A more developed evaluation of impacts could be, for example:

'Yanbu Industrial city is another example related to traffic management but it is weak because it lacks a clear source as the only authority referred is Huawei and this one does not provide any evidence. Also, it is weak because it is not relevant for the argument because it does not show how the evidence helps reduce traffic congestion or helps directly with traffic management, thus this evidence weakens the argument.'

Higher scoring responses evaluated the impact of the individual pieces of evidence on the argument and then included an overall judgement at the end of the response, focussing on the overall effectiveness of all the evidence.

'Ultimately, Document A shows evidence from a variety of unique types from many regions and uses sources' expertise and ability to observe, giving validity despite some claims not being well supported. Document A has strong outstanding weaknesses, still supporting an overall argument with validity despite some highly credible sources. Despite some claims not being well supported, Document A's high expertise and ability to observe give it full validity. Therefore, Document A effectively uses evidence to support its argument.'

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 whether **Document A** was stronger than **Document B**, **Document B** was stronger than **Document A,** or they were both equally strong. Any of these conclusions can be equally valid.

The most frequent approach was to initially attempt to identify and describe the perspectives of each document and then directly compare the key components of the arguments of the two documents throughout the answer. The strongest responses achieved this well with analysis and clear evaluation of the relative strengths of each document and included 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. This approach can also encourage candidates to consider different key components from each document and so there is no direct comparison between the two, which limits access to higher marks even though many key components are identified.

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. It is important that candidates exemplify the key components using the documents rather than merely using a list of pre-learned key components that might apply to any document.

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), and Provide a judgement about argument and perspective (AO1d). The second assessment objective was AO3 – Communication.

The strongest responses adopted a structured approach to answering the question by methodically:

- identifying, 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 arguments 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 AO1(a) – 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. The strongest responses included a small number of good comparisons, limited to 3 or 4 key components, and which allowed the candidate to use their time more profitably on demonstrating other skills.

Stronger responses included a range of compared key components. For example, comparing one component between the two documents:

'Document A's argument is stronger than Document B's argument. This is because Document A discusses the solution to the issue in detail, including examples of the technology being implemented in several major cities and globally. However, Document B does not give any examples of the proposed solution being implemented which leads to the conclusion that the solution is not being used or did not have good results when used.'

For AO1(b) – Analyse and compare perspectives – There was a range of marks as some responses did not provide any analysis of perspectives, while weaker responses simply identified perspectives, often from just one document. Stronger responses compared, described, and explained the significance of the perspectives in both documents. Candidates seemed much more prepared to attempt this part of the question in this series.

An example of a high scoring response is:

'The document details the arrangements to solve traffic congestion. Document A advocated for a more technology-centred solution – AI-powered traffic management systems. It supports this argument by citing three key examples: AI systems currently at work: Alibaba's City Brain system in Hangzhou and company Huawei for the majority of the article, it focuses on these 3 examples integrating a blend of qualitative and

empirical quantitative evidence and expert testimony to support the assertion that AI is 'the best by far'. Document B, on the other hand, lists a series of solutions for a more politically-oriented audience. The writer in Document B asserts the need for 'special bus lanes' and 'carbon-based subsidies for rail travel' arguing it is up to the rich and to governments to encourage this sort of mass transport.'

Weaker responses only stated what the document was about, or the theme of the documents from the stem of the question, or the title of the article without any analysis, rather than identifying the authors opinion. For example:

'Document A seems to focus more on the overall belief that technology could improve cities throughout the world, while Document B seems to focus more on the improving of transportation methods mainly in Africa.'

There is no identification and only a little description of the authors' claims, and very little comparison, or explanation.

For AO1(c) – Evaluate Arguments – Stronger responses evaluated the key components of arguments that had been identified with clear illustration from, and balanced reference to, both the documents. Weaker responses made unsupported points about the argument and may only have referred to one document.

An example of a higher scoring response providing evaluation and illustration is given here. This is one part of several evaluations that were balanced across both documents.

'Document A uses a very narrow type of evidence by mostly quoting owners of companies that sell the technology used to fix the problem. These people have a vested interest in the success of their technology which may lead to misinformation and bias on the topic. This weakens the argument in Document A and would make readers less likely to believe the information presented.'

Lower scoring responses were less developed, making points which did not involve any evaluation, for example,

'The author of Document A specialises in topics like technology, physics, climate, and space. Whereas the authors of Document B specialise are a part of an organisation that focuses on environmental and development challenges.'

For AO1(d) – Provide a judgement about argument and perspective – Stronger responses compared key components of the argument throughout. This allowed intermediate judgements to be made when both documents had been evaluated and compared. A conclusion was used to summarise the intermediate judgements that had been made in order to come to an overall conclusion. Weaker responses made partially reasoned but unsupported judgements.

High scoring responses were often completed with comments like this which summarised the intermediate conclusions which had been presented throughout the response:

'In conclusion, Document A has a better global scope with its argument, but Document B provides important context on the issue, giving the reader a better understanding of the issue and the severity of it on society. With these two strengths of both documents in mind, I can conclude that Document A has the better overall argument. This is because its larger global scope helps its proposed solution feel more reliable and globally important. While Document B does give the reader a better understanding of the issue, that is not worth much if Document B's argument does not seem as effective at counteracting the issue around the world.'

A lower scoring response might simply state a mostly unsupported judgement, without comparison, for example,

'Document A is stronger because of where the author lives and works and the sources they use', or,

'Document B has more evidence and explanation so and so their argument is stronger than Doc A.'

For AO3 – Communication – Stronger responses were clearly written, well-structured and included logical argument which was focused throughout on the question. Weaker responses included arguments that lacked clarity, had an uneven structure, were in bullet points or did not always link to the question.

Overall, the strongest responses linked aspects to examples in the text and with explanation of why this supported the argument. Middle scoring responses 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 AND RESEARCH

Paper 9239/02
Essay

Key messages

Candidates must ensure that they construct a title question which sets up contrasting perspectives, both of which can be supported by available and varied research.

Candidates are required to critically evaluate a number of their key sources. It is expected that candidates will consider strengths and weaknesses of the evidence and arguments of three or four sources.

Candidates should ensure that both of their contrasting perspectives are given equal consideration and that the contrasting perspectives are actively compared at various points in the essay.

General comments

This component assesses candidate essays against ten separate skills. Increasingly, candidates are better prepared and more of them are addressing all of the assessment criteria required by this skills based syllabus. This series saw some well researched essays with popular areas of focus including Artificial Intelligence, Migration, Climate Change and Social Media. Essays must not exceed the 2000-word limit and bibliographies should be uploaded as a separate document when submitting candidate work.

Comments on specific aspects

Analysis of Question

The foundation of a successful essay is a good title question. Although the essay is a piece of independent work, it is important that teachers and centres advise their candidates as to what makes a good title question. The title question must set up a debate between two contrasting perspectives, ideally the title question could be answered yes or no, for example, '*Is social media beneficial for society?'* The next thing to consider is will there be available research that supports both perspectives. Clearly, with the social media example there will be plenty of research supporting both contrasting perspectives. Finally, in terms of devising a good title question, candidates need to consider whether the implications of the question can be analysed through the lens of different themes. '*Is social media beneficial for society?'* could be analysed through a political lens (democracy and free speech), or through a health lens (impacts for mental health), or through a cultural lens (cultural homogeneity) to name but a few.

Ideally, candidates will analyse three or four implications of the title question and they need to clearly identify the implication or theme at the start of a new paragraph. For example, '*Do the benefits of migration outweigh the drawbacks?',* the candidate who used this title question started their first paragraph after the introduction like this:
'*One of the most important aspects to consider when weighing up the benefits or costs of migration is the impact it has on the economy'.*
Assessors are looking for clearly identified implications that are then developed and analysed.

It is important that candidates remain focused on their title question. The candidate who used the title question, '*Should we incorporate Artificial Intelligence into the workplace?',* went on to discuss the impact of Artificial Intelligence on school children and so lost focus on their title question. Candidates should be mindful when narrowing down the parameters of their question, as the example did, by choosing to focus on the workplace specifically rather than society more generally.

CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Building Perspectives

A one-sided essay without contrasting perspectives will not be able to achieve beyond the lowest attainment level in this aspect. The skill being assessed here is that of synthesis. Candidates should be making links across their sources to develop coherent perspectives that respond to their title question. Synthesising arguments and evidence from different sources is a key skill that is assessed in many of the syllabus components. To achieve at the highest level, candidates should make explicit the links between two sources both of which have had some developed use within the essay, as can be seen in this example, which comes from an essay with the title '*Should tourism be restricted?*'

'*A lot of tourists coming to a place can cause the number of affordable houses to decrease. An article states that tourism in popular places increases the housing prices, because rich investors buy a lot of places and try to rent them out at a high price (Fowler 2021). The argument is logical, because if rich investors buy a lot of houses and set the prices very high, local inhabitants cannot afford the prices and there are less houses for them. Another article builds on this point with specific reference to Airbnb in Barcelona (Mead 2019)
The author refers to research that shows that the number of rented houses by Airbnb has risen by 43%, which increases the housing prices for locals as well as reducing the number of homes available for long-term rental.*'

The evidence from Mead explicitly supports Fowler's argument and both sources are relevant to the title question and favour the perspective in support of restrictions.

Range of Sources

Assessors are looking for candidates to employ a range of sources as they build their contrasting perspectives. Candidates should use relevant and credible research that originates 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. If we consider the example above (see Building Perspectives) the candidate has made it explicitly clear that Mead's argument is pertaining to the global context of Spain (Barcelona). Candidates should make clear which global context their research originates from or which global context it relates to. It also creditable to use sources from global institutions such as the World Bank or the Pan-African Council.

Candidates are also assessed on their ability to engage with the arguments put forward by their selected source material. To be successful here candidates should select a source that supports a perspective. The source should have a strong line of argument, relevant to the title question, rather than one that is informative or descriptive. Candidates need to present some relevant evidence from the source and then explain how the source's argument and evidence relate to the perspective being developed.

Candidates who used 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

This still remains one of the skills that some candidates do not demonstrate. Candidates should critically evaluate three or four of their key sources, considering both strengths and weaknesses. To reach the higher attainment levels, a more developed and focused line of critical evaluation is required, rather than several partially developed or assertive points. Here is a strong example of critical evaluation from this series, it comes from an essay with the title '*Should archaeologists continue excavating ancient human remains?*'

'*This strengthens the argument as it shows how much effort and protection archaeologists have for the remains, which ultimately increases credibility, as we can trust that they are properly treated. On the other hand, there is also the realization that there are multiple possibilities from excavations such as how remains buried in tombs "may have emerged from a group". This uncertainty weakens the argument as it suggests that results deriving from excavations are only theories and are not always factual. This shows that there is doubt within archaeological research that must be faced when discussing the impact of it on ancestry and culture.*'

Comparison of Perspectives

A well planned essay should provide several opportunities for candidates to compare perspectives. Comparison can be achieved in the introduction when the candidate sets up the debate and outlines the main points of the contrasting perspectives. As discussed in the Analysis of Question section above, candidates should consider their title question through the lens of different themes. Building on the example used there, the question '*Is social media beneficial for society?*' was considered via a health lens. This enabled the candidate to compare the health benefits provided by social media and juxtapose these against the dangers to mental health posed by social media. It is also expected that candidates will offer a holistic comparison of perspectives at the end of the essay as they build towards their conclusion.

Consideration of Contrasting Perspectives

This is the first of three reflective skills assessed via the essay. While studying Global Perspectives and Research it is hoped that candidates encounter a wide variety of perspectives relating to topics and issues with global significance. The skill here is for candidates to remain objective and give fair and even consideration to both perspectives in their essay. Candidates need to be able to demonstrate that both of their contrasting perspectives have been given equal treatment in terms of quality of research, critical evaluation of source material and the tone of language used. It is also expected that candidates will devote a similar number of words towards each perspective. Candidates, for the most part, demonstrate great maturity in how they address issues with competing perspectives. Candidates must be mindful of not choosing an issue to focus on which they will not be able to approach objectively. For example issues such as Animal Testing can be highly emotive and some candidates find it difficult to not let their personal perspective influence the content of the essay.

Reflection and Impact on Personal Viewpoint

In previous series this has been an assessment aspect that many candidates have omitted but this year the vast majority of candidates were able to achieve credit here. Assessors are looking for candidates to reflect upon how their point of view has been changed or consolidated when researching and writing the essay. Higher achieving candidates will be explicit in addressing how perspectives or arguments have impacted their thinking. This is a strong example from the current series. It comes from an essay with the title '*Do influencers have a positive impact on our society?*'

'*Prior to conducting the research, I did not stand on a formal position thus I felt very intrigued on researching a topic such as influencers and even more interesting the impact they have on our society. There was much research material available but finding sources with inclination towards the positive impact influencers have on society was not easy. That influenced me into the negative impact perspective. I believe that as a society we all have prejudices on influencers that can lead to misjudgement. This essay was a challenge for me in order to question them, but also to acknowledge them. The process of the research was really interesting due to this misconception that they are harmless or dull when in reality they are every day impacting more and more our newest generations. The weight of evidence supporting the negative perspective did change my point of view but only slightly because those sources, in particular, Badillo (2023) often had more measured and convincing arguments because the authors lacked bias.*'

Further Research

It was really encouraging to see more candidates addressing this skill in their essays. Assessors are looking for candidates to suggest a new area for further research that is relevant to the title question. More successful candidates were able to take their idea for further research and develop it in terms of detail and justification for the suggested idea. This is a strong example from the series. The candidate's essay title was '*Should governments enforce laws to ban the illegal wildlife trade (IWT)?*'

'*For instance, further researching what laws governments could enforce to prohibit the IWT. Possibly by adding restrictions to it, like the Chinese government decided or to abolish IWT. One could also research what those restrictions could be and how the law would get passed through the legal systems throughout the world. By doing this, we can create steps on how one could carry out banning the IWT, or at least have certain rules and restrictions in place. Further research can help suggest to governments on how we, as a society, can protect animals who are threatened by extinction.*'

Structure

The vast majority of candidates presented essays with a sound structure and were able to achieve reasonably well against this assessment criteria. To reach the higher levels for structure assessors are looking for essays that demonstrate effective use of discourse markers and/or headings and are clear and logical throughout. A well structured essay will also maintain a strong focus on the title question and be between 1750–2000 words.

Candidates should be reminded that their essays should be written in continuous prose and not contain charts, tables or diagrams.

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, this system is exemplified in the Building Perspectives section above. Footnote systems are fine though footnotes should only be used for reference details and not extra information or critical evaluation.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH

> **Paper 9239/03**
> **Team Project**

Key messages

Candidates produced presentations on a fantastic array of topics, making them interesting and enjoyable to watch and mark. There were several popular and previously seen topics, for example invasive species; poverty and homelessness; human trafficking; drug addiction; plastics and pollution as well as climate change, to name but a few. Some refreshingly new topics included the impact of language loss or the destruction of archaeological sites on a culture; the gentrification of neighbourhoods on residents and/or the environment; issues relating to aging populations and governments' handling of debt crises and inflation.

The quality of work overall was good; very few candidates submitted work that showed a lack of engagement or research. During this session many candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the meaning of the criteria and therefore were able to achieve well.

Most answers made good use of time, using the ten minutes well with clear evidence of planning. Most candidates had clearly been well prepared and were able to therefore produce results which encompassed a good range of detail allowing adequate time to address all the assessment objectives. There were very few presentations below five minutes, though some candidates appeared to have been given a cut-off point of less than ten minutes. This should be avoided so that candidates are able to maximise the scope of their presentation. A small minority produced presentations which exceeded 10 minutes, which meant that their solutions were unable to be credited as they were after the time limit.

Many presentations were clear and focused, which showed that the presenters have confidence in their use of technology as well as an ability to make valid and relevant choices in the selection of their source materials. Successful high performing candidates made detailed references to visual aids to help back up their arguments.

General comments

An increasing number of candidates are choosing to present a PowerPoint presentation with an added voice-over rather than present in front of a group of their peers and their instructor. Although this is acceptable, candidates should be advised that an audience should be kept in mind and the presentation should aim to interact with the audience, whether they are present or not.

A small number of centres submitted a joint team presentation, which is not permitted for this component and led to candidates' marks being limited and only the work of each specific candidate being credited, rather than the presentation as a whole. This should be avoided as it often leads to candidates achieving very low marks.

Teachers should note that there is no need for them to speak at the start to introduce the candidate, it has led to presentations running over 10 minutes which could impact the candidate's marks. There is also no longer a requirement for there to be an audience, so using presentation time to prove that there is one isn't necessary.

Something that most candidates still do, which was a requirement of the old syllabus, is list their team members' perspectives during their presentation. There is no need to do this, and that time could be better used within the presentation.

On occasion, candidates were hampered and disadvantaged by external noise. One example of this was a candidate producing their presentation against the background of loud music emanating from another nearby classroom in the school. This is unfair on candidates who may also be nervous about presenting in front of an audience. Centres are advised to be mindful of how they can best support candidates by ensuring that the conditions for delivering presentations are ideal. There were also some unsuitable locations for video recording as screens were flashed out by sunlight, making it impossible to see presentation slides. Some candidates positioned themselves directly in front of the screen, again making it impossible to view the slides.

Presentation

AO1 – Research, analysis and evaluation

A – Individual analysis of the problem

It was pleasing to see that, this year, most candidates chose an issue which lent itself well to the task, enabling them to access the assessment objectives. There were examples of candidates ensuring their chosen issue was sufficiently specific, an improvement from some of the more generalised, vague issues seen from some candidates in previous sessions. For example, rather than a general approach to 'access to healthcare', more specific approaches were seen such as 'access to healthcare in rural communities.' Rather than 'prison populations', examples such as the 'racial bias seen within the judicial system' enabled candidates to develop a much more focused project.

Candidates generally excelled in the analysis of global problems, providing clear insights into the issues and their impacts. This analytical strength was evident in their ability to break down complex problems, assess various perspectives, and outline the potential consequences of these issues on different communities and global systems. The impact of global problems was often well-articulated, highlighting students' understanding of the interconnectedness and complexity of global issues.

In order for candidates to gain 3 marks or more for this criterion, they are required to explain the impact of their problem. This could be the impact on a range of areas such as countries, people or animals. An example of a candidate doing this well is a candidate who discusses the impact of immigration in general but then also goes and explains the impact of immigration on a range of different countries such as Portugal, Australia and Germany.

Candidates who did not achieve as well tended to not have a global element. Though it was possible to achieve well on this criterion by exploring the local impact in depth, presentations with a narrow focus often did not achieve so well. An example of a presentation focused on a local issue is one on preservation of the Florida Keys. It did not provide a broader context and suffered as a result of being based on what is assumed to be 'common knowledge' of the situation.

Weaker presentations were sometimes the result of teams choosing an issue which was too broad to be adequately encompassed within a 10-minute time slot, leading to a relatively superficial treatment of the topic, with local and global examples selected almost at random.

Some candidates did not manage to maintain a balance between the problem and their proposed solution. Several candidates stated a problem without developing or analysing it but proceeded to immediately consider several potential solutions. This limited their marks for this assessment objective. There was also time wasted by spending too long defining terms that were obvious – 'society', 'disease', 'internet', for example, or on explaining the causes of a problem rather than the impact it was having. The best answers kept a sharp focus on impact and threaded this throughout their discussion of local and global examples and their solutions.

B – Range of research undertaken

There was a mixed approach to research. For the most part candidates considered quite a wide range of sources, gathering a good deal of information. However, some candidates were unable to use that research to maintain a precise focus on their chosen problem and so their use of the research became quite generalised rather than directed with purpose to develop and underpin their ideas and arguments.

The strongest work cited research using different formats and sources. Examples were seen which included university research, community project data, journalism, information from the world of manufacturing and industry, government departments and expert opinion. Weaker responses tended to rely on public opinion

quotes, or personal perceptions and experiences or merely cited one or two university or governmental research papers which were restricted to just one country. Public opinion quotes and reliance on personal experiences tended to result in a project which felt poorly researched or developed. Stronger candidates managed to sound like experts in the field of their chosen issue, demonstrating skills to find, source, compile and explain key research findings. Successful presentations used research throughout the presentation and found data and evidence from a variety of types of sources encompassing a range of contexts. Another way that candidates achieved well for this criterion is by using research from a variety of different countries. One candidate scored top marks by selecting material from a variety of global contexts in order to illustrate the universal nature of water shortages.

Some candidates also carried out primary research, such as an interview with a prominent local professor, or a survey among local residents in the neighbourhood and this was a welcome development, particularly when the results of that research were used purposefully to develop the candidate's argument and/or inform the development of their solution. However, there were occasions where such research was conducted but only as an end in itself and not used to any real purpose.

C – Evaluation of sources to support the research

This remains an assessment objective that candidates struggle to achieve well on. Although some candidates have scored 3 or 4 marks for this criterion this year, evidence of this has been limited. There has, however, been an improvement in the number of candidates making a point of evaluating at least one source.

Some candidates are describing the provenance of the sources but are not explicitly discussing the impact of this to effectively evaluate the sources. This is seen with a candidate who makes multiple references to the experience or background of the sources and authors but has not shown how these factors influence the reliability of the sources, limiting their marks.

Some candidates did manage to achieve two marks by **(i)** identifying the source itself and **(ii)** explaining specifically why the source they used could be considered credible or reliable. Briefly stating 'This is a reliable/credible/trustworthy source' alone does not count as source evaluation – candidates need to articulate why it's reliable/credible/trustworthy. Similarly, 'it's good because it's from the government' does not count as adequate source evaluation.

Another example of where marks are not awarded for evaluation of sources is when candidates discuss the reliability of sources collectively, often at the end of the presentation. Some candidates discuss generally how their sources are credible but do not tie these statements to specific sources.

A final example of candidates not being able to achieve more than 1 mark, is when they attempt to synthesise the sources but do not explicitly discuss the reliability of the sources. This occured several times across this series and meant that marks could not be awarded as the candidate had not evaluated the sources first. An example of this was in a presentation on mass tourism, where the candidate used multiple examples of sources together but did not evaluate them. Therefore, they were only able to achieve a maximum of 1 mark.

In some centres, candidates have adopted a strategy of evaluating several sources at the same time, interrupting the flow of the presentation to give a 'round-up' of sources previously cited, perhaps in the belief that this constitutes 'synthesis'. However, in these cases, the candidate simply evaluates two sources as both being 'reliable' and then justifies that description, rather than commenting on how the views contained in the sources might support or challenge each other, so synthesis is not achieved.

D – Justification for the individual solution which is proposed

Most candidates were able to propose some sort of solution and explain why they thought it would work, although often this was not based on any evidence, but rather on their own ideas or opinions.

However, there were some candidates who scored well on this criterion and who developed sound solutions that were clearly underpinned by detailed evidence such as how the solution worked in other countries or in a different context, often using official data as evidence to support the solution's effectiveness in solving or reducing the problem. There were also some examples of candidates effectively justifying their solution with, for instance, detailed consideration of cost implications, as well as ways in which the solution might impact communities (both local and global). A good example of where a candidate discusses a solution, supports this with evidence of it working in multiple countries and justifies why it should be implemented was from a

candidate presenting on mass tourism. They supported their solution with statistical evidence from Thailand and showed how it worked in other countries. They also produced an image of how it had worked in the Amazon rainforest.

There is no need for a group solution – the solution should be individual to the candidate. Several candidates rushed through their own solution so that they had time to discuss the group solution in their presentation, meaning that they didn't discuss either solution in any depth, limiting the marks they could achieve for this criterion. The solution also doesn't need to be innovative; the candidate just needs to show that it is effective. Many candidates spent a lot of time going over the limitations of their solution. Candidates only achieve marks for proving that the solution would be effective, so talking about limitations does not gain candidates any marks, and wastes time that could be spent discussing the effectiveness of the solution and achieving a higher mark that way.

There was a tendency for candidates to offer a lot of different solutions to the issue, such as suggesting that invasive species could be solved by offering bounties, stricter controls on animal imports, better licensing of private owners and zoos, introducing biological controls to the environment, and bigger fines or punishment for those releasing animals. This approach usually created a list but little else. The best answers focused on one key solution and spent time explaining it and giving examples of where it had been tried or what evidence might support it.

AO3 – Communication

A – Production of an organised argument

One of the key strengths observed in many candidates was their ability to produce organised arguments. This skill was demonstrated by most candidates through clear structuring of their responses, logical progression of ideas, and coherent presentation of evidence and analysis.

The majority of candidates had clearly adopted some form of physical structure to deliver their presentation, often using the slides to help them with this. Although there were some examples where the presentation seemed to jump randomly from one thought to another, these were not common. Most provided a clear introduction which defined the scope of their issue and then moved into a structure around the issue within their locality, then nationally and finally globally, and culminated with their proposed solution/s. The majority of candidates slotted their research and sources throughout these sections. It was less common to see clear signposting although there were some examples. Clear signposting, such as: 'following on from', 'moreover' and 'likewise' helps candidates to produce well-structured and well-developed arguments. The most effective presentations were well organised and built up a clear and coherent argument based on a range of evidence gathered from the candidates' research and used to underpin all the points being made.

One of the best examples seen was a candidate who had used a logical structure which they had followed throughout to organically develop their argument through consistently well-argued, clear and coherent points. The candidate had also presented confidently throughout and the presentation flowed from one well-connected point to the next throughout their presentation.

Candidates would be well advised to put their interpretation of research they have gathered into their own words before trying to present it. All too often, candidates were presenting chunks of research with a clear lack of understanding of the content, resulting in them having to consult their notes and losing the thread of their argument, thereby lessening its impact.

B – Presentation of visual information to support an argument

Almost every candidate produced a PowerPoint presentation. The best visual support often occurred when candidates used graphs and charts. While some candidates merely described the statistics or images pictured, others managed to interpret trends and related them back to the problem or solution. Some would simply say 'as you can see in the chart' but did not really allow the audience the opportunity to consider its significance.

Although this was much less common than the previous session, there were still some candidates who used irrelevant slides. Examples seen included a generic cover sheet, which remained on screen for the entirety of the presentation. The majority, however, did manage to use slides which were relevant. They included graphs, photographs which related to their issue, scientific diagrams etc. A large number did also make reference to these slides. Graphs allowed candidates to talk the audience through key statistics, and so proved an effective tool which enabled candidates to achieve well in this objective. Stronger responses

referred to and/or engaged with slides throughout the presentation. There were a few occurrences of candidates' slides containing information which were not referred to or engaged with at all, even though they were clearly relevant to the argument. Conversely, there were some very good presentations with detailed graphs and charts which were fully explained and analysed and this really added to the evidence and argument. Other presentations made use of diagrams of bilge pumps from large vessels discharging invasive marine life into port areas, or diagrams of models showing how particular mechanisms worked which added value to the presentation when fully explained.

The use of a variety of visual aids was not often seen, but a small number of candidates from one centre incorporated physical objects into their presentations as visual aids; one candidate used a pair of artificial lungs to demonstrate the effects of air pollution and one used grains of rice in jars to illustrate the scale of the problem of gang culture. These were used effectively to illustrate their points and that, along with graphs and pictures that were talked through on their slides, enabled them to score top marks.

C – Use of language to address an audience

Candidates seem to have taken on board advice for this criterion. There seems to be far more engagement with the audience, even when a candidate uses a voice over PowerPoint which is really encouraging. An example of some of the phrases used by one candidate who scored full marks for this criterion are: 'you may be wondering…' , 'what catches your eye first?', 'if you turn your attention to…', 'is it really that easy?', 'I want you to remember' as well as the instruction to 'go email, send a letter, speak to local government'.

It is interesting to note that the two candidates who incorporated physical objects into their presentation (see AO3b above) were also able to use this as an opportunity to engage more directly with their audience. For example, the candidate presenting on pollution introduced their demonstration with the words, 'Now I would like to show you all a little demonstration that could help in getting you all to worry about how much pollution we are releasing and how that affects us…' and later asked the audience a direct question: 'Can anyone tell me what they saw different in each lung?' and an audience member answered.

Some candidates appeared to make a deliberate decision to present in a formal, impersonal style, and therefore pass up the opportunity to achieve high marks for this criterion, although they may have scored highly against most other criteria. Candidates may decide to do this because they feel such a style is more consistent with the academic nature of their presentation. However, it can also result in a missed opportunity to connect with their audience and gain more marks.

Reflective paper

AO2 – Reflection

The majority of candidates made good use of their 800 words to reflect on collaboration and learning but a significant number did not, some writing as few as 200 words. Reflections were often descriptive rather than evaluative, but some candidates clearly articulated what had been learned, how their own perspective(s) had changed and how this project would impact future action, whether that be in teamwork or in how they were going to contribute to making the problem less of a problem.

A – Reflection on the effectiveness of collaboration

Rather than reflecting on/evaluating their team's collaborative activities, many candidates used most of their 800 words to describe their team's approach, iterating their journey through their problem to their solution. This often included why they thought their solution was better than others in their team. A few took the opportunity to air their grievances against team members or congratulate their friends. Notwithstanding this, most candidates reflected on their collaborative activities at some point with varying levels of success. There were several candidates with good evaluations on collaborative activities that earned them 4 marks.

Evaluation of collaboration was largely restricted to what the group did or did not do with unsubstantiated statements about who held them back, who helped them and comments about procrastination. Many talked about appointing a leader but not why; many talked about problems of communication but not how they were solved.

To score well for this criterion, candidates need to look at the impact of their collaboration – rather than just talking about their procrastination, candidates who scored well then went on to discuss how this led to the team rushing at the last minute and not being as well prepared as they could be to present. To score top

marks there needs to be several evaluative points about collaboration, encompassing various stages of the project.

B – Reflection on learning

Many candidates now seem to be aware that they can reflect not only on learning related to their chosen issue, but also on what they learned about the process of collaboration with their teammates, or about giving a presentation. This has enabled candidates to broaden the scope of what they write about in their reflective paper, but sometimes results in listing of things learned, rather than in evaluating the impact of what they have learned.

Candidates should be encouraged to think critically about everything they have learned from being a part of this project and detailed and wide-ranging considerations of what they knew about the issue at the outset of the project and what they knew at its completion after all the research that they had carried out. The best candidates evaluated their learning in real depth, for instance, showing how the research undertaken had changed their thinking or evaluating what they had learned about themselves from working in a team setting and their own approach to study and research.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEACH

| Paper 9239/04 |
| Research Report |

Key messages

Global Perspectives and Research is a skills based syllabus. For candidates to succeed in this component, their Cambridge Research Report needs to demonstrate a range of different skills. It is really important that centres and candidates understand the requirements of the syllabus and what skills they will be assessed against. The following Principal Examiner's Report will discuss each of the skills in isolation with reference to candidate performance this series.

Candidates should set out in their introduction which themes will be used to analyse the implications of their title question. The report should contain intermediary judgements as well as a final judgement. Each intermediary judgement should respond to the theme used to analyse a particular implication of the question.

Candidates should give due consideration to the structure of the report. Effective use of headings can really improve the communication of detailed and potentially complex contrasting perspectives.

General comments

Candidates presented some really well researched reports that varied from broad title questions such as '*Is online education a viable alternative to traditional education?*', to more nuanced and focused title questions such as '*Does hypersexualisation in black female rap empower black women?*' There is no requirement for the report to have a global dimension. Other areas of focus included Energy, Migration and Artificial Intelligence.

The reports made for some fascinating reading and it was clear that the vast majority of candidates engaged really well with the task of completing their Cambridge Research Report.

Research Log

The Research Log requires candidates to plan ahead (AO1) as well as reflect (AO2) on research decisions taken. These are the two skills being assessed here.

For AO1, assessors are looking for evidence of 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 what are 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.

The most successful candidates were aided by using a well-designed Research Log template with headings that linked to the skills being assessed. Successful templates provided frameworks that ensured candidates did not drift into diary style description of what they had done that day. Rather, the Research Logs were forward looking in terms of planning and next steps. When candidates reflect on what they have done, this should be with intention of thinking 'how does my reflection shape my next steps'.

There is no set format for the Research Log, although exemplars are available in the syllabus and from other training materials.

Questions and Perspectives

Implications of the Question

The title question is of huge importance. A successful title enables candidates to demonstrate all of the skills being assessed. A poorly constructed title question will prevent even the most able candidate from being able to demonstrate all the skills that underpin the syllabus. Teachers and candidates need to use the Research Proposal Form as a framework for ensuring that the agreed title question can fulfil three basic requirements. Firstly, the question must set up a debate between two contrasting perspectives. Secondly, there must be available research that directly supports and challenges the premise of the title question. Thirdly, the title question must have enough scope for different implications to be considered. In essence, the title question should be analysed through different lenses or thematic approaches.

'Do the benefits of competitive distance running outweigh its potential negative effects?', was a title question from this series. There is a clear debate here, the question can be answered yes or no. There are a number of lenses through which the candidate could explore the implications of this question, for example Health (physical and/or mental), Ethics (performance enhancing drugs) and Infrastructure (safety and accessibility). If initial searches suggest there is plenty of credible and relevant research to support the report then this is a question that could lead to a successful report. However, the candidate has used the term 'competitive' in their title. Therefore, this narrows the scope of the report and generalised discussions around the benefits of non-competitive running for general wellbeing will not be addressing the title question and therefore will not be creditworthy. There were several occasions where candidates narrowed the scope of their reports through overly precise questions and ultimately, they were unable to maintain focus on their title question.

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).

Building Perspectives

The next skill to address is synthesis. Assessors are looking for candidates to build coherent perspectives in response to the title question by weaving together argument and evidence from different sources. There are still some candidates that treat each source in isolation and therefore do not make links between materials. That said more and more candidates were able to pull different elements of source material together in a sophisticated way. Here's a successful example. It comes from a report with the title question, '*Is the architectural design of schools beneficial for learning?'*

'Bertram (2017) identifies different consequences of design implementations in schools. For students, the author identifies four sections of the educational facilities: physical environments that may affect students; "systems and processes; products and services; environment; and communication". Bertram then outlines how this affects students, and concludes that "this study confirmed the belief that school design matters in a profound way to all the stakeholders, and in particular, to the teachers and students". According to Barrett et al (2020) elaborating upon issues that Bertram identified in the past, they analyzed 153 classrooms in 27 schools and interviewed around 3800 pupils in their study assessing environmental factors' effects on students; "Internal environment quality (IEQ) research has understandably focused on the readily measurable aspects of: heat, light, sound and air quality...". They then identified three design principles that students would be dependent upon: "Naturalness: light, sound, temperature, air quality and links to nature; Individualisation: ownership, flexibility, and connection."'

Both sources have some development, they are also relevant and credible. The candidate makes the link between the sources explicit when they say that Barrett elaborates on Bertram's ideas. Candidates that juxtapose sources together without drawing out the links between arguments and evidence can gain credit but not at the higher attainment levels.

Comparison of Perspectives

Within a well-structured report (see AO3 Communication below), the candidate should have several opportunities to demonstrate the skill of comparison. This may be done at the level of argument, there were several candidates who explicitly placed sources in opposition to one another. This can be seen in the example below taken from a report entitled, '*Should healthcare be free?'* The source *Wedia* is directly challenged by the *Moral hazard* source.

'The maximum amount of money that can be the "high risk" amount is 385 euro's which means that when someone's procedure is more than this is amount, the insurance gives you a refund. This means that the costs of your health care can never be higher than that 385 euro's, making health care fairly affordable for anyone. In the Netherlands, the "own risk" amount is mandatory for anyone older than 18 years old (Wedia 2021). However, when something like an insurance or an own risk is mandatory, a specific problem can occur. This problem is similar to one of the consequences of having free healthcare: people being less careful and going to the hospital more often. With a mandatory insurance, people have to pay up to a specific amount, but it cannot get higher than that amount. Also, you still have to pay even though you do not go to the hospital or make use of any other medical infrastructure or appointments. This might result in people being less careful, this is because they have to pay the amount of money anyways. (Moral Hazard And Adverse Selection in Health Insurance, n.d).'

When the candidate identifies an implication of the question ideally the lens or theme used will enable both perspectives to be compared. Using the healthcare question to exemplify, in the report the candidate analysed the economic implications of their question. In doing so, the candidate compared the economic costs and benefits of making healthcare free. So the economic lens enabled the candidate to compare two contrasting perspectives in response to the question. It is anticipated that candidates will offer a more holistic comparison of perspectives before the final judgement is made. This final comparison of perspectives should consider all of the implications that have been analysed in the report.

Sources

Use of sources

In the first instance, the sources used to develop perspectives need to be relevant and credible. Relevance means that the arguments and evidence from the source are directly addressing the title question. As stated above, when formulating a research question it is important that the candidate can access adequate source material that directly links to their chosen question. The most useful source material will have a clear line of argument rather than being descriptive or informative. Assessors are looking for candidates to be able to analyse relevant and credible source material that clearly supports or challenges a perspective. Candidates need to be able to demonstrate an understanding of the source's argument and evidence and explain how it responds to the title question.

If a candidate tries to use too many sources, then they will find it difficult to demonstrate full engagement with their research material. Candidates are recommended to use 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.

Evaluation of Sources

For candidates to be successful here they need to move beyond generic critical evaluation and link the critical evaluation of the source to the focus of the report. Although creditworthy, many candidates do not move beyond evaluation of the author's credibility or the source provenance. It remains the case that several candidates do not address this skill. Here is an example of higher-level critical evaluation form a report titled, '*Is resistance against authoritarian governments justified?'*

'Transparency International is a critically important source of information as it provides the CPI of all countries in the world every year. The CPI aggregates up to 13 different sources that measure how corrupt the public sector of a country is, in terms of perceptions held by businesses and country experts. The data is therefore cross checked through a number of different sources, and the nature of the indicator makes it possible to compare if a country's situation has become worse or better in terms of corruption over time and to compare it with other countries.'

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

Concepts

The Cambridge Research Report demands that candidates engage with complex ideas and relevant concepts. The candidates that demonstrated strong conceptual engagement were more often than not those candidates who engaged with appropriate academic research material. 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. There is further information available on page 25 of the Syllabus. Certain subject areas will naturally lend themselves more favourably to a larger range of relevant conceptual ideas, for example, concepts in economics are numerous. Supply and demand, price elasticity and efficiency are just a few of the concepts that were seen this series. Assessors take a broad approach with this skill and will reward engagement with complex ideas even if clearly identifiable concepts are not apparent.

Research Methods

In the Cambridge Research Report, methodology refers to the set of methods which are most suitable for use within a particular subject area. Candidates should explain why the methods they have chosen are the most appropriate ones for their report. The most successful candidates are able to relate their chosen methods to their underlying methodology.

It should be noted that 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 in the research proposal form. Here is the introduction to a candidate's methodology section that was found in a report with the title, '*Should prostitution be legalised?'*

'The methodology used will be based on the secondary research method in which I will conduct desk research and a literature review of academic journals, reports and articles from reputable sources. The ethical implication of the question will be supported by qualitative data that is able to express the lived reality for sex workers whereas the economic implication will be underpinned by quantitative data such as tax revenues. This method is practically suitable for me as an A Level student as it is more efficient and less time consuming than conducting first hand research like interviews and questionnaires.

Furthermore, a theoretical factor that influenced this decision was that I reside in an Islamic state where prostitution is considered highly immoral due to religious beliefs. Therefore, the question of my choice might be a provocative topic for many individuals, which might lead to a negative bias, affecting the accuracy of the research. Hence, primary research like local interviews and surveys would not be appropriate.'

Judgements

Ideally, when a candidate considers the implications of the question through a thematic lens they will reach an intermediary judgement for that section of the report. Using the question outlined above, '*Should prostitution be legalised?'*, the candidate may make an intermediary judgement of no when considering the ethical implications of the title question. However, they might reach a different judgement when considering the economic implications of the question. The Principal Examiner recommends candidates use themes as headings within the report so it is clear which implication has been considered and that an intermediary judgement has been reached before moving on to the next section. Many candidates did this successfully. It is important that the intermediary judgement responds directly to the title question.

As well as intermediary judgements, the candidate is expected to reach a final judgment in response to their title question. The most successful candidates will offer a comparison of perspectives, where evidence and arguments are evaluated, as support for their final judgement.

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

Reflection on Perspectives

Many candidates offered a discrete section at the end of their report with the heading 'Reflection'. This a perfectly acceptable approach but this does not negate the need to offer some reflection on the perspectives in the introduction or methodology. Assessors are looking for candidates to be able to consider why they have chosen specific themes to analyse the implications of the question, what is the relationship between themes and perspectives and how will this shape the report. This is still an area that many candidates are not addressing. For example, here is an extract from the report used in the Evaluation of Sources section above.

'In this report, I will assess the question of whether resistance against authoritarianism is justified or not, through the ethical, political and economic themes. The ethical aspect is foundational to this question due to commonly held assumptions that authoritarian governments tend to act in violation of fundamental human rights. . . The report uses the political aspect because the success or failure of governance often leads to the formation of public opinion about a particular government, so it is crucial to see how this operates for authoritarian governments. . . Finally, the economic aspect has to feature because economics is closely tied to financial wellbeing . . .'

Many candidates chose to reflect on how the perspectives they 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 attainment levels candidates should reflect upon how the perspectives have influenced the report as shown above.

Reflection on Conclusions

Assessors are looking for candidates to discuss the strengths and limitations of the conclusions reached in the report. It was good to see many more candidates engaging with this reflective element. It is important that the candidate keeps in mind the conclusion when reflecting. Quite often, candidates discussed the strengths and limitations of the report in general. While this is creditworthy, the most successful candidates focused their reflection on the strengths and limitations of the report's conclusion. There are many aspects of the report that candidates can reflect upon, such as, the range of research, the efficacy of the research log, the selection of themes or the methodology employed but this should always come back to the impact on the candidate's conclusion.

Communication

Structure

Headings offer a simple but effective way to structure a report. It is important when using headings that they relate to the parameters of the report set out in the introduction. Many candidates were able to set out in the introduction which themes they would use to analyse the implications of the question and then use these themes as headings to provide a framework for the report. Increasingly, candidates used a contents page and this too offered a good structural framework so long as the contents page matched what was in the report.

As well as headings, candidates should use 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 detracted from the structure of the report.

Terminology

Candidates are expected to produce a report that is accessible to the lay person and therefore the specialist terminology used should be made accessible for a wide range of readers. This is the communication skill assessors are looking for. Many candidates defined key terms in the introduction which is acceptable, but this approach should not be exhaustive.

Referencing

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 how and where sources are being used. The very best approach will replicate the example used in the Building Perspectives section above. Here, the candidate gives clear voice to the author and the reader is in no doubt what the source's argument is. Each citation should be supported by a reference in a separate bibliography. The bibliography should be organised in a logical fashion and each reference should contain appropriate details which would allow the reader to locate the original source. Many candidates were able to demonstrate effective referencing systems. There were some candidates who offered no more than an URL which is not considered effective.

Different subject areas use different referencing systems and candidates are free to use any appropriate system they choose.