GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

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Paper 0457/01
Portfolio
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General comments

Candidates produced portfolios covering a variety of topics from the 16 areas of study. Areas of study included: law and criminality, health and disease, education for all, biodiversity, conflict and peace and belief systems. Many candidates identified a question within the topic area, which they then went on to answer within the study. This gave the studies a clearer focus and candidates generally found the study easier to structure. This was also true where candidates used sub-headings linked to the assessment criteria.

Some candidates were given freedom of choice as to which areas of study they chose for their basic and extended studies and some Centres were more prescriptive in that candidates submitted studies based on the same areas of study. Either way, individual responses were apparent.

Candidates used a variety of media to produce the portfolios, with the more successful studies embedding the media within the study and including extended writing.

It is important that work reflects the assessment criteria and is in continuous prose. Candidates should avoid submitting irrelevant material for a study (including class work and pictures that are never referred to).

Teachers are encouraged to see that their candidates understand the need to keep to the word count specified of 1000-1500 words each for the two basic studies and 1500-2000 words for each for the two extended studies.

Comments on question paper issues

Teacher assessment

Teachers are generally clear about the assessment criteria, relating it to the work. For the most part, moderation samples showed that there is clarity about the difference between the bands. Where a study met the assessment criteria fully, marks within Band 3 were awarded, and where there was limited information supplied for one of the criteria, candidates were given marks in Band 1. Studies with a question that the candidate went onto answer were generally more successful than those that had used a broad topic area rather than a narrower focus.

Gather information representing different perspectives

Most gathered and presented more than a limited range of information representing different perspectives and this usually came from a range of sources. Candidates are getting better at being more concise in presenting this information so that it does not take up a disproportionate amount of the word count.

Analyse issues within the study

Candidates are getting better at analysing issues within a study rather than limiting their analysis to description, as they are genuinely looking at the issues from a more individual perspective. More successful studies covered fewer issues in depth rather than simply describing the issues. When analysing an issue, candidates need to consider the causes and current situations related to the question being discussed and the possible effects and consequences of these conditions.

Identify and evaluate possible scenarios

Some candidates included scenarios within their studies. These were sometimes fairly creative, although generally there was a lack of creative thinking about possible scenarios. Where candidates did think about possible scenarios, they sometimes considered the impact of these scenarios and suggested possible course of action and were therefore awarded marks for evaluation. Unfortunately, this was not a regular feature of the work moderated.

A meaningful question to be asked to identify possible scenarios could be, 'what would happen if ……..?' Candidates then need to evaluate the likelihood of this and the possible consequences in order to be awarded marks for evaluation.

Formulate possible courses of action

Studies that were well structured mostly managed present solutions to the problems they had identified earlier in the study, although few of these were well developed and some tended to list possible solutions to the problems.

Develop evidence-based personal response demonstrating self-awareness

The evidence for this part of the assessment was either embedded within the study, or included in the self-evaluation form. By doing this, many candidates could show that were fully engaged with the study.

Candidates referred to their life at home, in School or where they lived in relation to the study, sometimes identifying what they had not realised before they commenced working upon the study or something that they will be doing differently as a result of the work undertaken for the study.

As the candidates' self-evaluation form for the portfolio is also taken into account for this criterion, Centres need to advise candidates to complete the form with reference to the two extended studies. There is no need for candidates to submit one form for each study.

Administration

Teachers are asked please to ensure that each study is clearly labelled with the title of the study and whether it is a basic or extended study. The title of the study also needs to be in the correct place on the Individual Candidate Record Form, together with the marks awarded. All files should be clearly labelled and Centres are asked please to check that every piece of work submitted can be easily accessed.

Some Centres included short comments on the Individual Candidate Record Cards, which related to the assessment criteria, to show how a mark had been arrived. This practice is encouraged as it is helpful for moderation. Centres should ensure that they submit the Coursework Summary Assessment Form, the MS1, and a fully completed Individual Candidate Record Form for each candidate.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

| Paper 0457/02 |
| Project |

General comments

Candidates chose to investigate an interesting variety of topics. Some of the issues explored were:
- accessibility for the disabled;
- poor health related to smoking and obesity;
- Information Technology literacy;
- bullying in school;
- crime and personal safety;
- exploration of cultures, traditions and languages of countries involved in the 2010 soccer World Cup.

Also of note were projects focused on the candidates' participation in a model United Nations conference.

This session saw continued improvement in the quality of work. There was an increase in the number of candidate groups identifying concrete and active outcomes to their projects, the choice of which often indicated a good deal of careful thought. Such outcomes also provided plenty of scope and opportunity for individual group members' evaluation of the outcome. On the other hand, groups which did not specify a concrete outcome or which simply presented the findings of their research and individual group members were subsequently unable to find very much to discuss in their evaluation of the outcome.

More Centres saw no changes to their marks as a result of moderation – a very pleasing situation. It was also helpful that more Centres provided brief comments on the Individual Candidate Record Cards to support the marks they had awarded. This is invaluable because the moderator needs to understanding the reasons why each candidates has been awarded particular marks.

Comments on candidate response to assessment criteria

This session saw more use of the form on the teacher support website for recording of evidence gathered during observations of candidates in discussion and carrying out their work. This was of real help to the teachers themselves in arriving at fair and well-supported marks for their candidates in these two criteria.

Teachers are encouraged to use the full mark range because this will help them to discriminate between the performance of both individual candidates and different candidate groups.

Teachers are also reminded that the criterion "Constructive participation in discussions" carries a group mark - so all candidates in a group must, therefore, receive the same mark for this criterion.

Project Plan
Group assessment

Most candidate groups produced very full project plans, which often provided activities and timeframes, as well as a detailed breakdown of individual group members' responsibilities. Many plans also provided evidence of on-line communications between individual group members as well as those they were collaborating with in other countries. In some cases, rather than providing a plan as such, groups chose to record the progress of their project and in doing so, indicated who had done what. While there is nothing wrong in doing this, candidates should be advised that they must articulate the rationale for their choice of topic and the aims of their project because when they carry out their individual evaluation of the outcome, they need to do so in light of its aims, otherwise their evaluation will not be able to reach the upper mark bands. When aims were not stated or were vague and no concrete outcome was identified, plans generally did not score very well.

Teachers are reminded that the "Project Plan" is marked on a group basis. This means that all candidates in a group must be awarded the same mark for this criterion.

Representation of different viewpoints and perspectives (including cross-cultural)
Group assessment

There was generally more evidence of cross-cultural collaboration in projects that were submitted in this session. Very good projects were characterised by the fact that they used the different viewpoints and perspectives that had been gathered to move the investigation forward and to influence the outcome of the project. In weaker projects, cross-cultural collaboration tended to be confined to candidates in the same school who came from other countries and the viewpoints elicited tended to be simply presented, rather than being used in any meaningful way. While there is nothing wrong in gathering the views of candidates in the same school, much richer information can be gathered if this is coupled with information gathering from outside the school setting. It is also worth reminding candidates that when they are considering different viewpoints and perspectives, rather than simply gathering the views of one section of society, or just one person in a particular country, they need to consider a range of views. For instance, if they are investigating an issue relating to health in the community, they should consider the views of various stakeholders, for instance, doctors and health workers, the elderly, new mothers, etc. and then use this information in producing the outcome of their project.

Teachers are reminded that "Representation of different viewpoints and perspectives (including cross-cultural)" is marked on a group basis. This means that all candidates in a group must be awarded the same mark for this criterion. This also means that the group submission needs to include a brief explanation of the information gathering and a more substantial discussion of how the information was used.

Evaluation of Project Outcome
Individual assessment

As stated in paragraph one of this report, it was very pleasing to find more candidates identifying concrete outcomes to their projects that were both meaningful and active. A number of candidate groups chose to produce video clips as their outcome, such as the group who produced a video clip on the dangers of smoking and posted it on YouTube, or the group who produced a video journal of their investigations into accessibility of facilities to disabled people in different parts of the world. Other groups chose to set up a website dedicated to their investigations. Brochures, pamphlets and posters were also chosen as outcomes. In nearly all of these instances, the outcome was the culmination of a high degree of focused research. Where groups identified concrete outcomes such as these, the candidates generally produced strong individual outcome evaluations. Weaker submissions generally tended to come from candidates whose group projects did not have a concrete outcome, but rather, the group had treated the write up of information gathered and conclusions drawn as the sole outcome. This left the individual group members with little or nothing concrete to evaluate in their submissions. Any report or write-up that candidates produce should focus on details of what they have produced/done, or intend to produce/do to represent what they have learned from all their investigations and how this reflects what they have learned from cross-cultural collaboration and learning about other people's viewpoints.

Evaluation of Individual contribution and learning (including what was learnt from cross-cultural collaboration)
Individual assessment

All candidates engaged in some discussion of what they had contributed to the project in terms of information gathering, writing, etc. and most were able to comment on the strengths of their teamwork and some of the challenges their group faced. Some candidates were also very frank in their discussion of their own strengths and weaknesses, and showed a good deal of self-awareness. Such candidates usually scored well in this criterion.

Submissions that did not score very well were characterised by discussion that was superficial in nature and lacking in any real critical consideration of the candidates' own weaknesses, or other possible avenues of contribution to the project. Teachers are urged to remind their candidates that in to reach the upper mark bands they must reflect in some depth on what they have learned from cross-cultural collaboration.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Paper 0457/03
Written Paper

General comments

Performance was generally of a high standard. Centres who entered candidates for the second or third time had all improved their performance. This was particularly evident in areas mentioned as weak in previous sessions, and great improvement was evident. Well done!

The most able candidates produced some extremely high quality work which demonstrated high level thinking about the issues, sources, evidence and arguments in the stimulus material. These candidates really engaged with the issues and the stimulus material and produced coherent answers which were connected and consistent between questions and demonstrated that the candidates had reflected on and were interested in global issues. Less able candidates (although this was by no means restricted to the weakest) thought about the questions one by one without making connections, and many of these candidates displayed a naivety about the world and about possible solutions to problems which is perhaps disappointing for someone who has followed a global perspectives course. A small number of candidates, for example, argued in **Question 4** that GE food should definitely be labelled everywhere in the world because people have the right to choose what they eat, but then argued in **Question 8** that human rights should not be made part of the national law for every country because some countries disagreed with them. Although candidates' marks were not affected by this, it is worrying that some candidates appeared to genuinely feel that the right to a label on food should be more widespread than the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Candidates tended to use exaggeration and hyperbole in some of their answers. A great many of them suggested that taking away people's freedom of choice by not labelling GE food would lead to riot and rebellion. Many argued that without international laws there would be chaos. These candidates should apply thinking about likely and possible consequences to their own reasoning as well as to others' reasoning.

It was noticeable this session that many candidates wrote a great deal more than necessary. Some candidates wrote two lines for each line given, used margins, the blank page or extra sheets to continue their answers. This should be discouraged. The space available is sufficient to gain full marks, and candidates who write twice as much tend not to benefit from it. This is either because they are writing instead of thinking and thus not writing high quality answers, or because they have gained full marks before moving to the additional sheets. Selection of relevant material is an important skill.

The most notable areas for improvement were **Questions 2** and **6**, which ask about what information is needed to make a particular decision and how this information will help to make that decision, and **Question 7**, which asks how convincing an argument is.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This question was generally well done. Most candidates were able to identify key parts of the debate for and against labelling GM foods. The most able candidates were able to explain, mostly in their own words, what the issues were, which sometimes involved summarising points or drawing inferences. For example, the most successful candidates wrote that, 'people want GE foods to be labelled because they need to be able to distinguish between these foods and normal foods.' They then gave reasons why this distinction was important: 'People want to avoid GE food in case it has harmful consequences, they want the freedom of choice to make their own decision about whether to eat them or not.' Most gave some details from the stimulus material regarding the possible harmful consequences of GE food.

Weaker candidates simply used fragments of the stimulus material without alteration or connections between them.

Question 2

Most candidates picked up from the stimulus material that they needed to know more about the cost and consequences of GE food. Most were able to produce a simple explanation of how this would help. For example, 'if the labelling costs a lot, we won't label.' To gain all three marks, candidates needed to be more thoughtful; 'if labels can be integrated into existing packaging at a small cost, I am likely to support labelling. However, if most GE foods require separate labels (e.g. fruit) and they are expensive, I will probably not support labelling.'

A number of candidates decided that they needed to know how popular labelling would be, and that they would do whatever the majority wanted, because it would be a waste to spend money on labelling if 51% of the population did not care. This answer was credited with some but not all marks, as the popularity of labelling was not felt to be a central issue. If GE foods were harmful, or if people should have freedom of choice about what they eat, or if the population were unaware of the issue, it would matter little whether the broader population supported labelling or not. The right action to take is not always the popular action.

A large minority of candidates answered this question with reference to whether they would eat or support GE foods, rather than with reference to whether they would support labelling GE foods. This limited their marks.

Question 3

(a)   Most candidates were able to identify a fact and an opinion from Donna's argument. Finding the value was more problematic. Candidates need to be aware that value judgements relate to issues or right and wrong, fairness, justice and similar ideals.

(b)   Most candidates were able to consider how likely it was that unemployment was a likely consequence of labelling GE foods. The strongest candidates thought of reasons why it was possible and weighed them against reasons why it was unlikely – such as 'It is possible that workers will be unemployed from small companies because companies have to find the money for labelling somewhere, but many GE food companies are large and rich. This means that they have the resources to add two letters (GE) to their packaging without laying workers off. So on the whole this consequence is possible in small companies, but unlikely in general.'

(c)   The strongest candidates broadened their answers away from the specifics of GE here to talk about the value or right that we should have freedom of choice, and that this applies to what we eat. They talked about the right to food choices such as vegetarianism or religious reasons for choosing to avoid specific foods. They then returned to GE and applied their discussion to GE foods, arguing that it matters more to have freedom of choice in this issue if they are harmful, but even if they are not, people should have the right to choose.

In both parts **(b)** and **(c)** candidates gained higher marks if they answered the question rather than merely giving reasons and only implying their answer. For example, 'It matters to a great extent because food directly affects our bodies and we have the right to make our own decisions,' is a better answer than, 'food affects our bodies and we have the right to make our own decisions.'

Question 4

Most candidates were able to use arguments from the stimulus material to form their own reasoning and to provide different opinions. The strongest candidates added ideas of their own – perhaps by thinking of a new response to arguments from the stimulus material, or by introducing values or principles to support their own view.

Very few candidates considered whether GE foods should be labelled 'in every country.' They tended to write generic answers about whether GE foods should be labelled or not. Candidates who did consider 'in every country' tended to consider that cost would play a greater role in the decision making in less economically developed countries than in wealthier countries. They also tended to gain higher marks because they had answered the question that was asked.

A number of candidates spent too long explaining why they disagreed with other views and forgot to give their own reasons to support their opinion.

Question 5

In parts **(a)** and **(b),** candidates generally gave acceptable answers. Weaker candidates seemed not to understand the difference between fair and safe.

In part **(c)** candidates were normally able to give an example of a problem that international laws can deal with better than national laws. Some candidates made this harder for themselves by not using the list in Source 3. The explanation proved more challenging. Most candidates could explain why international action was necessary, but only the most able related their explanation to why international laws were better than national laws.

In part **(d),** almost all candidates were able to choose a human right that they thought was most important. Very few candidates, however, were able to explain why this was the 'most' important right. This was most successfully done by those candidates who argued that 'all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights' was most important, 'because this is the foundation of all other rights.' A number of candidates were able to argue that equality before the law was most important, because corruption in the law such as allowing rich people to get away with crimes made other rights difficult to achieve. Weaker candidates tended to restate the right rather than explaining why it was important.

The main weakness in the answers to this question was candidates using the wrong source documents. This is careless because they are told above each question which source to use.

Question 6

This question discriminated very well between more and less able candidates. Most were able to think of a number of relevant and significant things that they needed to know in order to decide whether to send peacekeeping troops to help in country B. The more successful candidates gave thoughtful explanations of how this information would help. For example, they argued that they would need to know which country, if either, had broken international law or violated civilians' rights, because peacekeeping troops should not be sent to help the aggressor, but they should be sent to protect innocent people whose rights were being violated. They argued that they needed to know whether negotiations had been tried, because they would try peaceful negotiation before sending troops.

Weaker candidates assumed that Country A was the aggressor and wanted to know 'why country A attacked country B.' They also felt that they should send troops to help whichever country was weakest, regardless of whether they had violated any laws or whether this would prolong a war.

The weakest candidates often forgot to say how the information they needed would help them to decide whether to send troops. One candidate decided, with no apparent reference to anything else he had written, that he would send troops to attack both Country A and Country B.

Question 7

This question asks how convincing an argument is. It means how rationally convincing rather than how emotionally persuasive. In future sessions this question may be asked in different forms, such as, 'How well does the reasoning work?' in order to avoid this confusion.

The weakest candidates restated, quoted, described or paraphrased some or all of Akabusi's argument and said whether they agreed or disagreed with it. Somewhat more able candidates gave good reasons for their agreement or disagreement. The strongest candidates evaluated the reasoning in terms of the knowledge claims, possible consequences and the values. These candidates also tended to see that some parts were more convincing than others. For example, 'Akabusi is right to say that international laws are often broken, but it is not a likely consequence of laws being broken that laws will never work. He ignores the many occasions when international laws have worked and does not consider the consequences of not having international laws. Without these laws there would probably be many more wars. The value he holds that countries should have total power is not convincing because total power can often lead to terrible consequences and human rights violations. He values a country's freedom more than the individual's freedoms, and does not consider the consequences of dictatorships, for example.'

One candidate noticed that Akabusi's argument is contradictory, which makes it much less convincing. 'These laws will never work' contradicts the later claim, 'international law might stop a war.' This was a strong evaluation, and it would be good to see more of this kind of evaluation in future sessions.

A number of candidates noticed that Akabusi's argument was highly opinionated and largely unsupported and unsubstantiated.

Question 8

This question discriminated well and allowed able candidates to perform at a very high level. Again, not all candidates answered the precise question – very few focused on whether 'all' countries should be 'made to' include human rights in their national laws. Candidates who did consider whether countries should be 'made to' include human rights generally argued that they should not, because forcing them to do something was in itself a violation of human rights. They tended to argue for persuasion over force.

Strong candidates tended to consider different points of view based on individual rights. They often quoted China's resistance to giving people the freedom of speech, Catholic and Islamic resistance to allowing people to change religion, and some countries' resistance to allowing people to marry freely because of deep rooted cultural practices. These candidates tended to argue against these alternative perspectives on the grounds that individual rights are more important than entrenched cultural practice, or that individual rights are generally beneficial to the nation.

Weaker candidates tended to quote indiscriminately from Akabusi's argument for their alternative perspectives. This was broadly unsuccessful because most of his reasoning related to international law relating to international conflicts. Centres should encourage candidates to think carefully during the examination.