

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND INDEPENDENT RESEARCH (INTERNATIONAL)

Paper 9766/11

Written Paper

Key Messages

- Many candidates are still writing very long answers to the opening questions, **1 (a)** and **(b)** where only 2 and 6 marks are available. Responses to these questions should be short and succinct.
- The key skill needed to score high marks is that of evaluation, supported by precise reference to the documents.
- Candidates need to answer the question set and focus on the key words in the question. **Question 2** required an evaluation of the view presented by the author, and not an evaluation of the topic of migration.
- **Question 3** brings together the skills that have been tested individually in the previous questions.
- Brief and relevant quotations from the documents should be used to illustrate a point and to support arguments, otherwise the answer is generalised or no more than a series of assertions.
- The use of own knowledge is not credited, candidates should base their answer solely on the material from the two documents.

General Comments

The candidates found the documents accessible and were able to identify the views and arguments put forward by the writers, which allowed responses to engage with the issues, arguments and views being put forward. Candidates were able to reach judgements about the strengths or weaknesses of the document or documents under consideration. There were very few candidates who ran out of time, although once again the allocation of time is an important issue. There were a significant number of candidates who wrote over a side for **questions 1(a)** and **(b)**, whereas a few lines would have been sufficient, particularly for **1 (a)**, which could be answered in bullet points. As a result, some answers to the final question were superficial, ideas were not fully developed and much was not considered. Stronger responses selected relevant, concise and appropriate quotations from the documents demonstrating that they had a secure grasp of the arguments being considered. The skill of comparative evaluation in the final question was often absent, with the documents being tackled in a sequential manner, which makes overall judgments more challenging.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1(a)

Virtually all candidates were able to score full marks on this question, but there were a significant number who spent time developing their ideas, despite the question simply requiring 'identification'. Two marks were awarded where candidates simply bullet pointed two statements. Candidates did not need to explain the issues, some wrote up to half a page, with some attempting to evaluate the statements. They gained no extra credit for so doing and this also had detrimental impact on the time available for the later questions, which carried a greater number of marks. Most were able to identify two of the following: building of a border fence in the US; construction of prison-like detention centres in Greece; use of detention centres by Australia.

Question 1(b)

A significant number of candidates scored very highly on this question, but as with **question 1a**, there were a large number who wrote too much. The question asked candidates to summarise the evidence and this required candidates to explain the evidence in their own words. Where candidates had simply copied out large parts of the document they were not given credit as they had not followed the command word in the question. Unfortunately there were some candidates who did not understand the word summarise and evaluated the evidence. This was not necessary and was not credited. Candidates who scored highly were able to identify the key issues raised by the author and then explain them. Relevant issues included: states becoming less tolerant, the lack of humanitarian consideration given to migrants, the use of more dangerous routes and illegal methods and how migration has become criminalised.

Question 2

Most candidates answered this question reasonably well and had a clear understanding of the requirements of this type of question. It was encouraging to see that some candidates were able to evaluate both the strengths and weakness of the argument and therefore access at least Level 2, although there were still some at the lowest level who just described the content of the documents. The better answers used short and appropriate quotations from Document 1 to support their claims and this is the ideal approach. Candidates should avoid making sweeping generalisations with no specific support and the over-long quotations, which detract from the argument being pursued. Many candidates worked through the strengths and then the weaknesses, which sometimes meant that the issue under consideration appeared in both parts and the examiner was unsure about the overall conclusion, whereas better answers discussed the strengths and weaknesses of an issue before reaching a conclusion about its overall merit. Centres should encourage their candidates to pursue this latter approach.

Candidates should look to go beyond the assertion that the argument was either weak or strong and support it with evidence from the document and clear explanation. There were two elements of weakness on which most answers focused. Many responses commented on the lack of statistical evidence in Document 1 and argued that the document was largely assertive and where there was detail it was unclear where that information had come from. Some responses commented on the lack of a counter-argument and suggested that this made the document less balanced as it pursued just one line of reasoning. In arguing for the strengths some noted that there were a number of detailed examples and that these were drawn from across the globe. There was some discussion as to whether the emotive language used was a strength or a weakness, with some commenting that it helped to gain attention, whilst others argued that loaded words, such as 'rickety' gave a biased view. There was some comment about the provenance of the document, with responses suggesting that because the author was a university lecturer it brought credibility to the document. Few answers then went on to reach an overall judgement about the strengths and weaknesses of the document, instead producing a list of strengths and weaknesses.

Question 3

This question continues to be the one that causes the most difficulties for candidates. A significant number of candidates were unable to produce an answer based on comparative evaluation. In many instances, where there was evaluation, the documents were considered sequentially. As in previous series, there were a significant number of candidates who did not go beyond a simple comparison of the content of the two documents.

Most were able to show an understanding of the views offered by both documents, but became distracted by this and offered no more than a comparison of the content or views offered in the documents. This reinforces the picture of an increasing tendency among a large number of candidates to forget the evaluative skills that they have applied to the previous questions. Obviously this has a significant impact on the level that can be reached and it is disappointing to report that there was an increasing tendency to see answers in Level 1 or the bottom of Level 2 because the evaluative element to the response was so limited. When evaluation of the documents does occur the better answers link their evaluation to the actual question set and do not evaluate in a vacuum. Some responses re-capped on the strengths and weaknesses of Document 1 and compared them point by point with Document 2, made interim judgements about the issue in the question and then an overall judgement in a well-developed conclusion. It was the direct evaluative comparison between the two documents which took such responses into the higher levels and candidates should be encouraged to think in terms of comparing the provenance of documents, the evidence used, the language and tone, the use of a counter-argument, the structure and the range of perspectives in order to judge which is the more convincing.

The more thematic approach certainly brought benefits to candidates, some commented on the lack of statistics in both, whilst also noting that at least Document 2 did refer to the origin of the data that was provided. However, others argued that both documents relied heavily on assertion and largely failed to acknowledge the source of the data. Some answers did comment on the very narrow perspective of Document 1, which was focused almost entirely on the political perspective, whereas Document 2 also considered the economic element. However, others contrasted this with the range of examples used in the two documents and some argued that Document 1 was stronger as it drew on examples from across a range of continents.

An area in which candidates could improve is in developing their judgements in the conclusion as this can often help raise the quality of the response. Once again, candidates would be well advised to support their arguments by precise reference to the documents, but need to avoid lengthy quotations that detract from the overall argument. It might help some candidates if they decided the line of argument they were going to take in the first paragraph and pursued that throughout their answer, explaining why the other view is less convincing as this will also help to ensure that the argument is consistent and that there is an answer to the actual question set and not a set of evaluative comments that are not linked to the question.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND INDEPENDENT RESEARCH (INTERNATIONAL)

Paper 9766/12

Written Paper

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General Comments

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Comments on Specific Questions

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Virtually all candidates were able to score full marks on this question, but there were a significant number who spent time developing their ideas, despite the question simply requiring 'identification'. Two marks were awarded where candidates simply bullet pointed two statements. Candidates did not need to explain the issues, some wrote up to half a page, with some attempting to evaluate the statements. They gained no extra credit for so doing and this also had detrimental impact on the time available for the later questions, which carried a greater number of marks. Most were able to identify two of the following: building of a border fence in the US; construction of prison-like detention centres in Greece; use of detention centres by Australia.

Question 1(b)

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GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND INDEPENDENT RESEARCH (INTERNATIONAL)

Paper 9766/13
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GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Paper 9766/02

Essay

Key Messages

The key messages from this series are that:

- most candidates presented structured essays with a clear line of argument;
- some candidates did not contrast different perspectives;
- evaluation skills need to be developed more fully;
- suggestions for further research need to be explained fully.

General Comments

For this component candidates write an essay exploring a global issue of their choice drawn from the topics listed in the syllabus. The essay is designed to give candidates the opportunity to explore different perspectives on a global issue through research and to record the outcomes in an essay. The essay should contrast and compare two different perspectives on the chosen issue. The outcome should take the form of a judgement about which perspective on the issue is the most convincing.

To complete the essay candidates need to develop a research question. They should do this by carrying out preliminary personal research on the issue and in discussion with their teacher. The research question should be global and imply at least two different and contrasting perspectives about the issue. The essay is not a description of the global issue; it is an evaluation of the arguments and evidence that support two different perspectives being explored.

The candidate is expected to assess each perspective and present convincing and well-supported judgements, based on argument and evidence, which provide an answer to the research question within the conclusion of the essay.

Within the essay candidates are expected to analyse and evaluate the arguments and evidence for each perspective. Candidates will need to find sources that support each of the perspectives by doing research. The research is most likely to be internet based but may also involve other primary and secondary forms of research. These sources will need to be analysed and evaluated by the candidate as each perspective is described briefly, reviewed and assessed. The candidate should justify their judgement about which perspective is the most convincing.

Candidates are expected to reach a balanced conclusion and reflect on their own personal learning. They should make and explain suggestions for further research.

Cambridge Pre-U
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Principal Examiner Report for Teachers

To summarise, the essay mainly involves the following skills:

- carrying out research into a global topic and issue;
- identification and selection of relevant sources from research;
- assessment of the credibility of selected sources by evaluating the arguments and evidence within the sources;
- analysis of contrasting perspectives on a global issue;
- presentation of convincing and well-supported conclusions that answer the question(s) posed;
- evaluation of the limitations of their own research and conclusions;
- developing and explaining suggestions for further relevant research;
- communicating effectively and concisely, using technical terms where appropriate.

Overall, this series, the quality of work and levels of achievement were good. Most candidates responded enthusiastically to the task and were actively engaged in researching a global issue of personal interest. Candidates generally understand the complexity of social, economic and technological change, and want to respond positively to global challenges and issues. Candidates and Centres are to be congratulated on their achievements.

Similarly, many candidates are also learning to reflect upon their own experience and developing personal perspectives by considering the implications of their research into global issues for their personal beliefs, values and lifestyle. From the evidence of the essays, the aims of the syllabus are being fulfilled.

In general, the research was completed well and there were some excellent essays. Most candidates presented a well-structured essay that contained a clear line of argument and led to a conclusion which answered the research question, usually posed within the essay title. The selection of sources and evidence were mainly relevant to the perspectives being assessed.

Unfortunately, some candidates did not analyse the arguments and evidence for contrasting perspectives. The most common problem was to simply describe the global issue. For example, in considering global warming, essays that described the causes and consequences of global warming rather than evaluating contrasting points of view about the most effective way to reduce global warming struggled to score high marks. The latter approach genuinely provides opportunity for a candidate to evaluate different perspectives. Teachers must guide candidates towards essay titles and plans that allow candidates to contrast and compare perspectives in an evaluative way.

Most candidates presented essays which were close to the word limit of 2000 words. Centres are reminded that any material in the body of the essay over 2000 words in length will not be assessed or count in the award of marks. To keep the essay manageable in scope, candidates are advised to compare only two different perspectives on the chosen global issue.

To improve performance further, candidates should be encouraged to:

- avoid assertion without explanation and evidence;
- avoid long accounts of personal opinion and anecdotal comment
- evaluate reasoning and evidence in sources by referring to both strengths and weaknesses;
- *apply* key concepts such as validity, bias, reliability, expertise and ability to see;
- practice and include reflection and evaluation of their own work, perhaps through peer assessment and group exercises; the focus should be upon explaining practically how the research and essay could be improved if it was repeated or more time was available.

Cambridge Pre-U
9766 Global Perspectives and Independent Research November 2015
Principal Examiner Report for Teachers

Comments on Specific Questions

In this section of the Report some further guidance is given to Centres on how to improve the quality of the essays.

1. Evaluation of sources – candidates are expected to evaluate the sources used in the essay. Some candidates only describe the source. The assessment criteria for the essay award marks for the evaluation of the sources presented as evidence for each of the perspectives being explored. It is therefore very important that candidates discuss the strengths and weaknesses of most sources, particularly challenging arguments, claims and evidence.

Candidates should think about potential bias, weaknesses in the methodology, the credibility of arguments, sample sizes, expertise, validity and reliability. The tone of language and clarity of argument might also be assessed by candidates.

2. Reflection and personal learning – candidates should devote one or two paragraphs to describing and explaining how the process of research and exploration of the global issue has affected their own personal perspectives and beliefs about the issue. This might include:
 - a description of their main learning points;
 - changes to their own beliefs and values;
 - possible changes to their own behaviour or lifestyle.
3. Limitations of the research and suggestions for further research – personal reflection often leads to the recognition that there is still much to learn and that work can be improved. An important part of reflection for the essay is therefore to identify aspects of the global issue or perspectives explored that could be better understood through further research. Identification of further research usually begins by thinking about the following questions:
 - If I had more time, what would I like to explore further on the global issue?
 - Are there any gaps or omissions in my knowledge and understanding of the perspectives that could be filled through further research?
 - Has the research suggested new points of view or additional perspectives that could be explored?
 - Is there further evidence that might strengthen or confirm the conclusions?
 - Are there implications or consequences of the conclusion, or my own perspectives, that could be explored?
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of my research and essay?
 - How certain can I be about the conclusion? Are there any limitations to the conclusion? Can it be generalised to other situations?
 - From an evaluation of the research and essay, how could further research improve the quality?

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND INDEPENDENT RESEARCH (INTERNATIONAL)

Paper 9766/03
Presentation

Key Messages

Presentations which identify and debate specific concepts tend to be the strongest.

Candidates should specifically address individual claims, lines of reasoning and pieces of evidence from individual sources in the pre-release materials.

The combination of arguments from the pre-release materials with the candidate's own research leads to the strongest outcomes.

Candidates are advised to make the identification and comparative development of perspectives an integral part of the structure of their presentations.

Candidate questions remain a central test of higher level achievement and should focus on evaluative debate, not description.

General Comments

Responses to the Pre-Release Materials

The major focus of the November 2015 pre-release materials, in Documents 1-7, was the management of e-waste, from the topic of sustainable futures. Documents 8-9 dealt with international law, using legislative approaches to climate change (national versus international) as their example. The major topic, as in previous series, proved the most popular, with a significant number of presentations debating which of the groups mentioned in the documents should be responsible for dealing with electronic waste: producers, consumers or the government. In approaching this, some candidates tended to be descriptive, listing costs, responsibilities and consequences of e-waste using information from the pre-release materials and research of their own. The most successful presentations, however, focused on specific concepts and made them the focus for debate. For example, the notion of Extended Producer Responsibility in Document 3 allowed some candidates to debate the most effective way for governments to exploit this principle in order to minimise e-waste. Document 6 proved moved particularly useful for many candidates, where the idea of 'enoughism' as an opposing concept to that of the consumerism which, arguably, is one of the main causes of excessive e-waste, allowed for presentations to take a broader view of the underlying value systems, opposing these as differing perspectives, sometimes globally contextualised in a number of different ways.

Documents 8 and 9 were used as starting points by some candidates, and this did produce a number of presentations focused on the causes or even effects of global warming. If based explicitly in a claim, statement, or other specific piece of evidence in one of the two documents, leading to a researched debate between at least two perspectives, then this approach would not necessarily yield fewer marks than ones which engaged more with the central concerns of the two documents. These proved more directly fruitful for a number of candidates, using national and international approaches to legislative action as opposing perspectives could draw on differing arguments in each of the two documents before utilising further research in order to reach sustained conclusions. As in previous series, higher marks were gained by presentations which ranged beyond the documents in the pre-release materials with research of their own, and set out to pursue debates between opposing perspectives rather than exploring a body of information pointing in the same direction.

Conversely, some candidates would have strengthened their presentations by making specific reference to documents in the pre-release materials. This series a number of candidates produced arguments on the topic of e-waste without linking it to any of the documents in the pre-release materials. This meant that the presentation could only be relevant to the pre-release materials, not based on them, and unnecessarily limited that particular aspect. Presentations should cite a specific claim, argument or piece of evidence from at least one of the pre-release documents, and ideally explicitly mention which document that is before moving on to their own research and the development of their argument.

Linking Perspectives to Structure

The most successful presentations were sharply focused on the six criteria described in the mark scheme. These are the response to the mark scheme with a globally focused question, the structure and coherence of its argument, the degree to which it reflects on the issue and perspectives it has chosen, the selection and synthesis of sources, its empathy with alternative perspectives and the detail and support of its conclusion. Centres are encouraged to read reports for previous series alongside this one, as together they constitute a discussion, with examples, of the full range of these criteria. One specific way, however, in which more successful candidates engaged effectively with their questions was to closely link the establishment and development of perspectives to the structure of their presentation. Relevant perspectives were defined and explained at an early stage, which allowed for their development as the presentation continued. For example, this presentation, with the question 'Is technology the reason for increasing personal stress levels?', first cites a claim from John Naish's argument (in Document 6) that the increased possibilities offered by technology are, apparently paradoxically, leading to rising 'levels of stress, depression and burnout'. They then list a number of alternative factors which could explain contemporary levels of stress, including family structures, the economy and health, before turning to 'the first view that I will be looking at (that) personal technology is the reason for increasing stress levels' and developing Naish's argument as part of this perspective.

Comments on Specific Questions

As is always the case with this component, no specific questions are set. However, candidates do write their own question which should derive from their starting point in the pre-release materials. This is of crucial importance as the presentation as a whole is judged on its success in organising perspectives around that question and successfully answering it in its conclusion. It is worthwhile, therefore, as in previous reports, discussing some specific candidate questions which lent themselves to differing levels of response. The most successful questions were phrased as a debate, which then allowed for the evaluation of opposing perspectives. 'Is corporate social responsibility an effective strategy?', for example, placed corporate social responsibility centrally as a concept to be considered, but also used the notion of 'an effective strategy' to evaluate this as a strategy in comparison with others. Questions phrased 'to what extent' can sometimes produce a debate which is less sharply delineated between perspectives, but the question, 'To what extent should the human race seek to protect and sustain the environment?' was the title of a presentation which fully and sympathetically explored the alternatives to this position. It would have strengthened itself even further by ensuring that both 'protect' and 'sustain' were equally addressed in its conclusion.

On the other hand, some questions had the form of debates but focused on more subjective areas, where it was harder to establish perspectives based on bodies of evidence. 'Does technology really make your life easier?' was an example of this. Questions with a 'how...' stem found it even harder to meet the criteria of the component, as this phrasing tended to lead to description rather than evaluative approaches to opposing perspectives. 'How much is e-waste affecting global warming?' provided some evidence of the link between e-waste and global warming but did not move substantively beyond this, and hence also did not engage with any counter-argument or perspective. 'How can the world manage the increasing amounts of e-waste?' also fell into this category as it provided a description of possible methods rather than a clear debate. These presentations found it harder to move beyond Level 2 achievement, whereas those with questions which prompted a debate were much more likely to pick out and make judgements on specific sources and lines of argument. Teachers are encouraged to assist candidates with the development of their questions, as this is an essential precursor to the design of presentations which fully meet the criteria.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Paper 9766/04
Independent Research Report

Key Messages

- Please annotate in such a way as to show how and you have awarded marks.
- Please consider that Paper 4 should be a continuation of Papers 1-3 and not a 'stand alone' exercise.
- If questions have not been submitted to CIE for advice, please consider how they will open up a sustained discussion.
- Please consider the basis for assessing AO5 carefully.

General Comments

With only a small number of candidates entering in the November series, this report cannot be extensive and the attention of the Centres who submitted work is drawn to the report for June 2015 where a wider range of issues were considered.

Comments on Assessment Objectives

General Comments

Strengths:

- There was often an obvious interest in the topics chosen and a real sense of engagement with important issues.
- In general the work was evidence based and not simply a general essay.
- Most of the work was clearly written and appropriately presented.
- At the higher levels there was some perceptive assessment of evidence and some well supported arguments.

Weaknesses:

- Some work lacked evidence of evaluation so was not really developing the skills of GP and seemed more like an essay supported by some footnoted sources.
- Sometimes candidates lost sight of the question posed and wrote more on the general topic.
- In some pieces of work there was not always sufficient reflection on the process of research.
- Conclusions did not always follow logically from the preceding analysis.

Continuity with GP

The extended analysis of the IRR is intended to develop the critical skills of the GP units. The critical analysis of the extracts in Paper 1 should lay the basis, for example, for consistent critical analysis of arguments and evidence in the IRR. The type of critical assessment practised in paper 2 should inform the wider research and writing of IRR. Without this critical underpinning then the IRR becomes a sort of information gathering exercise with different views being explained but little attempt made to offer a supported judgement based on evaluation of evidence. The marking is skills and not content based, so credit should not be given for detailed descriptions or even explanations which might be the case if this were a 'normal' subject based project. This is often stressed in advice given by consultants to candidates when submitting OPFs and it must be stressed again here, Marking of the IRR must be based on critical assessment in AO2 and AO3 and must show where work is showing a genuinely critical sense. Without the higher level skills then much work

may not really show the response to intellectual challenge required by AO5. The mere description of complex views and theories is not as demanding as attempts to assess them.

Assessing IRR

It is important that work should be annotated. Centres are still either submitting work without any comments or offering only brief marginal comments and no final explanation of marks awarded. Sometimes marks are not stated on the work itself, just on the mark sheets. In order to mark accurately, Centres must annotate and use the terminology of the mark scheme. There must too be a judgement about the quality of the Assessment Objective. If evidence is evaluated, then how well is this done? Is it merely superficial and based on the origin of the source, or does it question assumptions and consider the quality and support for the arguments, corroborating and using contextual knowledge from other evidence? Marginal annotations should point this out and not merely indicate 'AO2' or 'AO3'. If there is significant irrelevance or mere assertion, then this should be indicated; conversely, where there is strong and well-focused writing firmly based on evidence, then this should also be shown. Annotation is the Centre's chance to show the Moderator the strengths of the candidates and to make a case for the marks awarded. It is also vital for Centre marking to show both strengths and weaknesses in terms of the specific mark scheme and not in terms of a general assessment of a candidate. Credit may well be given for personal qualities and research skills in AO1, but AO2 and AO3 especially should be based on product not process.

AO5

This is often difficult for Centres but if very low marks are given then it should be clearly explained why the work was significantly below what might be expected for a candidate of this age and how the work did not engage with any challenge either in terms of subject matter or in terms of the approach. Work does have to be quite basic and limited to get only 1 mark. On the other hand, work which is predominantly explanatory or descriptive and does not tackle a particularly demanding subject should not be over rewarded. This is a Pre U qualification and its mark scheme reflects the opportunity given for candidates to work at the highest level. It must be stressed that it is not always a matter of addressing complex subject matter. Poorly understood and uncritical studies of complex intellectual or scientific topics merely to show 'challenge' will not score highly. Searching studies of what might seem to be undemanding topics which look at competing methodologies and evaluate evidence in a sophisticated way will, however, be well rewarded. Explanation of the marks awarded for this AO is particularly important.

It as a pleasure to read much committed and interesting work which confirmed the enormous educational value of this paper as a preparation for further study and adult life in general.