GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 8987/11
Written Paper

Key Messages

- Candidates should ensure they read the question carefully and answer the actual question set.
- The length of the answer should reflect the number of marks available.
- The key skill, particularly on the later questions, needed to score high marks is that of evaluation, supported by precise reference to the passage.
- **Question 2** required candidates to consider both documents and go beyond a simple comparison of the content and evaluate the provenance, content and perspectives to reach an overall judgement. This question 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 or claims and will not reach the higher levels.
- Candidates will not gain credit by bringing in material from outside the documents.
- The strongest responses reached a supported judgement about the issue under consideration.

General Comments

The overall standard of the responses was encouraging. Candidates were able to access the passages and most showed a clear understanding of the demands of the questions. There were a number who did not pay attention to either the marks available or the command words in the questions and this limited the level achieved. It is encouraging to see that an increased number of candidates are able to apply the higher level skills on the final question, although there is still a number who rely on solely comparing the content of the two documents. Stronger answers often showed evidence of clear planning for the higher mark questions and this certainly helped candidates structure their answers in a coherent and logical manner.

There were very few candidates who ran out of time, although the allocation of time is an important issue. There were a significant number of candidates who wrote well over a side for **Questions 1a (i)** and **(ii)**, whereas a few lines would have been sufficient. As a result, some answers to the final question were too brief and ideas were not fully developed. Stronger responses selected relevant and appropriate quotes from the documents demonstrating that they had a secure grasp of the arguments being considered.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

(a) (i) Candidates who read the question carefully were usually able to score well, but there were a number who ignored the phrase 'against the work of the IPCC' and wrote more generally about Bays' views and therefore produced answers that were only occasionally specifically focused. The question carried only four marks and did not require lengthy answers, but clear identification of the main points Bays puts forward. However, the question did require candidates to summarise Bays' arguments and therefore simply copying out large amounts of texts was not credited, although short quotations to support a point were acceptable. Candidates scored either one mark for an undeveloped and valid point or two for a relevant and developed point. Most candidates were able to note that the IPCC cannot be trusted because of government intervention or political interference, but a number did not develop this fully and therefore did not score the maximum number of marks. An example of a full mark response can be seen below:

'*Document 1 accuses the IPCC of not fulfilling its expectations as an 'objective scientific body'. The main reason given for this is the fact that the government, who are claimed to have a vested interest in the conclusions of the IPCC as a way to increase their power, have 'input' into the*

process of the IPCC's conclusions, meaning it is unlikely to be objective. It is furthermore claimed the IPCC are not 'scientific' as the conclusions it produces are made without consulting scientists. It also calls some of the IPCC's claims 'controversial' and in summary, accuses them of 'fraud' and even 'corruption'.'

(ii) Most candidates were able to identify two pieces of evidence to support Bays' arguments about the work of the IPCC. However, candidates who did not read **Question 1 a(i)** carefully and wrote about his arguments in general drifted into comments about the temperature of the earth. A significant number also used the Nobel Peace Prize of the Kyoto Agreement, and although they are pieces of evidence they did not support his arguments about the work of the IPCC. Candidates who scored well referred either to specific statements that were added or deleted from the reports or simply mentioned the revision to Chapter 8 or the 2007 Fourth Assessment Report. As with **Question 1 a(i)** examiners did not expect lengthy answers and two simple relevant bullet points sufficed to score the two marks.

(b) This question allowed candidates to discuss both the evidence and the reasoning within Document 1. Although candidates found it easier to discuss the weaknesses, there were very few who were not able to at least suggest that there might be some strength to the article and therefore offer some balance. The stronger responses often discussed each point and then made a judgement as to the strength or weakness of the issue under discussion, before making an overall judgement about the document. However, other approaches were acceptable. Most candidates discussed both the evidence used by Bays and his reasoning. The weaker responses often made valid points, but they were little more than claims as they were not supported by precise textual knowledge which would have supported the point being made, and were therefore not credited as evaluation. Candidates should avoid lengthy description or summaries of the document under consideration as this will confine their answer to the lowest mark band, but should focus on the key skill for this paper, evaluation. In doing this, it is important to ensure that they link their discussions back to the question and that they leave the examiner in no doubt as to whether it is a strength or weakness that they are discussing, rather than leaving it implied.

Most were able to suggest that many of Bays' claims were just assertions and not supported by precise factual material; this was just as true for his claims about the deliberate fraud and the melting of the ice caps as seen in the example below:

'Other assertions made do not feature sufficient or any evidence. For example, the statement 'historically, governments have used global warming to expand their control' is very unconvincing as it is vague, generalising and contains no examples.'

Many went on to note that even if the work of the IPCC has been undermined it did not mean that global warming was not happening. A significant number also commented on his expertise in the field and argued that this significantly weakened his argument, particularly as he did not use any experts to support his claim. The example below shows how this could be incorporated into a balanced discussion:

'While some may argue that it is a weakness that the document was only authored by a university candidate and not a professional, it cannot be denied that the author has no obvious financial gain or other vested interest from his conclusions, and therefore they are more likely to be objective and reliable.'

Although some may dispute this claim, given the author's lack of expertise, the response is balanced and offers a valid evaluation of the provenance.

Candidates also considered the validity of the evidence that was used as shown below:

'Another weakness, however, is in its failure to sufficiently evaluate its sources. It describes how 'oil, coal and utility companies' disputed the IPCC, without considering that this would have been in their financial interests, as their products are what is accused of contributing to global warming. Nevertheless, other sources cited are more reliable, such as objective facts about the 'Nobel Peace Prize.'

Some candidates suggested that a strength was a counter argument, but it is difficult to see that reference to the Nobel Prize or the UN is sufficiently strong to make a case for this and those who

suggested that the lack of a counter argument weakened the Document appeared to be on firmer ground.

Question 2

Candidates continue to find this the most demanding question. However, it brings together the skills that have been tested on earlier questions, which are frequently ignored when tackling this question. Despite this, it was pleasing to see that a significant number of candidates did at least attempt to evaluate the two documents and did not simply summarise the content in a comparative way. As this is the most demanding question, candidates would be well advised to allow a disproportionate amount of time to address it. It might help candidates if they produced a plan, which indicated how the points and evaluation relate to the actual question, rather than see the documents in a vacuum. Candidates should also check to ensure that they have reasonably balanced coverage to the two documents as there were a number, who having evaluated Document 1 in the previous question, chose to either ignore it or treat it in a superficial manner. 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.

Candidates who did evaluate the two documents usually considered the issue of provenance and most argued that Revkin's background made his views stronger than those of Bays, although some suggested that as Revkin was writing for a national newspaper, whereas Bays was writing for a degree it could be argued that Bays was less likely to be susceptible to outside influences. Candidates also considered the question of evidence and this allowed many the opportunity to produce balanced answers as although they suggested Revkin appeared to support his argument with reference to scientists this was often vague as he referred to 'many scientists' or 'experts' without actually naming them. However, stronger answers often developed this further and noted that he did refer to both John Wallace and Dr. Eicken, which appeared to give his argument greater credibility. Similarly, some candidates noted that Document 2 used specific statistical support to add to its credibility:

'for example when in the first paragraph it states that there have been changes for the last 420,000 years, instead of vaguely referring to the past, and also when it uses specific examples of the 2007 report.'

Stronger answers also considered the sources used to support the arguments put forward in the two documents. This also provided an opportunity for balanced discussion as seen in the example below which considers the evidence used in Document 1:

'It describes how 'oil, coal and utility companies disputed the IPCC, without considering that this would have been in their financial interests, as their products are what it is accused of contributing to global warming. Nevertheless, other sources cited are more reliable, such as objective facts about the Nobel Peace Prize.'

Some answers also considered both the relevance of the arguments in each document and the delivery of the argument. There were a number of responses who noted that Document 1 scarcely addressed the issue of global warming and instead focused on the issue of the credibility and corruption of the IPCC. One candidate noted that 'It could be criticised that Document 1 contains an ad hominem attack, which is flawed in its relevance to global warming because although it attacks the IPCC organisation and their methods, it fails to consider in any other way the correctness of their conclusions about global warming.' Similarly candidates discussed the method of delivery of the argument, noting that Document 2, despite its assertions was able to keep its conclusions in the third person, 'many scientists said' and 'experts say'. However, some suggested that the structure of document 1, with the opening rhetorical questions made it more convincing.

The strongest arguments reached a supported judgement about which document was more convincing and sometimes there were even interim judgements after a point had been discussed, which resulted in an overall judgement based on these interim judgements. Candidates should be encouraged to reach an overall judgement, but it does need to be based on the argument that has been pursued throughout the response and must be more than assertion. An example of a strong conclusion which reaches a balanced judgement is shown below:

'In conclusion, although in a sense Document 2 is less convincing as it fails to produce as many examples of specific statistics as Document 1, or to as accurately source its evidence, its arguments are presented much more objectively making them more convincing, and in addition, are much more relevant to the question of global warming, as they address it and its evidence specifically rather than concentrating on an attack against a specific opponent. In this way, Document 2 is indeed generally more convincing, although it is not without its flaws as well.'

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 8987/12
Written Paper

Key Messages

- Candidates should ensure they read the question carefully and answer the actual question set.
- The length of the answer should reflect the number of marks available.
- The key skill, particularly on the later questions, needed to score high marks is that of evaluation, supported by precise reference to the passage and in relation to the actual question set.
- **Question 2** required candidates to consider both documents and go beyond a simple comparison of the content and evaluate the provenance, content and perspectives to reach an overall judgement. This question 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 or claims and will not reach the higher levels.
- Candidates will not gain credit by bringing in material from outside the documents.
- The strongest responses reached a supported judgement about the issue under consideration.

General Comments

Candidates were able to access the passages and showed a clear understanding of them, however, it was noted that relatively few were able to evaluate them and many relied on description or explanation. There were a number of candidates who did not pay attention to either the marks available or the command words in the questions and this limited the level achieved. It was disappointing to see that few candidates were able to apply the higher level skills on the final question. Most candidates relied on comparing the content of the two documents and this limits the response to the lowest level. However, stronger answers showed evidence of clear planning for the higher mark questions and this certainly helped candidates structure their answers in a coherent and logical manner. There were very few candidates who ran out of time, although the allocation of time is an important issue. There were a significant number of candidates who wrote a side for **Questions 1a** and **1b**, whereas a few lines would have been sufficient. As a result, some answers to the final question were too brief and ideas were not fully developed. Stronger responses selected relevant and appropriate quotes from the documents demonstrating that they had a secure grasp of the arguments being considered.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

Candidates who read the question carefully were able to score well, with a significant number achieving full marks. Candidates did not need to explain their choices and with the command 'identify' could simply quote from the document or put into their own words. There were a number of reasons why the writer of Document 1 thought that access to the Internet was a basic human right and Examiners credited a range of reasons including the UN declaration of Human Rights and its statement that we a are free and equal, the right to free education, the right to freedom of opinion and speech, the fact the Internet is a forum for expression and it allows everyone to participate in the network of shared cultural life. A response that gained full marks stated that:

'The first reason is because the writer of Document 1 believes according to article 1 of the UN's declaration of Human Rights that every human being is born free and equal, therefore we all deserve access to the Internet uncensored. The second reason is from Article 27 which states that 'Everyone has the right to participate in the cultural life of a community, to enjoy the arts, to share in scientific achievement and its benefits.'

Candidates who gave more than two reasons did not gain extra marks and may have penalised themselves by allowing less time for the higher mark questions.

Most candidates were able to identify two pieces of evidence why governments want to control their citizen's use of the Internet. As with the previous question, candidates were required only to identify reasons. This meant that explanation or examples, such as Egypt, were not required. There were a variety of reasons such as controlling the amount of information people receive so as to stay in command, keeping people in the dark by 'limiting and censoring' the information they access and stopping people from becoming too powerful, which were credited. However, some candidates drew on information that was not in the document and this was not credited. An example that was credited with two marks was:

'The first reason put forward is because the Internet today is a new weapon that allows common people to access information and spread it at a rapid rate. The second reason would be the fact that the Internet 'helps put power into the hands of every single person.'

Question 2

The question allowed candidates to discuss both the evidence and the reasoning within the document. There was a great deal that candidates could discuss and Examiners did not expect all the strengths and weaknesses to be discussed in order to access Level III. However, at the top level Examiners expected candidates to display continuous evaluation and reach a supported judgement as to how convincing the argument was in relation to the actual question set. Although candidates found it easier to discuss the weaknesses, there were very few at the higher levels that were not able to at least suggest that there might be some strength to the article and therefore offer some balance. The stronger responses often discussed each point and then made a judgement as to the strength or weakness of the issue under discussion, before making an overall judgement about the document. However, other approaches were acceptable. The weaker answers often made valid points, but they were little more than claims as they were not supported by precise textual knowledge which would have supported the point being made, and were therefore not credited as evaluation. Candidates should avoid lengthy description or summaries of the document under consideration as this will confine their answer to the lowest mark band, but should focus on the key skill for this paper, evaluation. In doing this, it is important to ensure that they link their discussions back to the question and that they leave the Examiner in no doubt as to whether it is a strength or weakness that they are discussing, rather than leaving it implied.

Many were able to suggest that many of the author's claims were just assertions, or sweeping generalisations, particularly in the opening paragraph, such as which governments and leaders have controlled the information people receive. This is illustrated in the example below:

'In the first paragraph it claims that history has shown educated and informed people working together to rid themselves of tyranny and oppression, however, there are no facts or examples to back up this claim. The author also suggests that the Internet is a 'new weapon' and although the author puts forward an argument once again there are no facts, statistics or examples to support such a claim. Instead, it puts forward a vague argument about the role of the Internet in the events in Egypt in 2011. Similarly, it claims that the Internet is a tool 'that can be used to access unimaginable amounts of information', but this claim is not supported by evidence or examples.'

Many went on to note that much of the argument relied upon the UN's Declaration of Human rights, but that although its statements might be reliable, it does not offer a balanced opinion. Other responses noted that although the writer mentioned the examples of 'China, Cuba and North Korea' as places where people were kept in the dark no evidence was provided to show that this was actually the case or that there might be reasons why this happened. Unfortunately, some weaker answers used this as an opportunity to be sidetracked into a discussion as to why access to the Internet should be controlled and brought in information from outside the document which could not be credited.

However, stronger responses discussed the evidence from the UN's declaration of Human Rights to bolster its claim that the Internet was a basic human right. Some commented that the UN's declaration was a reliable source, but others went further and questioned whether it was intended to be applied to something such as the Internet and therefore whether the argument and evidence was valid. A number also made reference to the events of Egypt and again engaged in a balanced discussion about the evidence provided, with many going beyond the basic claim of the importance of the Internet in the events of 2011 to argue that it was not well supported. However, weaker responses again often applied knowledge from outside the document which is not credited.

The strongest answers reached a judgement as to 'how convincing' the argument in Document 1 was with one candidate concluding that:

'Although Document 1 has both strengths and weaknesses, its weaknesses outnumber its strengths. The claims made by the author are not well supported and often rely on generalisations or assertions which are not supported by statistical information. The UN Declaration was devised before the Internet developed and is therefore of limited value in claiming it is a human right and the examples of China, Cuba, North Korea and Egypt are not supported by evidence, weakening the overall argument.'

Question 3

Candidates continue to find this the most demanding question. However, it brings together the skills that have been tested on earlier questions, which are frequently ignored when tackling this question and unfortunately this was certainly the case in this examination session. There were few candidates who were able to go beyond a simple comparison of the content of the two documents, thus limiting their response to the lowest mark band, whilst a significant number simply described the content of the two documents and made little attempt to compare them. There were some candidates who did attempt to evaluate the two documents and did not simply summarise the content in a comparative way. As this is the most demanding question, candidates would be well advised to allow a disproportionate amount of time to address it. It might help candidates if they produced a plan, which indicated how the points and evaluation relate to the actual question, rather than see the documents in a vacuum. Candidates should also check to ensure that they have reasonably balanced coverage to the two documents as there were a number, who having evaluated Document 1 in the previous question, chose to either ignore it or treat it in a superficial manner. 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. The strongest responses evaluated the use of reasoning, evidence and the quality of each document. The strongest answers often started with a summary of the arguments of the two passages and how far they agreed or disagreed.

There were very few candidates who considered the issue of provenance and the sources used by both writers. Some responses noted that 'Document 2 was an extract from a British newspaper, the Guardian, which makes it more reliable as a source; however Document 1 coming from an online web site might be less reliable.' Although these points might be valid, they are limited in terms of evaluation and need much more development to be convincing, for example why should a British newspaper be reliable? Candidates also noted that Document 2 contained a wider range of sources and different opinions, but few went on to question the reliability of those sources, some of which are named and others not, which would have made their argument more convincing. One response claimed that:

'In document 2 the writer provides support to his claim with stronger arguments and more examples. He claims that the biggest complaint is how it affected the quality of thinking. This is supported by arguments from dissenters, such as Nicholas Carr who claims that 'being connected meant being constantly tempted to look away' which disrupts our concentration and that the 'Internet is chipping away my capacity for concentration and contemplation.'

However, the response did not develop this and question the validity of the claim and how typical such a response might be, leaving the point underdeveloped.

Some answers also considered both the relevance of the arguments in each document and the delivery of the argument. There were a number of responses which noted that Document 1 focused on the reasons why we should be able to access the Internet, and gave examples of countries where this was restricted, but noted that although some countries were mentioned, there was a lack of specific examples of how they were preventing this access. This was contrasted with Document 2 which used a wider range of sources and precise examples, although some noted they were little more than anecdotal and therefore could be considered limited. Similarly candidates discussed the method of delivery of the argument, noting that Document 2 presented a stronger argument because it was more balanced, with the second paragraph noting the benefits of the Internet. However, some took this further and noted that the rest of the document focused purely on the negative aspects and why access should be limited.

There were a number of candidates who considered the use of language, with some suggesting that the emotive nature of the language in Document 2, with the use of words such as 'dissenters' and 'worriers' detracted from the argument.

The strongest arguments reached a supported judgement about which document was more convincing and sometimes there were even interim judgements after a point had been discussed, which resulted in an overall judgement based on these interim judgements. Candidates should be encouraged to reach an overall judgement, but it does need to be based on the argument that has been pursued throughout the response and must be more than assertion.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 8987/13
Written Paper

Key Messages

- Candidates should ensure they read the question carefully and answer the actual question set.
- The length of the answer should reflect the number of marks available.
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- **Question 2** required candidates to consider both documents and go beyond a simple comparison of the content and evaluate the provenance, content and perspectives to reach an overall judgement. This question 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 or claims and will not reach the higher levels.
- Candidates will not gain credit by bringing in material from outside the documents.
- The strongest responses reached a supported judgement about the issue under consideration.

General Comments

The overall standard of the responses was encouraging. Candidates were able to access the passages and most showed a clear understanding of the demands of the questions. There were a number who did not pay attention to either the marks available or the command words in the questions and this limited the level achieved. It is encouraging to see that an increased number of candidates are able to apply the higher level skills on the final question, although there is still a number who rely on solely comparing the content of the two documents. Stronger answers often showed evidence of clear planning for the higher mark questions and this certainly helped candidates structure their answers in a coherent and logical manner.

There were very few candidates who ran out of time, although the allocation of time is an important issue. There were a significant number of candidates who wrote well over a side for **Questions 1a (i)** and **(ii)**, whereas a few lines would have been sufficient. As a result, some answers to the final question were too brief and ideas were not fully developed. Stronger responses selected relevant and appropriate quotes from the documents demonstrating that they had a secure grasp of the arguments being considered.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

(a) (i) Candidates who read the question carefully were usually able to score well, but there were a number who ignored the phrase 'against the work of the IPCC' and wrote more generally about Bays' views and therefore produced answers that were only occasionally specifically focused. The question carried only four marks and did not require lengthy answers, but clear identification of the main points Bays puts forward. However, the question did require candidates to summarise Bays' arguments and therefore simply copying out large amounts of texts was not credited, although short quotations to support a point were acceptable. Candidates scored either one mark for an undeveloped and valid point or two for a relevant and developed point. Most candidates were able to note that the IPCC cannot be trusted because of government intervention or political interference, but a number did not develop this fully and therefore did not score the maximum number of marks. An example of a full mark response can be seen below:

'*Document 1 accuses the IPCC of not fulfilling its expectations as an 'objective scientific body'. The main reason given for this is the fact that the government, who are claimed to have a vested interest in the conclusions of the IPCC as a way to increase their power, have 'input' into the*

process of the IPCC's conclusions, meaning it is unlikely to be objective. It is furthermore claimed the IPCC are not 'scientific' as the conclusions it produces are made without consulting scientists. It also calls some of the IPCC's claims 'controversial' and in summary, accuses them of 'fraud' and even 'corruption'.'

(ii) Most candidates were able to identify two pieces of evidence to support Bays' arguments about the work of the IPCC. However, candidates who did not read **Question 1 a(i)** carefully and wrote about his arguments in general drifted into comments about the temperature of the earth. A significant number also used the Nobel Peace Prize of the Kyoto Agreement, and although they are pieces of evidence they did not support his arguments about the work of the IPCC. Candidates who scored well referred either to specific statements that were added or deleted from the reports or simply mentioned the revision to Chapter 8 or the 2007 Fourth Assessment Report. As with **Question 1 a(i)** examiners did not expect lengthy answers and two simple relevant bullet points sufficed to score the two marks.

(b) This question allowed candidates to discuss both the evidence and the reasoning within Document 1. Although candidates found it easier to discuss the weaknesses, there were very few who were not able to at least suggest that there might be some strength to the article and therefore offer some balance. The stronger responses often discussed each point and then made a judgement as to the strength or weakness of the issue under discussion, before making an overall judgement about the document. However, other approaches were acceptable. Most candidates discussed both the evidence used by Bays and his reasoning. The weaker responses often made valid points, but they were little more than claims as they were not supported by precise textual knowledge which would have supported the point being made, and were therefore not credited as evaluation. Candidates should avoid lengthy description or summaries of the document under consideration as this will confine their answer to the lowest mark band, but should focus on the key skill for this paper, evaluation. In doing this, it is important to ensure that they link their discussions back to the question and that they leave the examiner in no doubt as to whether it is a strength or weakness that they are discussing, rather than leaving it implied.

Most were able to suggest that many of Bays' claims were just assertions and not supported by precise factual material; this was just as true for his claims about the deliberate fraud and the melting of the ice caps as seen in the example below:

'Other assertions made do not feature sufficient or any evidence. For example, the statement 'historically, governments have used global warming to expand their control' is very unconvincing as it is vague, generalising and contains no examples.'

Many went on to note that even if the work of the IPCC has been undermined it did not mean that global warming was not happening. A significant number also commented on his expertise in the field and argued that this significantly weakened his argument, particularly as he did not use any experts to support his claim. The example below shows how this could be incorporated into a balanced discussion:

'While some may argue that it is a weakness that the document was only authored by a university candidate and not a professional, it cannot be denied that the author has no obvious financial gain or other vested interest from his conclusions, and therefore they are more likely to be objective and reliable.'

Although some may dispute this claim, given the author's lack of expertise, the response is balanced and offers a valid evaluation of the provenance.

Candidates also considered the validity of the evidence that was used as shown below:

'Another weakness, however, is in its failure to sufficiently evaluate its sources. It describes how 'oil, coal and utility companies' disputed the IPCC, without considering that this would have been in their financial interests, as their products are what is accused of contributing to global warming. Nevertheless, other sources cited are more reliable, such as objective facts about the 'Nobel Peace Prize.'

Some candidates suggested that a strength was a counter argument, but it is difficult to see that reference to the Nobel Prize or the UN is sufficiently strong to make a case for this and those who

suggested that the lack of a counter argument weakened the Document appeared to be on firmer ground.

Question 2

Candidates continue to find this the most demanding question. However, it brings together the skills that have been tested on earlier questions, which are frequently ignored when tackling this question. Despite this, it was pleasing to see that a significant number of candidates did at least attempt to evaluate the two documents and did not simply summarise the content in a comparative way. As this is the most demanding question, candidates would be well advised to allow a disproportionate amount of time to address it. It might help candidates if they produced a plan, which indicated how the points and evaluation relate to the actual question, rather than see the documents in a vacuum. Candidates should also check to ensure that they have reasonably balanced coverage to the two documents as there were a number, who having evaluated Document 1 in the previous question, chose to either ignore it or treat it in a superficial manner. 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.

Candidates who did evaluate the two documents usually considered the issue of provenance and most argued that Revkin's background made his views stronger than those of Bays, although some suggested that as Revkin was writing for a national newspaper, whereas Bays was writing for a degree it could be argued that Bays was less likely to be susceptible to outside influences. Candidates also considered the question of evidence and this allowed many the opportunity to produce balanced answers as although they suggested Revkin appeared to support his argument with reference to scientists this was often vague as he referred to 'many scientists' or 'experts' without actually naming them. However, stronger answers often developed this further and noted that he did refer to both John Wallace and Dr. Eicken, which appeared to give his argument greater credibility. Similarly, some candidates noted that Document 2 used specific statistical support to add to its credibility:

'for example when in the first paragraph it states that there have been changes for the last 420,000 years, instead of vaguely referring to the past, and also when it uses specific examples of the 2007 report.'

Stronger answers also considered the sources used to support the arguments put forward in the two documents. This also provided an opportunity for balanced discussion as seen in the example below which considers the evidence used in Document 1:

'It describes how 'oil, coal and utility companies disputed the IPCC, without considering that this would have been in their financial interests, as their products are what it is accused of contributing to global warming. Nevertheless, other sources cited are more reliable, such as objective facts about the Nobel Peace Prize.'

Some answers also considered both the relevance of the arguments in each document and the delivery of the argument. There were a number of responses who noted that Document 1 scarcely addressed the issue of global warming and instead focused on the issue of the credibility and corruption of the IPCC. One candidate noted that 'It could be criticised that Document 1 contains an ad hominem attack, which is flawed in its relevance to global warming because although it attacks the IPCC organisation and their methods, it fails to consider in any other way the correctness of their conclusions about global warming.' Similarly candidates discussed the method of delivery of the argument, noting that Document 2, despite its assertions was able to keep its conclusions in the third person, 'many scientists said' and 'experts say'. However, some suggested that the structure of document 1, with the opening rhetorical questions made it more convincing.

The strongest arguments reached a supported judgement about which document was more convincing and sometimes there were even interim judgements after a point had been discussed, which resulted in an overall judgement based on these interim judgements. Candidates should be encouraged to reach an overall judgement, but it does need to be based on the argument that has been pursued throughout the response and must be more than assertion. An example of a strong conclusion which reaches a balanced judgement is shown below:

'In conclusion, although in a sense Document 2 is less convincing as it fails to produce as many examples of specific statistics as Document 1, or to as accurately source its evidence, its arguments are presented much more objectively making them more convincing, and in addition, are much more relevant to the question of global warming, as they address it and its evidence specifically rather than concentrating on an attack against a specific opponent. In this way, Document 2 is indeed generally more convincing, although it is not without its flaws as well.'

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 8987/02

Essay

Key Messages

- The most successful candidates deal fairly with two contrasting global perspectives. Candidates should be reminded that balance is even more important if you strongly support one of the views presented.
- Successful candidates realise that it is possible to have an interest in something without having a vested interest, and to have an opinion without being biased.
- Sources must be evaluated against the perspectives used and the wider context.
- Research remains the most common weak point in essays with many essays displaying an over-reliance on a narrow range of material. Essays should contain evidence of wide research having taken place.
- Remember this is not an unseen paper. It is not enough to comment that a source lacks support: candidates should research and be able to comment from their findings on the quality of the source.
- Titles must always be in the form of a question and teachers are reminded that questions can be sent to Cambridge for comment prior to the session in which candidates are submitting work as stated in the syllabus.
- The syllabus has not changed and teachers are reminded that reports exist for previous sessions and that these remain useful documents with which to be familiar.

General Comments

It was pleasing to see some very strong responses this session. There are many candidates who really engage with the fundamental aim of this paper, which is to help the candidate develop a better understanding of the differing global perspectives on important issues. The best responses were serious-minded, well-researched and empathetic. It was clear from reflection that this exercise had broadened some candidates' understanding of the context of their own view of the world. In doing so they had sometimes changed their views, and always enriched them.

The best responses truly engaged with the debate. The candidate might have very strong views, but achieved balance. While many candidates achieved this, there was a sizable minority who could only see the merits of one side of a debate, and whose references to the other or others were characterised by hostility, denial of their validity, or ridicule. This tendency was most marked in essays dealing with religious/ethical differences, or on topics such as terrorism.

Some candidates made it very difficult, or impossible, to score highly owing to the nature of the question they set. The first task is to identify an appropriate question. It remains an unfortunate fact that some candidates do not do this, and set themselves summative tasks, or set out to defend one point of view only. These responses cannot do well because the Assessment Objectives state that different perspectives need to be critically compared. Without choosing different perspectives to compare and contrast candidates are limiting their achievement at the outset.

Many candidates spend too much time evaluating the sources and not enough evaluating the perspectives. It must be stressed that effective evaluation cannot be achieved through using a rehearsed approach. While the vocabulary associated with Critical Thinking can be helpful, the candidate needs to move past the content and onto the context. One candidate wrote*:*

'Another weakness in Lichter's argument is her use of unsupported statistics stating that the Pakistani literacy rate for females is less than 2 percent and that 3 million girls now go to school compared to ten years ago. These would be supporting information but are not cited from any specific source.'

In this particular case the evaluation of the source would be most effectively done by checking the figures. Another candidate wrote*:*

'It may also be likely she has a vested interest in 'designer babies' due to the fact the some people who are part of the society may practice in the medical field of 'designer babies' and she may be inclined to withhold evidence about 'designer babies' that is not entirely positive and could have a negative effect for them and may tarnish their reputation'

Comments like this are not evaluation, but speculation. In an essay where there are marks for suggesting (and doing) research these are not appropriate.

Candidates need to remember the word limit. Many excellent essays were 1800-1950 words long. A few went over the limit, and the excess was not marked. As the excess often included reflection and conclusion, this lowered the mark that could be awarded. Some tried to gain themselves extra space in other ways. Examples included:

- A text 2000 words with full footnotes containing extra explanation. This could not be credited as it went over the limit – and it contained much of the candidate's source evaluation.
- Extensive quotation integral to the text, but not counted in the candidate's word count.
- 2000 word text and additional diagrams and illustrations to develop points. In these cases the text not the images was counted.

Comments on Specific Questions: examples of effective and less effective practice from this session

Effective questions:

To elicit an effective answer you need to ask an effective question. Examples of effective questions used this session are given below. From each of these candidates were able to access global issues, identify clearly differing perspectives and provide a reflective response to the steer of the question:

Should scientists be obliged to publish negative data?

Is torture ever justified?

Should children be allowed to engage in paid work?

Is the UN fit for purpose?

Should the present ban on international ivory trade be lifted?

Is Nuclear Power a viable alternative to Fossil Fuels?

Less effective questions:

Should Euthanasia be legalised in the UK? This is specific to one country and the candidate is making it more difficult to critically compare genuinely different perspectives.

To what extent is China a "superpower" and evaluate how sustainable are China's policies if they are to maintain their status of been a superpower? This uses two different command words and is over-complex

Should Drugs in Sport be legalised and what will the impacts in the world of sport be? This is too broad and is further limited by requiring a factual summative response to the second command. Questions of this type do not encourage the identification of different perspectives.

Effective phrasing:

Many candidates fail to recognise the authenticity and validity of a particular view (especially one with which they disagree). The following is an example of effective phrasing:

'*In any case, the DMU (Durham Miners') obituary can be seen as a reliable representation of the miners' perspective. To legitimize celebrating Thatcher's death, even for those who were directly affected by her, we must consider two factors: whether her actions are relevant enough today to warrant a celebration of her particular death, and whether a celebration of death is ever justifiable. To address the first: the strong reactions all over the world to her death in April testify for themselves that her legacy is still important. The Economist, a widely circulated magazine which has "backed Margaret Thatcher" claims "Margaret Thatcher and the –ism that she coined remain as relevant today as they were in the 1980s."This would justify the relevance, if not the correctness, of celebrating her death.'*

This candidate concluded by arguing that celebration of Margaret Thatcher's death was not justified; nevertheless recognising the Durham miners' view as a legitimate perspective worthy of consideration. The extract is an example of the concise and orderly development of an argument – made clearly global in the essay overall – an approach which would lead the candidate to the top level of attainment, seeing and appreciating both perspectives, and reflecting on them to a supported conclusion.

Effective Reflection:

Having explained the differing perspectives on an issue, and shown awareness, candidates need to move on to reflect on the debate, and here their own views can be developed as they move towards a supported conclusion. These are two very different examples of effective reflection:

'*Yes, there are many more immigrants in the area, but there is no real evidence that they are doing any damage. The real problem here seems to be more of a fear of the unknown, which is then fed by anecdotal stories of them being 'up to no good' which, can only be fuelled by the Daily Mail's use of such emotive language.'*

'If all crops produced become genetically modified, an idea that is not so abstract considering that current estimates reveal that 75% of all processed food in America contains GM produce, then eventually the majority of the world's food supply will be controlled by multi-billion dollar corporations – a notion that is unsettling at best.'

Both of these examples begin to illustrate the potentially transformative influence that studying Global perspectives can have on a person's thinking.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 8987/03
Presentation

Key Messages

- Presentations should primarily focus on contrasting different perspectives
- Clear concepts help to create more effective presentations
- A good understanding of the difference between an issue, an argument and a perspective should be demonstrated within presentations
- Effective questions are an important part of effective presentations

General Comments

Each session, this paper gives candidates a pre-released booklet of source materials for them to use as starting points in constructing their presentations. However, the key educational objectives which are assessed – the development of supported arguments which respond to alternative perspectives and reach their own considered judgements – remain the same. Centres are therefore advised to study closely previous Principal Examiner reports, especially those for June and November 2012. Taken together with this one, these are now beginning to build a library of examples of good practice which teachers and candidates may well find helpful.

Building broader arguments

A significant number of candidates responded to the tiger mother debate in the source materials, focusing particularly on Amy Chua's arguments in Document 1 and Hannah Rosin's response in Document 2. More effective responses avoided a purely personal consideration of their preferred parenting style and did not rely on the uncritical use of found material on styles of parenting (often the same material on the same four styles). Instead, they identified distinctive underlying issues of their own and conceptualised them, placing the presentation within a wider context. For example, one candidate used these documents as their starting point in asking 'should education place more emphasis on discipline than creativity?' They demonstrated this link between the stimulus documents and their chosen concepts early on: 'The Chinese mother, Amy Chua (Document 1) quoted focus on discipline, whereas the American mother focuses on creativity'. The ideas of discipline and creativity then established a broader framework for debate which allowed them to evaluate their research and reach a synthesised conclusion.

Another successful method for putting the parenting debate within a wider context was to use some of the arguments in Document 3 which linked parenting to economic success on a national level. This allowed for questions such as, 'Do countries with societies that encourage individualism have more prosperous economies?' This type of question identifies the relevant concepts and allows for a sharp and more sophisticated consideration of evidence.

In general, candidates who took a more flexible approach, using skills from the critical path, and who began with perspectives supported by combinations of documents instead of a number of documents treated separately were much more successful in their presentations.

Structuring perspectives, arguments and sources

Successful presentations responded to the emphasis of the mark scheme on focused issues, well-structured reasoning and sympathetic reflection on perspectives by being explicitly aware of these terms and using them to signpost the structure of their work for their audience. To reiterate, an issue is a topic (e.g. parenting) or a concept (e.g. gender differentiation). An argument is a line of reasoning leading to a specific

conclusion, either made by the candidate or located by them in a specific source. A perspective is a coherent world view which responds to an issue, made up of argument, evidence and assumptions which may come from a particular context.

This understanding was demonstrated early on by a presentation which asked 'does the entertainment industry objectify women?': 'first I will contextualise the question by defining terms necessary for its understanding, then I will present three perspectives on the issue, and finally I will go into my own perspective.' Here they demonstrated their focus on their own question and an understanding of the distinction between other perspectives (each of which in turn contained several arguments and sources) and their own. Another candidate, responding to the question 'do women have a disadvantage in comedic media compared to men?', demonstrated this understanding towards the end of their presentation as follows:

So, those are the two perspectives, each with two sources that hold as many strengths as they do weaknesses. In the end, which side of the argument is right? After analysing each side's argument and thinking about my personal views on the subject, I ultimately do not think that women are less funny.

This conclusion requires more development and justification (which the candidate goes on to provide), but it starts here with a clear sense of the perspectives, arguments and sources they have explored as distinct strands, and an awareness that the judgement to be made will require filtering these through their own context and assumptions.

Evaluating sources and evidence

The assessment of this paper looks for judgements which are supported, sources which are ideally relevant and credible and conclusions which are based on evidence. Candidates can do this in a variety of ways and, the isolation and consideration of the credibility and appropriateness of specific sources can be helpful in encouraging them to support their points and engage in evaluation. However, the most successful presentations were led by the candidate's synthesis of argument and evidence alongside their personal reflection which were then supported by their assessment of evidence and sources so that the latter did not dominate. Here is a candidate doing precisely this in answering the question, 'Does investment in higher education positively impact society?':

And those with a bachelor's degree earn almost twice as much money as those with only a high School diploma. Georgetown economist Anthony Carnevale even goes on to conclude that this economic differential between those with and without degrees is a median lifetime income of 1 million dollars more than a non-graduate in the U.S. The increasing thing to note is that this dichotomy is expanding. The Education Work Force Policy quantifies that the wage differential of high School vs. a bachelor's degree over 30 years has grown by almost 150% and the growth in high skill jobs in the future will exacerbate these gaps further. Thus higher education significantly advances the economic life of individuals.

Credible and relevant sources have been selected already by the candidate, and the appropriateness of those choices can then simply be indicated by identifying provenance (e.g. 'Georgetown economist'). Evidence is introduced by an argumentative proposition, its significance is assessed, links are made with other pieces of evidence and conclusions are drawn.

Comments on Specific Questions

One of the distinctive features of this syllabus is that, for two of the three papers, candidates are invited to set their own questions in consultation with their teachers. This gives candidates an opportunity to define their own agenda and explore an issue which is meaningful to them. By the same token it also issues a challenge and a responsibility. Candidates can limit themselves though inappropriate question choice and formulation, as the ability to set an appropriate question becomes part of the assessment. It is also expected that teachers discuss question choice with candidates and give guidance on this before they set out to work independently on their presentation. Previous reports on both Paper 2 and Paper 3 give extensive guidance on question-setting, including an extended section in the Paper 2 report for June 2010.

It is striking that all of the examples of effective work cited in this report also have effective questions. These should allow for a direct response to the source material as a starting point, organise opposing perspectives in a clear debate and lead to a specific judgement. The most effective questions (which produce the strongest presentations) also clearly signpost key concepts in the debate. For example, 'Should gender be used to discriminate between candidates for employment?' and 'Is "Chinese Parenting" an ethical philosophy for raising children?' are both effective questions because they include all of these elements. On the other

hand, a question such as ‘Should fathers spend more time with their children and less time at work?’ is a clear debate, but lends itself less well to challenging concepts. Any question which begins with ‘how’, such as ‘how does the parents’ relationship with one another affect the children’s development?’ makes it difficult for the candidate to construct an argumentative debate rather than an explanation. Many Centres have engaged with this guidance and are clearly helping their candidates to construct effective questions which connect with the assessment objectives for this paper. This has led to more effective work overall compared with previous sessions.