

Examiners' Report Summer 2008

GCE

GCE General Studies (8206/9206)

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6451/01

General

The paper followed the same structure as in previous series and generally appeared to be accessible to the majority of candidates. Section A was designed so that there were questions on all major themes in the specification. There was some evidence to suggest that a limited number of candidates had not been adequately prepared for the demands of the paper. Knowledge generally was patchy and work continues to be required in teaching Section B (thinking and analytical skills).

There were few rubric infringements. However a number of short questions were not attempted by some candidates. This is unfortunate as it means marks cannot be gained. 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 major problem that is becoming more apparent is a noticeable decline in the standard of handwriting. Work that is illegible is difficult to mark. If work cannot be read then marks cannot be awarded for what might otherwise be a sound answer. There is also an increase in poor expression generally.

Although there were some excellent examples of candidates who have a broad knowledge and understanding of the specification, 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 often lack sufficient evidence to support arguments. Some sections of the Specification (Religion and Media) are better known and understood than others (especially aesthetic evaluation and creativity and innovation).

Many candidates do not read questions with sufficient care. This can result in missing key words or ideas, misinterpreting the question and providing too much irrelevant detail. Candidates need to note qualifying words, especially in essay titles.

In section C the vast majority of candidates answered Q12 rather than Q11 or Q13. Clearly, Q12 was seen as a fallback for many who felt uneasy about tackling the issues in the other two options. However many candidates who attempted this question did not demonstrate the level of knowledge and understanding required to gain a high mark. It was noticeable that a greater proportion of answers to Q11 and Q13 were knowledgeable and reasoned than for Q12. Candidates appeared to feel that they could answer a question on religion as a matter of course without much depth of understanding.

Section A

Questions 1, 2 and 3

These were multiple choice questions. All questions achieved at least a 60% success rate, with the most successful being Q1a (religious symbols) and Q3 (folk culture).

Question 4

Most candidates were able to gain at least one mark on this question. The most common responses related to styles of food and music. Major weaknesses were that candidates often missed the term 'specific', giving general answers. For example 'food' was not acceptable whereas 'Indian food' was. The other key element often missed was that examples must have been absorbed and so become part of British culture rather than simply examples of cultural practices continued by some people who lived in Britain. A number of candidates ignored the time period and offered answers dating back hundreds of years. These could not be credited.

Question 5

Answers to part (a) were rather disappointing. Many candidates seemed unsure about the meaning of media bias, although most were able to give a reasonable explanation of bias (as favouring one side or another). The majority of candidates were unable to access the second mark since they failed almost completely to identify media or link their explanation of bias to media other than in the broadest terms. The best examples were those which gave examples to illustrate their understanding of the term. The weakest answers simply recycled the words used in the question and failed to show any understanding of the term.

Part (b) proved to be rather difficult because the term 'harmful to society' was too broad and open ended although most candidates were able to score at least one mark. A number of answers offered the same point twice although expressed in slightly different terms. Many answers simply suggested the media provided false or limited information and therefore misguided the public. Some of the better answers suggested that opinion shaping was potentially harmful but often failed to explain why. Some answers showed a good understanding of the role of media in creating/amplifying moral panics. Many of the illustrations used related either to political influence or the creation and reinforcement of stereotypes.

Question 6

Part (a) was a slightly different form of a fairly traditional question. Too many candidates simply used the words in the question as their explanation which, whilst often technically correct failed to show understanding of the term and so could not be credited. Just over half the candidates were able to score a mark. When asked to define terms candidates must recognise the importance of finding different words than those used in the question to demonstrate their meaning. Very often candidates tried to equate the term with innovation, suggesting elements of uniqueness, rather than simply of using imagination to produce or bring into existence a work of art. Answers to this question illustrate the value of candidates learning the meaning of key terms used in the specification. Candidates will benefit if they have access to a decent glossary of the key terms used in General Studies. A number of candidates attempted to describe 'artistic style' rather than 'artistic creativity' and so failed to score.

Part (b) was generally well done with many candidates scoring both marks. The scope of possible answers to this question is vast and candidates were often able to score well with single word answers. The question does not require that the factors should

be explained. Some candidates were able to identify influences on individual artists or specific styles but the majority answered in general terms.

Question 7

Most candidates were able to score at least 1 mark on part (a). Answers generally showed a sound understanding of the terms morals as determining the difference between right and wrong but were often less certain on the idea of moral values. Those who scored the second mark were usually able to show that moral values formed part of a belief system that influenced the way people behave. Too often candidates gave examples of moral values without actually explaining the term. These could not be credited. Neither could answers that showed that moral values influenced behaviour but neglected to explain what moral values were. This question produced some very good answers but it also produced answers where candidates failed to respond to what the question asked.

Part (b) was straightforward and the majority of candidates were able to score both marks. The most frequent answers were religion, family, society and self (experience or conscience). Candidates were rewarded either for offering two different sources of moral values or choosing one and explaining its influence in some detail.

Section B

This section consisted mainly of multiple choice questions or of single mark questions and was generally fairly high scoring.

Questions 8(a), 9(a) (b) and (c) and 10(a)

These were multiple-choice questions. More than 75% of candidates chose correctly for 9(a), 9(b) and 10(a). Just over 58% chose correctly for 9(c) but only 23% were correct on 8(a) which concerned types of reasoning used in the passage.

Question 8(b)

This question required candidates to identify from the passage phrases illustrating fact and moral belief. A significant problem here is that candidates do not seem to understand the term 'phrase'. Very often two or more sentences were copied out. Even if they contained the correct phrase it was likely that the answer was invalidated because it contained other types of knowledge as well. These questions need to be read and answered carefully. Over 90% of candidates were able to answer 8(b)(i) correctly but only about 50% scored on 8(b)(ii). A number of answers were selected from the wrong part of the passage. Line numbers when given in questions are an important guide and must be observed carefully.

Question 10(b)

Answers were as always mixed. There was evidence that many centres have attempted to teach the skills needed for this question. Once again a problem was that candidates did not carefully read what they were asked to do. Many candidates seemed unfamiliar with the skills required to analyse a passage and so experienced difficulty in locating 'hooks' on which to hang the points they wished to make. Weaker candidates are still describing the content of the passage rather than analysing the style and quality of evidence used. Candidates should remember that thinking and analytical skills should not be described in the abstract but should be applied critically to the passage. To gain the higher marks there must be specific reference to the passage and candidates should explicitly consider the strength or weakness of the support provided by the evidence used. Many candidates wrote at great length but only made a single clear point. Often candidates scored well by

writing briefly and making a number of different points about the passage. Occasionally candidates ignored the question and took issue with the content of the passage in spite of the clear instructions given in the rubric. This question required a conclusion in answer to 'How successfully ...?'. Candidates who failed to assess the degree of success could not achieve full marks. Too often candidates presented a series of items of evidence but failed to examine the type of evidence used and its strength or weakness in relation to supporting the given quotation. The quotation is important in this question. It is not simply about whether facts offer stronger evidence than opinion, it is about whether the support offered to the given conclusion is effective. This raises the issue of relevance. Facts, especially statistics, may offer strong evidence in general terms but can also offer weak support if they are not relevant to the argument or conclusion. The reduction of marks to 3 rather than the more normal 4 did help to ensure a better spread of marks. Most candidates were able to score 2 marks for AO3 and a further two for communication.

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

Question 11

This question was not particularly popular, even though it is a style of question that has been used frequently. It was attempted by less than 20% of candidates. Candidates generally have a very poor understanding of the term culture. Too often 'high culture' is associated purely and simply with social class and wealth and not with the understanding and appreciation of particular forms of activity. Inevitably this question leads to the voicing of personal prejudices and often ignorance of what is involved in certain cultural activities. Many candidates still assert that theatre and opera are inaccessible because of cost whereas Pop concerts and football matches are accessible because they are cheap. It is sad to think that some television shows such 'How do you solve a problem like Maria?' and the 'X factor' are classed as examples of high culture. Better candidates were able to offer clear definitions of what they understood by both popular and high culture and many candidates argued that better education and accessibility through television, DVD and film has reduced the traditional barriers that seemed to make high culture exclusive. Many argue that cross over artists (such as Pavarotti and Kathryn Jenkins) have made high culture a thing of the past. Examples of high culture tended to be limited and rather stereotyped.

Question 12 (purpose in life)

This proved to be easily the most popular question with over 70% of candidates attempting it. There were inevitably some anti-religious rants and equally a number of evangelical tracts, but most candidates did attempt a balanced view. Few candidates really defined what they understood by purpose in life. Many recognised that religion could offer a purpose in life but equally there were other ways in which people could find such a purpose. A major weakness was the lack of supporting evidence. Most candidates seem to have found this question a 'safe bet'. It was generally tackled in a straightforward way but relatively few answers were really convincing. Many answers simply dealt with arguments for and against religion and effectively ignored the issue of purpose. It was disappointing that the vast majority of answers focussed on the Christian religion and paid little attention to the role of

other world religions. Some candidates addressed negative aspects associated with religion (such as terrorism, blood transfusions) but often failed to relate these to the question. Specific religious beliefs which could give purpose were rarely identified. Few candidates recognised that it is possible to combine religious and other factors in establishing purpose.

Question 13 (artistic style)

Only about 10% of candidates attempted this question. Few recognised that the question was about aesthetic evaluation (objective) as opposed to personal judgement (subjective) ways of assessing art. Most candidates failed to define or deal with the key terms in the question. The most frequent artistic forms considered were music and painting. Answers tended to split into two distinctive groups. Less able candidates had limited knowledge and understanding of the topic and were unable to support their answers with reference to specific works or styles of art. Better candidates, often students of Art, Music or Literature clearly understood the question and had the skills and knowledge to deal with it effectively. Many of the weaker answers simply rejected characteristics altogether and argued that the only way to judge art is on the basis of personal taste. Some of the best answers were able to show that the purpose of judgement is as important as the criteria used. Judgement based on 'liking' does not necessarily require knowledge of characteristics, whereas judgement based on critical comparison does. Candidates who took note of the different clues in the question ('judge', 'characteristics', 'style' and the listing of forms) often produced good answers. Some candidates demonstrated tremendous knowledge about different artists and works of art but often failed to use that knowledge to answer the question

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.

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 small number of candidates misunderstood the question and incorrectly identified optical instruments such as glasses. A significant minority of candidates incorrectly referred to the discovery of atoms or molecules, or failed to gain a mark because their answer was not specific enough eg "Galaxy" rather than "Discovery of new galaxies". Many students gained both marks, most commonly by identifying cells and astronomical discoveries.

Question 2

Most candidates correctly identified E as the answer.

Question 3

A large proportion of candidates were limited to 1 mark because they repeated the same answer three times, eg to reduce energy costs. A small number of candidates were able to suggest other valid reasons why the advice quoted in the question was given. References to reducing environmental damage were only credited when they were linked to the public image the company was trying to present.

Question 4

Many candidates gained marks by referring to the use of landfill sites, reduced energy costs or the associated reduction in waste gases. Vague references to "reducing pollution" or "saving the environment" did not gain marks.

Question 5

Many candidates gained at least one mark, very often for identifying the relevance of sample size or the use of a control group. Good candidates were able to score well quite easily. However a significant number of candidates scored very poorly because they described some of the procedures used in acupuncture rather than addressing the question about how they could demonstrate the effectiveness of the treatment. A number of answers essentially restated the question eg "Treat someone with acupuncture and see if it works" without giving any indication of how they would "see if it works".

Question 6

Better answers gained marks by linking possible medical problems to the specific procedures mentioned in the question, ie storage of eggs for a long time, rather than to the problems associated with IVF generally. Most candidates gained a mark for identifying ethical problems such as the impossibility of an IVF child knowing their biological family, or problems linked to religious belief. No marks were given for statements such as "It is playing God" unless these were linked to belief.

Section B

Question 7(a)

Approximately a fifth of candidates identified B as the correct answer.

Question 7(b)

Almost all candidates correctly identified one of the facts, and better candidates often identified both facts.

Question 7(c)

Less than a third of candidates identified C as the correct answer.

Question 8

Many candidates failed to score any marks on this question. Even candidates who scored highly elsewhere very rarely score both marks on this question.

Question 9

Many candidates were able to gain 2 or 3 marks by correctly quoting evidence from the passage to illustrate how the author supported his argument. Most candidates went on to gain at least one further mark for correctly identifying particular pieces of evidence as fact or opinion, or by referring to the use of ridicule or humour. Better candidates were generally able to score highly without the use of overlong quotes from the passage. A small number of candidates chose to challenge the evidence in the passage, or confused the two authors, 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 10

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 or problems associated with technology. Many of the more limited answers focused almost entirely on mobile phones and ipods and concentrated on design changes rather than technological improvements. Better answers considered a range of technological developments, for example in medicine or transport, and questioned the value or purpose of "understanding technology" rather than just being able to use technology. Most candidates were limited to 2 marks for Quality of Written Communication because of errors in spelling or grammar.

Question 11

This question was answered by approximately 45% of candidates. Most candidates were able to offer a good argument relating to the use of fossil fuels and possible renewable energy sources, the possible effects of climate change or population growth and the difficulty of trying to control it. Many candidates mentioned Malthus or Boserup by name and were able to produce considered responses linking the various aspects of the question. Even amongst better candidates there still remains some confusion between the depletion of the ozone layer, often described as "the Ozone layer", and the greenhouse effect. Most candidates were limited to 2 marks for Quality of Written Communication because of errors in spelling or grammar.

Question 12

This question was answered by approximately 10% of candidates; often achieving high marks. A few very simple answers concentrated on the bad effects of weapons development without any attempt to differentiate between positions of the scientists in the two different countries. Better candidates were able to spell out some of the different pressures and ethical considerations which might apply and were also often able to relate these to historical examples, normally the development of atomic weapons. Most candidates were limited to 2 marks for Quality of Written Communication because of errors in spelling or grammar.

Hints for revision

- When asked to identify 2 or more reasons/advantages/facts make sure they are different and not just slightly different aspects of the same thing.
- If you are asked to select evidence you will not gain any marks by offering your own opinion.

6453/01

General

This paper largely followed the pattern of performance seen in recent years. Perhaps the calculations in Q1 proved more of a challenge to some candidates (especially questions 1(d), 1(e) and 1(f)), but Q2 proved popular and accessible. Of the three multiple choice questions about the political parties (Q3-5) the question concerning the Labour Party proved to be more difficult than the questions about the Liberal Democrats or the Conservatives. Marks for Section B were broadly comparable with expected performance though there were individual questions which proved to be distinctly more or less successful than usual. The three essay questions worked well - most candidates were able to find at least one question which engaged their interest sufficiently for them to produce an effective piece of extended writing as a response.

Section A

Question 1

Most candidates identified the correct answers for (a), (b) and (c). They were, respectively, E (39%), B (10,673) and B (2002). Candidates found questions (d), (e), (f) distinctly more difficult with fewer than half the candidates identifying the correct options which were, respectively, C (£2.8 million), C (22°), C (14,300). Question (g) was correctly answered by a majority of candidates as D (1,213).

Question 2

In (a) most candidates were able to identify the number of divorces in 1970 as being between 60,000 and 75,000 and in 2003 between 160,000 and 175,000. Some candidates forgot that the units in which they were dealing were 'thousands', but on this occasion the omission was not penalised.

In (b) most candidates recognised that the Divorce Reform Act 1969 which came into effect in the early 1970s had made divorce easier to obtain. It was also recognised that instead of being frowned on by society, divorce was now more acceptable - especially since society's values appear to have become more secular as the influence of religion has declined. Many candidates referred to women now being more financially independent, spouses often focusing on careers rather than marriage and support for a single parent now being significantly better than it had been in times past.

A significant minority managed to get very confused in (c)(i), seemingly trying to connect changes in the numbers of first marriages to the changing trends for divorce. Such a link was not an appropriate response. A majority of candidates adopted a less convoluted approach, referring to trends such as more people choosing to co-habit, those focussed on careers leaving marriage till later, more people choosing to remain single and some people being put off by the high cost of marriage. Some argued that it was now not shocking to society to have a child and be unmarried, as it had been previously. By offering such answers most candidates were able to secure maximum marks. The same was true of (c)(ii) in which candidates generally gained full marks for pointing out that with more people having been divorced, it was not surprising more would re-marry especially as religious opposition to re-marriage had to some extent declined.

Question 3

Perhaps surprisingly, under half the candidates recognised the correct answer as 'A - In the 2001 and 2005 general elections, Labour elected more women MPs than any other party'.

Question 4

Over half the candidates identified the correct answer as 'C - The Liberal Democrats opposed UK participation in the war in Iraq'.

Question 5

Over half the candidates identified the correct answer as 'D - In the past twenty years both John Major and William Hague were Leader of the Conservative Party'.

Section B

Question 6

In (a)(i) most candidates correctly identified 'It's a great pity....' as an opinion. Quite a few gained no marks, though, because they failed to explain why this was the case. To gain the mark, a candidate needed to say this was the case because the phrase was a value judgment or that it could not be tested/verified or that it was subjective or could not be proven or that not everyone would agree.

Similarly in (a)(ii) most candidates correctly identified 'like the Americans did' as being a fact. Most went on to say this was because it could be tested/verified or that it could be proved to be correct because it actually happened or that it was objective and could be supported by evidence. A few candidates scored no marks either because they failed to offer an acceptable reason or because (in spite of the explicit instruction in the question) they offered a totally different extract from the passage as an example of a fact.

In (b) a majority of candidates once again demonstrated that they do not understand inductive and deductive arguments. Just a few candidates correctly said that if one or more specific observations/facts were identified leading to a general conclusion, this would be an example of an inductive argument. Most of these candidates recognised that in the case of inductive arguments, the conclusion reached is not certain, being only more or less probable. The more successful candidates then often went on to point out that in a deductive argument if the premises are true and the argument is good then the conclusion must be true.

In (c) determining the relevance of the writer's holiday experiences, as described in the passage, proved to be a challenging task to many candidates. Successful answers generally recognised that, although anecdotal, the 'holiday comments' were relevant to the writer's conclusion because they highlighted the mindset that older people need to recognise they are not 'past it'. Many candidates dismissed the holiday experiences as having no relevance at all - those who offered no serious reason for such a view gained no marks. However some credit was usually gained by those who said that what a person did for a couple of weeks on holiday might have no bearing on their performance over the other fifty weeks of the year at work.

If responses to (b) and (c) tended to be disappointing, answers to (d) provided a very pleasing contrast. The question worked well with many candidates being able to select and comment explicitly on appropriate pieces of evidence (usually referring to

the holiday experience, Lloyd George and Alan Greenspan). A fairly small minority failed to read the question with sufficient care and seemed to assume they were being asked a different question - often set in the past - about how and how well the conclusion was justified; if such answers gained any marks, the total was usually modest.

Section C

Question 7

This question yielded some animated discussions about the relative contributions to understanding society's problems from, respectively, natural and social scientists. Most candidates were able to offer arguments from different perspectives and to reach a justified conclusion. Those whose answers included some albeit simple evaluative judgments were able to reach Level 4. Generally it was felt that both groups had a massive impact on society - natural scientists can identify problems (global warming, incidence of disease) and seek solutions while social scientists have insights into different types of problems (unemployment, 'credit crunch' or 'broken society'). It was, however, pointed out by some of the strongest candidates that social scientists seem to have a greater difficulty than natural scientists when it comes to agreeing on the best solutions.

Question 8

This question yielded some thoughtful discussions about those who had committed so many offences and never been caught in the past that they were often entirely justified in thinking they never would be caught. It was recognised that in such circumstances deterrent sentences logically had no meaning. Better answers then often went on to consider the impact an improvement in detection rates could have on the behaviour of such criminals. Most candidates were able to offer reasoned arguments and a justified conclusion. While some answers offered simple evaluative judgments and reached Level 4, many scored less because they moved away from the precise issue raised by the question, offering instead a wide range of comments, assertions and occasionally arguments about crime and society in general.

Question 9

Although questions on the general subject of 'family life' have often attracted more than their fair share of weaker answers, this was certainly not the case this year. This question provoked some hard thinking about role models and how they could be an influence for good or ill. Most candidates offered arguments from different perspectives and reached a justified conclusion. Those containing evaluative judgments were able to reach Level 4. Generally it was felt that role models were very influential but that being a role model should not be seen as applying to parents only - the significance of siblings, teachers, sports and pop stars, fellow gang members and friends on Facebook was considered and in some cases they were seen as being just as or more important than parents; there were also excellent comments on the part played by role models in helping a young person define her or his identity.

6453/02 (Coursework)

It is pleasing to report that the strong performance by candidates submitting General Studies coursework for Unit 3B has once again been maintained.

The biggest single improvement noted was in the greater proportion of candidates basing their work on genuinely evaluative (ie: 'how far...' or 'to what extent...') questions - and therefore the marked reduction in those using purely descriptive titles on which it has often proven impossible to achieve high scores for AO3 and/or AO4 in the past.

Sadly, though, a few not only offered largely descriptive pieces of coursework but also sometimes based them on topics which were distant from the main concerns of the Unit 3 specification. Topics such as the rise and fall of Hitler, the importance of the media, the speed and thrills of driving a motor car, the body beautiful and the practicalities of organ transplants had little or no equivalence to the U3A paper for which this coursework option provides an alternative route. Although the work was not rejected, marks for such topics awarded by the centres were generally low on relevance grounds, a judgment confirmed by moderators.

For 2009, the last occasion when this coursework option will be available, centres are urged to heed the following advice which is also to be found in the General Studies Coursework Guide (2nd ed, 2004) which may be accessed on the Edexcel website:

- Centres need to consider the suitability of the question for a coursework task - do not allow purely descriptive titles
- Make sure the topic is one which can effectively be completed in an essay of 1,500 to 2,000 words at most.
- Subject matter should clearly fit into the category of 'social perspectives' - preferably based on a topic listed in the Unit 3A specification
- The topic should be broad enough for the candidate to be able to select an appropriate range of relevant information
- Candidates need to be able to conduct a debate over their chosen question and to be able to draw a justified conclusion from their discussion
- Candidates should identify types of knowledge and argument used in reaching their conclusion (ie address issues typically raised in Section B of the Written Exam for Units 1-5).

Most candidates submitted a bibliography and some made the effort to reference their work in the body of the assignment but in a majority of cases such bibliographies failed to provide sufficient detail to enable a diligent reader to go back to the original source on which the student had worked to produce the assignment. Sometimes where candidates had cited a verifiable source, the amount they quoted in the coursework was greater than the amount they acknowledged. Stronger candidates sometimes lost AO3 marks because they had gone past the 2,000 word limit

The moderators generally agreed with the rank order of candidates established by centres; typically, though, marks were often generous over 40% and rather harsh under 20%. Where moderator marks differed from centre marks, the error was often in assessing AO4 for which (as stated above) marks are to be awarded for the kinds of skills typically assessed in Section B of the Written Exam for Units 1-5.

This year saw some totally new centres entering impressive coursework and both students and their teachers in these centres are to be congratulated for 'getting it

right'. This year more centres helpfully wrote annotations on the students' work which enabled moderators to understand the thinking behind marks awarded; it would be wiser though for centres not to give the candidate an actual grade on the work as marks may change upwards or downwards when the centre's coursework is reviewed by external moderators.

Although there seemed to be fewer serious administrative errors than has sometimes occurred in the past, still too many centres continue to use the old coursework mark sheet when they should be using the new version printed in the Coursework Guide, a significant number of centres submitted coursework with incomplete front cover sheets, lacking centre or candidate numbers and signatures and up to a quarter of centres sent their sample to their moderator without including the work of the top and bottom candidates. The incomplete sheets and incomplete samples were matters which were easy to correct but at a busy time of year, moderators and exam staff in the schools and colleges could well do without additional chores of this kind.

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 but there is also much confusion on the topic of Culture.

There were few rubric infringements. However a number of short questions and multiple choice questions were not attempted by some candidates. This is unfortunate as it means marks cannot be gained. If a question, especially a multiple choice type, is attempted there is always a chance to gain a mark even when candidates are not sure of the 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. Success, especially in Section B, depends on an awareness of the required skills and knowledge. 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 with which to support their arguments. Most candidates appeared to have a sound grasp of what was expected of them, even if at times they were not able to deliver.

A significant problem is that many candidates do not read questions with sufficient care so that key words or ideas are missed or misinterpreted. As a result some candidates wrote at excessive length using material that did not relate to the question. Consequently the marks they achieved were lower than their natural ability seemed to justify.

Section A

Questions 1a and 1b

These were multiple choice questions and seemed a straightforward test of knowledge. Both parts were correctly answered by more than 85% of all candidates.

Question 2

Responses to this question were disappointing. Many candidates appeared to experience some difficulty in understanding what they were asked to do. This was a new type of question on a familiar topic. Candidates were required to distinguish between creativity and innovation, but often failed to do so. Too often candidates simply recycled words from the question. They must recognise that it is not possible to define a term simply by using the words in the term. This does not show understanding. Ideally candidates should have shown that creativity is a general term describing the process of bringing something into existence on the basis of imagination or skill. In contrast innovation is a sub-division of creativity which involves producing something that is in some way unique or different to what has been done previously. Innovators change the rules or make new ones whilst creative people usually follow existing rules.

Question 3

Answers to this question were very mixed. Most candidates were able to score at least one mark but relatively few gained all three. Too often candidates attempted to define 'absolute' but ignored the equally important 'moral values'. Many understood that 'absolute' was something that applied under all circumstances but too often it was associated with individual feelings or beliefs rather than as something that was universal. Many recognised that the idea of absolute values came from a religious base. Candidates who understood the term correctly were usually able to give an appropriate example. Candidates who ignored 'absolute' and simply defined moral values could not be given credit for appropriate examples because they did not show clear understanding of the term.

Question 4

Part (a) was a new approach to testing ideas about religious belief. Most candidates were able to give a catalogue of areas where science was said to challenge Bible teaching (such as origin of the earth/universe; creation of man; miracles) but relatively few were able to answer the question 'explain how...'. The key issue here is that scientists claim to operate on the basis of 'proof' whereas the Bible depends on faith. To gain all three marks candidates were required not only to give examples of scientific challenges but also to show the process that science used. Most candidates were however able to achieve at least 2 marks. Of critical importance here is the instruction to 'explain'. This requires much more than a listing or description of examples. This is a good example of the type of question where careful reading is essential if full marks are to be obtained.

Part (b) was fairly straightforward and most candidates were able to achieve at least one mark. The key term was relevance. Too often candidates failed to take note of this and gave answers which were descriptive of what religion is rather than what it can offer to a modern society.

Section B

Question 5

This proved to be a difficult question for most candidates and was generally answered poorly. Only about a quarter of candidates were able to achieve one mark. This was usually awarded for weak explanations of opinion. It is clear that the majority of candidates are not able to distinguish between these two terms although they are key aspects of thinking and analytical skills. Answers were generally vague and repetitive. Some candidates assumed that they had to find the answer in the passage.

Questions 6a, 7a and 8a

These were all multiple choice questions. Just over half selected the correct answer for 6a whilst over 70% were correct on 7a and 96% correct on 8a.

Question 6

Parts (a) and (b) required candidates to select phrases used in the passage. Some candidates ignored the given line numbers and selected from the wrong parts of the passage. Others wrote out lengthy sections of the passage so that it was not clear which part referred to either the analogy or to the moral judgement. Questions such as these should not be answered by quoting several sentences, nor should the instruction 'identify and write out' lead to a paraphrase in the candidates own words. Three quarters of candidates were successful on part (b) but less than half were correct in part (c).

Question 7

Similar skills were tested in parts (b) and (c). These were answered slightly more successfully. It is a matter of some concern that all of these short questions test very basic aspects of thinking and analytical skills but a considerable number of candidates appear either not to understand the terms or to lack the ability to identify appropriate examples from a passage. These are skills that clearly need attention if candidates are to succeed.

Question 8

Part (b) was based on a critical analysis of the passage. The earlier questions in Section B 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.

Many candidates appear to have read the passage only superficially whereas this question requires 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 claim to which they were directed in the question.

Answers often simply identified evidence which related to the claim, but many candidates failed to examine how effectively the evidence they had identified did support the author's view. Many answers tend to be simplistic, eg 'facts are good evidence, opinions are unreliable/biased and statistics cannot be questioned'. Of critical importance in this passage is not whether there is evidence but whether it provides effective support. A number of candidates simply paraphrased the passage. Some gave broad answers claiming that the author uses facts and opinions (which could be said of almost any piece of writing) and failed to bed their answer in actual

evidence found in the passage. The reduction of this question to 3 marks meant that there was a better spread of marks but it did not reduce the amount candidates wrote. Candidates who answered the question 'How successfully ...?' were often able to gain the third mark.

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.

Quality of communication was generally sound. Some candidates failed to use an appropriate style of writing and too often candidates misspelt 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

Question 10 was the most popular answer with just over 33% of candidates attempting it. The least popular was question 11 with 15% of candidates answering it. The other two essays attracted almost 25% of candidates.

Question 9 (culture)

This question demonstrated the usual poor understanding of the term culture. Many candidates treated it in purely socio-economic rather than artistic terms. Most did attempt to create an argument but often lacked sufficient evidence to justify the views they expressed. Very few attempted to unpick the term 'meaningless'. Most tried to argue that high culture has been absorbed into popular culture thanks to Simon Cowell and Paul Potts. Some of the better answers did focus on the issue of accessibility and education but generally candidates assumed that high culture was simply what the royal family and other wealthy people enjoyed doing. Some candidates identified high culture with national culture and took the opportunity for a 'rant' against immigration and the infiltration of 'other cultures'. Some of the better answers did recognise that the idea of what is meant by culture can change over time.

Question 10 (moral responsibility)

This was the most popular essay and it did generate some extremely good answers. Many candidates recognised the need to discuss freedom of expression and were able to distinguish between the right to express and the right not to be offended. Some very cleverly introduced a middle stage suggesting that all artists had the right to express what they thought but did not have the right to have their work exposed to others who might be offended. Very few candidates paid attention to the issue of morality either directly or indirectly. A number of candidates were able to support their answer to different examples of contemporary art which for one reason or another has caused offence. Few recognised that there already exist a considerable number of restrictions on freedom of expression, whether of artists, journalists or the ordinary citizen. Many answers were converted into discussions of censorship rather than of moral justification.

Question 11 (aesthetic evaluation)

This was the least popular essay but overall was the highest scoring. Candidates who had some knowledge of the arts and aesthetic evaluation were able to write well informed and well balanced arguments making good use of examples. Weaker answers tended to focus on popular music and assert that 'what I like' is the only

effective way to judge art. Some of the best answers were able to question the purpose of evaluation, recognising that different purposes lead to different forms of judgement.

Question 12 (Media bias)

This question 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. A major issue was that candidates rarely seemed to understand the term 'media bias'. Most focussed on the idea of a free society. Some recognised that a genuinely free society must inevitably allow the development of different forms of bias whilst more controlled societies could eradicate all but official bias. Few paid attention to the concept of 'essential'. There were some extremely good well informed answers but many were based on vague unsupported assertion. Perhaps inevitably the Sun and Labours election victory featured prominently.

Quality of communication was generally sound. Some candidates failed to use an appropriate style of writing and too often candidates misspelt 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.

6455/01

General

This paper proved accessible to most candidates and the pattern of performance was typical of recent years. Candidates gave confident responses to questions in Section A of the paper. In Section B many candidates had difficulty in defining concepts such as assertion and inductive but were more successful in the final question dealing with an assessment of the evidence in the insert passage. Three out of the four essay questions attracted thoughtful and largely coherent responses with many candidates attempting to make evaluative comments.

Section A

Question 1

In (a) the majority of candidates recognized that the data relating to life expectancy was arranged in descending order and correctly identified Ireland as the median life expectancy country.

In (b) most candidates were able to give at least two reasons to explain the variation in years of life expectancy with the most popular responses being quality of health care and levels of income and wealth. Some candidates lost marks by duplicating their responses or giving vague responses such as "quality of life".

Question 2

This question was generally well answered although some candidates were able to give only two reasons - deterrent and making the streets safer. While many candidates were able to respond fully to this question and gave three relevant reasons for imposing larger prison sentences the specific language and concepts of retribution, rehabilitation and reform were not always evident.

Question 3

In 3(a) the majority of candidates were able to apply 15% to 40 million and arrive at the correct figure of 6,000,000.

In 3(b) a minority of candidates failed to read or understand the initial instruction - "using the data in the table" and presented generic responses which had no connection with the specific social characteristics of prisoners identified in the data. Most candidates however recognized the importance of poor schooling, the lack of qualifications, high levels of unemployment, homelessness and mental disorders as being significant factors needing attention and resources as an alternative to larger prison sentences. There were many sensible and relevant explanations given to support these alternative ways of reducing crime.

Section B

Question 4

In (a) very few candidates were able to clearly differentiate between an assertion and an argument. The essential distinction between an assertion - a claim or proposition made without supporting evidence (unjustified) and an argument - a claim or proposition made with supporting evidence (justified) was rarely made.

Some candidates were able to accurately define an argument but were unable to define assertion and thus were unable to gain a mark.

In (b) many candidates did not understand the difference between inductive and deductive and were therefore unable to explain why inductive arguments are thought to lead to weaker conclusions than deductive arguments. Some candidates were able to contrast an inductive argument (where specific observations lead to a general conclusion) with a deductive argument (where a general observation/ premise lead to a specific conclusion) but were unable to go on and make the important point that an inductive argument leads to a conclusion that is not certain but only more or less probable.

In (c)(i)-(ii) the vast majority of candidates correctly identified part (i) as a fact and part (ii) as an opinion. However, particularly in 4c(i), the reasons given were often insufficient to gain the mark. A reason such as “the statement contains statistics” or “the statement is a personal opinion” were not sufficient. Reference needs to be made to issues such as evidence, verification, objectivity, actuality and proof in (i) and to issues such as subjectivity, lack of evidence or verification, and value judgment in (ii).

Part (d) proved challenging to many candidates. Only a minority managed to use the passage example to fully explain the relationship between beliefs and facts and opinions. Those candidates who assumed that the phrase “Muslim alienation has increased” was the most likely to be supported by evidence were able to effectively connect with the previous sentence and discuss how belief can develop into opinion and how both concepts might be supported with facts.

In part (e) less able candidates either gave just a summary of the passage or wrote about the arguments and not the strength of the evidence. Many candidates however gave confident and comprehensive responses to this question. After identifying the author’s proposals for a hung parliament as a solution (and being awarded one mark), strong answers then identified the one strong piece of evidence in the passage (voter support for the Labour Party) and contrasted it with the weight of opinion, value judgment, unsupported inductive argument and assertion elsewhere in the passage. Perceptive candidates recognized the significance of the concepts reviewed in Question 4(a) (b) (c) and (d) and incorporated them in a logical and coherent response to this question.

Section C

Question 5

This question produced some very forceful arguments in favour of victim involvement in court cases. Some weaker responses were unable to get beyond an emotional reaction to the phrase “aggrieved, biased and vengeful people” in the question. Such responses tended to be one-sided and assertive rather than balanced and evidence based. Many answers were simplistic, concentrating on the feelings of the victim and their families. Very seldom was there reference to the offender and his/her motives and feelings. Some candidates revealed rather imperfect understanding of the judicial process and court procedures and many were ignorant of the opportunities available to victims of perpetrators to address or influence a court. Essays that identified and discussed ways in which victims and offenders might seek and take advantage of opportunities within the existing court system and then sought to make same judgment with regard to relative value and worth of such opportunities were

able to reach level 4. Essays which related the rights and responsibilities of victims and offenders to notions of judicial purpose such as retribution, reform and rehabilitation were awarded high marks.

Question 6

This was the most popular question and the one to which many candidates had an emotional attachment. Some revealed great anxiety, fear and antipathy for sport. A few explained how and why PE lessons were stressful and how they felt bullied and fearful about having to do a sport or wear unflattering or too revealing clothes. There was often a suggestion that an increase in PE would lead to increased truancy. Many candidates were however able to incorporate such personal fears and experiences in balanced and thoughtful approaches to this question. Strong responses identified a range of broader issues relevant to fitness and obesity such as diet, genetic conditions, economic and social circumstances. They also took a more critical stance and raised questions on the specific proposal for more required sport exercise and raised questions relating to the rights and wrongs of an imposed regime of 4 hours a week, timetabling problems for schools, resource, equipment and curriculum implications. The need for a change of lifestyle, diet and home influence were recognized as being just as important as exercise.

Question 7

This was not a popular question and was often not well done. It seemed to attract less able candidates who had very limited understanding of the legislative process and who failed to unpack the latter part of the proposal and focus on effective and ineffective laws. This question attracted a significant number of superficial, simplistic and prejudiced responses. Stronger candidates recognised the need for new laws to meet new and developing situations (e.g. security to combat terrorism). They also gave examples of anachronistic laws that need reforming. A common example of the changing effectiveness of a relatively new law was that of the use of mobile phones when driving.

Question 8

There were some very good answers to this question which often evidenced strong feelings especially when discussing the ethics of paying a £10,000 tax free grant to encourage the production of more children. Answers made reference to a wide range of issues such as teenage pregnancy, how the grant might be used and motives for child bearing (love versus money). Strong answers contextualized the question in terms of a declining working population and discussed the short/long term costs and benefits of such a proposal. More emphasis was often placed on the cost to the tax payers rather than on the exchequer although perceptive candidates recognized the limited value of a one-off payment of £10,000 and discussed the implications for education, health and housing resources if the proposal was successfully implemented.

6456/01

General

Candidates choose two essays titles from four and, as in most years, a particular pair of questions was much more popular than the others. This year, just over 80% of candidates chose question 2, and just under 80% chose question 4. Question 1 attracted about 15%, and Question 3 just over 20%. The popularity of particular questions is related to perceived connection with current interests - for example the information/Internet link in question 2, or to moral and political issues that are currently in the media - for example, human rights and the holding of terrorist suspects in question 4. The other questions appear to be less popular because of theoretical issues to do with the arts and/or sciences (question 1) or broader philosophical issues (question 3). That said, for the candidates who tackled less popular questions, the mean marks and mark distributions were similar to the others.

Most of the candidates were able to get to grips with the demands of their chosen questions at some level and were relatively successful with the aspects relating to AO2 and AO3, with which they are presumably familiar from the other units in this qualification. A significant minority appear to think it is acceptable to produce an A2 level essay without reference to any specific evidence (AO1). AO4 continues to weaken mark totals for most candidates, as it is either ignored or somewhat artificially "tacked on" as an afterthought.

Teachers could help students gain better marks in a difficult task by reinforcing the following points:

- Write legibly. An examiner cannot award marks for words that are impossible to decipher. It is also better to write as neatly as possible; sadly, standards have not changed for the better this year.
- Select the key words/terms in the text of the question, and say clearly what you believe they mean in your introduction. This will help you think more clearly about the question, and will help the examiner see how you have interpreted it.
- Make sure you consider more than one point of view or argument.
- Don't pay lip service to weighing up the value of your evidence - and remember that its worth has to be considered in relation to the nature of the argument. Are you using moral reasoning, or is the question expecting an objective assessment?
- Come off the fence in your conclusion - you are being asked to weigh up the evidence you have provided and to deliver a conclusion in a justified way.

Question 1

Quite a challenging question on the face of it, but accessible from the knowledge expected in the specification. It was clear that candidates felt far more secure of their ground when discussing the nature of art, than when elucidating the impersonality of science. Indeed, this led many candidates astray into discussing the finer points of classical and modern art, rather than tackling the job, or role, of the artist in society. Where they did so, they obviously felt uncomfortable. Describing the “impersonality” of science frequently led to a presumption of robotic behaviour by scientists, although a minority considered that some scientists showed excitement and competitiveness in their work.

At the lower end of the scale candidates merely agreed with the assertion and went on to give a few examples of modern art. The subjectivity of art came up regularly, and examples of Damian Hirst, Tracy Emin or “Banksey’s” pieces were common. More developed answers argued that science and technology could be personal and explored areas such as healthcare and other discoveries which directly affect society.

Most candidates decided firmly the answer to the question was ‘no’ and reasonably good answers went on to introduce examples where science and art often merged, such as the i-pod, where the design of the item was as much a marketing factor as its functionality. A nice answer was seen from a scientist extolling the ‘beauty’ of Euler’s formula from the most impersonal of sciences, mathematics.

Those who chose to answer this question frequently missed any reference to “most important job” and simply tried to assess whether or not it was the job of the artist to “counterbalance the impersonality of science and technology”, the latter part of this being accepted without discussion by the majority of candidates. A few missed the idea of “job”, or role, and wrote about the similarities and differences between arts and sciences. While not irrelevant, this needed to be more closely linked to the question. A few did very well, questioning both aspects of the claim, often with useful examples.

Very few candidates tackled a deeper philosophical point embedded in the question - what does it mean to ascribe a “job” or function to any human being? This bears on the idea of an individual having a purpose that transcends the fact of their existence. To reassure teachers, not considering this aspect was not a bar to reaching the highest levels in the mark scheme - but it could be something that you discuss with future candidates.

Question 2

A very popular question and, on the whole, tackled quite competently. Candidates could score high marks by analysing two different viewpoints in some depth. Clearly it lent itself to the Internet generation, and many good answers were seen extolling the virtues of the Internet in some specific detail, for example describing the use of social network sites, online encyclopaedias and messaging. It was often noted by candidates that much of the information on the Internet was subjective and unverified, notably where editorship falls under the responsibility of self-chosen individuals. A majority also considered other sources of information - libraries and the media - but the Internet was the object of choice. Weaker two-sided examples were seen where candidates accepted that the information was 'out there' but that we as individuals could not be bothered to access it, or that it meant nothing to 'us' anyway, particularly in relation to scientific affairs. Such answers came across as less than objective and these responses had an obvious 'teenage slant'. Political examples were seen more often than scientific, often referring to George Bush, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and more recently, the proposed 42-day detention requirement for terrorist suspects. Those candidates who appeared to be scientists probably know more than they think, though in the main, answers from such students tended to be limited to ubiquitous and generalised points on cloning and GM crop production.

While weaker answers tended to accept "access to a greater range and quantity of information" with little comment, better responses were able to challenge this and discuss the factors which might limit access by certain people and the potential dangers of accepting all this information on trust for example - lack of regulation of internet sites or media bias. A number of answers described government censorship of certain events, some to a very paranoid level, with a number of conspiracy theories given in great detail. Most of the higher level answers described society's lack of interest in political and scientific affairs and concluded that whilst the information is out there, people wouldn't necessarily actively seek it out.

However, it is of concern that candidates have a sense of having the truth hidden from them. They also think that nowadays there is more "spin" and propaganda than before. They seem to be disillusioned. They all agree that we have a freedom of choice when it comes to the source of information but many think that all sources are biased in ways that are very difficult to detect.

Overall, candidates were able to provide much information and comment on the availability of information, and tackled this aspect well. The "understanding" of the public was a different matter, and very few candidates considered the reasons why the general public might be considered to be ill informed, or where it makes poor and superficial judgments. Most were able to say something convincing about "public understanding", usually saying that it was not necessarily better, since access to information does not automatically increase interest in or ability to process political and scientific topics. Many took "political and scientific affairs" as read and did not think to develop these aspects with evidence.

A small minority were able to use some statistical evidence - for example, the turnout at local and general elections as an indicator of public interest. Some considered the impact of universal education as a promoter of information sharing and understanding. Candidates should be encouraged to think more carefully about the evidence that they would need, as opposed to evidence that they might have as personal knowledge, in order to answer the more demanding part of the question. For example - discussing how we might estimate "public understanding" is just as valuable as having some actual examples as far as the mark scheme is concerned.

Question 3

Although this was not a popular question, it produced some excellent and very well developed answers, allowing very good candidates to display their knowledge on current world problems - civil war in Somalia, global climate change, Burmese oppression, Zimbabwean 'democracy', the incompatibilities of Islam and the secular world - as major problems that the international community has great difficulty in tackling due to political intransigence in various forms. Some good answers took the view that inventions often occurred not necessarily through necessity, but through convenience to ourselves, such as the continual improvement in transport (long-term) and in home entertainment, to give two examples. Similarly, candidates were able to show the opposite viewpoint, such as the Kyoto agreement, events such as Live Aid, and organisations such as the UN making attempts to solve particular international problems, albeit with limited degrees of success.

Some candidates produced interesting discussions on the contrasting views of Malthus and Böserup on population pressures and agricultural development, and how these related to the "necessity" argument. On the whole, candidates expressed considerable optimism about mankind's capacity to tackle difficulties and disasters - medical, natural and sociological - but in many answers this may have been because they did not consider the evidence of history or geology. Very few appreciated the scale of some events - earthquakes and tsunamis, for example - or the energy involved in natural processes such as hurricanes and floods. Some essays did look at seemingly insurmountable problems such as an asteroid collision, with the inevitable reference to the film "Armageddon." The most common conclusion from the higher-level answers was that most things could be solved provided there was the political will to do so.

While a few were able to recognise, especially with regard to climate change initiatives, that realistic and sustainable progress was only likely to be achieved with the agreement and cooperation of "the international community", this important angle was ignored in a significant number of the responses. A significant number of candidates were convinced it wasn't actually happening or argued that the science was unproven and the international community need not worry about it! This common belief seems to have stemmed from last year's Channel 4 documentary about the alternative theories, and provides an interesting light on Question 2. Perhaps unsurprisingly, very few candidates looked at the long term picture - humans have only been around significantly for tens of thousands of years - what happens in hundreds of thousands is remote, and possibly not worth thinking about?

Question 4

Although a very popular question, often answered at great length, candidates were reluctant to say what they understood to be a "human right". Examiners were left trying to interpret the candidate's understanding of a "right" by the context provided by the answer. Another weakness of the responses was a tendency to describe, sometimes in great detail, how human rights were being abused in various parts of the world - for example, Burma, Zimbabwe and some Islamic regimes - not realising that this was missing a large part of the question. The intention of the question was to enable a discussion of the origin of rights, and whether some people forfeit their claim to a right through their own actions or attitudes. Examiners are able, however, to credit answers that develop a different understanding of the question, so this misreading may not have lost many marks, but it is a good example for teachers to use with their students, in trying to get them to appreciate what the question is actually about.

Some candidates believe that it is the people's right to do anything they want, and very few make any links between rights and responsibilities or duties.

Some weaker answers were able to describe the weaknesses in Zimbabwean democracy for example, without relating their answers to how it affected people's rights. Better answers were able to refer to examples such as the UN charter on human rights, though few candidates developed their answers by asserting or describing universal 'rights'. Most took an uncritical approach and accepted that because of various terrorist threats, the curtailment of human rights was acceptable. The 42-day detention limitation again came in for some focus, though it was rare to see more attention given to domestic politics, such as Internet surveillance, ID cards and CCTV cameras being potential points of discussion. The incorporation of European Human Rights into British Law was seen a couple of times by very good candidates, who were clearly politically well informed and received appropriate credit.

Reference to "the nature of the world we live in" also inclined, at best, to the implicit. Nevertheless, there was some interesting discussion of a number of "political, religious and scientific issues" and most came to the conclusion that rights do sometimes need to be limited or sacrificed for the greater good (utilitarianism) and should be balanced by responsibilities. Weaker answers described simple pros and cons of the chosen issues - abortion, euthanasia, holding of terror suspects, prison sentences, dress codes, religious symbols, designer babies, cloning and embryo research - with insufficient links to the issue of rights. Although there were some useful international examples offered, there was surprisingly infrequent reference to universal human rights, as declared by the UN, to the work of groups such as Amnesty International or to the European Court of Human Rights, except when this was to complain about extremes of political correctness.

Appendix A: Statistics

6451: Aspects of Culture

Grade	Max.Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	36	33	30	27	25
Uniform boundary mark	120	96	84	72	60	48

6452: Scientific Horizons

Grade	Max.Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	31	28	26	24	22
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	35	32	29	26	24
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	34	32	30	28	26
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

6455: Modern Society

Grade	Max.Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	37	34	31	28	25
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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