

# ResultsPlus

Examiners' Report

June 2011

GCE General Studies 6GS02 01

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## Introduction

In their answers to this Unit 2 paper, candidates generally demonstrated an impressive breadth of knowledge and understanding; they often responded to the topics raised in the paper with interesting and innovative observations.

There were, however, four ways in which examiners felt that some candidates let themselves down. These were:

- 1 In Section A, many failed to find C as the the correct answer to Question 2 (on percentages) and D as the correct answer to Question 19 (on the Renaissance).
- 2 Although most candidates scored well on Questions 13-16 which dealt with facts, opinions, etc, they often then went on to score poorly on Questions 24-26 which called for knowledge of evidence and arguments. There are always 14 marks allocated to such matters (Assessment Objective 3) and candidates would be well advised to study such thinking and analytical skills more carefully. One easy strategy would be to spend more time working through pp5-8 of the Student Book.
- 3 Rather more candidates than usual wasted time by writing longer answers than required for some of the short Section B questions and then they ran out of time when tackling longer Section B or Section C questions, which carried many more marks.
- 4 Some candidates foolishly dismissed Question 32 with the statement that they didn't watch 'soaps' and therefore would not be attempting this question. The specification contains no requirement concerning candidates' television viewing habits. However, pages 21 and 55 of the specification do make it clear that candidates must be aware of 'messages' from soaps - the best answers embraced ideas such as moral panics, empathy, role models, influence, socialisation and tolerance

## Question 21

Many candidates offered vague answers, saying that life expectancy was rising or that there would be more elderly people by 2083. Even in 2011 both of these trends are obvious. So in answer to a question about how the population will have changed by 2083, candidates needed to be more specific in their answers.

In this short answer the candidate concisely establishes two clear changes.

Score: 1 mark (out of 1)

21 Using paragraph 1, how will the population of Britain have changed by 2083?

Children will be outnumbered by over-75's  
around 700,000 of our population in their 20's will  
survive to 2083



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

If you are asked about 'changes' always be as precise and definite as you can.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

One mark is awarded because the second point in the mark scheme is met by the first line of the answer. If the answer contained only the points in the second and third lines, this could also have gained a mark since 20 year olds now who are alive in 2083 will be 100 years of age

This response is talking about rising life expectancy which is already taking place, rather than concentrating on changes.

21 Using paragraph 1, how will the population of Britain have changed by 2083?

The ever rising life expectancy of the population in the UK means that people that were born around the year 2000, will be likely to be alive by 2083



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Before writing the answer, this candidate does not appear to have thought carefully enough about what the text was telling them.

The candidate doesn't seem to have appreciated that by 2083 over 700,000 of the population will be aged 100 or more. To say that lots of people born in and around 2000 will have lived to 83 in 2083 is not the point made by the paragraph, so a mark of 0 is awarded. If the candidate had said 'current twenty-somethings will be alive in 2083', they would have earned the mark



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Always read a passage on which questions are based with great care. This answer seems to have completely missed the fact that the writer is talking about people who were in their 20s around the year 2000.

## Question 22

This question gave candidates the choice of explaining links between life expectancy and either 'nature' or 'nurture' or both. Many did this very successfully; where some candidates fell down, they either described 'nature' when they should have said 'nurture' or vice versa. A few offered descriptions about ways in which life expectancy was changing without linking such ideas clearly or explicitly enough to either 'nature' or 'nurture'.

Although both points in this answer focus on 'nurture', it is still possible for two marks to be awarded because two clear and different points are made - NHS improvements and safer working environments.

Score: 2 marks (out of 2)

22 From your own knowledge, state two ways in which life expectancy (paragraph 1) could be linked to either 'nature' or 'nurture'.

- 1 Nurture- The medical care in Britain is now much better than previously so people can recover from illnesses such as Cancer that in 1900 would have killed them.
- 2 Nurture- Because people are now having more office based jobs so they are not being exposed to Coal mines like before. Therefore the lack of manual jobs has increased the life expectancy.

(Total for Question 22 = 2 marks)



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**Examiner Comments**

This question is clearly prefaced with the statement 'from your own knowledge' so candidates who tried to find an answer in the text were clearly not following the instruction given.



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**Examiner Tip**

This question was designed to give candidates the choice of writing about 'nature' or 'nurture' or both. But in such circumstances, it is essential candidates clearly state which of these is being explained or discussed.

Both the ideas expressed in this answer could have gained a mark if the candidate had clearly and correctly linked them specifically to 'nurture'.

Score: 0 marks (out of 2)

22 From your own knowledge, state two ways in which life expectancy (paragraph 1) could be linked to either 'nature' or 'nurture'.

- 1 ~~Medical and~~ ~~les~~ medical advancements in recent years has helped to add years on to the life expectancy
- 2 Technological advancements have prevented problems which would have occurred, centuries ago



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Examiner Comments

A couple of points are made which potentially could have been mark-worthy. However, since no link is made, no mark could be awarded.



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Examiner Tip

The question is clearly about 'links' so the candidate here needed to spell out the linkages.

## Question 23

Most candidates had little difficulty in giving two measures mentioned by the writer in paragraph 2 of the passage. However, those who tried to build answers from other parts of the passage could not be given marks, since they had not obeyed the instruction given.

The candidate is awarded two marks for giving more than two of the measures mentioned by the writer in paragraph 2 of the passage.

Score: 2 marks (out of 2)

**23** Outline two measures mentioned by the writer in paragraph 2 which the government might take to cope with increased population density in and around London.

1. Japanese -style bullet trains for improved transport  
Taller thinner housing + office blocks for more space
2. Also an effort to push businesses + government out of London and South East so there is less congestion in the area.



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**Examiner Comments**

This candidate makes all three points listed in the mark scheme, two of them in the first point - so the answer would have gained two marks even if the second part of the answer had not been given.



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**Examiner Tip**

If you are asked for two measures, why waste precious time in the examination giving three?

## Question 24

This question seemed to present candidates with enormous difficulty. If candidates had been able to remember the kind of statements about deductive arguments in the Student Book (p5), they would have been much more successful. The book says: 'Deductive arguments are usually explained as reasoning from the general to specific. More accurately, if the premises (previous statements from which a conclusion is inferred) are true, the conclusion cannot be false....'

The first part of the answer matches closely enough the third bullet point in the mark scheme - if the premises are correct, the conclusion must be correct. So 1 mark is awarded.

Score: 1 mark (out of 2)

**24** State two features of a deductive argument.

(You do not need to refer to the passage to answer this question.)

1. If the argument / statement / fact is true, then the conclusion must be true.
2. Words such 'if' and 'then' are used, with extensive use of facts.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Many candidates had much to say about the significance of facts and evidence, none of which relate in the ways suggested to deductive arguments. So the second part of the answer does not earn any marks.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

For all of the General Studies papers, an afternoon spent learning the points on thinking and analytical skills in the Student Book (pp5-9) would be invaluable.

In no way do these points identify a deductive argument; such arguments are usually limited to inferences relating to mathematics and definition of rules of formal logic.

Mark: 0 marks (out of 2)

**24** State two features of a deductive argument.

(You do not need to refer to the passage to answer this question.)

- 1 an argument that is made as a conclusion from the evidence
- 2 an argument that contains no bias and is objective



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**Examiner Comments**

References to evidence and bias do not suggest this candidate understands deductive arguments - none of the points in the mark scheme are stated, so no marks can be awarded.



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**Examiner Tip**

If the candidate had remembered no more than that deductive arguments go from general to specific (while inductive arguments go from specific to general), she or he could have achieved 1 mark.

## Question 25

To be effective, an argument needs to be supported by evidence - this is what facts provide. Facts are verifiable, can be proved and are objective while opinions are subjective and generally cannot be verified since they contain a value judgement. Expert opinions may be more persuasive than the opinions of others but it isn't unknown for experts to disagree.

This is a short and simple answer in which the subjective nature of opinions is clearly dealt with (just someone's view/ might not be right) and gains 1 mark. The reference to facts as truth/ hard to argue against, earns a second mark.

Score: 2 marks (out of 2)

25 Why are facts thought to support an argument better than opinions?  
(You do not need to refer to the passage to answer this question.)

Opinions are just someone's view on something  
and might not be right but facts are  
true and are hard to argue against.



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**Examiner Comments**

The candidate has the right ideas but it would have been desirable to state them more explicitly.



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**Examiner Tip**

This answer could benefit by using more of the key words to be used in a discussion about facts, opinions and arguments such as evidence, verifiable, objective, subjective, value judgements.

This answer neither identifies facts as evidence to support arguments nor clearly brings out the subjective/partial nature of opinions - so 0 marks are awarded.

Score: 0 marks (out of 2)

25 Why are facts thought to support an argument better than opinions?  
(You do not need to refer to the passage to answer this question.)

because if people see or hear facts their brain  
tells them that the information they have been  
given is right. Where as an opinion does not  
support the argument as the person listening is  
less likely to believe opinions over facts.



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**Examiner Comments**

Waffle doesn't pay!



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Although it is unlikely to have made a difference on this occasion, this candidate does not even take the trouble to spell a word in the question (argument) correctly. Accurate spelling does matter!

## Question 26

The writer establishes various observations and then uses an inductive argument to draw a conclusion from them. This isn't the only possible conclusion that could have been reached. For part (a) only '**Inductive argument**' was acceptable. However if a candidate gave a wrong answer for (a) but offered a sensible critical point for (b) they could have gained 1 mark.

For example, if '**argument from cause**' was offered as an answer for (a), a suitable critical comment could have been that correlations do not guarantee a cause and effect relationship between two events. Alternatively if '**argument from authority**' had been incorrectly given for (a) a mark could have been gained in (b) for an observation such as 'arguments from authority depend on the expertise of the authority but this cannot be a strong form of argument because even experts often disagree'.

(a) This isn't an example of a deductive argument so no marks can be awarded.

(b) Deductive arguments are not generally indecisive or 'only possibilities' so this part of the question also gains no marks.

Score: 0 marks (out of 2)

**26** (a) At the end of paragraph 4, the writer reaches the conclusion that 'Immigrants and their children will ... help make sure the working population continues to increase and pay for our pensions and the NHS'. On what type of argument is this conclusion based? (1)

Deductive

(b) How strong is this type of argument in supporting a conclusion? Briefly explain your answer. (1)

The conclusion is still indecisive. It states only possibilities



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**Examiner Comments**

Having offered an incorrect answer for (a), an appropriate comment in (b) about the strength of deductive arguments could have earned a mark - eg: if the premises are true, the conclusion cannot be false.

- (a) The candidate correctly identifies the argument as 'inductive' so 1 mark is awarded.
- (b) The candidate seems to recognise that this is a case of 'specific to general' so 1 mark is (just) gained.

Score: 2 marks (out of 2)

26 (a) At the end of paragraph 4, the writer reaches the conclusion that 'Immigrants and their children will ... help make sure the working population continues to increase and pay for our pensions and the NHS'. On what type of argument is this conclusion based?

(1)

induction

(b) How strong is this type of argument in supporting a conclusion? Briefly explain your answer.

(1)

quite strong because they have gone from a small case of young people working and generalised it.



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**Examiner Comments**

A more effective answer to (b) might have been to say something like: 'Conclusions based on inductive arguments are probable, rather than certain.'



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**Examiner Tip**

When discussing inductive arguments, try to stick to key terms. Inductive arguments are based on observations - ie reasoning from a specific observation to a broader generalisation (conclusion).

## Question 27

This question tests AO3 (thinking and analytical skills) and AO4 (quality of written communication). There is usually one such question on every paper. Here candidates are not asked to offer their own views on the topic or to consider whether or not they agree with the writer of the passage. Such questions are usually intended to focus on the reliability of the conclusion reached by the writer, the nature of the arguments and the types of evidence used to support them. In assessing answers, examiners typically ask themselves questions such as:

Does the candidate critically examine the evidence?

Does the candidate refer to the writer's arguments in terms of bias or gaps and flaws or facts and opinions?

Does the candidate refer to different types of argument (ie inductive, deductive, cause, authority or analogy)?

Is there a plausible final objective assessment made?

Given the nature of the Section B passage on this paper, there is an additional question to be asked:

Does the candidate critically discuss reliability and assumptions/predictions?

Most candidates resisted the temptation to engage with the argument itself and they did largely focus on evidence and arguments, as required. To that extent, this question yielded higher marks than some similar questions on previous occasions. But there will still have been some candidates who wasted time and gained few or no marks because they were not sufficiently alert to the nature of what was required.

The answer starts off by discussing evidence, then the weakness of predictions, then the writer's use of facts/opinions before reaching a plausible final assessment.

Communication is clear, with few errors, so 3 marks can be awarded for AO4.

Score: 7 (out of 7) AO3 - 4, AO4 - 3.

27 The writer suggests that the population of the UK will rise to 86 million by 2083 (paragraph 3). How strong are the **evidence** and **arguments** used in the passage to justify this claim?

There is evidence given throughout the passage to ~~prove~~<sup>justify</sup> that this will happen. Such as fertility rate of 1.8 million and 180,000 net immigrants per year. This ~~is~~ is factual and therefore justifies the rise in population.

However though the writer presents facts and figures ~~as~~ in his arguments, predicted figures for the future are not always correct and therefore could be discounted.

The writer also presents some opinions as facts which may not necessarily be true for example "The UK, though, will benefit from the changing economic and political power". There is no way of knowing that this

is definitely true and therefore it does not justify his conclusion as predicted results can change.

~~The writer gives an argument about the rise in population, makes it easy for this opinion to be passed on to the reader, and his claim to be justified.~~

In conclusion, the writer's arguments and evidence justify his claim to a certain extent, however it is not possible to predict the future number exactly therefore ~~is~~ weakening his evidence.



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Examiner Comments

There are 14 marks on this paper for quality of written communication - 3 for this question, 3 more for Q30 and 4 each for Q31 and 32. This candidate makes a few spelling mistakes but the answer is set out in well structured sentences and paragraphs, so full marks can be given. Those candidates who fail to take grammar, spelling and punctuation seriously are inevitably putting themselves at an increased disadvantage and, probably, lowering their overall grade.



## ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

If a candidate changes his or her mind, a simple line through a word, sentence or paragraph is sufficient to indicate to the examiner that it is not to be marked - extensive obliteration, as in the penultimate paragraph, is not required. Generally crossed out work is only marked when the candidate has not had time to replace it.

This answer starts off with a critical discussion of evidence involving current trends and then over the page points out that there are a great many assumptions in the writer's piece. The candidate has nothing to say about matters such as bias, gaps, flaws, facts or opinions in arguments nor are types of arguments considered - and there is no final plausible assessment. The quality of communication is weaker than the first answer but the answer is still broadly understandable.

Score: 4 (out of 7) AO3 - 2, AO4 - 2.

27 The writer suggests that the population of the UK will rise to 86 million by 2083 (paragraph 3). How strong are the **evidence** and **arguments** used in the passage to justify this claim?

The evidence is that 180,000 net immigrants per year and the fertility rate will make the population increase. This is based on if the current trends stay the same.

The current trends may dramatically change meaning that the population could greatly exceed 86 million or be greatly less.

A fertility rate of 1.8 isn't enough to increase the population alone it has to be about 2.1 to stop the population from decreasing. This means if immigration stops then the

population may decrease instead.

This shows the writer is making lots of assumptions for the population to increase to 86 million.

He also believes health care will continue to increase meaning lots of us will live to 100 but this may not be the case.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Even a simple comment that the writer's argument is inductive - and therefore not wholly compelling - could have gained an additional mark.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

The question is about 'evidence' and 'arguments'. The candidate gains marks because of what is said about 'evidence'. Only about half marks are gained overall partly because nothing at all is said about 'arguments'. It is always a mistake to ignore part of a question you are attempting to answer.

Like the less successful answer above, this candidate has little or nothing to say about arguments but aspects such as evidence, unreliability of predictions, unbiased nature of the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and an overall assessment are all there - and the quality of communication is good, with reasonably accurate spelling and coherent sentences and paragraphs.

Score: 7 (out of 7) AO3 - 4, AO4 - 3.

27 The writer suggests that the population of the UK will rise to 86 million by 2083 (paragraph 3). How strong are the **evidence** and **arguments** used in the passage to justify this claim?

The writer's suggestion is strongly backed up by extensive uses of facts and figures. This evidence helps to justify the claim strongly. However, this information is based on 'current trends', which means it may not apply in future as trends change.

The evidence is taken from the Office of National Statistics, which is an unbiased, respected source for statistical facts, meaning the argument is equipped with strong evidence.

However, this claim made by the writer rests on the fact of rising life expectancy, and the suggestion that old people will live longer and outlive the young.

The writer does not take into consideration the idea of disease epidemics or natural disasters, which would drastically reduce the population.

Also, the evidence is on immigration figures, such as data on net immigrants per year may not apply in years to come, as laws may change with new governments.

There is no bias involved, so this helps to put up a good argument.

Overall, if the evidence is true, then it helps to prove strongly that the writer's claim is true and justified, as one cannot argue against hard facts.



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### Examiner Comments

This answer is stronger than the answer immediately above because of the discussion about bias and the ONS. There is also a clear attempt to make an overall assessment at the end.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Tip

The second paragraph makes the point that the information comes from the Office of National Statistics which is generally regarded as reliable and unbiased. Candidates would be well advised to get into the habit of considering the reliability of the sources upon which the arguments leading to a conclusion are based.

## Question 28

Most candidates were able to score 1 or 2 marks from this question. Those who scored 0 often did so because they had ignored the requirement to stick to paragraphs 4 and 5 of the passage.

The first four lines of this answer explain how the UK could become more powerful in the EU Council of Ministers and the European Parliament. The following sentence matches the point about young immigrants joining the working population, so their taxes would help to pay for pensions and health costs.

Score: 2 (out of 2)

**28** According to paragraphs 4 and 5, why does the writer believe the UK should welcome the projected increase in its population?

Because, according to paragraph 5, the UK will benefit from the changing balance of economic and political power. The UK will then dominate the ~~Europe~~ Council of Ministers and the European Parliament. Also, an increase in population means the working population will increase, helping to pay for our pensions & the NHS. (Total for Question 28 = 2 marks)



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

The first point could easily have been strengthened by pointing out that UK representation in the European Parliament is based on population size. The second point could similarly have been strengthened if it had been mentioned that contributions towards health costs and pensions are likely to be specially important because of the rising elderly population.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

This answer just manages to remain within the writing space allocated and it gains both marks available. Some candidates wrote much more - a waste of time because, a short, concise answer is sufficient to gain the marks. Always try to get your answer into the space available. Never continue your answer in the space allocated to another question. If you must use more space, continue on an extra sheet of paper.

## Question 29

The question asked candidates to identify past events which might explain why the UK's involvement in Europe was the subject of so much debate. Inevitably a wide range of responses was offered - based on issues such as the growth of Euro-scepticism/rise of UKIP, media hostility especially from the Murdoch titles, the consequences of freedom of movement rules, the cost of EU membership and bailouts of failing economies, loss of sovereignty when EU law overrides UK law and EU developments such as the Maastricht and Lisbon Treaties. Many candidates seemed to think that European Union membership carried with it military consequences or obligations to which they were opposed. Maybe candidates were thinking the UK's role in NATO - but such comments had little or no relevance to this particular question.

The first five lines gain no marks but the two points which follow concerning the rise of UKIP and resentment over EU laws are both worth a mark.

Score: 2 marks (out of 3)

29 In the final paragraph, the writer says 'instead of taking a lead and seizing its opportunities, the UK will still be discussing whether it was a good idea to join the EU, and whether it might be time to have another referendum'. What events in the past might have led the writer to hold such a belief?

There have been past referendums<sup>held</sup> in the UK ~~over~~ over the issue of Britain's membership, due to the doubt held by many over whether it actually benefits the country. The creation of ~~B~~ parties such as the UK Independence Party (UKIP) demonstrates the negativity towards the EU held by a proportion of the population. Some people do not agree that the UK should have to adhere to laws & regulations set out by the EU if it does not agree with them, and there have been rows about this in the past.

(Total for Question 29 = 3 marks)



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

If, instead of the first five lines, the candidate had referred to another tangible point - such as the hostility of Murdoch papers to almost any EU activity - a third mark could easily have been gained.



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**Examiner Tip**

Some candidates unsuccessfully tried to find answers to this question in the passage. Some questions do depend on finding information from the passage (eg Q28) but this one requires candidates to draw an answer from their own knowledge and to be able to demonstrate awareness of relevant events in the past. Make sure you are aware of these two types of questions.

## Question 30

Most successful answers to this question saw the prospect of increasing British leadership and influence in Europe in terms of

population increases (whether explained in terms of greater life expectancy or immigration) leading to heightened representation in the European Parliament and a bigger role in the Council of Ministers. It was generally recognised that UK leadership could follow if we become the largest economy in Europe.

Equally, a greater leadership role for Britain could arise from a decline in the population and, hence, influence of countries such as France or Germany. Some candidates thoughtfully considered problems which national governments can not adequately tackle on their own - eg: economic policy, global warming and climate change, world trade issues. If Britain decided we wanted to do so, our government could exercise leadership over such matters and might be able to tilt the balance/make a difference on key policies - eg on supporting economically weaker countries or whether other countries should be allowed to join the EU or in making the organization and structures of the EU more open, efficient and democratic.

This answer effectively discusses power in Europe as population grows, strengthening economy, decline of other countries. There are some communication errors but the writing is broadly understandable.

Score: 5 (out of 7) AO1 - 3, AO4 - 2.

30 The writer states that 'British leadership of Europe will be there for the taking'. Explain why this might occur.

As our population booms the amount of seats we are allowed in the European Parliament "where power is allocated according to population size." Also This means that our ministers will have more say over what happens in Europe and be able to create new laws for Europe. Also the bigger population means more taxes which means our economy will boom, meaning in a few decades we will have the largest economy in the EU, which means we will be able to "dominate the Council of Ministers." As the UK's population will "exceed France's baby 2015 and Germany's by 2047." As these countries limit immigration from Poland and elsewhere, once their population begins to age and the government will not be able to pay people pensions. Their economy will suffer so we will be more dominant.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

In view of the importance of the changing relative population between the UK and other European countries, this candidate could probably have gained an additional mark by explaining in a little more detail why this change seems likely to take place.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

It would have been easier to follow the different points in the candidate's answer if the candidate had used paragraphs to make it clear where one point ended and the next one commenced. Good communication can improve the mark awarded.

This answer completely fails to engage with the writer's argument and does nothing to explain how Britain might have a greater opportunity for leadership. Communication is organised into simple sentences and paragraphs but lacks accuracy.

Score: 1 (out of 7) AO1 - 0; AO4 - 1.

30 The writer states that 'British leadership of Europe will be there for the taking'. Explain why this might occur.

This might occur because of the economic crisis as Britain will be getting more money from taxes and income from businesses as the world's wages will go up as also people may migrate to other EU countries which could also make their population rise.



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**Examiner Comments**

It would be quite impossible to work out what the question asked from this answer - such a test underlines the fact that the candidate's comments have little if any relevance.



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**Examiner Tip**

This answer proves that random comments are not enough! Most Section B questions are related to the passage in the insert - so in formulating answers, candidates usually need to bear in mind the arguments and conclusions advanced.

This answer is simply written but it does reach four key points - decline of France and Germany and their influence, importance of Britain's population growth and simple reasons, improvement of Britain's economy and more power in European Parliament and Council of Ministers. Communication is clear without significant errors.

Score: 7 (out of 7) AO1 - 4, AO4 - 3.

Total 4+3

30 The writer states that 'British leadership of Europe will be there for the taking'. Explain why this might occur.

Countries such as France and Germany "which limit immigration from Poland and elsewhere" will suffer economically. Because Britain allows more immigration ~~are our~~ population will overtake France and then Germany which will result in Britain having a better economy. According to the writer this will lead to the UK having the strongest economy in Europe which will increase political power. When the writer stated 'British leadership of Europe will be there for the taking' it means having the most influence, politically and economically which is what he is saying might occur.

In the Council of Ministers and European Parliament power is allocated based on population. This will be the result of increased population which would further justify ~~this~~ statement.

The writer believes that for "British leadership etc." to occur Britain needs to allow its population to grow. This is what the writer means when ~~he~~ they say "will be there for the taking".



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This answer takes only about half of the space allocated for the answer - but the candidate still gets full marks.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

It isn't necessary to fill up the spaces completely in order to get a good mark if you have made the key points simply and concisely.

## Question 31

In spite of the stimulus material which prefaces this question, some answers wandered far from issues of democracy and whether it has been weakened or strengthened over the past 50 years. Some candidates mistakenly seemed to think women did not have the right to vote in 1961; most answers missed the opportunity to comment on the voting age being reduced to 18 in 1969 or the lowering of the minimum age for candidates to 18 in 2006. However, many answers did have thoughtful points to make about the impact of pressure groups and the media as well as voting systems, political parties, devolution, referendums and elections.

The idea that First Past The Post (FPTP) voting does not provide fair representation earns AO1 - 1, AO2 - 1. This is followed by the claim that voters don't believe their votes count as much under FPTP as when proportional representation is used - AO2 - 1. The candidate's argument that the present system is too complicated and PR should be used instead is not tenable and doesn't gain marks. However, the observation that politics is unbalanced by so many donations being given to Labour/Conservative parties and the growing pressure for state funding which would strengthen the voice of smaller parties earns AO1 - 2, AO2 - 2. Democracy is not just voting but also may involve protests (foxhunting, student fees) which are seen now more than 50 years ago earns AO1 - 2, AO2 - 1. Finally the observation that some people are pleased the voting system hasn't changed earns AO2 - 1. Communication is understandable so 3 marks are awarded.

Score: 14 (out of 20); AO1 - 5; AO2 - 6; AO4 - 3.

31

### Democracy – Then and Now

- Fifty years ago, just three political parties were represented in the House of Commons and in some constituencies there were only two candidates for voters to choose from.
- By 2010 an average of six candidates contested each constituency and ten different parties were represented in the House of Commons.
- Over the last fifty years election turnouts have declined.
- In the 2009 elections for the European Parliament, a significant proportion of the UK's MEPs came from minor parties such as UKIP, the Greens and the BNP.
- Proportional representation is now used throughout the UK, for some elections at least.

To what extent and in what ways has democracy in the UK been strengthened or weakened in the past 50 years?

For the past 50 years we have used the first past the post voting system to elect new PM's. Although some people may feel this is a good way to vote it does not give a fair representation of the votes cast. This has weakened our democracy as people do not feel that their vote counts as much as when a proportional representation has been used. Some people feel that the voting system we have now is to

complicated and the proportional representation system should have been used ~~in~~ years ago. This has also weakened our democracy. Also as the more popular parties such as Labour and Conservatives are able to get donations, they are able to influence people to

vote for their party, this has weakened the democracy as people more people believe that these donations should stop and all parties should receive government grants to allow the less well known parties to have their say. The democracy in the UK has been strengthened by allowing people to protest, <sup>more</sup> for example student fees and this fox hunting protests. This strengthens democracy as it allows people to express their opinions. Protests were not as easily arranged and organised 50 years ago. The voting system today has not changed this is good as some people don't like change and believe it should stay the way it is.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

If this candidate had used paragraphs to indicate where one point ends and the next begins, a higher mark might well have been achieved for Quality of Written Communication.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

This candidate gains marks by making good use of the stimulus material which prefaces the question. Some candidates made no use of this material and generally scored less well as a result. If you are answering a question which has stimulus material attached, do not be afraid to use it.

This answer makes a variety of interesting points, some of which were not anticipated in the mark scheme. The candidate discusses: greater choice of parties strengthens democracy - AO1 - 1, AO2 - 1. More choices make people think about politics more AO2 - 1. More parties represented in the House of Commons means a wider range of views are expressed - AO1 - 1, AO2 - 1. More debate may lead to more compromises/accommodating views - AO1 - 1, AO2 - 1. Two candidates per constituency were not enough and more candidates make people think about who will be better for them - AO1 - 1, AO2 - 2. Turnout is declining, perhaps because 'broken promises' make voters angry - AO1 - 1, AO2 - 1. In particular, working classes feel parties no longer speak for them - AO1 - 1, AO2 - 1. Many young voters have little information on politics and feel government makes them suffer - AO1 - 1. Communication (AO4) is effective.

Score: 19 (out of 20); AO1 - 7, AO2 - 8, AO4 - 4.

To what extent and in what ways has democracy in the UK been strengthened or weakened in the past 50 years?

Democracy in the UK has strengthened in the past 50 years as there ~~is~~ is now a greater choice of parties such as minor parties which allow people a greater choice to pick from. This has strengthened democracy as people ~~are~~ don't have a very small limited choice and may make more people want to understand more about politics due to the number of different choices they have; ~~is~~ resulting in people understanding about what they are voting for.

Democracy has also strengthened over the past 50 years as more parties are represented in the House of Commons which means that more people with different missions and views are able to have

their say. This means that the majority of opinions are now being listened to, causing more of a debate, which will result in a better compromise being that that should benefit more people.

There are now more candidates for people to choose from which will encourage people to pick the candidate that will make a better change ~~from~~ for them. In the past the majority of people only had two candidates to choose from, therefore if the public

didn't like the particular candidates values they would have to vote for the opposite party. ~~which~~ <sup>This would</sup> make people less politically happy in the long run.

Democracy over the past 50 years has weakened due to the lack of people going to vote. A lot of people are no longer seeing the point in voting as no ~~longer~~ <sup>matter</sup> who they vote for the promises that are made to persuade people to vote for a certain party are never kept making people angry as they aren't seeing the changes they want.

A lot of people, especially from the working class, now choose not to vote as most parties ~~are~~ <sup>copy</sup> their ideas to the higher classes in ~~society~~ <sup>society</sup> as they are the most influential <sup>at</sup> part of the population and have the most money if it is needed. This means that the working class are seeing no benefits at all.

In addition to this most of the recent changes

made by the government are making the younger generation suffer and therefore they do not want to vote as whatever party they choose they will still not get the help they need. In things like education, or even young parents are unable to get the support that they need.

Another reason why democracy has weakened over the past 50 years is that young people that are old enough to vote have not been educated in politics so they understand what they are voting for as no-one has explained it and therefore find it easier not to vote.

In conclusion democracy has strengthened and improved over the past 50 years in the amount of choice yet it has weakened due to the lack of understanding people have about what happens in politics.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

This answer focuses clearly on 'democracy' as a key element of the question. Identifying key words is an important skill for success in examinations.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

While many candidates declare their opinions and offer little justification, a strength of this answer is that points made are supported by evidence and significance is simply but carefully explained. The more candidates explain how the points they are making help to answer a question, the better.

## Question 32

It was disappointing that a minority of candidates failed to attempt this question, perhaps because they had run out of time or maybe because they were under the mistaken impression that that only one of the Section C questions needed to be answered.

Equally disappointing was the fact that some candidates declared themselves unable to answer the question because they didn't watch soaps. The General Studies specification has nothing to say about which television programmes candidates should or should not watch - but it does clearly indicate (Section 2.5.1, P21) that 'messages' from soap operas should be studied; this is elaborated in Appendix 1 Clarification of Content (P55). Fortunately there were significant numbers of candidates who had indicated that they didn't watch soaps themselves who nonetheless produced thoughtful answers which went right to the heart of the issues raised in the question.

It was clear to examiners that many candidates knew a great deal about soaps and they were able to relate this to the question of promoting or legitimising certain types of behaviour in terms of ideas such as role models, empathy, socialisation and moral panics. Less successful were those who contented themselves with explaining storylines from various soaps without ever linking them closely to the precise terms of the question.

Soaps are popular and their ideas influence the young and thus affect behaviour - AO1 - 1, AO2 - 1. Negative behaviour (eg: drinking) is seen, perhaps because viewers wish to see tension/drama - AO1 - 1, AO2 - 1. Violence and fighting are often also seen - this matters because viewers may copy them - so soap characters may influence viewers to do the things they do such as skipping lessons, drinking underage or taking drugs - AO1 - 2, AO2 - 3. If soaps didn't offer tension/drama, they wouldn't be as popular - AO2 - 2. It would be better if soaps showed/emphasised adverse consequences to combat anti-social behaviour and make people think twice - AO1 - 1, AO2 - 1. The bad influence of soaps (eg glorifying murder) may occur as a result of peer pressure legitimising behaviours such as theft or adultery - AO1 - 3, AO2 - 1. The piece concludes that it's easy for people to forget that soaps are scripted not performed in the real world. Communication is effective.

Score: 20 (out of 20); AO1 - 8, AO2 - 8, AO4 - 4.

How far and in what ways do soaps promote certain types of behaviour and legitimise negative social behaviour?

Soaps are watched by many people and people especially young people look up to their idols in these soaps. This can influence people's behaviour. For example they usually promote a lot of underage drinking but more or they mostly highlight the negative effects rather than the positive effects. People want to see drama and tension and not people having a good time. Soaps often promote violence, and have many fights to

create tension but it also means that people may copy them to resolve issues. Teenagers often misbehave or skip lessons a lot in soap operas, which teenagers can

copy. However if all Soaps were changed so that there was no tension and everyone lived happily knowone would watch the Programme. When ~~as~~ characters in popular Soaps are seen taking drugs it is true that people like to copy them. So instead of taking underage drinking ~~and~~ and other behaviours out of Soaps they should do it to show the negative effects, which most people Soaps do anyway. This will help tackle antisocial behaviour and make people think twice before they do illegal things. The other ways Soaps legitimise negative behaviour are through peer pressure which is seen a lot in Soaps to make people do illegal things, they have also even glorified murder or made it seem like a good thing to do in certain situations. Other types of negative social behaviour they legitimise are theft, and another major one they use a lot is adultery, as people like to see tension between couples but it can also influence people to do the same. I summarise by saying that although a lot of illegal activities are performed on soap operas people need to remember that they are only scripted and should not be performed in <sup>the</sup> real life world.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

This is a strong answer which makes its points clearly and succinctly.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

But it would have been helpful if the stages of the answer had been separated into paragraphs so it was clear when one stage had ended and the next commenced.

This answer points out that soaps are dramas which could happen in everyday life so therefore they include negative social behaviour - AO1 - 1, AO2 - 1. However, soap behaviours are exaggerated to provide entertainment and make people want to watch - AO1 - 1, AO2 - 2. Negative social behaviour shown includes binge drinking but by the end of the storyline the bad consequences are highlighted, providing a warning to the young - AO1 - 1, AO2 - 2. Some 'good' characters are always included in soaps to show the advantages of being law-abiding, etc - AO1 - 1, AO2 - 1. So soaps try to help people by warning them about the disadvantages of negative behaviour - AO2 - 1. Communication is effective.

Score: 15 (out of 20); AO1 - 4, AO2 - 7, AO4 - 4.

Totals 4+7+4

How far and in what ways do soaps promote certain types of behaviour and legitimise negative social behaviour?

Soaps are based on dramas that could possibly happen in everyday life and therefore need to take aspects of negative social behaviour in order for them ~~to~~ scenario based on real life. However due to the audience of these soaps who require entertainment these behaviours need to be exaggerated in order for people to want to watch them.

Soaps show a lot of negative social behaviour such as binge drinking as this happens a lot with teenage societies. Although this behaviour looks as though it is being promoted, towards the end of these storylines the bad aspects of this behaviour are ~~not~~ incorporated to not only make it entertaining to watch but also to warn teenagers that are watching of the consequences of the behaviours that can be harmful to them.

In addition to this, soaps sometimes use worst case scenarios ~~of~~ of negative social behaviour within their storylines as they know that a lot of people may have been in a similar situation ~~and~~ and seeing something worse will make them feel better about what has happened to them.

Within a soap there are always certain characters that help promote certain behaviours that are positive to ensure that people that are watching will see this and be encouraged to carry this behaviour out when they see the rewards that this character is ~~also~~ receiving.

Soaps do tend to show a lot of negative social behaviour as this is what people enjoy watching and they do this to try and warn people, therefore soaps do not go too far for the majority of the time because they are actually trying to help people even though the government don't see it that way.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Comments

Parts of this answer are very general - more specific points would have secured a higher mark.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Tip

This answer would have been strengthened if some of the ideas expressed had been supported by tangible examples.

## ***Paper Summary***

There were four ways in which most candidates could probably have improved their score enough to gain at least one extra grade. They were:

- 1 To be better prepared to answer AO3 questions (carrying 14/90 marks) - careful study of the Student Book pp5-8 could easily achieve this.
- 2 To take more care over spelling, punctuation and grammar and avoiding vulgar expressions or texting language. 14 of the marks allocated to Q27, 30, 31 and 32 were allocated to the Quality of Written Communication, for which few if any candidates secured the maximum mark.
- 3 To contain answers within the space allocated for that question on the paper. Much longer answers rarely gain any or many more marks and waste valuable examination time.
- 4 Attempt all the questions. A significant minority of candidates attempted only one of the Section C questions. This almost certainly cost them one if not two grades.

Overall, most candidates produced impressive work and it is good to report that they responded well to the challenge of the examination.

Even a simple comment that the writer's argument is inductive - and therefore not wholly compelling - could have gained an additional mark.

The question is about 'evidence' and 'arguments'. The candidate gains marks because of what is said about 'evidence'. Only about half marks are gained overall partly because nothing at all is said about 'arguments'. It is always a mistake to ignore part of a question you are attempting to answer.

## Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

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