

# Examiners' Report Summer 2007

GCE

GCE General Studies (8206/9206)

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## 6451/01

### General

The paper followed the same structure as in previous series and most questions appeared to be accessible to the majority of candidates. Section A contained a larger number of multiple choice or short answer questions than in previous series. This ensured full coverage of the specification content and allowed candidates to produce answers quickly, thus making more time available for the higher scoring Section B and Section C questions. The majority of candidates seemed to have been taught aspects of the paper and were familiar with its demands. However work is still required in teaching Section B (thinking and analytical skills) and in selecting appropriate examples to illustrate points made in answers to essay questions. The topics of religion and media are generally well understood and creativity and innovation are dealt with reasonably. However Culture, Morality and Aesthetic evaluation are often poorly understood.

There were few rubric infringements. However some candidates failed to attempt certain of the short questions. If a question, especially a multiple choice type, is attempted there is always the possibility of gaining a mark. This is not possible if a candidate does not provide any answer.

A problem that appears to be increasing is a noticeable decline in the standard of handwriting. Work that is illegible is difficult to mark. If it is impossible to read then marks cannot be awarded for what might otherwise be a sound answer. There also appears to be an increase in poor expression generally. A matter of some concern is the use of unacceptable language, not in any abusive sense, but as a 'normal' part of expression.

There were some excellent examples of candidates with a broad awareness and understanding of the specification, but most appear to have at best a patchy and too often a superficial knowledge. This can seriously affect marks for Section A which deals with AO1 (knowledge and understanding) and can restrict the marks achieved in Section C (dealing with AO3) where candidates lack sufficient evidence to marshal in order to support their arguments. Sadly a number of candidates persist in criticising the underlying concept of this subject. Their complaints would be more effectively addressed to their own centres and teachers, rather than to anonymous and hard pressed examiners.

An issue that seems to be increasingly evident is that many candidates do not read questions with sufficient care. This can result in missing key words or ideas, misinterpreting what has been asked for and writing in too great detail material that is clearly not required. Candidates need to take note of and respond to important qualifying words, especially in essay titles. In Section B there was evidence of some candidates writing about wrong lines or even paragraphs.

## Section A

**Question 1a** was fairly straightforward and many candidates were able to select the correct answer. **Question 2** was quite accessible and many were able to score the mark. **Question 3** was generally disappointing. Many candidates do not seem to have an understanding of moral reasoning and often confuse the term with moral values or moral codes. Very few showed any clear understanding of Social Contract theory. The majority who scored were only able to achieve a single mark. Most candidates either confused social contract theory with other forms of moral reasoning, most notably Utilitarianism, or wrote about moral issues, or simply listed commonsensical moral statements (such as 'it is important to treat other people well') but failed to link their answers to Social Contract theory. However there were a relatively small number of candidates who had a firm grounding in the topic and were able to give clear coherent and accurate answers. In contrast a number failed to make any attempt to answer the question.

### Question 4

This was generally quite high scoring. Few candidates had problems in gaining the mark in (4a). The most frequent religions and symbols were Christianity and the cross (or occasionally the fish). Answers to (4b) generally scored at least one mark. Candidates found it easier to give a fuller answer when dealing with Christian symbols than with symbols associated with other religions. At times candidates correctly identified a religion and a symbol but then described the meaning of a different symbol associated with the chosen religion. Answers to (b) showed that candidates find it difficult to distinguish between 'meaning' and 'representation'

### Question 5

This was slightly less well answered than question 4. Most candidates were able to identify a religion and a belief about death, although such beliefs were often phrased in a very general and unspecific manner. Answers to (b) were variable. Some were able to give well informed and developed answers, but the majority owed as much to commonsense as to real understanding of the impact of a belief on behaviour. A significant number simply gave bland answers such as 'to live a good life'. Those who achieved the second mark were usually able to give specific examples of what this meant in practice. A number of answers failed to score because they wrote either about the reaction of believers to a death or moral rules (such as 'thou shalt not kill'.) Some candidates confused the religion associated with particular beliefs (most notably Judaism and Islam linked with reincarnation).

### Question 6

This was generally not answered well. Candidates do not often have a good understanding of the principles of aesthetic evaluation and many seem to have been influenced by the wording of the question simply to repeat it. In this question they were given the principles and asked to justify the use of such criteria. Too often answers simply described the criteria rather than explained why people might use them. This was a good example of a question that many candidates failed to read carefully. It was also one where candidates relied more on commonsense than on learnt work. Some of the better answers focused on use of the criteria to achieve consistency in assessment or as a way to categorise work. Sadly a number still associate evaluation of art simply with monetary value.

### Question 7

This question proved difficult for many candidates. Again it was one where many failed to read the question. Some answers simply selected and described an artistic style. Although they were well informed about the style they failed to identify or explain what the term meant. A number of weaker candidates simply recycled the words in the question and failed to add anything new. A number of candidates failed to notice the restriction to select illustrations from one of the specified artistic forms and instead attempted to refer to several forms. A number of candidates named particular styles but failed to give any indication as to why they were regarded as distinctive styles. Candidates who wrote about style in the sense of performance rather than of production were given credit.

### Question 8

Answers to this question rarely achieved more than 2 marks, with the majority only scoring 1 mark. Most of the topics were selected with popular taste and availability of new materials being the most popular. Too often answers were superficial and commonsensical. Those candidates who were actually able to link their explanation to the development of a specific style generally did well. Too often candidates ignored the word 'development'. Aspects of style that generally scored well were linked to political conditions such as punk, and war poetry. Few candidates seemed to have a clear understanding of how artistic styles are created and develop although many were able to give sound descriptions of the features of particular styles.

### Section B

Candidates should recognise that all questions in this section relate to AO4 and that 'commonsense' answers are not likely to gain marks. The passage seemed to be quite accessible to the majority of candidates.

### Question 9

Parts (a), (b) and (c) relate to key aspects of the Specification and candidates should have a clear understanding of the terms used but sadly such familiarity was often lacking. Candidates who identified that question (d) related to the preparedness of the BBC rather than to the digital revolution were more likely to give a correct response. The key is that factual statements can be checked against written or verbal evidence. A variety of ways of checking for evidence were suggested. A number of candidates wrote about the wrong statement. Many candidates simply rephrased the question in the sense 'It is true because the author says it is'. Answers to (ei) were generally poor. Only a small proportion of candidates were able to identify inductive. A number of the answers were not related to types of argument at all. The specification is very clear that candidates need to understand and be able to identify five different types of argument. They should at least know these five terms and be able to select one of them. Part (eii) was answered well by about a quarter of candidates. Some ignored the question and wrote out two or three sentences. Others selected the wrong paragraphs. This question again illustrates the importance of reading questions carefully.

Answers to (f) were very disappointing. Many candidates still simply summarise the passage, whilst others take issue with the content and give their own view rather than seek to analyse the argument. A significant weakness was that many

candidates failed to read the statement carefully. Too often they ignored the issue of funding and focussed on the importance of the creative industries. The passage is about the importance of the creative industries to the UK economy, but this was not the thrust of the question. Candidates should have recognised that there was little direct evidence to support the assertion about funding. However there were several items of evidence that implied the need for increased funding. Effective answers were those which recognised that most of the evidence did not give direct support and then examined the strength or weakness of the support given. A number of answers were able to identify different thinking and analytical skills, but wrote in general terms and failed to bed their answers in the passage. Sadly there were a number of 'prepared' answers in which the evidence was forced to support the statement. (Facts give strong support, opinions don't; statistics always are reliable and accurate and provide strong support; arguments from authority are always relevant and provide strong support 'because he knows what he is talking about'). Some of the better answers recognised that the passage relied heavily on the opinion of a single individual and a few were able to point out that the claim related to the arts in general but Hall was speaking only about the arts in London. To succeed in this question candidates need to know the different terms and be able to apply them to the passage. They need to develop a critical approach and not accept everything at face value or as of equal worth. They should recognise there are times when it is appropriate to say that evidence does not support claim. Mastery of these skills are perhaps the most valuable aspect of General Studies. Candidates should recognise that a question starting 'How successfully ...' invites evaluation and a structured conclusion.

Generally communication was sound. There were relatively few (about 10%) answers that were poorly expressed. Major weaknesses continue to be illegible or poor handwriting and the misspelling of common words or words copied from the passage.

## Section C

The three essays attracted roughly a third of candidates each with question 12 being the most popular and question 10 the least popular. It was pleasing to see that more were prepared to attempt answers on culture than has been evident in the past. Too often candidates still show that they have some interesting ideas but are not able to support them with appropriate evidence. Conclusions are too often seen almost as a 'bolt on' to finish the essay, rather than as a drawing together of opposing arguments in order to reach a justified decision about the issue under consideration. Many candidates would benefit from structured work on the creation of appropriate conclusions. There is insufficient attempt to evaluate the relative merits of evidence used in support of opinions. Too often all evidence and opinions are accepted as of equal worth. Candidates who treat the essay as a debate are likely to achieve better results.

### Question 10 (western culture)

This question produced some interesting answers. The main weakness was uncertainty about the meaning of 'western culture'. Some saw it as an alternative to high or popular culture and inevitably there were some who felt it related to cowboys and Indians. Most answers were prepared to recognise that it was more sensible to refer to 'difference' rather than 'better'. Many recognised the inevitability of prejudice in that we generally feel that our own culture is superior to others. Too often answers were bland and failed to define the nature and

characteristics of culture. Few considered culture in terms of art music architecture etc. but often focused on materialism and consumerism linked to lifestyle. Consequently it was difficult to make any effective comparisons. Some linked the question to behaviour and asserted a decline in standards in the west compared to higher standards in other parts of the world. Candidates demonstrated considerable ignorance of other cultures and failed to recognise the impact of globalisation or the two way process of culture absorption. Inevitably there were a number of answers that relied on prejudiced assertions rather than reasoned argument. Supporting evidence was often lacking.

#### Question 11 (religion and morality)

This was the second most popular question. Many candidates wrote at length but often missed the point of the question. There was relatively little evidence that candidates understood what moral reasoning was. Few were able to see why religion should be regarded as a basis for moral reasoning as opposed to a source of moral values or moral codes. Most answers answered the question of whether religion had relevance to today, often asserting that science had disproved religion. Some felt religion was a good basis for religious people but was irrelevant to non-religious people. Some of the better answers were able to discuss different types of moral reasoning. Many did recognise that religious values were similar to traditional values, but they often failed to recognise that traditional values had developed in the main from religious teachings. A number pointed out the difficulty of deciding which religion to rely on in a multi-cultural and multi-faith society. Many claimed that because of its age religion had little to contribute to many contemporary issues, such as euthanasia, abortion, divorce and genetic modification. A few made the valid point that whilst religion may not say anything specific about an issue it will very often lay down general principles that can be applied and interpreted. There were however some very well informed and well argued answers. Inevitably perhaps a significant number of candidates drew a parallel between terrorism and religion in order to argue in support of the statement.

#### Question 12 (censorship)

This was easily the most popular of the essay titles. Relatively few attempted to define 'censorship' or 'harmful'. The majority of answers dealt with the subject in fairly narrow terms often focussing either on the use of censorship in war time or in terms of the media. Some interpreted the term in a very liberal sense linking in any form of restriction as being 'censorship' (including for example when parents prevent children staying out late at night, the age restrictions on smoking and alcohol). Some mistook censorship for media bias. There were a good number of well informed and well crafted answers that showed a good understanding of censorship and recognised that at different times and under different circumstances censorship could be both harmful and beneficial. Some dealt with the issue of who was best suited to act as censor.

Comments made about quality of communication in Section B apply also to Section C.



## 6452/01

### General

The format of the paper was very similar to previous series. The majority of candidates were able to attempt most questions.

Disappointingly, many answers were poorly presented and the quality of handwriting sometimes impeded a clear understanding of the answer.

### Section A

#### Question 1

A large number of candidates incorrectly identified the invention of the light bulb as a scientific revolution. A significant minority of candidates identified both the invention of the light bulb and the discovery of antibiotics as scientific revolutions and therefore gained no marks. Candidates who correctly identified antibiotics were often able to explain their answer eg by referring to changes in our understanding of medicine, or further research and discoveries related to antibiotics. General references to improving health or saving lives were not credited because that could be said of many medicines or techniques which are developments or extensions of existing knowledge.

#### Question 2

Some candidates who focused just on the validity of the medical studies referred to in the question gained no marks, although there were pertinent points made about the size of the effect in reducing heart attacks, the relevance of the medical history of individuals and the relevance of other factors such as diet and exercise. Many candidates gained marks by mentioning the possible side-effects on the liver and other organs and there were also frequent references to the frequency and volume of alcohol consumption or the strength of alcohol in the wine.

#### Question 3

Many candidates were able to correctly identify two advantages relating to better road safety and reduced crime. Some candidates gave answers which were too vague to gain marks eg "lights help you to see" or "you can see where you are going". Candidates also sometimes gave repeated answers which referred to reduced accidents for car drivers and reduced accidents for pedestrians which only gained 1 mark. The majority of candidates gained at least 1 mark for identifying the cost of maintenance or "wasting electricity" as a disadvantage. There were also a small number of answers mentioning "light pollution".

#### Question 4

In (a) most candidates were able to pick the correct answer. In (b) many answers gained marks for mentioning exaggeration as a means of catching the readers's attention. Some candidates were able to offer good explanations in terms of the specific headline referred to in (a) of the question eg "The science of flight is complicated" or "Perhaps the theory does not explain how bumblebees can fly but they can hover" although the question was a general one about "...a newspaper headline on a science item.." The possibility of bias was also mentioned. Answers

which reworded the questions gained no marks eg "It is because people don't understand it properly".

#### Question 5

The majority of candidates selected the correct answer.

#### Question 6

Most candidates gained a mark by making a relevant general comment. Many candidates also gained a further mark for working out that £600 was the same as total insurance premiums for 20 years. Relatively few answers attempted a calculation based on some assumed period of house occupancy. Those that did scored 3 or 4 marks. A minority of candidates did not have a clear understanding of how insurance works eg "If you have only paid £30 after 1 year then it is not worth it because you will still have to pay another £570 if something goes wrong". A small number of answers were based on £30 as a monthly rather than an annual premium and consequently gained no marks. Few candidates commented on the vagueness of the claim in relation to the time period or the fact that it referred to individuals rather than households.

### Section B

#### Question 7(d)

Many candidates recognised that the passage was based on scientific research and were able to gain 2 or 3 marks by correctly quoting evidence from the passage. Most candidates went on to gain at least one further mark for correctly identifying evidence as fact or opinion. Candidates gained no marks for identifying any piece of evidence as both fact and opinion eg there were some references to "factual opinion" or "opinionated fact". As in previous examination series, some candidates attempted to make a general comment about the nature of the evidence in the passage eg "It is mainly fact supported by some opinion". Candidates who did this without identifying and referring to specific pieces of evidence gained no marks. Some candidates lost marks because they paraphrased evidence from the passage and omitted key words eg "...women admired the dancing of men.." with no reference to **symmetry**. A small minority of candidates chose to challenge the evidence in the passage which suggests they had not read the question carefully. Most candidates were limited to 2 marks for Quality of Written Communication because of errors in spelling or grammar.

### Section C

#### Question 8

This question was answered by approximately 45% of candidates. There was a broad range of answers with some limited to simple comments on the benefits of inoculation. Some candidates mentioned the eradication of diseases by inoculation, the greater importance of inoculation in some other countries, or the cost or inoculation against possible savings in providing treatment. Many candidates were able to describe how vaccines worked and tried to give a balanced argument by examining the benefits of inoculation against possible religious objections or the small risk of harmful consequences. However, relatively few candidates were able to offer an argument which balanced risks to individuals

against benefits to the population as a whole, although “herd immunity” was mentioned by a few high scoring candidates. Many candidates who presented good answers could have gained further marks by referring more explicitly and closely to the case for and against **compulsory** vaccination rather than vaccination in general. Where the MMR controversy was mentioned it was usually as evidence to oppose vaccination because of the supposed risks. Most candidates were limited to two marks for Quality of Written Communication because of errors in spelling or grammar.

### Question 9

This question was answered by very few candidates. The majority of answers did not score high marks and were often limited to very simple comments about writing lists of equipment, putting experimental results in tables or organising the storage of data in filing cabinets or computers. Better answers referred to scientists gaining new information and “fitting it into theories” and there were also a small number of very good answers which illustrated these points by referring to the construction of the periodic table or taxonomy in biology. Some candidates were able to link the organisation of knowledge with the development of new theories and illustrate the point with reference to historical examples such as Newtonian Mechanics and Relativity. Most candidates were limited to two marks for Quality of Written Communication because of errors in spelling or grammar.

### Question 10

This question was answered by approximately 45% of candidates with a broad range of answers. Some very simple answers concluded that the reduced carbon dioxide emissions justified building nuclear power stations. There was sometimes some confusion between the greenhouse effect and the ozone layer. Better answers mentioned the problems associated with the disposal of radioactive waste or the possibility of devastating accidents such as Chernobyl although relatively few attempted to balance the likely costs and benefits. A number of very good answers broadened the argument to include new technologies such as carbon capture, the use of renewable energy sources and some of the problems about continuity of supply associated with them. The link between nuclear power and nuclear weapons was also mentioned with a few specific references to Iran and North Korea. Some weaker candidates suggested that nuclear power was a completely new technology. Some very good answers pointed out the extensive safe use of nuclear power in France. Most candidates were limited to two marks for Quality of Written Communication because of errors in spelling or grammar.

### Hints for revision

- If asked to choose between two options do not try to “hedge your bets” by picking both
- When asked to identify 2 reasons/advantages/facts make sure they are **different** and not just slightly different aspects of the same thing
- If a question contains numbers then a good answer will almost always include some calculation and not just general comments
- If you are asked to select evidence you will not gain any marks by offering your own opinion



## 6453/01

### General

The format of the paper was the same as in recent years with no changes in the specification content or assessment objectives. The demands made on candidates was also broadly comparable with those made in previous series.

Section A gave candidates an opportunity to undertake numerical calculations and there was a range of multiple choice questions which tested knowledge and understanding over a range of topics from different parts of the specification. Once again the questions in this section discriminated between those who were ill-equipped to deal with relatively simple numerical questions and those who were more confident in interpreting and calculating data. Once again the political questions (Q6 and Q7) proved very challenging to many candidates.

The insert for Section B proved accessible for most candidates. There is still much confusion about the difference between inductive and deductive. However the understanding of beliefs, opinions and facts was much stronger.

Of the three essay questions in Section C, question 11 was by far the most popular. Unfortunately it was also the question that revealed a significant amount of ill-informed prejudice. Candidates continue to attempt to produce balanced essays and improved spelling and paragraphing was also evident. Many candidates however still draw conclusions that are not supported by evidence or argument within the body of the essays. There is also a reluctance to comment on the relative strengths of the evidence presented. A reasoned discussion supported by relevant evidence and argument deserves some evaluative comment towards the end of an essay. Such comment would refer to the evidence and argument presented and would indicate why one particular view was more persuasive than an alternative view.

### Section A

#### Question 1

In (a) only 50% of candidates were able to correctly apply 44% to 4 million to correctly calculate 1.76 million.

The majority of candidates were able to explain why employment rates were higher for men at each level of educational qualifications. In (b) most cited women choosing not to work as an appropriate explanation.

#### Question 2

This proved a very challenging question for many candidates. Only a minority were able to use the definitions of the mean and mode given in the question to calculate the sum of the values of 250 for the mean and 80 for the mode. Very few candidates were able to identify 170 as the highest amount offered.

#### Question 3

In part (a) less than half of candidates were able to apply 10% to 600,000 and then multiply by 1.5 to arrive at a correct answer of 90,000.

In (b) the most direct route to a correct answer was to calculate 83% of 360 and give the correct answer of 298.8 degrees. Many candidates were unable to attempt this question as they did not know that there are 360 degrees in a circle.

In (c) many responses suggested the increase in divorce as the prime reason for the increase in step families but did not make explicit the link between such marriage breakdowns and the consequent move to reconstituted families.

#### Question 4

Responses to this question revealed a significant degree of confusion between the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights.

#### Question 5

A considerable number of candidates were confused between the meaning of reformation and retribution.

#### Question 6

This question was very poorly answered. Many candidates did not recognise the assumption in the question of areas with multiple seats in the House of Commons where one particular party dominated. Only a minority of candidates were able to suggest reasons such as social class, traditional ties and loyalties, and specific economic or social issues targeted by political parties.

#### Question 7

Another poorly answered question. Many answers simply described specific pressure/protest group activities without connecting such action to elections or candidates. The level of cynicism regarding the pursuit of political activities was somewhat alarming in many answers. An inclination for bribery and corruption was accepted as natural by a significant minority of candidates.

### Section B

#### Question 8

In (a) and (b) there was a considerable amount of confusion between inductive and deductive arguments.

The majority of candidates were able to respond confidently to (c) (d) and (e) with a considerable number of candidates giving very comprehensively correct explanations for the difference between a fact and an opinion.

In (f) a number of candidates misread the question and did not produce two pieces of evidence to support each conclusion. A large number of candidates also selected evidence which did not relate to a specific conclusion and adopted a 'mix and match' approach. The explanation/justification marks were awarded either for a concluding section or for comments made about the four different pieces of evidence as they were identified and described.

## Section C

### Question 9

As with the other two questions, responses to this question that identified and discussed some relevant issues/themes/concepts produced strong answers. A balanced and comprehensive discussion of such issues as compensation/compensation culture, governmental responsibility for taxpayers and citizens, and individual (insurance) accountability contributed to some very strong answers to this question. Many candidates discussed issues such as alternative options for government expenditure and the extent of government responsibility for 'acts of god'. This question produced some very thoughtful answers where candidates did try to weigh up the arguments for both sides and referred to problems such as terrorism causing delays at Heathrow. Many candidates however lacked knowledge and seemed to think that the government runs airlines or airports. Many candidates also appeared not to have heard of the concept of personal insurance and were thus unable to discuss this in relation to the notion of 'things going wrong'.

### Question 10

This was the least popular question in section C. Some candidates found it difficult to give a balanced view and simply concentrated on discussing the importance of government expenditure and taxation. However there were some very strong responses to this question. Many sought to discuss the importance of foreign policy with specific reference to Iraq maintaining it to be at least as important as tax and spending in the contemporary political scene. The significance of George Brown as a major political figure being principally concerned with economic matters was often discussed. Many candidates offered well informed discussions of recent elections and policy initiatives.

### Question 11

This was a very popular question and one which produced sharply different levels of response. The very best answers discussed issues and concepts such as retribution, rehabilitation, recidivism, and prison as a deterrent and produced some sound arguments and a measure of evaluation. However, this question also attracted candidates whose knowledge of the contemporary world appeared to be derived almost exclusively from tabloid newspapers. The commonest solution to prison overcrowding offered was capital punishment for murder, terrorism and paedophiles with public protection being the main focus of such answers. Thankfully these were far outweighed by more thoughtful essays which demonstrated some sound understanding of the criminal justice system and associated concerns.



## 6453/02 (Coursework)

Many candidates produced formidable pieces of coursework on which both they and their teachers are to be congratulated. Where topics were selected that related closely to the Unit 3 specification, candidates tended to achieve high marks; however, where candidates chose to write about topics with little or no really close link to any of the five specified themes, marks were often much lower. Disappointing marks often resulted from candidates working on a largely descriptive topic which enabled them to score well for AO1 and AO2 but to score little on AO3 and AO4. The most successful candidates typically wrote coursework using questions from recent Unit 3 written papers.

The AS General Studies coursework is expected to be 1,500 words in length - certainly no more than 2,000 words so candidates who produced coursework of twice or three times the required length inevitably penalised themselves for selecting material inappropriately. Some pieces of coursework contained appendices which were excessively bulky - interesting but not essential - and these should not have been included.

All candidates are expected to produce coursework which is clearly linked to any one of five specified themes. In the latest version of the Coursework Mark Sheet (page 86 Edexcel Coursework Guide for General Studies, 2004 which can be downloaded) candidates are required to state which one of the five specified themes their work is directed. Where the title of the coursework related uneasily to the chosen specified theme, marks gained for 'relevance' were inevitably poor or, at best, modest. So while some of their coursework titles fitted well into the specified themes (eg traditional families into the 'family life' theme or euthanasia into 'crime, deviance and the legal system'), others were at best peripheral to the theme on which it had been claimed they were based (eg climate change or terrorism and the 'government and politics' theme). Since it is the specified theme which provides the baseline for relevance, choosing topics which do not fit closely into the theme can lead to AO1 and/or AO3 marks being low. Centres should not permit candidates to stray beyond the Unit 3 specification boundaries for more than the occasional reference or aside.

Sadly, too many candidates gave few references or sources for the diagrams or studies to which they referred; others offered a bibliography involving just a few websites, rarely indicating the dates on which these were inspected - the strongest candidates, however, did reference their work fully and accurately and produced a comprehensive and impressive bibliography, which sharply boosted their score for AO1. It was immediately obvious that some candidates had undertaken a great deal of research, so their work was packed with data, and they showed considerable graphical and interpretive skills; however sometimes this gave the impression more of a report rather than the required 'debate' with rival arguments being evaluated to achieve a reasoned conclusion. For slightly weaker candidates, the coursework gave a very descriptive impression - the evidence was given but it wasn't always clear what point the candidate was seeking to make.

In a significant number of centres, candidates wrote about a possible return of capital punishment - this was acceptable but abolition occurred long before these candidates were born and is unlikely to return in the UK; for the future it might be worth considering other possible 'crime and punishment' topics such as the effectiveness of ASBOs, whether prisons are 'fit for purpose' or how the gender balance in prisons can be explained or whether too many people are being sent to

prison. In the centres where such alternative topics were examined, candidates appeared to relate more actively to the task they were undertaking.

There were some administrative flaws which placed additional burdens on moderators and teachers - centres using the old coursework mark sheet rather than the 2004 version, candidates not stating the specified theme on which their work was based or the number of words used, failure by the teacher or the candidate to sign the required declarations, failure to add the AO marks correctly or to transfer the aggregate mark to the OPTEMS or equivalent form. However, there were also impressive instances of good practice - especially in terms of the annotation of scripts by teachers who were clearly intent on conducting a dialogue with candidates which challenged them to think in new ways and to synthesise evidence and arguments coherently, systematically and imaginatively. Where things didn't work out quite so successfully, sometimes the AO indicated by the teacher alongside a particular paragraph was not entirely appropriate - for example referencing and bibliography need to be assessed in AO1 not AO2 or sometimes too many AO4 marks were awarded for candidate insights largely unrelated to the explicit 'Section B agenda' of the Unit 1 - 5 written papers where AO4 is assessed.

In larger centres internal moderation procedures seemed to vary from the systematic and effective to the haphazard and optimistic. For internal moderation to be achieved successfully, it is important that the tasks undertaken by candidates supervised by different teachers are themselves very similar if not identical.

The strongest candidates advanced contrasting arguments supported by good evidence which led naturally to a reasoned conclusion; however, weaker candidates sometimes produced very descriptive work and did not seem to appreciate that reaching a conclusion needs to involve far more than summarising a very limited survey. Ideally, student surveys should provide no more than the evidence to support arguments one way or the other, they certainly cannot be an alternative to arguments!

On the basis of this year's performance, the best advice that can be given to teachers in schools offering the coursework option is that they should encourage candidates to:

- (a) stick as closely as possible to the specification topics for Unit 3, perhaps even using questions from the written examination as the basis for their coursework
- (b) use the coursework mark sheet (p86 coursework guide) and complete it fully - number of words used, which specified theme is being addressed, signed teacher and student declarations
- (c) demonstrate a range of knowledge and skills from different disciplines - read reports from written examinations for Section B questions to be sure AO4 requirements are fully understood
- (d) never exceed the recommended word limit of 1,500 words (2,000 words including referencing, bibliographies and appendices).

## 6454/01

### General

The paper followed the same structure as in previous series and appeared to be accessible to the majority of candidates. Section A was designed to give good coverage of the specification. Many candidates appeared to have been prepared to meet the demands of the paper, but work is still required in teaching Section B (thinking and analytical skills). Candidates seem to be happier with media and religion than with other aspects of the unit. The least popular and least successful section is aesthetic evaluation.

There were few rubric infringements. However a number of short questions and multiple choice questions were not attempted by some candidates. If a question, especially a multiple choice type, is attempted there is always the possibility of gaining a mark. This is not possible if a candidate does not provide an answer.

A significant and increasing problem is a decline in the standard of handwriting. Poor handwriting limits the ability of the candidate to communicate effectively with the examiner and can result in poor marks.

Some candidates demonstrated an excellent range of knowledge and were able to deploy their knowledge well. A number of essays showed very high levels of thought and argument. However there were also candidates who seemed not to have been prepared for the demands of the paper and an increase in the numbers of essays which lacked identifiable conclusions. Success, especially in Section B depends on an awareness of the required skills and knowledge. Similarly essays that consist of unsupported assertion will rarely score well. Poor understanding of the Specification can adversely affect marks, especially in Section A which deals exclusively with AO1 (knowledge and understanding). It can also limit the marks achieved in Section C (dealing with AO3) if candidates lack sufficient evidence to marshal in order to support their arguments. The majority of candidates did appear to have a sound grasp of what was expected of them, even if at times they were not able to deliver. Inevitably there were a handful of candidates who felt it desirable to criticise General Studies rather than to show their ability by answering the questions that were set.

A significant problem is that many candidates do not read questions with sufficient care. The result is that key words or ideas are missed or misinterpreted. As a result some candidates wrote at excessive length about material that did not relate to the question. As such they achieved marks that were lower than their natural ability seemed to justify. Inaccurate or careless reading was particularly evident in Section B.

### Section A

Questions 1 2 and 3 were multiple choice and seemed a straightforward test of knowledge and distinguished effectively between candidates who had knowledge of the topics and those who did not.

#### Question 4

Responses to question 4 were rather disappointing. Many candidates appeared to misread the question and described key features of a chosen artistic style (most

frequently Impressionism, Punk and Pop Art) but failed to relate their knowledge to the question. The key factor was the classification of art works rather than a description of style. A significant number wrote about aesthetic evaluation rather than about the classification of art. Candidates who scored well had a clear understanding of the term artistic style and usually identified characteristics such as the time of production, characteristics of techniques used, similarity to comparable works. Too often candidates offered suggestions such as materials, subject matter, location of production or longevity.

#### Question 5

This question was usually sound. The main weaknesses were answers that ignored the 'religious' qualification in the question. Too often answers had little to do with religious belief or morality. Answers which were more scientific or social in origin were not credited. The better answers were those that recognised that 'strong religious beliefs' usually mean that people recognise the supremacy and authority of a supreme being. Actions are 'wrong' if they are contrary to the will and purpose of that being. Many candidates achieved two marks but relatively few were able to develop their answers sufficiently to justify the third mark.

#### Question 6

This was perhaps the most difficult and least well done question in this section. Most candidates appear to have a very limited understanding of aesthetic evaluation. Both parts of the question were often misread. In (a) many candidates wrote descriptions of aesthetic criteria rather than attempting to explain why such criteria might be used. A number were distracted by the expression 'beauty' and assumed that the criteria could only be used to judge beauty. There was often confusion between which judgements were subjective and which were objective. A number of candidates answered the question 'why use any criteria'. This enabled them to access some marks. The better answers were those which recognised the advantages of judging works on the basis of agreed standards rather than on personal opinion. Part (b) was generally answered much better, but again there was misreading of the question. A number of candidates introduced 'beauty' into the question and tried to answer in a very restricted rather than broad and general sense. The majority of answers argued that works of art speak on a personal basis to individuals and therefore should be judged personally. It was often recognised that agreed criteria could force a viewer to 'see' something that wasn't actually evident. As always in questions on this topic a number of candidates felt that evaluation was about fixing monetary price rather than judging quality.

### Section B

#### Question 7

Part (a) was generally answered badly, even though as a question it has been asked in the past. Many candidates either failed to attempt the question or gave 'commonsensical' answers that very rarely recognised that causal arguments concern cause and effect. Inevitably there were a significant number of candidates who misread the question as 'casual arguments' and gave appropriate answers. Answers to (b) were also very disappointing. Relatively few candidates recognised that fallacies were weak forms of argument. Too often answers suggested that fallacies were falsehoods or inaccuracies. A significant number of candidates failed to make any attempt to answer this question.

## Question 8

This was based on the passage. The earlier questions are designed to give help for the final part. Sadly many candidates who do well on the shorter questions fail to carry their knowledge and skill into the final question. This is a great pity as this type of question has been used on many occasions and centres should be well acquainted with its demands.

Part (a) was often inaccurate suggesting that candidates guessed rather than knew what they were asked to do. Part (b) was usually answered more successfully. Answers to (c) were usually straightforward. The main weakness was that candidates again did not read instructions carefully. A number wrote out two or three sentences which contained within them a correct phrase. These were not credited. Part (d) was very straightforward and most candidates were able to answer it correctly, although some did choose the wrong paragraph. Considering the difficulty with (a) it was pleasing to see that many candidates were correctly able to identify a cause and effect from the specified lines.

Part (f) was disappointing. Many candidates appeared to have read the passage only superficially whereas this question required a careful analytical reading. The passage was well suited to this activity since it required candidates to interpret and apply evidence rather than simply accept it at face value. Similarly many paid insufficient attention to the phrase to which they were directed in the question.

Most answers seemed unaware that although the passage concerned euthanasia it contained little direct reference to patients' rights. Some picked up the clue by comparing the title of the passage with the quotation. There is evidence to support the author's claim, but it is indirect and requires it to be interpreted. Many candidates wrote about argument from authority, the benefit of factual evidence as opposed to opinion, the unassailable 'truth' of statistics etc. but few were able to relate what they said to the question. Critically the passage is not simply arguing for euthanasia but pointing out that in both practical and legal senses the rights of the patient are often ignored at present and may be ignored even more in the future. She argues that doctors and relatives are taking decisions for economic reasons and ignoring the feelings of the patient. Too many candidates forced the evidence to fit a preconceived pattern. Few recognised that the statistics provided no support at all for the claim and often tried to read all sorts of inferences into them. To do well in this question candidates must develop a critical approach to what they read in order to see what is actually there. Approaches to this question appear to be better than in the past, but candidates must learn how to apply techniques to specific documents.

The question is phrased in such a way as to demand a conclusion about the success of the author. This requires evaluation as well as simple identification of evidence. Candidates should not be afraid to argue (and justify) that the evidence does not support the claim. In this particular case the justified answer should have been 'not very well'. Too often candidates accepted that it was about euthanasia and then asserted that the claim was supported successfully.

Quality of written communication was generally sound. Some candidates failed to use an appropriate style of writing and too often candidates mis-spelt words from the passage or the question itself. As pointed out on many occasions, one of the gravest weaknesses in communication is poor or illegible handwriting.

## Section C

Two of the essays proved to be considerably more attractive to candidates than the others. To an extent this popularity was reflected in the marks obtained.

### Question 9 (culture)

This concerned the responsibility or otherwise of government. There were a number of key words that candidates could have explored with profit. Too often the question was seen simply as a debate between popular and high culture. Inevitably prejudices were apparent. A number of weaker candidates felt it was unfair to support one form of culture and not the other. Too often candidates still associate high culture simply with high social class and popular culture with working class. In so doing they tend to miss the relative attractions and shortcomings of each type of culture. Some missed the point of the question and simply argued that because it was popular culture it deserved more support. Very few recognised that those aspects of high culture that have survived today have generally done so because of their intrinsic qualities and certainly do not reflect the total cultural output of previous ages. Many of the better answers recognised the value of preserving heritage for the future, rather than simply preserving something that might otherwise not be economically viable. Few candidates really got to grips with the issue of government responsibility and even fewer explained what form that responsibility should take. Inevitably a significant number of those who chose to answer this question would have been advised to select one of the others. However this question did generate some excellent well informed and well argued answers.

### Question 10 (creativity)

This was the least popular essay but it did generate some outstandingly good answers. A number of candidates were able to support their responses with detailed knowledge of different art works and perhaps more significantly of artists. Many candidates had very limited understanding of 'economic pressure'. Some were able to show that both economic pressure and creativity could exist side by side as significant influences. Others were able to argue that there is no single 'main influence' and that different influences can be more or less significant at different times. The most successful answers were those that were able to relate their arguments to specific instances. Perhaps inevitably the most successful illustrations related to the development of Impressionism, Pop Art, Punk and Jazz/Blues as well as popular music. Too many candidates failed to consider the development of a new artistic style and so were unable to access higher marks. Some of the better answers gave consideration to the meaning of creativity and were able to apply it to specific examples.

### Question 11

This was the second most popular essay. It generated a wide range of answers. Some of the weaker responses ignored the question and simply wrote about the relevance/irrelevance of religion to the present day. Better answers paid attention to key words such as 'impossible', 'escape' and 'influence'. Inevitably there were many answers that linked the influence of religion with the recent upsurge in terrorist activities. Some recognised that whilst all must be aware of religion, for a variety of reasons, it was possible to reject direct and specific influences. Influence was usually interpreted in a fairly superficial and overt way. Relatively

few were able or willing to look beneath the surface. Some weaker answers gave personal responses to religion and confused 'belief' with 'influence'. There were some excellent and well informed answers which dealt with secularisation, but the best of these were able to draw comparison with various cultures in different parts of the world, and were able to recognise that even when organised religion is rejected its influence can still be present (such as in art, music, architecture, values etc.) Sadly, as is often the case a few took the opportunity to voice prejudices either against religion in general or against specific religious groups (in Particular Islam and Jehovahs Witnesses.)

### Question 12

This produced a good range of answers. Some were very well informed, thoughtful and balanced but others were very superficial and based on often unsupported assertion. Better answers paid attention to the issue of 'ordinary' people and 'harmful' but often the introductory stem was either misread or ignored. Most candidates correctly restricted themselves to a single form of the media but a significant number ignored this instruction and so could not achieve high marks. Candidates were generally better able to address media influence than the question of whether such influence was harmful or not. A number of candidates wrote well informed essays about different models of media influence but these needed to be applied directly to the question to achieve high marks. Candidates were able to advance a good range of illustrations. Media influence on anorexia, drugs and violence were explored but so too were the benefits of media publicity, such as that following the recent abduction of a young girl.

Comments made under Section B about communication apply equally to Section C.



## 6455/01

### General

The structure of the paper was similar to previous series with no changes in the specification content or assessment objectives. The demands of the paper were also broadly comparable to previous papers.

In Section A, the calculations relating to taxation were generally well done. However Q1 (d) proved challenging to many candidates. The question was often reinterpreted to focus on reasons for increases in taxes rather than reductions. Many answers did not distinguish between consequences of reductions and reasons for reductions.

In Section B the insert proved accessible and interesting for most candidates. The majority of candidates were able to differentiate between inductive and deductive and confidently explain the difference between fact and opinion. However only a very small number of candidates were able to identify an argument from cause and explain why such arguments may sometimes be regarded as weak.

In Section C very few candidates chose Q4 on European Courts and many who did choose this question produced only marginally relevant responses. The most popular question was Q6 dealing with family life and moral values but Q3 and Q5 also attracted a significant number of responses.

It is pleasing to report that Section C answers were better focussed on the issues, concepts and dilemmas at the heart of the respective questions with most presenting an explicit conclusion. There is still however a significant minority of candidates who present unsupported assertions and personal opinions rather than evidence based argument and discussion.

### Section A

#### Question 1(a)

The vast majority of candidates correctly identified a progressive tax from the table although a few thought that Council Tax was a progressive tax.

#### Question 1(b)

Most candidates correctly identified a regressive tax with V.A.T. being the popular choice.

#### Question 1(c) (i)

The majority of candidates were able to correctly calculate the percentage of tax paid. Weaker candidates however either made a guess at the percentage or did not attempt the question.

#### Question 1(c) (ii)

The majority of candidates correctly argued that the UK tax system appears to be regressive (given the data in the question) as the person with the highest income pays a smaller proportion of tax. Most of the explanations given were

comprehensive and clear. Some perceptive answers noted that a significant amount of expenditure on items such as petrol, cigarettes and alcohol would influence the degree of regressiveness in this particular scenario.

#### Question 1(d)

This was a challenging question for many candidates. Generally the suggestions for reasons against reducing taxes on petrol were stronger than those given for reducing such taxes. Many responses reflected current concerns for the environment and emphasised the impact on pollution and congestion if taxes on petrol were reduced. Candidates often struggled to find reasons for reducing petrol taxes (help those on low incomes, reduce costs for manufacturers, distributors, provide more disposable income) and simply stated the consequences of such a taxation policy change without producing a clear reason.

#### Question 1 (e) and (f)

The majority recognised that secrecy over pay best explains why despite an Equal Pay Act, many women are paid less than men for identical work. Some answers to Q1(f), by weaker candidates, simply proposed some sort of Equal Pay Act not having taken advantage of the information in Q1(e). There were however many thoughtful answers to this question. Typical acceptable responses included suggestions for actions that lead to greater transparency in showing pay level differences, stronger sanctions against employers ignoring current legislation and stronger enforcement of that legislation.

### Section B

#### Question 2(a)

This was not well answered. Only a small minority of candidates were able to identify an example from cause.

#### Question 2(b)

Similarly very few candidates were able to explain why arguments from cause could be regarded as weak. Most responses gave rather general explanations. A small minority of strong answers referred to the difference between correlation and causation and made explicit the link between cause and effect. Explanations such as 'arguments are based on limited examples of cause and effect' or 'there is no real evidence that a cause will always have the same effect' were acceptable answers to this question.

#### Question 2(c)

A majority of candidates correctly gave 'inductive' as the correct answer but had more difficulty in explaining the concept accurately to gain the second mark.

#### Question 2(d) and 2 (e)

The majority of candidates correctly identified fact or opinion and gave sound definitions and explanations.

### Question 2 (f)

Although some candidates drifted away from the specific quotation from the source and in consequence engaged in speculative and non-relevant general discussion, most recognised that the statement contained elements of both belief and fact. Some found it challenging to distinguish between fact and belief but there were many maximum scores.

### Question 2 (g)

Most candidates were stronger on identifying evidence than argument in this question. The article was rich in terms of different types of evidence and argument. Candidates might have cited inductive argument together with cause and analogy. There was opinion, assertion, researched evidence, and rhetorical questions. Weaker candidates failed to acknowledge or discuss the language or meaning of such a variety of evidence and argument. Even stronger answers which recognised different types of evidence and argument failed to establish a clear link with the specific conclusion that a new highway code of conduct was required. Without such an explicit link it was difficult for many candidates to comment on the justification for this conclusion.

## Section C

### Question 3

Weak responses tended to give a partial interpretation to this question with a focus in general terms on schools and education only. Such responses also often led to negative, defeatist, one-sided answers with the opinion that schools had too much to do already and couldn't be expected to be concerned with equality and decency. The question also tended to attract candidates who wished to make a point about immigration, whether appropriate to the question or not. The refining of the question to describe 'decently' and 'fairly' was not addressed by any but the most able candidates. Many candidates recognised that whatever a school might do there would still be a very strong influence from family and peer groups. Strong responses to this question often included references to such issues as : what is an effective education system?, what are the alternative socialisation influences on moral values and attitudes?, what is the role of legislation in protecting minorities and in establishing and supporting social norms?

### Question 4

There was a sharp contrast in approach to this unpopular question. Many candidates simply saw this question as one dealing with the European Union as a whole rather than specifically with European Courts. Such weak responses simply described the undemocratic nature of the European Parliament or of the European Community and failed to address the specialist nature of this question. These answers were also often significantly opinionated. Although there were very few answers to this question there were some strong and relevant ones. Candidates were very confident on the European Court of Human Rights and exemplar material given, particularly on the 'right to die' cases, issues of sovereignty, the cost and time of taking a case to the European Court, and explanations of the process of law featured prominently in good answers.

### Question 5

There were some thoughtful and imaginative responses to this question. However weaker candidates often assumed that the assertion in the question meant that there is little or no leisure now and that much more is required. Anecdotal evidence was often presented for the importance of leisure and many superficial responses assumed that work was absolutely and exclusively important for both individuals and the economy. Stronger answers considered that work could be improved by regular leisure time and focussed a discussion on the relief of stress in the workplace. Such responses revealed a good working knowledge of illnesses caused by stress and identified advantages of a more balanced work-life balance to individuals, employers and to the NHS and the economy. Frequent reference was made to current concerns with obesity levels in the UK. Discerning candidates referred to other thriving economies (e.g. China) and suggested that research findings were far from precise and categoric in determining the relative significance of work and leisure for healthy workforces and strong economies.

### Question 6

This was the most popular of the 4 essay questions. Most candidates were able to identify relevant issues and themes from this provocative assertion but some got so involved with an issue that the 'reversal' proposal was not really addressed. A common approach was to compare the 'good old days' with a nuclear family, role models, religion and moral teachings with divorce, single parent, reconstructed families, teenage pregnancies and women's liberation. For those who focussed more on the arguments for a reversal and constructed a largely one-sided answer the results were broken homes, latchkey children, inability to discipline, lack of respect for older people and more criminality. More balanced essays countered with references to advances in medicine and technology, women's right to a career, more independence of thought and action and less people trapped in unhappy and/or violent marriages. The subject matter presented in answer to this question was relatively standard. It was the treatment of this subject matter - shallow or thoughtful, that made the difference in terms of marks awarded. The strongest responses referred to both family life and moral values and a supported conclusion such as "it would be impossible and not right to reverse the trends, though some moral values need to be reassessed" was a common final comment on this question.

## 6456/01

### General

The examination was in exactly the same format as previous years, although the mark schemes were slightly different, in the criteria for levels. Responses by candidates were reflective and positive - with very few negative or disingenuous remarks.

Two questions - Q1 and Q3 - were by far the most popular, each attracting about 40% of the candidates. Q2 and Q4 attracted about 10% each. It seemed from the answers that candidates were very much at home in Q1 because it allowed them to express views on the foolhardiness of people and the NHS, views which were both common and diverse. Q3 seemed to be popular because of the issue of war, allowing the expression of views on Iraq and Afghanistan, although the question did not necessarily drive candidates to those conflicts.

Each answer is separately assessed on four assessment objectives, which have the same criteria for each question. Comments on performance in two of these objectives are common to all four questions:

#### Assessment Objective 4 (AO4)

This assesses the candidate's ability to make clear the nature of the evidence being used to support their arguments, and how well this evidence supports the conclusion(s) they come to. In spite of recommendations in Examiners' Reports after every series, candidates do not perform well on this objective. At their weakest, candidates state their opinions as though they are facts, or make no comment at all about the evidence they provide. The great majority do not proceed beyond level 2 (3-4 marks), at which they make it explicit that at least some of the evidence they offer is fact, opinion or belief. To achieve level 3 (5-6 marks), candidates are expected to show explicitly how strongly and in what way their evidence supports their conclusions. About a quarter of candidates appear to have been taught to comment on the subjectivity or objectivity of their evidence, but make a routine, standard comment that gives no indication as to **which** evidence is which. It is perfectly proper for candidates to make use solely of opinion or belief, just so long as they make it very clear. After all, if the question demands moral reasoning, the arguments will often be based on beliefs.

For example, a conclusion to Q2 which demonstrates good understanding of AO4 might run along these lines:

I have restricted my evidence in this question mostly to disagreements about which I have personal knowledge, such as the banning of smoking in the family home, and where to go on the family holiday. I have to conclude on the basis of these experiences that one can **never** settle a disagreement without a debate. Problems arise because it depends on the authority available to implement a decision on a disagreement made without any debate. In essence this power only resides with someone you cannot argue with. In national decisions in practice this means a dictator, or a leader who has the ability and will to conceal actions from colleagues in government. Many things on which we should decide, we can debate endlessly - and why not? Disagreements which are clear and urgent - "I don't want to wear my cycle helmet/seat belt because it looks stupid, in spite of what my Mum says." are

different to others - "Why don't we all want to go to California this year?" because they are very different in their objectivity and outcomes.

There are still too many conclusions that simply restate the candidate's stubbornly held beliefs, sometimes in contradiction of the arguments presented.

### **Assessment Objective 2 (Quality of Written Communication, AO2)**

Although most answers are legible and easy to follow, rather few are well laid out and structured enough to achieve level 3. Spelling is often inaccurate - not so bad that it interferes with the reader's understanding, but poor enough to cause concern. One can only speculate on the reasons for this. Too many answers adopt a very colloquial or informal style. This often detracts from the argument(s) that the candidate has presented.

Comments on the questions below are more specifically directed to the content (AO1) and arguments (AO3) of the answers.

### **Question 1**

This question was very popular. The content prompted in the question, and in particular the moral issues raised were obviously familiar to candidates, and stimulated many points of argument. Usually long and well presented sets of examples of "lifestyles" and "actions" were given with a variety of reasons, also, as to why payment should, or should not, be made.

Quite a high proportion of candidates, however, did not make much more than a simplistic analysis of the idea, and displayed very limited understanding of, for example, the National Health Service.

For example, a common form of answer that was better than trivial, but was simplistic ran along these lines:

Lots of people run risks. Smoking, and eating too much, are known to lead to health problems, but are matters of choice. Some people choose to take risks in leisure time. People like these take advantage of the NHS; therefore they should be charged for any treatment needed.

A weak counter argument is presented:

It is, however, sometimes difficult to separate or identify those people who take risks.

A conclusion of sorts is arrived at, usually biased by the writer's belief that:

People should not receive free treatment if they knowingly take risks.

Quite a lot of these answers either omitted to mention, or did not know, that the NHS is funded through taxation, and in that sense is not a "free" service, only free at the point of need.

A small number of answers made an appreciable digression into the idea of a compensation culture, which was not particularly relevant to the question.

One area of weakness in answers was that where candidates were advocating charges often they did not explain how these would be calculated or who would make judgements about which lifestyles qualified as ones where subsequent associated injury would be paid for. The means of the general policing of such a system was largely ignored. The moral position of doctors and other medical staff, and their professional responsibilities, were only rarely touched upon.

More robust answers, presenting better counter arguments, bringing in a greater appreciation of the workings of the NHS - the fact that everyone (rather, every taxpayer) contributes to the NHS, so perhaps everyone should benefit. They considered the ethical issues surrounding those making provision (how can you deny someone in urgent medical need?) and commonly comparison was made with the provision in other countries, such as the US.

Very good answers made highly effective analyses of the issues. The fact that smokers and drinkers provide enormous sums to the Exchequer through taxes on their consumption came in here, and some economically minded candidates appeared to know that this tax influx is the main support for the whole NHS, or at least made the point that we need to know this statistic in order to make a fair comparison. Private health schemes were discussed, as well as the possibility of insurance cover for specific activities. Candidates made intelligent comparisons with health care in the US and other countries.

The best answers made use of both ethical and economic arguments, and reflected on the political complications of these, before drawing a conclusion.

For AO3, examiners grouped manifestly one-sided arguments - "*it's your fault - you should pay*", with gestures towards a balanced approach - "*it's your fault*" against "*it's difficult to draw the line*" in level 3 (4-6 marks). There were, on the other hand, many good level 4 (7-9 marks) answers.

## Question 2

This question was not popular, probably because there were no concrete ideas given in the question itself, and some candidates may have felt nervous about selecting examples for themselves. The question was, admittedly, semantically not totally straightforward, but this did not seem to worry candidates who plucked up courage to answer it. The question did not prohibit consideration of disagreements common in everyday life, at home or at work, but very few candidates took this up.

A surprising issue is that most candidates are so unwilling to spend any time in examining the core concepts in the question. For example, this question is best unpicked by considering the nature of a "disagreement". From their answers many candidates took the position that a disagreement was of a single kind. However, a disagreement might be about a disputed fact or observation, or a conflict of ideology, or a decision about a course of action in any field of human experience. It may be in a scientific context, or as an outcome of moral reasoning. Once these ideas have taken root, it is easier to see that there may be different ways of dealing with the disagreement.

Many candidates were all for the democratic ideal of debate and often gave very detailed accounts of the benefits together with often quite scathing condemnation of the very idea of settling a matter without debate. They also responded well to the request in the question for examples. Often when detailing these - for example

- abortion, euthanasia, creationism, the origin of the Universe, or dealing with Iraq they sometimes got carried away and spent a disproportionate amount of time on a specific example. In these cases candidates sometimes lost sight of the fact that they needed to consider opposing or alternative viewpoints.

Very few paid much attention to the possible disadvantages of debate. That is, some situations may contain the need for swift action. So, in an enterprise situation, while one group is busy talking about an issue a competitor stops debating, takes action and scoops the prize! The view that in some circumstances a quick decision is needed, above all, thus minimising debate, was largely ignored. Most candidates linked the debate to a discussion where "you can put across your views and opinions and make people think and have an open mind".

### Question 3

Like Q1 this question proved to be very popular and many candidates showed a good level of understanding of contemporary issues. This is highly reassuring from the point of view of a modern democracy. It revolved around the definition and meaning of culture and society and the relationship between the two concepts. Many candidates got bogged down in discussing this. A great majority of answers did not explore what they understood by "culture" or "society" and very few responses mentioned the role of UN and other agencies in avoiding the use of force.

Many responses were balanced for and against the use of force to preserve a culture. Many candidates discussed the examples of World Wars 1 and 2, the Iraq war, Falklands, Hitler, 9/11, and the Palestine/Israel conflict. However, there were some responses in which the facts were incorrect and some confused Iran and Iraq. If candidates are uncertain about their facts, they will not lose marks if they say so.

All were agreed that if force were to be used it should be kept to a minimum. The most interesting debates were along the line that force should not be used at all because a "culture" cannot be destroyed. When Germany occupied France in WW2, did French culture totally disappear? Many answers said it was right to use force to save our culture but only a few applied that idea to the fact that the Nazis were wrong to impose their culture on others by force.

Some good answers concluded that force should be used to preserve FREEDOM, rather than culture.

Few answers took up the issues of the culture of a multi-cultural society, and which culture we should fight for? Few mentioned that violence does not inspire respect and tolerance for someone else's culture.

### Question 4

This was not a popular choice. The question was challenging and few candidates were able to suggest how a society recognises science and scientists.

Answers at the lower levels often comprised discussion about examples of social issues that were connected to science, for example, animal testing, GM crops, cloning, and stem cell research. The implied conclusion was that a society would clearly hold such activities and hence those that promote them, in high regard.

Most answers mentioned the contributions to society made by scientists but often failed to produce evidence on the society's view of scientists. Many candidates who chose this question went on to compare science and religion, and the ways in which these contributions to culture were related to, or opposed, each other. Some made the assumption that developed countries promote science where "third world" countries promote religion and went on to compare the western world with the Middle East and mainly Muslim countries, a somewhat provocative approach. A few made valid economic points - many forms of scientific research are expensive, time-consuming and require highly trained experts - things that are not available to most developing countries. On the other hand, a developing country might decide to throw much of a limited resource at a specialised area of technology, for example weapons research, in the hope of acquiring greater recognition.

In spite of these problems, candidates' answers were often of good quality, not least because answers could look at different points of view very easily.

Although most candidates agreed that values and ideals of society could be discerned through scientific criteria, it could not be a complete answer because society is composed of, and is affected by, many different aspects, attitudes and activities. Only a few associated the power of the media with the expression of values and ideas of different societies.

### Hints for revision

- In this paper it is very important that you are clear about the key ideas referred to in the question. For example, if the question refers to "society" - make a few notes on what **you** understand by this term, and list the core points you think you will need to make this clear.
- Select a past paper, and, **without attempting to answer any of the questions**, list the key concepts in each question. Beside each one, state in note form, what this means to you - **without referring to any sources**.
- Select an essay from a past paper, and write out the question, or the key part of the question **in your own words**. What is the proposition that you are being asked to debate?
- Decide if the proposition is based on **moral** or **logical** reasoning, or if it has elements of both. If both, clarify what these are.
- When you have written out the proposition, write down the **opposite** of the proposition.
- Under the proposition, and its opposite, list the evidence that you need in order to support the opposing positions.
- Think about each piece of evidence, and then note beside it - is this your **opinion**, is this a supportable **fact**, is this something which would require **further investigation** or of which you are uncertain, is this a **religious** belief, is this an **ethical** issue which relies on certain principles?
- Deciding which questions to answer is often a problem. Look at a past paper (or four questions from past papers). Carry out a speedy review of each question, as outlined above, and **only after you have done this for all questions**, decide which two to tackle. You should find that you have a better understanding of which you are best placed to answer.



## Appendix A: Statistics

### 6451: Aspects of Culture

Grade	Max.Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	33	30	27	24	21
Uniform boundary mark	120	96	84	72	60	48

### 6452: Scientific Horizons

Grade	Max.Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	34	31	28	26	24
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### 6453/01: Social Perspectives (written paper)

Grade	Max.Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	38	35	32	29	27
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### 6453/02: Social Perspectives (coursework)

Grade	Max.Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	39	35	31	27	24
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### 6454: Cultural Expressions

Grade	Max.Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	31	29	27	25	23
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### 6455: Modern Society

Grade	Max.Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	36	32	29	26	23
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### 6456: The Contemporary World

Grade	Max.Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	33	31	29	27	25
Uniform boundary mark	120	96	84	72	60	48

#### Notes:

**Maximum Mark (Raw):** the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme.

**Boundary Mark:** the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

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