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Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCE
Government & Politics (6GP03)
Paper 3D: Global politics

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It was evident, once again, that a good proportion of candidates had been well prepared for the 3D examination. Subject knowledge was strong and there was, for the most part, a pleasing focus on the wording of the questions. The most popular short questions were the responses on cultural and economic globalisation and also the differences between unipolarity and multipolarity. The most popular long response was the question on whether or not realism provides a more convincing perspective on global politics than liberalism. The least popular response, although attempted by a sizeable minority, was the short question on regionalism and the least popular long question was the one on whether the process of European integration is in danger of unravelling.

The advice from previous examiners reports appears to have been heeded by many candidates in this series and remains valid for future examination papers in Global Politics. As usual, there were a few key differentiators between candidates' responses. The key to success in responding to the questions set is to recognize that not one, but in the case of the longer essay response, four marks are being awarded for each script. Whilst Assessment Objective 1 (A01) knowledge may help a candidate to achieve 12 of the available 45 marks, there are still 33 marks available for A02, synopticity and A03. A large proportion of candidates score well in A01 because they provide detailed and developed knowledge and understanding with relevant and accurate work but they can fail to attain the marks that are available elsewhere. The intellectual skills required to perform at the highest level in A02 revolve around the ability to provide analysis, evaluation and parallels or connections. This can be a challenge for those candidates who rely primarily on production of learnt fact and knowledge. Synopticity, where candidates are expected to provide an awareness of competing viewpoints or perspectives, can be a weak area for some. The longer questions are designed for debate and discussion of alternative viewpoints. A03 can also be an issue for some candidates. There is a need to bring all of the earlier A0 elements into a structured and logical response which provides balance and use of appropriate political vocabulary.

It is evident that most, if not all, teachers are aware of and focussed on the 'Further guidance for Route D' document, prepared by the previous Principal Examiner, which can be found on the Edexcel website. This document provides additional content explanation and advice to support the initial specification document. It is also pleasing to note that teachers and students are making good use of recently developed resources and of contemporary examples to support responses.

Q1

This was the most popular of the short responses on the examination paper. Most candidates were able to provide definitions of the two key terms with quality of definition being a useful way of differentiating the quality of response. Stronger candidates were able to focus on ways in which the two types of globalisation can be compared and contrasted. Stronger candidates were able to discuss differences in impact, depth, consequences for state sovereignty etc.

Q2

The question on regionalism was the least popular of the short responses, as it often has been before, but some candidates were able to provide particularly strong responses where they went beyond descriptions of regionalism to deal with the key term in the question which was the significance of regionalism for global politics.

Q3

This was the third most popular question and many students were able to use recent knowledge of Russian actions as part of their response. Stronger candidates were able to define the key term and set a criteria for consideration rather than simply discuss general Russian strength and weakness. A number of candidates compared Russia to the USA and made the assertion that there could only be one superpower which was mostly unhelpful.

Q4

This was the fourth most popular response with most candidates beginning with a brief discussion of the aims and philosophy of the WTO. Most candidates were able to highlight at least two criticisms of the WTO with stronger candidates able to provide more criticisms with a level of detailed discussion in order to provide some assessment.

Q5

This was the second most popular of the short questions on the examination paper. Candidates were, for the most part, able to provide decent definitions of the key terms with some limited use of historical and contemporary examples to support explanation. A few candidates relied on simply defining the two terms but stronger candidates provided clearer historical and/or contemporary examples and also explanation of the differences between unipolarity and multipolarity.

Q6

This was the least popular of the longer questions and did produce a number of weak, one sided, Brexit heavy responses. It also led to the creation of some very strong responses where candidates were able to produce balanced, well supported argument with contemporary knowledge. Consequently this question worked very well for differentiation.

Q7

This was the second most popular of the long essay responses and provided a decent level of differentiation with stronger students able to discuss specific elements of the UN structure rather than just UN successes and failures. The Security Council was often well understood and discussed but other elements tended to be weaker.

Q8

This was the most popular of the longer responses with a wide variety of different approaches to the question. Many candidates were able to explain the key principles of both realism and liberalism but not all were able to use contemporary examples to construct an argument as to which school of thought was the most convincing.

Paper Summery

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