GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8021/11
Paper 1

Key messages

- Try to write between 600 and 700 words
- Only answer one question
- Look for the key words in the question and ensure your argument addresses these.
- Structure the essay clearly, using paragraphs including a clear introduction and a conclusion
- Effective conclusions will step back and offer evaluation of the issues discussed in the essay
- Include relevant examples or evidence to support ideas presented in arguments
- Use formal language as this is an academic essay
- Check your writing at the end to correct unnecessary errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar

General comments

The content of most essays appeared free-thinking and distant from any pre-prepared material. Some essay titles were refashioned into a form that allowed an extensive off-loading of descriptive content, the best example being the link between a healthy lifestyle and what we eat. There were many responses that could have improved the balance of arguments, tending to tackle one side of an argument at the expense of a less favourable view. However, there continues to be evidence of candidates becoming more adventurous and less restricted in expressing their opinions, particularly on the matter of government policy and global attitudes to such things as freedom of the press and political control. This saw more wide-ranging essays emerge that explored the limits of sometimes controversial viewpoints and opinions as well as less popular philosophies, leading to the expression of an original personal viewpoint.

The use of English was satisfactory though some essays were constrained by weak punctuation and spelling. There were few occasions where the communication broke down completely so that the candidate's viewpoint could not be discerned in some way.

Good to very good answers employed a range of structures and vocabulary, were well organised and contained few (serious) errors. A number of answers were 'standard' in so far as there were spelling, grammar and punctuation/syntax errors, including basic words and structures, but it was relatively rare for essays to fail to communicate clearly at all. Where there were lapses of clarity due to expression/communication, these tended to be more occasional rather than sustained. Handwriting made a small number of essays difficult to judge.

Among common errors were: (basic) spelling errors (there/their/they're), including words found on the question paper; incorrect use of expressions or vocabulary items; inconsistent use of English/American spellings; agreements with singular/plural verb subjects and conjugations and/or with tenses, and misplaced punctuation with weak grasp of syntax. This was usually due to inappropriate or absent punctuation but, in extreme cases, either long sections without punctuation or extensive comma splicing, or the reverse, with full stops between clauses which should have been joined, perhaps with commas or semi-colons. There was frequent incorrect use of *in which* (for *which*), *while* when not required, prepositions in verb phrases, and similar constructions, demonstrating faulty sentence construction. *Although* and *however* were quite frequently confused.

Paragraphing was usually attempted, not always completely successfully. The most common problem was for paragraphs to be too long/non-existent in most of the body of the essay. Nevertheless, occasional responses had very short paragraphs, while two or three in a sequence were connected by their ideas and so should have formed one longer paragraph.

Register was sometimes too informal. This is important because it now forms a specific strand of the AO3 descriptors. Although only mentioned in one bullet point, it is an element of prose which stands out to Examiners when inappropriate, perhaps more so than (minor) spelling or grammatical slips. Most essays contained at least one contraction (*you've, don't, can't, shouldn't, we're, it's*, are examples). The frequent presence of *wanna*, *let's*, *gonna*, *stuff*, *kinda*, *a whole bunch of*, *a ton of*, the use of the ampersand (*&*) and *etc.* are inappropriate for a formal, academic essay.

Common phrases to introduce paragraphs, such as *To begin*, *To continue (on), To add on*, *In continuation*, *More over, Concludingly* (sic) and similar are not always necessary and omitting them can improve the flow of an essay, even when their inclusion is trying to achieve the same objective.

Candidates should be advised to check their work carefully for (basic) errors, including correct spelling of words in the questions, e.g. *necessity, business(es), requirement, models, development, health(y) (*and *healthily), technology (*and *technologically), organisation, literature, appliances, furniture, appearance.*

Introductions usually referred to the main words of the question, but many tended either to be too general or tangential to the question, were very topic-based or simply stated that the question could be seen from two sides. Fewer candidates listed all of the points which would later be covered, hence repeating themselves. A good introduction should aim to demonstrate understanding of the question terms and give an idea where the candidate's viewpoint may lie, before discussing the issue in more detail in the following paragraphs. The introduction should do more than simply repeat the question and, where appropriate, offer a specific context in time and/or place.

Candidates should refer back to the exact wording of the question as they start each paragraph, to ensure continued question focus. **Question 7** responses, for example, often drifted into descriptions of how technology is used, rather than addressing the issue of 'fully replace people'. Similar comments apply to **Question 1**, with online communications. Here, sometimes the 'business' focus was also lost.

Ideas were usually developed and explained, at least in simple terms, while the better answers were able to evaluate their arguments, by offering judgements, acknowledging the complexity of an issue, and/or considering alternative viewpoints, perhaps with the perspective of an alternative time or place, or the impact on different groups of people. The best answers were very thoughtful indeed.

The quality and frequency of supporting information and exemplification varied a great deal, from non-existent to vague, and lacking clear links to the question or points made, to being well chosen, applied and marshalled in support of an advanced argument. There was some tendency to narrate and describe, for example the life stories of sports stars (**Question 3**) or tourist destinations and activities (**Question 5**). Similar comments apply, as mentioned above, to **Questions 1** and **7**, with regard to technological developments.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Evaluate the necessity for online communications in running a business.

Better essays discussed examples in detail, i.e. those businesses which operate almost exclusively in an online environment such as Amazon and eBay. Balance was sometimes offered in terms of businesses which do not lend themselves so well to an online sphere, such as therapists, dog groomers/walkers and similar, although the importance of advertising, reviews and communication with clients was still relevant in such cases.

A number of less successful responses tended simply to describe how email, video conferencing, social media and review sites could be used by businesses, in general terms. There were, even so, useful references to the Covid world. Helpful distinctions were sometimes drawn between 'big business' and local or family-run enterprises, sole traders and entrepreneurs. Evaluation was often achieved by remarking upon the difficulties when technological unreliability occurs.

Several less successful arguments focused on the strengths of social media and did not focus on the business element of the question. Whilst a range of sources were mentioned, several candidates tended to describe rather than evaluate.

Question 2

Voting in national and regional elections should be a legal requirement. Discuss.

Voting as a mandatory requirement drew some thoughtful responses. Many candidates argued that compulsory voting might create a more informed and influential electorate and some suggested that enforcement abrogated individual rights under the constitution. One response put it this way: 'forcing someone to exercise their right to vote no longer makes it a right'; a clear evaluative point. Others suggested that if people were forced to vote they may not take it seriously but that, on the other hand, the requirement to vote might benefit smaller political parties, thus reducing the danger of 'an elective dictatorship' in the words of another excellent response.

A few essays welcomed the idea because people, such as released prisoners who are often barred from voting, could fully take part as citizens. More evaluation occurred when answers discussed the matter of penalties for not voting, pointing out that fines would most likely lead to the already poor being further impoverished. Issues of bias and misinformation were seen as likely to be enhanced, rather than diminished, by forcing everyone to vote. Some candidates discussed the frailties and corrupt practices of their own government and, in doing so, highlighted the importance of a fair, democratic process.

Question 3

To what extent does sport produce good role models?

The majority of responses included examples of good and bad role models, although there were some arguments with no examples at all, which weakened the debate. Many candidates were well informed across a range of sports including cricket, tennis, football, baseball, athletics, cycling and swimming. 'Rags to riches' examples were especially interesting as were references to perhaps lesser-known examples of the good that come from taking a stand, one example being Andy Robertson's campaign against cyber bullying.

A few limited their argument to school sport and its pressures. While such an approach is acceptable, more convincing arguments could have taken into account the common understanding of what a role model is. Several essays were imbalanced. Too much time was spent discussing the lives, achievements, and failings of sports stars rather than concentrating on to what extent they were a role model, which led to a lack of discussion and broader consideration of their achievements off the field of play.

Better arguments explored the on-field and 'celebrity' angles, the qualities required for success in sports and the influence on young people. By way of balance, examples of poor role models and associated behaviours were cited, for instance doping/cheating, drugs and extra-marital affairs. Interesting local examples were included in some responses.

Question 4

A country's continued development depends on the quality of education it provides. Discuss.

Candidates saw the economic and cultural benefits of quality education and there were, among these, the most thoughtful analyses of how poverty excludes the majority from accessing 'quality education'. A few candidates considered the fact that some countries' development is prodigious because of the value of their natural resources irrespective of how education is provided and to whom.

Many responses considered how good the education system was in a particular country, and how some countries had got it right, with others falling short. Many candidates cited personal experience to support their view. The better responses considered the matter of how education impacted a country's development. A simple view that was often proposed was that a country's leaders were well-educated (either at home or abroad) and this ensured continued development. The importance of education in areas such as medicine, business, and commerce, and even farming (for those nations that heavily rely on agriculture as part of their survival) was sometimes discussed.

The negative issues tended to surround mismanagement by governments, a lack of opportunity for the poorer members of society, and no investment in school systems – all supported by personal experience. There were some interesting responses which discussed 'brain drain' and the impacts of multinationals/foreign investors such as China.

Question 5

To what extent does tourism make a positive contribution to your country's economy?

Many of those who responded to this question benefitted from their knowledge of the tourist attractions their countries offer. A few candidates discussing the seasonal benefits of tourism made the point that their country's economy relied more heavily on other factors such as raw materials. Many cited jobs and improved infrastructure as economic benefits of tourism and a few qualified this by arguing that more essential needs such as healthcare and education are neglected in favour of tourist income. Those answers that were aware of the opposite to positive were the more evaluative ones. A few referred to the dangers of cultural dilution giving as examples the frequent celebration of Western occasions at the expense of local ones. Many candidates, given recent events with Covid travel restrictions, examined the problems caused by the economic impact of *not* having tourism which was widely understood.

Some candidates only presented one side of the issue in their essay and determined how tourism was the backbone of their nation, and how its financial contribution was essential. The idea of 'business tourism' was mentioned a few times and was not a very convincing point (businesspeople visiting to uncover the potential of a country for future investment). This was not the focus of the question and candidates who took this approach struggled to make a convincing case. Weaker responses tended to describe attractions, facilities and destinations, while stronger answers were more varied and were able to bring in a wider range of considerations, stakeholders and impacts. Some responses were very informative with some thoughtful comments about poverty and also cultural exchange in some countries.

Question 6

It is possible to live a healthy lifestyle without being careful about what we eat. Discuss.

Many responses to this question were competent and well informed. There were a few excellent answers which utilised a sociological as well as a medical perspective. One essay commented upon 'the normalisation of overeating' in their society and the negative consequences for the young in particular. Other thoughtful essays focused on mental health making the point that physical and mental health are indistinguishable, while others mentioned the importance of a good night's sleep in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. There was some discussion of balanced diets, fast food, eating disorders, obesity, exercise and nutrition and the psychological issues surrounding diet and weight.

Weaker answers wrote advice columns or simply listed the various diseases that might be contracted if we are not careful about what we eat. Some candidates did not address the command word 'discuss'. 'A balanced diet' needed some definition: some essays assumed the reader knew what one was. The word 'lifestyle' was sometimes ignored and the words 'what we eat' became the focus of the question. Some candidates took the approach of trying to persuade people to adopt different, recommended diets, and avoid a wide range of foods – this was not what the question was asking for. Few explored the idea that it is possible to have a healthy lifestyle without being concerned about what we consume.

Question 7

Technology can never fully replace people. To what extent do you agree?

This question provoked a number of thoughtful responses with nearly all arguments stressing the human role in creating and controlling technology. Various examples of AI both in the home and in the workplace were referred to and several candidates were aware of the technological advances in the medical field. A few candidates referred to our appreciation of arts and crafts and of human creativity in design and production. Most candidates were clearly of the opinion that technology will never replace humans. The most successful essays struck a balance between the way technology could make life easier and more efficient, cost-saving and stress free against the intensely and indisputable way human emotion (and how this varies from person to person) could never be replicated. Words like 'compassion,' 'empathy,' 'sympathy' were commonly used to point out the ways technology was unable to replace humans.

There were some essays where candidates listed all they knew about machines and gadgets stating how fantastic these were, which was not a successful approach. Focus on the question was not always sustained, especially on the idea of 'replacement'. Answers tended to describe various technological developments and products and leave the reader to infer which of these might be happening in place of humans.

Better answers were able to differentiate between the types of jobs and activities which might be more replaceable than others, giving reasons such as emotion and empathy. There was some consideration of the fact that, ultimately AI and technology are tools, programmed by humans, to improve life rather than to replace us completely.

Question 8

Newspapers in your country should not be allowed to publish the views of just one person or organisation. Discuss.

Some responses to this question gave interesting regional perspectives. Those from countries where the media is virtually the mouthpiece of the government were able to reference appalling past events that were covered up and others focused on the phenomenon of 'fake news' and the dissemination of conspiracy theories. Essays tended to focus on political opinions and bias, notably how newspapers in their country attempted to persuade the electorate during an election due to the affiliation of the newspaper. The question of duty and moral responsibility to the people were sound points made as well as the fact that there should always be a spectrum of views available to the reader. Some candidates chose it as a chance to criticise their own country for their unreliability in presenting the population with news that they could trust.

The principle of access to a variety of viewpoints was understood by many candidates, as well as the implications of having just one viewpoint. There was reference to misinformation, fake news and propaganda. Some answers mentioned that, in a world of instant access to all manner of information online 24/7, perhaps editorial/owner bias in newspapers was less significant than in the past.

Many candidates found framing a counter argument difficult.

Question 9

Examine the view that it is the responsibility of art and literature to challenge society's values.

The small number of candidates who answered this question had a reasonable level of knowledge. The issue of 'responsibility' was not always explicitly addressed, but most answers had some grasp of the ways in which changing and challenging societal views might be facilitated through literature or art, with some examples. Some essays included historical moments as the focus of their argument, supporting this with pieces of art and works of literature that some artists were brave enough to submit for scrutiny. Using the command word 'examine' was appropriate as it opened the question to a wider interpretation.

This question needed candidates to provide examples to support any arguments made, and some answers would have been improved by providing at least one. The key words 'art and literature' were on occasion sidestepped and areas such as poster campaigns were considered. This was of some relevance but should not have formed the main part of an essay. However, there were a few who referenced anti-slavery writers and poets and there was one essay which featured the art of caricature in political cartoons.

It is wise to attempt a question like this only if you have the knowledge of relevant examples to support an argument.

Question 10

The usefulness of household appliances and furniture is more important than their appearance. Discuss.

Of the few responses that were attempted, the candidates managed to tackle the argument of usefulness versus appearance, using some interesting, contemporary examples. Many concluded that it did not matter what something looked like if it worked and lasted a good amount of time.

Several responses tended to focus on new/old items and usability, rather than design and aesthetics, as the question asked. Comments on the comfort of sofas and beds featured frequently, alongside some kitchen appliances. More could have been made of the constant availability of 'upgraded' models of various technological devices, regardless of whether the 'old' one worked well or not.

GENERAL PAPER

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Paper 8021/12
Paper 1
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Key messages

- Keep the introduction focused and concise
- Address the question throughout the response
- Organise and link points and paragraphs in a coherent structure
- Develop the points with explanations and relevant examples
- Adopt an argumentative rather than a descriptive approach
- Analyse and evaluate throughout the response and not just in the conclusion
- Write a conclusion that synthesises the argument and does not simply repeat earlier points
- Use a range of precise vocabulary and idioms appropriate to the context
- Use punctuation correctly and appropriately
- Avoid making numerous cancellations and insertions of words or phrases
- Set time aside to check for errors in grammar, especially in agreement, use of articles and tenses.

General comments

A wide range of performances and approaches were seen. Overall, candidates were able to successfully address the questions set on the question paper. Relatively few candidates failed to offer a relevant response or ran out of time. Most essays were within the recommended word limit though some exceeded this by a great margin and consequently, were repetitive and lacked focus. The majority of responses were communicated with a good standard of written English though many had noticeable errors which might have been corrected if careful proof-reading had occurred.

Most responses had clear introductions but there were still a number that tried to provide extraneous topical information. An effective introduction gets to the point of the question and should not spend time outlining all the points which will be discussed. Generalised introductions are not helpful either and neither are lengthy prologues, often consisting of three or four lengthy paragraphs, that provide background material which is can be tangential to the issue raised in the question. This was most common in **Question 5** with much detail of the causes and effects of climate change.

Quite a few weaker essays showed evidence of poor organisation. The discussions lacked structure as paragraphs did not follow on from one another as connectors such as 'furthermore; 'however'; 'consequently' were absent. It was common to see sentences which were haphazardly placed in paragraphs and not logically linked. At times, examples were quite randomly inserted and not actually related to the point that they followed. Ideas were jumbled and sometimes repeated at various points of the discussion. Some of these problems could be resolved by making a rough plan before commencing on the essay and ensuring that each paragraph has a topic sentence and a clear focus.

Strong responses had a coherent line of argument where the viewpoint was apparent. Many followed the pattern of making a point, supporting it with some development and exemplification and linking this back to the question. Weaker essays often relied on assertion or sweeping statements with generalised examples. Some stated a point of information or offered an opinion but neglected to link it to the question. Others assumed that a link to the question was established by just appending the words of the question. Weaker responses contained incorrect factual information or were vague in the development of ideas.

Exemplification is an essential part of an argument and readers are convinced when there is a range of local and international examples. To be effective, examples should be specific though not necessarily to the point where statistics are cited to one or two decimal points. It is also useful to offer different kinds of examples within a category, for instance, different types of non-academic subjects in **Question 4** or music from different genres in **Question 10**. Anecdotes were sometimes effective but several candidates produced long

personal accounts as in responses to **Question 3** and **4**, which did not really advance their arguments as the question is not about one individual's experience.

The best essays demonstrated full understanding of the question terms, progression in the argument and evaluation throughout the response. These discussions were supported with a range of well-chosen examples and nuanced development. Strong responses maintained an academic register and did not use colloquial terms (kids; whole lot of; gonna).

Quite a number of essays, even the better ones, had inappropriate register at times. There was often a conversational tone and frequent use of contractions such as 'don't' and 'won't'. Other common faults included errors in agreement, especially between subject and pronoun or subject and verb, the omission of aticles, the sequence of tenses and errors in the use of singular and plural nouns. The accuracy in spelling could be improved, with many instances of misspelled common words or spelling the same words inconsistently through the essay.

Punctuation and sentence construction were also areas of difficulty for a significant number of candidates. Comma splicing, the omission of commas and full stops were common faults which affected communication, especially as there were often lengthy sections of writing that were poorly punctuated and required re-reading. Apostrophes were frequently missing from possessive nouns.

Although many candidates attempted to employ a range of vocabulary, there were still a considerable number of essays that were largely unambitious in their word choices and sentence structures.

Legibility of handwriting was also an issue and candidates should keep to the recommended word limit as the more they wrote, the more the handwriting deteriorated and grammatical errors increased. It is also advisable to keep cancellations and insertions of words and phrases to a minimum.

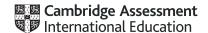## Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This was quite a popular question. Many found it focussed only on 'animal welfare', and raised issues linked to animal abuses, cruel experiments, deforestation and pushing animals towards extinction. Mention of 'rights' would have improved many responses and more attention paid to the connotations of 'a civilised society'. Most responses discussed examples of poor treatment of animals by humans within a broader framework of whether they could be justified. In some cases, this approach resulted in solid, competent answers, but in others, the focus drifted to lists of cases of abuse without any developed consideration of the issues raised by the question. Better answers to this question focused strongly on the issue of animal rights and their place within a civilized society, whether potential or real, but these were relatively few.

Question 2

It was evident that some candidates were keen to share their love of their country but this caused some to lose objectivity in their responses. Weaker answers tended to have vague notions of what 'love for your country' meant; some saw joining the armed forces as a good example of love or obeying the laws and being a trustworthy citizen. Others regarded it from an economic point of view – supporting industry and national enterprise. A number of candidates overlooked that this was a 'your country' question and did not refer clearly to just one country. Good responses to this question considered the value of patriotism and love for the country with reference to specific examples from the present and the past and, sometimes, questioned whether that love was enough for a country to thrive upon or even whether it was beneficial. Weaker responses took a more descriptive approach and wrote about patriotic behaviour without obvious evaluation. A few responses misunderstood the wording of the question and wrote about the strength of the nation in terms of its economic or military capability but did not refer to the contribution of love to this.

Question 3

A large number of candidates found this question accessible, and this resulted in a lot of competent answers, though only a few were truly analytical or evaluative. Candidates often wrote passionately about the value of sport or artistic pursuits and the positive impact they had on people's lives. Some answers clearly felt that hobbies could only be beneficial or even justified if they led somewhere in terms of career advancement or monetary advantage, which tended to move the answer away from a discussion of the essence of 'hobbies', though such answers still tended to be focused and adequately developed in most cases. Weaker responses

did not define exactly what a hobby was and what it was not. Sleeping, shopping and eating were often mistakenly identified as hobbies. Many saw the advantages of a hobby, that it helped people to feel refreshed, motivated, to acquire new skills and socialise. Balance was usually offered through the identification of negative aspects such as distraction from studies and possible addiction or isolation from family and friends. At times, the impact of these negative aspects was exaggerated and made the argument less plausible. There were some very tenuous links to people, usually sportsmen, who made a successful career out of 'a hobby' and some of these links were very assertive and unconvincing.

Question 4

Another popular question, but also one where clear understanding of what constituted 'non-academic' subjects was sometimes an issue, and in what ways schools were providing these or not. It was broadly recognised that different students had different needs, and some saw a contrast between 'academic' subjects and vocational courses. The benefits were easily seen in the relief of boredom, relaxation from stress and pressure, help with socialising, as an aid to good physical and mental health and critical thinking. Clearly, parental pressure to achieve academically was evident, as was the need to provide good grades for further education and for future professional work. These benefits were usually balanced against disadvantages such as the distraction away from academic success and the financial costs to schools and parents of co-curricular programmes.

Question 5

This was a very popular choice with candidates. The main issue with weaker responses was over-descriptiveness of a wide range of environmental issues, from global warming, disposal of waste, air and noise pollution to problems with plastic thus resulting in a loss of focus on bicycles. Candidates found it easy to explain the advantages of bicycles, that they are non-polluting, ease traffic jams and are inexpensive. Disadvantages were sometimes overlooked, but usually involved restrictions for long distances and carrying goods, usability issues for the elderly or infirm, and the impact of bicycle manufacturing processes on the environment. Better answers saw that there were problems in the environment which could not be addressed by the increased use of bicycles alone, for instance, deforestation, overfishing or a range of natural disasters.
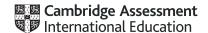
Less successful answers presented generalized discussions about environmental damage or the general benefits of cycling, only occasionally touching on their impact on the environment.

Question 6

This question worked very well in terms of accessibility. Candidates with a mathematical background were able to generate numerous examples and discuss them in terms of their importance to everyday life, while those without such a background were still able to discuss in general terms many practical uses of mathematics. Although there were very few weak answers, there were also very few analytical or evaluative answers. Candidates were listing all the uses of Maths that they could think of, including mundane practices like shopping or running day-to-day family life and assuming that such a catalogue on its own would demonstrate the importance of Maths. Better responses looked at different aspects of mathematics, such as calculus, geometry, statistics, probability and how these are important in areas as varied as Science, Music and Technology.

Question 7

This question required specific knowledge of methods of surveillance as well as the understanding of how it applied to their country. Some candidates produced very good answers to this question, critically evaluating the approach to surveillance of their own government and the motives for conducting surveillance. Others were competent but not evaluative, contrasting the stated purpose of such surveillance (usually to protect the population or reduce criminal activity) with the potential for a 'slippery slope' or undesirable consequences in terms of privacy. Candidates gave examples of electronic surveillance as well as CCTV surveillance. Many candidates struggled to maintain a focus on 'your country' or drifted into a discussion of wider technology, and lost sight of issues connected with 'rights'. Weaker answers either did not understand the nature of surveillance or equated it with the actions of companies or organisations rather than the state.

Question 8

This question was rarely attempted and more successful essays selected good examples of poetry and books from their country that influenced the people. These were often works from different eras that were politically important, for instance, urging people to fight for independence or literature of religious significance for teaching people moral values. The performance of candidates on this question was divided into well-informed, detailed responses and responses which were generalised and had a passing knowledge of local literature.

Question 9

As with questions about advertising on past papers, many candidates focused on the general benefits and drawbacks of advertising and only the very best answers maintained a strong focus on the issue of their truthfulness and the potential benefits or otherwise of stricter regulations. Other responses tended to move in and out of focus, describing the purpose of advertising with occasional reference to regulatory matters. Analysis of specific advertisements was hard to come by and too often, generalised assertions took over, or focused on celebrity branding of goods and how misleading that could be. Pinpointing specific regulations was also a problem. There was much discussion of the pressures on businesses to increase sales, and the lax controls on platforms like social media.

Question 10

Responses to music questions tend to be descriptive and feature accounts of the candidate's favourite artists and this was the case here. The best answers maintained a strong focus on the issue of music reflecting society and there were a number of such answers. Other responses wrote generally about music and sometimes added comments regarding society but showed little development in terms of a discussion of the issue. Weaker answers either ignored the issue of society altogether or neglected to look at specific examples of artists or works. Some superficial responses were seen where candidates discussed their attraction to specific groups or performers or where the general features of music were described, forgetting the 'reflects society' requirement. Some candidates were able to look in detail at facets of music which reflected religious ritual and tradition or which highlighted specific ethnic groups and how music expressed their cultural traditions. Social issues like racism, or protests against aspects of society were sometimes brought up, with reference to particular pieces of music and were very informative. A few candidates misunderstood the question and wrote extensively on how society is influenced by music instead of how music reflects society.

GENERAL PAPER

| Paper 8021/13 |
| Paper 1 |

Key messages

*   Keep introductions concise, relevant, and try not to simply repeat the question
*   Pay close attention to the wording of the chosen question, the key words, not just the topic
*   Maintain an academic register; avoid an informal conversational style
*   Conclusions should do more than summarise the points already made
*   The best conclusions suggest that further debate might be needed
*   Try to provide evidence to support opinions and statements
*   Use only examples that support and develop ideas
*   Paragraphs can be used to help to separate points and ideas
*   Evaluation and assessment are necessary components of an essay
*   Essays which have clear evaluation are more able to access the marks in the higher levels
*   Essays that aim for a broad perspective on a topic are more likely to score well than those adopting a narrower approach
*   Attempt to write a full essay of 600 words or more

General comments

When faced with which question to attempt, candidates should ask themselves what they really know and not go for a less demanding option or the question that they have easy opinions about. Candidates would be better advised to choose the question they would like to answer because the topic both sparks their interest and challenges them.

It is important to try to use correct linking words, such as moreover, furthermore, therefore, on the other hand, instead of phrases like: *For starters; Moving on; Continuing on; To add on*. Mechanical phrases such as these diminish the effect of what follows. Paragraphs should be seamlessly linked and a way of doing that is to repeat a word or refer to an idea or short phrase that occurs towards the end of the preceding paragraph in the opening sentence of the next paragraph. Read any well-written essay and you will see these features time and time again. Time spent on identifying how accomplished writers link their paragraphs would be time well spent.

It is tempting to use contractions, e.g. *aren't, don't, didn't, wouldn't, can't, isn't, it's* and *I've*, among others to save time, these are too informal for an essay and the full wording should be used. Also, essays should avoid using vocabulary that is too informal, e.g. *kids, to do stuff, off of*. The presence of terms such as 'things' or 'stuff' also reduce the quality of an essay.

The use of conversational English was the most obvious feature of many essays, even those that reached the higher levels in AO1 and AO2 by applying meaningful examples and developing a sound argument. Teachers always emphasise the importance of clear, accurate expression. In this examination AO3, use of language, is the primary assessment objective.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Assess the impact of unrestricted importing and exporting of goods and services between countries.

There were too few responses to this question to give a meaningful report on it.

Question 2

To what extent do flags unify or divide people?

Responses to this question showed a good engagement with the topic. The most successful responses examined the symbolism used on flags and the meanings conveyed. In the unifying nature of flags one candidate referred to the Rainbow Flag, the flag of the European Union and both the Mexican and American flags which in this case represented the candidate's heritage. Another candidate gave more attention to how some flags represent allegiances that are associated with exceptionalism and division such as the flag of Nazi Germany and the Confederate flag in the USA. All the attempts at this question were interesting; in some cases, exploiting the full range of the rich and varied examples that the question holds could have improved many of the responses.

Question 3

Men and women who play the same sport should receive equal pay. Discuss.

The strongest responses to this question were well informed and used clear exemplification to back up their arguments, avoiding the pitfalls of relying on gender stereotypes and assumptions. It was a question which allowed all abilities to write using their own knowledge and experience. Successful responses considered the complexity of the issues involved and showed respect for all those who play sport to the best level of their ability. These answers contrasted personal effort and determination with issues beyond the control of the individual such as contract structure, sponsorship, viewer ratings, and other inevitable disparities in remuneration often illustrated by reference to various superstars. A good example of evaluation seen was: '*I am a firm believer in gender equality but there are differences between individual and collective sports' activities. Moreover, viewer interest determines the amount of money that the athletes get.*' There is clear evaluation here, the reference to team and individual sports and recognition of economic realities. The statement starts with an opinion and then adds nuance or evaluation.

Question 4

As time passes, the world will end up with too much water. Examine this statement.

Most of the responses to this question considered the implications of climate change such as rising sea levels and destruction of habitats. Some answers would have been improved by considering the impacts of too little water (drought) compared to too much (flooding) as this question needed to consider water shortage as well as overabundance of water.

Question 5

Security cameras are essential to keep our towns and cities safe. To what extent do you agree?

Many of the responses to this question agreed with the statement. The stronger responses went on to consider the matter of 'extent'. Weaker responses made general reference to maintenance costs and camera reliability. Fuller answers offered examples of their efficacy in different countries and cities. The most thoughtful responses concerned themselves with issues around privacy and other ways of keeping our towns and cities safe, such as deploying more police and devoting more time in education settings to honesty and good citizenship. Stronger answers included examples of cameras where they assist in the tracing of missing persons and the arrest of dangerous criminals. Another useful example that was referred to was concerned with road safety and how surveillance might be a threat to mental health.

Question 6

To what extent has the use of Mathematics positively changed the world we live in?

There were too few responses to this question to give a meaningful report on it.

Question 7

Parks and other green spaces in cities are unnecessary. Discuss.

There were too few responses to this question to give a meaningful report on it.

Question 8

To what extent does your country's heritage restrict its development in the modern world?

The strongest responses to this 'your country' question were balanced, thoughtful and offered the reader an insight into the country concerned. They showed how folklore, dance, art and music, gave their chosen countries their distinctiveness. The best essays were evaluative as they considered both negative and positive aspects of heritage, the influence both enriching and constricting of religion in the formation of attitudes, and how rural and urban outlooks are often different.

Question 9

Films and live performances based on books can never replace the joy of reading. Discuss.

Commonly responses to this question acknowledged the difficulty of translating a book of some length into the usual duration of a film or live performance. Examples ranged from Shakespeare's plays, the novels of Tolkien and Rowling, to the well-known tales Cinderella and Sleeping Beauty. These interesting and thoughtful essays stressed the importance of the imagination in responding to the details and relationships that give books depth and colour.

Question 10

Assess the view that literature from the past has no relevance to modern life.

Examples from the best responses included the mention of the timelessness of Shakespeare's plays, the Diary of Ann Frank, 'Hard Times' by Charles Dickens; all of these were meaningfully referred to. None suggested that any literature from the past may have no relevance to modern life!

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Paper 8021/21
Paper 2

Key messages

*   It is highly recommended that if a question does not instruct the candidate to write a response in their own words or within a certain word limit, candidates copy the relevant wording from the material. Responses in own words to certain questions (for example, **2(a), 2(b)**, **2(d)** and **2(e)**), were frequently not precise enough to gain credit.
*   In **1(b)**, regarding the standard of written English, some responses exhibited a strong command of the language, along with good organisational and analytical skills. These candidates used connectives and conjunctions in their answers, so that their responses were structured in such a way that the factors mentioned were signposted clearly as advantages or a disadvantage. In addition, their responses were nuanced, gaining credit by using modal verbs (for example, 'might', 'might not', 'could' and 'could not'); by employing constructions such as 'It seems as if…', 'He would be more likely to be interested in…' and 'Her tone suggests…', and by incorporating words such as 'possibly' and 'potentially'. Through these approach responses that were too generalised could have been improved.
*   Some candidates wrote more than was allowed in **1(a)**, **1(c)**, **1(d)** and/or **2(c)**. One of the key skills examined on this paper is the ability to compose succinct responses, resulting in material appearing after the word limit not gaining credit. It is highly recommended that a candidate does not include an introduction or repeat the question as part of their response.
*   In **2(b)(i)**, some candidates copied words and phrases from the Insert, placing them in quotation marks. However, when responding to questions requiring the use of the candidate's own words, words and phrases that are copied from the material cannot be credited even when the candidate acknowledges and attributes them by placing them in quotation marks.
*   It is crucial that candidates read the questions carefully and respond to the requirements or focus of each question. For example, in **1(b),** candidates attaining Level 4 included a creditworthy disadvantage in their response as directed. On the other hand, there were candidates who did not include a disadvantage in their response. In **1(b), 1(c)** and **1(d)**, there were candidates who ignored the instruction to explain why a certain installation might be chosen without referring to the other two installations. For example, in **1(b)** a few candidates provided reasons why two or all three of the installations would be chosen by Carlo, while some candidates explained the disadvantages of the other two installations that would lead to Lift Off being chosen by Carlo. In **1(f)**, candidates gaining credit described the characters of the three protagonists from the tone of their voice alone as required, whilst weaker responses either explained the outcomes the three protagonists desired for Hafrock Hall or simply quoted their conversation. In **Questions 2(a)** to **2(e)**, candidates gaining credit restricted their answers to information located in the material in *Section B*, as these questions did not ask candidates to answer using their own opinions or knowledge.
*   It is essential that candidates note the section of material that they have been directed to by the question. In **1(e)**, responses gaining credit cited a creator's quote as directed. Weaker responses offered something in the material said by Anja or Ingrid.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a)   Candidates gaining the most credit noted the word limit and offered concise responses containing precise details, such as 'it has an older demographic that tends to visit only once', which contained two creditworthy points in very few words. Weaker responses cited either vague points, such as 'deteriorating' without referring to what was deteriorating, or factually incorrect points, such as the hall having 'no visitors'.

(b)   Higher level responses exhibited the ability to interpret the evidence offered in the material and read between the lines to show understanding of the various aspects of Carlo's situation and how they linked to his likely choice of Lift Off. In addition, such candidates understood that the most convincing responses are nuanced. Candidates achieving high marks gathered pieces of information from across the material and put them together to form cogent arguments. These candidates offered a consideration that had been developed, whether by linking two pieces of information from different sections of the material or by providing an explanation, thereby highlighting the ability to present sustained and relevant analysis. For example, 'Lift Off would take the least amount of time (only a month) to install and this is an advantage to Carlo because it will be the quickest way to boost the attraction of Hafrock Hall and bring in new visitors' (with this candidate also showing an excellent command of superlatives) and 'This attraction might not be successful in gaining many young visitors as many young people want to post pictures online and might not be interested in giant swans' (with this candidate also using nuance to good effect).

Valid points beyond the mark scheme seen included candidates offering the idea that a laser show in the evening might scare away the birds or linking in some way to Carlo being a naturalist to the swans being made of recycled materials.

Some candidates would have gained more credit if they had explained both the advantages and one disadvantage as instructed, thus ensuring that they were offering a balanced response by including a disadvantage. Some candidates gave a creditworthy disadvantage, but then either did not explain why it would be a problem or developed the disadvantage with a mitigation as to why it would not be an issue. A few candidates communicated more disadvantages than advantages.

Some candidates cited random facts in their responses without any development and/or indication as to whether they were advantages or a disadvantage, so that their answer was then a narrative rather than an analysis.

Weaker responses were characterised by the repetition of considerations and/or a consideration and its development being separated from each other in the answer, thus affecting the clarity and fluency of the response. In addition, there were candidates who might have gained more credit if they had not offered vague considerations with no explanation (for example, 'it has a pleasing aesthetic of giant swans'), or considerations that were incorrect or not convincing (for example, that they would get a grant from the Art Trust for Lift Off, Lift Off was the most interactive installation, Lift Off would have the most negative impact on Hafrock Hall or that the bird calls were artificial so Carlo would not like them).

(c)   Candidates gaining the most credit noted the word limit and offered succinct responses, such as 'It seems as if it would be the most lucrative as it would catch people's eyes…' and 'It would likely be a good place to take photos which will later be online'.

Some candidates could have gained more credit by following the question rubric more closely and offered an explanation instead of a description of the installation.

(d)   Candidates scoring well followed the instruction regarding the word limit and offered concise answers, such as 'They will receive grants as the creator lives 10 km away…' and 'Visitors will walk through all of the gardens…'. Valid points beyond the mark scheme included the ideas that, with the creator living so close by, the estate and the creator could easily work closely together or it would be easier to liaise with the estate if the installation needed to be repaired.

Some candidates could have scored higher if they had offered an explanation, as directed in the question, rather than only a description of the installation. Some candidates cited general points that could apply to all three of the installations. A few candidates confused the '*sculpture trail*' mentioned by Anja with the '*sensory trail*' in Exploring The Senses and so cited '*doubling their visitor numbers*' as a justification.

(e)   Candidates gaining the most credit selected the correct quote and justified their choice using excellent vocabulary, such as 'this aligns with…', 'Carlo concurs…', '…is the common thread between the two' and '…resonates more with Carlo'.

Weaker responses citing the other creators' quotes did not note that one did not mind if their installation ended up '*in an urban environment*' and that the other thought that nature needed '*some colour and music in it*', neither of which matched Carlo's attitude towards nature.

(f) Candidates scoring highly followed the instruction to describe the characters from only their tone and showed emotional intelligence in their responses, employing excellent vocabulary. For example, in **(i)**, many candidates understood Anja's tone and described her as 'a critical thinker who analyses evidence', as somebody who 'relies on facts instead of emotions', or as somebody who 'is pragmatic and fact-oriented'. In **(ii)**, a few candidates understood the meaning of '*subdued*' in this context and described Carlo as being 'submissive', seeming 'reluctant' or 'feeling defeated' by the situation in which he finds himself. In **(iii)**, some candidates realised that Ingrid's tone meant that she 'is exasperated by the continuous debate' or that she 'has clearly been combatting his resistance to the estate for a long time, yet has persisted'.

Common misunderstandings seen included the following: candidates confusing Anja and Ingrid and therefore muddling their characters; '*matter-of-fact*' taken to mean 'bossy'; '*subdued*' taken to mean 'calm'; '*long-suffering*' taken to mean 'long been in pain' or 'very sad'. A few candidates provided a description of the lives of the characters (for example, 'wears brown clothes', 'unhappily married' or 'socially busy').

Section B

Question 2

(a) Candidates gaining credit in both **(i)** and **(ii)** located the correct responses and quoted all of the relevant details from the material.

A few candidates offered their own opinions, incomplete answers (for example, species extinction) or answers that were in their own words but too vague to be creditworthy.

(b) In **(i)**, candidates most often gained credit for bullet points three, four and/or five in the mark scheme: for example, 'cultivate produce that resembled the taste and culture of the vegetables she ate as a child' and 'She missed the taste of the greens she grew up eating.'

Many candidates lifted key words and/or phrases from the material and interspersed them with a few of their own words, thereby limiting the credit they could gain after the lifted material had been disregarded. Some candidates offered points in their own words that were too vague or were irrelevant to the question being asked (for example, citing random facts from other parts of *Section B*).

In **(ii)** and **(iii)**, many candidates located the correct answers and quoted all of the relevant details found in the material.

Some candidates cited points that were too vague or incorrect, especially those responding in their own words when not asked to do so in the question (for example, referring to 'older people' instead of '*village elders*' or 'people' instead of *local people*'; stating simply that 'she observed', without any reference to being '*quiet*' as well, and, finally, stating that she worked out the solutions herself rather than quoting '*the answers emerge on their own*' from the material), while others offered points that were irrelevant to the question being asked (for example, providing random facts from other parts of **Section B***).*

(c) The most commonly cited points that gained credit within the word limit included the EU ban on shallow water fishing, the importance of fishing as a source of food and income, villagers having to translate their local language, (into a form) understood by officials, and (their language) hardly ever been written down.

Common misunderstandings seen included the following: a few candidates thought that it was the Swedish government that was banning shallow water fishing, some thought that all types of fishing had been banned and a few were confused regarding the nationality of the government officials.

(d) Many candidates gained credit by locating the correct response and quoting all of the relevant details from the material.

Weaker responses were characterised by either vague answers (for example, passed a Sacred Forest Law) or incorrect ones (for example, citing the formation of a farming co-operative or random quotes from other parts of **Section B**).

(e) Candidates scoring highly on this question noted the instruction to identify Zaza's problems and his solutions to these problems, located the correct information in the material and quoted all the relevant details.

Some candidates would have gained more credit if they had not provided their own solutions to Zaza's problems. Some candidates offered responses that were too vague (for example, stating either that his trade was limited but not giving the reason why or that he only had a bicycle but not mentioning that it limited his trade), factually incorrect (for example, stating that every spring he borrows one truck) or irrelevant (for example, citing information from another part of the material).

(f) Creditworthy synonyms beyond the mark scheme were seen: for example, 'statements of disapproval' for '*protestations*', and '**to regrow**' for '*to regenerate*'. Many candidates correctly offered 'caretakers' for '*custodians*'.

There are four ways candidates could have gained more credit. It is crucial that candidates offer the same grammatical form as in the question (e.g. 'objection' is not the correct grammatical form to replace '*protestations'*); offer only one synonym per question; the synonym has the same meaning as the words or phrases as they are used in the material and ensure that the synonym provided matches exactly the original word or phrase (e.g. the synonym should match *'protestations*' only, rather than encompass the whole idea of '*Despite her family's protestations*').

(g) Creditworthy sentences seen included the following: 'Going against the protestations of the exam invigilator, she continued to doodle on her exam paper' and 'The war-torn country began to regenerate as foreign loans boosted the economy'.

It is essential that candidates do the following to gain credit in this question: ensure that the subject matter is not the same as in the material (for example, by not linking '*protestations*' with finding a better job or '*to regenerate*' with rainforests); offer a sentence that illustrates the meaning of the word or phrase as used in the material (for example, by not offering a sentence illustrating the idea of protests in **(i)** or cleaners in **(iii)**); check that the exact meaning of the word or phrase is clearly defined in the sentence given; use the same grammatical form in their sentence (for example, '*protestations*' must be used rather than 'protestation', '*to regenerate*' rather than 'regenerated' and '*custodians*' rather than 'custodian'); respond with only one sentence per word and, finally, use the three words or phrases given in the question rather than their own three synonyms.

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Key messages

It is essential for candidates to read the questions, and the material, very carefully before beginning to write any answer. In this way, they should be absolutely clear as to what they need to do to gain maximum marks in a given question. For example, they should identify:

- how many points or ideas to offer, whether specified or implicit in the available marks
- whether the points should simply be located and identified, or explained and developed
- whether or not they can use the same language found the material, or should attempt to render the ideas in their own words
- whether or not a word limit is in place, so their response needs to be succinct in conveying the precision of the points required.

General comments

Both **Sections A** and **B** seemed to be well understood by the majority of candidates, while **Section A**, in particular, appeared to engage their interest and stimulate developed responses to the longer, higher-tariff questions. Rubric infringements and blank response areas were not common. Most candidates were able to communicate information in written English clearly enough to be understood, and organised their work in the answer spaces provided, with most responses offering the correct number of points for the marks available in respective questions. Mistakes were sometimes made in locating and identifying the necessary ideas from the appropriate section of the material. Some responses found difficulty in explaining and communicating the points with sufficient focus, detail and precision, or in line with the rubric of particular questions, such as word limits and own words. Candidates appeared to understand what was required in each question type, although many found the final language exercises in **Section B** to be a challenge (please see detail below).

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Most of the candidates found the subject matter (the selection of one of two music acts to perform at the end-of-year entertainment for college leavers) engaging and clear, in so far as they were able to identify key points in favour of each of the two acts, as well as respond to the other questions. A common misunderstanding included confusing the name of the college (Giglow College) with one of the groups (Going for Giglow), while some candidates thought that the group's 'enough material' in Additional Information point 8 referred to their equipment, rather than to their repertoire.

(a) While most candidates were able to identify the relevant point successfully, that Kalia had named the wrong group when reporting the apparent wishes of the candidates, some candidates confused the focus of **1a** with that of **1b**. The idea of being *right to give fellow candidates a chance* to perform was a common distractor, as was the likelihood of IndiGoGothik's *becoming famous*. Some responses identified the 'untrue' claim (that *lots of candidates* wanted Going for Giglow to perform) but did not offer the real information (from Additional Information, point 19) as development or justification.

(b) Those responses which did not repeat or substitute the ideas from **1a** were generally able to pick up that Kalia's failure to mention her desire to join Going for Giglow (and her imminent audition)

was unfair. The majority of correct answers went on to state that this *vested interest* made her *biased/impartial/too likely to support the group*. Distractors included other negatives of Going for Giglow, such as their previous technical difficulties or amateur status, when there was no clear reason why Kalia should have mentioned these and it was apparent that the other committee members would, or could, already have known these facts.

(c)   Most candidates correctly identified Tove as the best informed, on the basis of being the sole committee member to have seen both acts perform live. A distractor for choosing Tove here was his role as *Manager of College Finances*, which might well have influenced his decision (since one group proposed playing for free and the other was expensive) but did not quite address the question's central issue of 'best informed'. Occasional answers cited Pen, or more than one committee member, but could still gain credit for the correct reason, if stated.

(d)   Three pieces of irrelevant information were sought, so it was essential to select features from the Additional Information which would be the same whichever group performed, i.e. would not influence the decision regarding which act to select. Most candidates seemed able to identify at least one or two of the three valid answers (points 4, 15 and 20), with the former being the most common omission. A strong distractor here was point 9 but it was clear that, in conjunction with point 16, the prior impact of the pressure of fame, now apparently imminent again, could well be relevant to the likely quality of the group's performance, or even that band member's non-appearance. Point 14 was also sometimes cited as irrelevant but all issues linked to cost and budget would be considered, since IndiGoGothik would be expensive and Going for Giglow free of charge.

(e)   This levels-marked question required candidates to think logically and to explain, develop and link ideas from different parts of the material to make a case for selecting Going for Giglow, while also offering one disadvantage, i.e. some balance. Most candidates did not find it difficult to come up with advantages here, if sometimes lacking links or developments. These included the band's declaration that *they will do it for free* (developed with any of the references to cost, budget, pressure to raise funds, Tove's financial concerns and the wish to keep ticket prices low), the ability to perform for an hour (being likely to engage the college students for longer), the fact that they are college students (so may know their audience, e.g. *they have an insider's view on which songs/genres would be a hit with the candidates*, and/or the venue, and be favoured by the principal, who makes the final decision and likes to promote student interests), and their recent offers of slots to play live outside the college environment, at the outdoor concert and the regular venue (which could suggest quality and a chance to see them while still an up-and-coming act). There was some unconvincing use of their commercial-style pop as likely to appeal to the college students, which did not follow from the apparent demand (point 19) for IndiGoGothik, a rock outfit. Another vague claim related to their apparent talent and ability but this would be true of both acts, and arguably more so of IndiGoGothik, so could only be credited when linked to Tove having made this claim, sometimes developed with the idea of his having some authority.

Advantages needed to be logical in comparison with the other group, so citing Going for Giglow's six months' experience as positive was not valid, since IndiGoGothik had been playing together for three years.

Balance was absent in some responses but was most often found in the technical difficulties at Going for Giglow's last performance, which could be repeated at the leavers' event and would reinforce their amateur status or disappoint the audience, or that having formed only six months previously meaning they may lack the experience for such an important event or to perform for a whole hour. Less successful development tended to offer mitigation, for example that these technical problems might have been fixed by now, or did not matter, given they were playing for free. Some responses used the band's previous performances at the college negatively, to suggest that students might prefer something new or be bored with them already, or that it would be less special or memorable for the leavers' event, and this was a successful approach.

As ever with this style of question, it was not acceptable to argue the case for Going for Giglow by stating the negatives of IndiGoGothik (for example, that candidates might be disappointed as they seemed mainly to prefer IndiGoGothik). The better answers made use of nuanced comment and modal verbs to suggest reasons and developments, rather than asserting, e.g. *Going for Giglow may be becoming more proficient and polished, given their regular slot from next month at a local venue and the invitation to play at a forthcoming prestigious local event... which might encourage*

more candidates to attend the event./Their previous technical difficulties <u>suggest</u> that they are unreliable and <u>may</u> even delay the start of the show.

(f) Three developed points were sought in this question (two disadvantages and one advantage) within the 60-word limit, so precision was important. Candidates are advised not to repeat the question stem or to offer any sort of introduction in such questions, as it 'wastes words' and risks potentially creditworthy material appearing after the word count and therefore not being rewarded. Again, it was not possible to argue by 'reversing' points relating solely to the other act, although comparatives were acceptable, nor to cite advantages and disadvantages which were more true of the alternative act.

Most responses made reference to the relatively high cost of hiring IndiGoGothik, given the college's budget for the event. (There was some lack of logic in presenting their reduced fees for college events as an advantage, however, since Going for Giglow would be free.) The short 30-minute set was also mentioned, though often conflated within the reference to cost. The need for notice was frequently cited but candidates tended to rely on the existing development (from the material) rather than, for example, explaining that availability might be an issue, especially if the principal delayed her decision. (The committee was deciding 'today' so any reference to these three individuals needing to rush their decision was inaccurate.) IndiGoGothik not being college students and thus not being favoured by the principal also appeared in a number of answers. Here, there was occasional misunderstanding of the phrase 'promote the interests of her students', as it was taken to mean she would want the most popular band to play, rather than offering the slot to college members. The wishes of the students, who were mostly excited to see IndiGoGothik play there, and the band's relatively higher level of fame (their recent award, one member having previously starred in a boy band and the manager's claims) were also popular advantages cited.

(g) This open question invited candidates to bring their own ideas and experience of music to bear on the quotation from U2's Bono. Most candidates engaged with this sufficiently for the two available marks, making reference to changing moods, having wide reach and impact, crossing language barriers, motivating people and bringing people together in a common cause, for example. However, there was some reliance on repetition in place of development or a fresh point, and a surprising lack of examples being offered, for instance of protest music or songs/artists who unify, inspire and raise awareness through their lyrics. Relatively few candidates challenged the claim but some did offer balance, recognised the limits of music and/or suggested that other influences might be more powerful in effecting change.

Section B

Question 2

While much of the material for ***Section B*** seemed to have been understood, candidates sometimes found it difficult to locate the appropriate information required for each question. Candidates tended to perform quite well on those with a word limit (**2di** and **2f**).0 More challenging questions were those which necessitated the use of own words to convey information (**2ei** especially, and **2eii**). Candidates tended to be less successful in ***Section B*** than in ***Section A***, especially with regard to the necessary precision for the language identification **(2b)** and manipulation (**2g** and **2h**) questions.

(a) The word 'magnificent' in the question stem pointed to the short opening paragraph, where the three creditworthy responses were found. Precision was needed to score full marks in this location question; to <u>stop</u> (destructive marble) <u>mining</u>, repopulate <u>abandoned</u> villages, and build an <u>alternative</u> economy. Credit was given, for the first of these points, if candidates selected the campaign for the closure of the quarries, and most candidates who rendered that idea in those terms went on to use other parts of that same later paragraph, and so gained no further credit.

(b) (i) These three sub-questions required the location of synonyms for the given terms from within the material. Some candidates left one or more of these three response areas blank or simply offered terms from an entirely different part of the material and with a different meaning. It was important not to include too many words surrounding the exact ones sought but this was not generally an issue for candidates who correctly identified 'there was (always) a pull', since this phrase was in inverted commas in the material.

(ii) The location of 'flashmobs', using the explanation offered in the question stem, proved easier than **2bi**, although *campaign* was a common distractor. This was the one of the three parts of **2b** which candidates found least challenging.

(iii) This was reasonably straightforward among the three sub-questions in **2b**, with more candidates than not correctly locating and supplying '(It's a) win-win situation'.

(c) Most candidates were able to identify the loss of *tourism* and *gastronomy*, while the third point, that 'people do not work <u>and</u> live here any longer' sometimes omitted one element and/or lacked precision, for example *loss of people*. A number of responses also included the idea of 'the quarries had started to excavate more and more', from earlier in the paragraph, which was incorrect, as this was not something which was 'missing'. Later points from the section on Eros Tetti and the 'mountains' lost culture' (subtly different from what he personally had noticed to be 'missing' from 'mountain life') were sometimes distractors. This may have been because the question was worth three marks and there were three concepts listed together here too; 'the natural resources, the values, people's spirit'.

(d)(i) Despite the requirement to answer and convey three distinct points in only about 30 words, this question proved quite accessible, with differentiation mostly coming from the location of the appropriate section of the material and the level of precision communicated. The most common reason for answers not gaining all three marks here was not, in fact, exceeding the word count. There was, however, some omission of detail, for example the reference to a 'mountain economy', or the 'local' angle in either the integration or the training points, with the 'businesses' sometimes also not featuring in connection with training. Where candidates did not shorten the 'restaurants, farms and enterprises' to just the latter, or more generally to 'businesses', they sometimes did not complete that point within the required number of words. Relatively few candidates mentioned the funding provided by the Italian government so tended to score from the other three valid points. Some candidates were confused by the later reference in the material to Yusupha Darboe's having been found a job by, but not with, the same Odissea Cooperative and so cited features of that work instead, which did not, therefore, answer the question.

(ii) Most candidates attempted to render the idea of ample resources, which could also be gained by listing all five of those mentioned in the material, and that of increased tourism, though the potential for further growth there was sometimes a distractor. Since there was no requirement for own words or to write within a certain number of words, it was necessary to convey the precise ideas ('lots of' resources and 'growing' tourism), rather than simply *resources* or *tourism*. Very few candidates seemed to pick out the points regarding the young people and how they cared passionately for the place, believing they can succeed. Where they did so, it was acceptable to present this as a quotation, as it had appeared in the material, rather than in the third person.

(e)(i) The first of the 'own words' questions proved challenging, even to candidates who performed very well on other questions on this paper, and even when permitting the re-use, from the material, of the terms 'crops', and also 'mountain(s)' (as a noun), 'taste' (as a noun) and 'valley' (as an adjective), according to the principle of these questions, that technical terms and those difficult to re-word should not be specifically reworded for credit to be earned. Many candidates did not gain either mark available, from the five possible points to be communicated, the most common one to gain credit being the idea of crops 'unique' to the mountainous region. Successful examples of this were: *The crops grown there have varieties that can only be found in the mountains./Crops are one of a kind in these mountains./Vegetation that cannot be mimicked in any other place.* Distractors, from the wrong part of the material, included the earlier and later parts of the same paragraph, and the following one.

(ii) Also requiring the use of 'own words', and even permitting the re-use of the first-person verb forms in the material in the third person, as well as 'cities' and 'refugees', and 'village' (as a noun) and 'mountain' (as an adjective), this question proved very challenging. The most common points to gain credit were those relating to refugees living in cities and believing there would be more work there. Successful examples included: *… lured to city areas* (no sense of 'living' there) *for vast employment opportunities./Most refugees reside in cities in hopes of better career opportunities.* (2) The sense of place was often missing from attempts at the remaining points, once copied words and phrases had been discounted. A successful example was: *He experiences freedom there* (having previously mentioned the mountains/village). An excellent response which conveyed four of the five possible points, so more than needed for the full three marks, was: *Most refugees would want to live in urban areas* (1) *because they think that there are more job opportunities there.* (1)

However, Yusupha likes living in a rural area, (1) *where he has nothing imposed on him.* (1) Some candidates focused on the section of the material relating to Darboe's life prior to coming to Italy, or his statements relating to the job he now does, instead of the final paragraph in the relevant section.

(f)   This question posed a greater challenge to candidates for keeping to the word limit (20 words, in this case) than **2di**, while still offering the necessary points with sufficient precision, The reference to training was important, both for the programme referenced and for the idea of jobs no longer done by people/ancient skills. *Integration* and *training* were the most common points credited. Some focused on activities the immigrant workers performed for Stefano Bresciani, which did not answer the question.

(g) (i)   Questions which necessitate the provision of synonyms for words or phrases adopt several key principles. Only the first answer can gain credit, if more than one is offered. Furthermore, both the accuracy of meaning and consistency of grammatical form must be retained. If, for example, a noun is presented, then a noun is also sought in the response. It should, therefore, be possible to substitute the given word or phrase with the new one, in the same place in the material, and for the sentence to convey the same meaning and still be grammatically sound. Candidates found the adjective 'nostalgic' difficult to render as a single adjective (rather than the noun 'nostalgia', e.g. *a feeling of reminiscing on the past* or *a feel-good emotion experienced to do with one's past or memories*) but some credit could be gained using formulations such as *reminiscing, reminiscent* or *remembering the past fondly*. While *emotional* alone was too vague, *emotional for the past* was an acceptable response. The terms *wistful* and *evocative (of the past)* were seldom seen.

(ii)   Candidates found this more straightforward than **2gi**, offering such synonyms as *to look after, to care for, to take care of* and *to cultivate*. While *to focus* was deemed too vague to credit, benefit of the doubt could be given to *to pay attention to*, and while *to grow* was not a synonym, *to grow and care for* was an acceptable response.

(h) (i)   As with the questions in the style of **2g**, the related ones in **2h** are assessed with the same general principles applicable in each series. Once again, the same grammatical form must be used, and in a context different from the one in which the word or phrase has been used in the material. There should be a single sentence only and the meaning of the given term should be absolutely clear in the context of the new sentence. Some successful examples included: *The train set made me feel nostalgic as I dreamt of a childhood that I could not go back to./My mum had lived in Singapore her whole life so whenever she smelled her favourite food from there she often said she felt nostalgic./He felt nostalgic when he saw his kids listen to stories near the campfire, remembering how he too used to do it long ago.* While **2gi** had proved more challenging than **2gii**, answers to **2hi** were more commonly correct than those to **2hii**.

(ii)   A number of candidates 'recycled' the context of the material, i.e. related their sentence to cultivation of plants, so did not gain the mark. There was also some confusion with 'tend to' in the sense of what one usually does, which was a distractor here. Better examples included: *The nurse, on his first shift, was told to tend to the burn scars of a patient./During war, there are often not enough medics to tend to the wounded soldiers./When I was six, I fell and got hurt while playing outside, so my mother made sure to tend to the wound immediately in order to avoid infections.*

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8021/23
Paper 2

Key messages

The material in the Insert is the basis on which candidates should answer the questions. Therefore, it is very important that candidates read the material carefully before starting to write their answers. Whilst some questions may occasionally require candidates to answer from their own knowledge and experience, candidates are expected to focus their answers on the material given in *Section A* and *Section B*.

Candidates should read the rubric for each question carefully; clear instructions are given regarding use of own words and word limits.

The paper assesses a range of skills including the ability to develop extended answers, the ability to write concisely and the ability to write in own words using clear English. The ability to write concisely is an important skill: if a candidate writes beyond an imposed word limit, this part of the answer will not be marked and therefore will not gain any credit, no matter how good it is. Future candidates would benefit from a range of opportunities to support writing concisely within a given word limit in preparation for the exam.

In questions where a word limit was imposed, some candidates wrote much more than was allowed. When word limits were quite short (for example 30 words), it was clear to see that a response was too long. In the question with a 80-word limit, candidates sometimes repeated back the question at the beginning of their response, wasting some of the words they could have used to gain credit. In some other cases, candidates did not take advantage of the 80-word limit and wrote much less than this, missing the opportunity to give a full answer. Where applicable, the word limit is specified in the question rubric and candidates should use this as their guide when answering.

There will always be questions when candidates are required, by the rubric, to answer using their own words; if they simply identify and lift a relevant portion of the text, little credit can be awarded. Candidates should assume that all but very technical language, which cannot be easily translated, should be written in their own words. Future candidates would benefit from plenty of opportunity to practice writing extracts of a text in their own words to prepare well for the exam.

General comments

Most candidates engaged with the material and found it mostly accessible. The majority of candidates attempted every question and only a small number found the questions very challenging in terms of comprehension and answering in clear English. The majority of candidates wrote with good grammatical accuracy and fluency. There was no evidence to suggest that candidates were short of time.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a)   In questions like this, where candidates are required to give arguments in favour of an activity, it is a skill, that candidates need to develop, to select pertinent information from one part of the material and link it to that in another. Candidates are expected to give a concise but developed answer within the 80-word limit.

This question required candidates to put forward the arguments that Jackson could use to persuade a company to sponsor his trip to Everest. A range of responses were seen with the most popular reasons being focused on raising money for the children's charity and this being a good public relations exercise for the company. Other candidates picked out the business opportunity related to Telnote's Chinese market; some candidates recognised the climbing interest of Telnote's boss who might empathise with Jackson's desire to carry out the expedition.

(b) This question assessed candidates' ability to use the material in the Insert to explain why Telnote might refuse Jackson's request for sponsorship. Many candidates were able to identify several reasons for the refusal including the environmental credentials of Telnote's Finance Director (also the boss's wife) and who may not want to be associated with the expedition due to the poor management of waste on Everest. Other reasons given were the moral argument about the intrusive nature of walking past climbers who had died on the mountain; other candidates were able to see the geopolitical/business argument about the Chinese market being important to the company and the closure of the approach to Everest by the Chinese government.

Credit was not given for the point about Jackson's altitude sickness as this was assumed to be something personal to Jackson and the company would not know about it

(c) Many candidates were successful in suggesting impacts (both positive and negative) on the Sherpa community who work alongside climbers to ascend Everest. Popular points were those focused on increased income and the opportunity to share their culture; negative impacts ranged from the sacred nature of the mountain and the sense of it being desecrated by the climbing expeditions, the changes associated with the job and the need for a large clean-up operation once the climbing season was over. Candidates should be reminded that, in questions like this, they need to include both positive and negative points to access all the marks.

(d) Most candidates were able to gain at least one mark on this question as there were many ways it could be answered: a quote from the text or an interpretation from the text. Successful responses included the idea that not much would stop Jackson due to his addiction to adrenalin; Jackson not being worried about anything and having an answer to every doubt his friend raises; that Jackson likes to push himself to the limit. Quoting directly from the Insert such as 'You know that I love adventure and there are few places on earth that will challenge me like Everest. It's the chance of a lifetime!' would have also gained credit.

(e) Answers to this question were wide ranging. To gain credit candidates had to use material and ideas other than those expressed by Jackson in the material, so no credit could be given for the idea of challenge, something new, that Jackson was experienced or this being the chance of a lifetime. When candidates did this, they usually gained few marks. Instead, creditable answers focused for example on having a great story to tell friends and relatives, personal wealth facilitating the opportunity to climb the mountain and stress relief.

Section B

Question 2

(a) In this question candidate were required to explain the meaning of a word or phrase found in the material. In questions like this, candidates must use the same grammatical form as the given word or phrase; for instance, if the phrase includes 'we' as in **2(a)(iii)** 'we got hooked on the idea', then a correct answer must include 'we' for example 'we were caught up in this way of thinking'. Therefore, as an example, if the word or phrase is adjectival, then a corresponding adjective/ adjectival phrase must be provided for the answer..

Some examples of successful answers:

(i) 'off-grid' – far away from civilisation

(ii) 'stumbled across' – *found accidentally*

(iii) 'we got hooked on the idea' – *we fell in love with the suggestion*

(b) This question required candidates to write in their own words. When this is needed, candidates must use words other than those in the material in their answer. Only very technical words in the

material, for which there is no alternative, may be allowed in their answer; in this case 'wind power' was allowed.

Examples of acceptable responses:
The first available information about wind power on the internet came from him
He started working on wind power before a lot of other people
Many people from abroad watch what he does

(c) In this question candidates were required to find synonyms in the material. When candidates are required to identify a word in the material that has the same meaning as a word or phrase in the question, they should pick only the exact word or phrase that matches. If they copy the sentence or phrase that the synonym is in, they will not gain any credit. For example, 'resilience' is creditable for 'ability to cope' but 'The Russian mentality, toughness and resilience to change' is not.

Many candidates were able to identify 'communal' as the synonym for 'available for all' and some candidates successfully identified 'resonate with' for 'appeal to'. Future candidates would benefit from plenty of practice of this kind of question in preparation for their exam.

(d) Again, as an **own words** question, candidates should have attempted to use words alternative to those in the material. Many candidates found this a challenging question.

Good examples of responses:
It is way away and the weather is difficult.
They barely have contact with the outside world.
They have to be aware of the environment all the time.

(e) Candidates were expected to use both the material and their own knowledge in this question.

Responses ranged from wanting to escape city life, to live a happier and freer lifestyle, being yourself and not living up to expectations.

(f) Some candidates were able to successfully use their own words to explain the disadvantages of being a child on the island. Responses ranged from having to go away from home for boarding high school to having few friends and having to move away for work in the future.

(g) In this question, candidates were given credit if they suggested that having more children could make the community happy or that children were more knowledgeable about technology and so could help the older generation. Other acceptable responses were that more children could keep the school open and the community would grow as the children grow up and have children themselves.

(h) This question was well answered by most candidates who gave a range of responses to why the internet could make islanders life easier. General points about improved communications and online schooling were popular responses.