

ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8021/11 Essay
--

Key messages

- Ensure candidates choose a question that they have plenty to write about.
- Read the wording of the question carefully and stay focused on it throughout.
- Take time to plan before beginning to write.
- Leave time at the end to check through the essay to correct errors.
- Write in formal English – do not use contractions or slang.
- Do not contradict arguments made earlier in the essay unless this is clearly justified.
- If an essay requires a balanced argument, ensure there are points for and against the proposition.
- Include evaluative comments throughout the argument.
- Use clear, specific examples to support arguments.
- Write between 600 and 700 words.
- Develop a greater knowledge of a range of subjects by reading more and taking an interest in the news.

General comments

The vast majority of candidates wrote sufficiently clearly to be easily understood and there were some good examples of a range of vocabulary and appropriate lexis for each of the questions. Vocabulary was a strength in many responses, including words like ‘entrepreneurs,’ ‘liquidation,’ ‘biodiversity’ and ‘ecosystems’ and phrases such as ‘societal norms,’ ‘capitalist regime’ and ‘revolutionary ideas.’ However, there were some responses with inconsistent register using phrases such as ‘wanna,’ ‘like,’ ‘gonna,’ ‘guys,’ ‘kids,’ ‘stuff,’ ‘way back’ etc. It is strongly advisable to avoid using such register in a formal essay. Discourse markers were often too informal or inappropriate such as: ‘To start off,’ ‘To continue on,’ ‘On the flip side,’ ‘Lastly’ and ‘To wrap it up’. Incorrect sentences starting with ‘Which’ were common as were sentences which were incomplete. Some responses used comma splicing to link clauses, rather than grammatically correct sentence structures. Some candidates used inappropriate contractions and there were a number of errors where candidates did not distinguish between whether to use ‘its’ or ‘it’s’. There was also some evidence of made-up words, e.g. ‘conversating’ and ‘overallly’. Some lower-level responses used capital letters incorrectly or had a lack of appropriate punctuation, sentence control and paragraphing.

The best responses applied appropriate, detailed evidence to construct a developed argument that went into evaluation, such as by stating a counter argument and then explaining why this was wrong. Often these responses focused on developing a few ideas in detail, rather than briefly covering a wide range of ideas. Most candidates used a point, evidence, explanation structure, with the stronger ones looking at ideas in more detail and moving into evaluation. Some responses were very descriptive and did not create an argument: these were often responses where the learner had picked a subject they did not know much about or had little to say. Weaker responses sometimes wrote all they knew about the subject, often without giving an opinion that answered the question; these responses also tended to be quite repetitive. Successful arguments were those where candidates stepped back and formed an evaluative judgement, not just in the conclusion, but throughout the essay at various appropriate moments.

More successful responses included named, developed examples that supported the argument to help create a valid, convincing argument. Some responses relied on listing pieces of evidence (e.g. different translation apps), without explaining the point they were making. Weaker responses sometimes relied on description of the evidence or general assertion of an opinion without any supporting evidence.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

International organisations are of essential importance in today's world. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

This was a popular question, and many candidates demonstrated good knowledge about the topic. Many candidates wrote about the UN and its offshoots, e.g. UNESCO and the UNHCR. International charities such as The Red Cross also featured frequently. Mid-level essays often pointed out how these organisations had come to the aid of countries after a natural disaster, e.g. Cyclone Idai in Zimbabwe, and had prevented loss of life. Stronger responses then went on to look at weaknesses of international organisations, e.g. only reaching urban areas, prioritising some countries over others. Responses also frequently examined the role of international organisations such as NATO in maintaining world peace, covering examples like World War 2, the Korean and Vietnam Wars, as well as more recent conflicts such as in Ukraine and Gaza. These examples enabled candidates to develop well-reasoned arguments, with the best focusing on the 'today's world' aspect of the question rather than providing a general survey. Some candidates also wrote about businesses, and this was an acceptable approach, although this sometimes did not give candidates as much to say as those who wrote about international political organisations. Weaker responses were uncertain as to what an international organisation was and were descriptive about what it was thought they did, rather than arguing whether they are of 'essential importance' in the world today.

Question 2

Technological advances will make learning to speak other languages unnecessary. Evaluate to what extent this statement is true.

The question gave the potential for straightforward for and against arguments and many essays tended to follow a similar pattern: technology can now be used for live translation saving time and money, but technology takes away from real communication and is not always reliable. AI was discussed by many candidates and there was scope for evaluation in the argument that technology had been a useful tool for language learning but was now removing the need to learn at all. There was also some evaluation about how we would lose unique cultural and social insights if we did not learn language. Some candidates explored the limitations of technology and one insightful response explained that there was not a translation for the Portuguese word 'saudade' (meaning a sense of wilful nostalgia) in any other language. Weaker responses often listed technological tools and then gave descriptive, anecdotal examples of how they could be used, without focusing on the wording of the question.

Question 3

To what extent is health education effective in your country?

Most learners who attempted the question took a balanced approach, pointing out successes in the health education of their country as well as examining and evaluating areas that needed more work, e.g. outreach work in rural areas or more help for homeless people/drug addicts. The 'To what extent...' phrasing encouraged an evaluative approach which stronger essays explored. However, mid to lower-level essays often included one main point about how health education is successful and then juxtaposed that with an area where it did not work so well with no analysis or evaluation. Areas covered included diet, sexual health, the importance of good hygiene, exercise and being appropriately inoculated against common diseases such as measles, chicken pox, TB and many others. The focus on 'your country' encouraged candidates to be specific and many responses successfully used examples from their own experience. Some essays listed examples of what was happening and why this showed positive health education (e.g. decreasing teenage pregnancies) and then used the same examples to show why health education was not effective (the fact that there were still a lot of teenage pregnancies). These responses were repetitive and not convincing. A small number of candidates misread the question and wrote about whether the health service in their country was effective: candidates should take care when they select a question to ensure that they are answering the question set rather than one of their own.

Question 4

Evaluate the extent to which literature can change how people think.

Stronger responses to this question usually had a range of named examples of literature to support their arguments. There were some pertinent examples of how literature could be a positive force ranging from discussion of popular texts such as the Diary of Anne Frank, works by Shakespeare, Orwell and war poetry as well as several new African authors. Many candidates discussed examples of literature that had fewer positive influences, with Hitler's Mein Kampf being a popular example. Some learners did not fully focus on the wording of the question and wrote more generally about why literature was a good or a bad influence on people, but the best answers did look at how it could change someone's thoughts by showing them someone else's perspective or making them aware of an important issue. Lower band essays tended to write generally without reference to specific examples of literature, making broad, unsupported assertions.

Question 5

Traditional arts and crafts are not appreciated enough in your country. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

The value of traditional arts and crafts and their cultural significance were the focus of most essays and there were some enlightening and impassioned views about different art forms such as dance and drama. Many candidates discussed how the continuation of traditional arts and crafts had some broader influences such as stimulating tourism and the local economy. Some candidates argued about how important it is to maintain links with past generations alongside our contemporary throw-away world. Most arguments tended to agree with the statement and there were some interesting arguments explored. In some instances, candidates needed to include more examples as some responses wrote about arts and crafts without going into specifics, taking the question as being about culture generally rather than arts and crafts specifically. Some candidates were not clear what traditional arts and crafts were and wrote generally about various art forms which demonstrated a partial understanding of the question.

Question 6

The desire to make a lot of money is having a positive effect on today's world. Discuss.

The need to make money was a major priority for many candidates, arguing that without a source of income their life would be unfulfilled. Many essays were focused on this single aim with little exploration of the negative effects that making money might have other than crime and corruption. However, a more worldly view of businesses making money to stimulate national growth, employment, improvements in skills, and general standard of living was commonly explored alongside weaker essays which expounded that having money was a panacea for all the good in the world and that without money life was miserable. There were some very well-argued points about how the pursuit of money was eroding social cohesion as well as causing stress and jealousy to individuals and leading to crime. Counter arguments focused on how rich people often engaged in philanthropy and how the drive to be rich offered motivation to people, with Elon Musk discussed frequently as an example. Weaker responses tended to rely on assertive statements: 'Everyone wants to be rich', 'You can't make a lot of money without doing bad things', 'Money is making everyone greedy'. There were often references to how social media has made everyone want to be rich which could have been an interesting 'today's world' aspect, but few responses did more with this than give examples of rich influencers. Several essays wrote generally about wealth without giving specific examples. There definitely was scope for evaluation around the idea that the desire for money could be positive if it did not get out of control.

Question 7

Evaluate the view that space exploration should be publicly funded.

Most candidates who attempted this question discussed the fact that space exploration is very expensive, takes resources away from other spending priorities and does not directly benefit ordinary people. Counter arguments were often based on the idea that space exploration is too important to leave to private companies and can have national security implications. Stronger responses included examples, writing about SpaceX and how space exploration might change in the future. 'Public funding' was a term that many candidates did not engage with and consequently many arguments speculated about what was 'out there' rather than debating how exploration should be paid for and by whom.

Question 8

To what extent has digital media negatively impacted attendance at live performances?

Almost all responses mentioned that it was possible to stream live events now, which could result in reduced attendances often explaining how this process had been sped up by Covid. Weaker responses made sweeping statements about live attendance being on a downward spiral, while stronger candidates included specific examples like Taylor Swift's Eras tour and used these to show how performers could use digital media to their advantage in increasing live attendance. There was definite scope for evaluation in weighing up the potential benefits and drawbacks. Weaker responses sometimes just listed examples of successful/unsuccessful live performers and some essays focused only on the positives and negatives of digital media with little or no reference to live performance. Many essays described digital media and celebrated its strengths. The ability to access events that otherwise would be restricted was a common approach in comparison to the cost of attending live performances as well as their infrequency and geographical restrictions. Higher level essays considered the negative and positive impact of digital media with more subtle viewpoints including the idea that digital media was in fact increasing audiences by offering the opportunity to attend live performances that were being broadcast to local cinemas and other large venues. Some candidates were broad in their scope of what live performances were and included sporting events, classical music concerts, dance and art events, sometimes stretching the boundaries of what was valid to the question. Some strong responses also considered the excessive use of mobile phones at live performances, where audience members film and later post online long sections of an event. These arguments made a good point about how disruptive that was to other audience members, negatively impacting their enjoyment of the event which can lead to people being less inclined to attend future events.

Question 9

Human rights are still not given enough importance in today's world. Discuss.

This question attracted strong views from many candidates, which sometimes negatively impacted the clarity of their writing and the strength of their argument as there were some assertive comments. The most commonly seen examples of how human rights are being given importance were examples such as the success of the Civil Rights movement, US independence and the introduction of policies like universal healthcare systems. There was often more focus on human rights failings, e.g. the George Floyd killing that led to the Black Lives Matter movement, the war in Gaza and issues with women's rights. Several learners referenced the killing of Charlie Kirk in an attempt to be topical but struggled to link this convincingly to human rights. The best responses successfully weighed up the advances against the issues and come to an evaluative conclusion. Mid-level responses included examples that showed understanding of the question and used these to form a sensible conclusion.

Question 10

To what extent are the problems of water pollution being successfully addressed in your country?

The question proved attractive to candidates whose country experiences difficulties in maintaining clean water due to issues such as drought, extreme weather, poor infrastructure, the size of population, and poverty. Many essays tended to consider other national priorities other than water pollution. Informed responses considered measures being taken to purify supplies as well as a consideration of ways to educate, warn, and improve public awareness about polluted water and the effects this could have on the environment and the food chain.

Examples included Zimbabwe and the problems in providing clean drinking water in some areas. There was assessment of the rural/urban divide in many African countries which often led to an evaluative conclusion. There was some praise for government initiatives, with the stronger arguments adding a note of realism about how successful these have proved to be. Weaker responses did not provide supporting examples which led to some vague and generalised arguments.

ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8021/12 Essay
--

Key messages

- Pay particular attention to the key words in the question you respond to.
- Maintain a clear focus on the question and to check this regularly while constructing the essay.
- Avoid ambiguity by clearly expressing your intended meaning.
- Illustration and examples need to be developed to move the argument forward.
- Where appropriate, always show awareness of the opposite point of view.
- Structure the essay with an introduction, followed by the main body and then a conclusion.
- Plan answers carefully before beginning the essay.
- The ability to weigh and judge arguments, and not merely to state points, is a necessary skill.

General comments

Most responses were informed and clearly written. Although **Question 4** was the most popular question, there was a range of responses with all ten questions attracting a reasonable number of responses.

Most essays followed the format of introductory paragraph, argument, then concluding remarks. The best answers used the argument to explore and evaluate rather than merely state or explain arguments. The majority offered relevant and focused coverage of the issues, though a small number did not maintain a focus on the question and such responses became vague and tangential in places. Thoughtful conclusions raised questions and acknowledged that there may well be more to be said, rather than simply repeating what had already been written.

Most candidates provided exemplification to support their arguments. In most cases these were specific and relevant, helping to move the argument forward. Some were more generalised or anecdotal, resulting in lengthy explanations rather than applying the evidence carefully and thoughtfully. Better responses considered the implications of examples carefully with regard to the argument being advanced. Less successful responses mentioned examples without developing them.

There was evidence that most responses were carefully planned, leading to a thoughtfully constructed response. Taking a few minutes to think about what the question is asking and organising thoughts accordingly, before beginning writing, is time well spent and it is clear that many candidates used this time constructively.

It was pleasing to see a large number of responses showing ambition in the use of both vocabulary and sentence construction. Usually, the willingness to use advanced vocabulary was matched by expression that was precise and used an appropriate register. However, weaknesses in grammar sometimes prevented ambitious sentence construction being successfully employed. Candidates should be aware of the need for clarity of expression and, while it is good to see the use of complex sentences, clarity and accuracy should be the main goals of expression. The majority of answers were written in an appropriate academic register. Although colloquialisms were seen, these were rare.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Tourism ensures the survival of remote communities. To what extent is this true in your country?

Candidates responding to this question successfully used a range of examples of remote communities and how they have been affected positively and negatively by general tourism. Different interpretations of 'remote' were offered, so examples ranged from towns and villages outside the major cities, island communities and communities not well served by existing infrastructure: with regard to this last point, the point was often made that increased tourism often brought about the necessary infrastructure improvements, bringing a significant benefit. Candidates generally commented on how increased tourism brought useful additional funding to such areas, though many also stressed negatives such as pollution, overcrowding and the unwelcome changes brought about by infrastructure developments. Others looked at employment and how increased tourism brought increased job opportunities but also sometimes exploitative practices.

Question 2

Successful leaders have to make unpopular decisions. Discuss.

The majority of essays included a large range of examples and a variety of leadership roles considered in relation to this question, with many candidates showing a good level of understanding of how leadership roles often required leaders to make decisions that were not universally popular, due to circumstances, strength of conviction or a combination of these and other factors. Examples included political leaders, CEOs of companies and other famous historic figures. Examples included the role of the Third Reich, Alexander the Great, Donald Trump's immigration policies and Putin's decision to invade Ukraine. Many candidates discussed the ongoing war in Gaza and the choices made on both sides. Defining what a good leader is and analysing how this applies to various people or company managers developed good responses.

Question 3

'Human migration from one place to another brings many benefits. To what extent do you agree?

Candidates focused on migration from rural to urban communities as well as migration from one country to another for educational, financial and health purposes. Examples included the migration of people from India to Japan due to an aging society and the need to boost the economy; the encouragement of manual workers to migrate to other countries for work in the building industry and how they are treated; candidates migrating to other countries for education and bringing their knowledge home to develop their original country; comments on how some diseases which were eradicated such as malaria, are now returning due to people migrating from those countries with the disease and the movement of people from rural parts of India and Nepal to already overpopulated cities and the effects created by this. While there were many detailed accounts of the benefits of migration, others made reference to anti-immigrant movements and policies around the world and considered the credibility or otherwise of these.

Question 4

To what extent does social media enable young people to communicate more positively?

Successful candidates focused carefully on the word 'communication' in the question, although this was also interpreted in different ways. Although many considered social media generically, there was often a productive focus on different social media platforms and the types of information contained therein, as well as how such information may be manipulated or utilised to mislead or favour certain points of view. There was a good awareness of the dangers of 'echo chambers' in social media and how these narrowed the range of available information rather than extending it. A plethora of examples was offered, such as the recent events in Nepal being aided significantly by social media; Black Lives Matter support; charity causes such as humanitarian aid in Gaza; chat sites for different hobbies and political causes and finally the role of influencers as communicators. Responses discussed the misuse of social media for 'haters', cyberbullies and how anonymity can facilitate further less positive forms of communication.

Question 5

The study of history focuses too much on what people have done wrong. Discuss.

Some candidates tended to be philosophical, questioning the role of history in general and how useful it is to analyse past events and people's actions. Some responses discussed the violent acts of Robespierre, one of King Louis XVI's royal political supporters and his 'reign of terror' to scare the people of France to refrain from revolution. Others discussed the reign of the Tsars in Russia and their demise, and other responses included Adolf Hitler and the Holocaust, Ghandi and partition and the downfall of the Maratha Empire in India. Most candidates agreed that learning from past events was essential to moving forward and that the writing of history needs to be completed with care and knowledge to avoid bias. Others questioned the premise, arguing that there were many instances where history is utilised to encourage 'good' behaviour, including the defeat of tyrants and opposition to tyranny.

Question 6

Financial security is the responsibility of the individual. To what extent do you agree?

There was some uncertainty evident among responses about the meaning of 'financial security' and what it entailed. However, this did not prevent some candidates from generating some thoughtful responses. While some focused on the need for people to manage their own financial affairs rather than the state, others considered the security of finances in the technological age and the dangers of money being misappropriated or stolen. Others looked at the need for good budgeting of household finances and the difficulties of achieving this.

Question 7

What an individual chooses to eat and drink is of no concern to anyone else. Evaluate this statement.

Many candidates looked at the freedom of individual behaviour and food and drink consumption as an element of this. Others looked at dietary choices such as vegetarianism and veganism. Many considered the health implications of various diets and eating habits and discussed whether society has an interest here, in terms of the health of the population or the provision of healthcare for those who ate or drank excessively. Some consideration was given to the financial impact of choices and the impacting of certain eating habits on the environment.

Question 8

Visual forms of art express emotion in ways that written words cannot achieve. Discuss.

Candidates included a range of visual forms of arts such as photography, movies, live theatre and floristry. Most often candidates argued that visual arts rather than written words expressed emotions more successfully. However, some consideration was given to whether visual arts required some form of written description as an aid to interpretation. A range of poets and writers were discussed with examples of how they demonstrate emotion in their writing and their effect on us as the reader. Examples included comparing paintings such as 'Starry Night' with modernistic art such as minimalism and representational concepts and evaluating how well each genre managed to depict emotion. While there was evidence that some found the question challenging, many engaged with the issue in a thoughtful manner and this resulted in some very good evaluative responses.

Question 9

The biggest concern about climate change is the threat it creates for the people of the world. To what extent do you agree with this view?

Candidates responded well to this question and often produced knowledgeable responses that discussed the threat posed by climate change. A plethora of examples of climate disasters from all over the world were highlighted such as hurricanes, typhoons, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, floods, wild fires and landslides. Candidates also discussed the recent hot weather over the last two years and how this has affected people living in various countries. Sometimes there was an emphasis on the causes of climate change rather than its effects, though better essays managed to absorb these causes and consider them in the context of the resulting threats. Some candidates gave thoughtful consideration to whether the world's people were the chief concern rather than other animal species or the world's geology itself.

Question 10

Songs have the power to divide as well as unite people. Discuss.

Candidates produced some very interesting responses to this question with a range of examples agreeing with the premise. Patriotic songs at sporting events, national anthems, hymns of worship and traditional music at religious festivals all featured as examples. Particular artists and groups were named such as Coldplay and their Indian tour and how they united the crowd with their music; Taylor Swift and her music concerning relationships and breakups which people can relate to; K-pop bands who have a cult following of support and Elyanna who wrote 'Olive Tree' relating to the war in Gaza and inspiring Palestinians to be strong. Another song mentioned was John Lennon's 'Imagine' where the lyrics remind people of the possibility of a world without war and violence, when at the time the Vietnam War was occurring. Songs that caused division amongst people were related mainly to the rap genre with examples of disputes between Biggie and Tupac, Kelly and Eminem, and Lamar and Drake. Candidates argued that the song lyrics caused offence and that, in some cases, fans clashed on social media and in real life, resulting in division rather than unity.

ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8021/13 Essay
--

Key messages

- Make sure that there is full understanding of the question chosen.
- Write a brief plan of action, the shape of the essay to be written.
- Essays should be written in paragraphs and require focused introductions and conclusions.
- Ensure that you allow sufficient time to write a concluding paragraph.
- Examples should be used to illustrate and develop the essay's argument.
- Avoid vague, sweeping statement or assertion.
- Opinions should be conveyed using an appropriate register.

General comments

Communication using written English (AO3) is an important assessment objective and most of the essays used language with control, using the academic register that is expected. Several learners used sophisticated vocabulary thoughtfully and appropriately and avoided the use of unnecessary words and phrases to introduce new paragraphs. While **Question 6**, about the desirability or not of equal pay, proved to be the most popular question, there were several candidates who chose other questions or topic areas. There were no misunderstandings of questions' meanings although there were, for example, responses to **Question 4** on design and **Question 8** on environmental impacts of what we wear, that came up with fresh, original, and relevant ideas.

Candidates are advised to write between 600 and 700 words. Some essays which were significantly shorter than this could only link a limited range ideas and arguments. Lack of development meant that these essays were restricted to the lower levels of attainment. Some of these brief responses were well-written but needed further analysis and information. There was some effective use of personal anecdotes in candidate responses, particularly to **Question 3** on books inspiring the minds of children and to **Question 7** on ageing populations. These were used to enrich and strengthen the essays of those that chose to write about these topics.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The government should protect the health of all citizens in your country. To what extent do you agree with this view?

All the responses to this question referred to a specific country although there were relevant references to health protection in other countries. A holistic attitude to health was evident. Some candidates wrote that society should not see 'mental health as a weakness' but should see mental health as being just as important as physical wellbeing. It was generally felt that countries where health services are free at the time of need might have a different view as to what health protection entails from those countries that charge for their health services. There were nuanced approaches to this matter. Several argued for more personal responsibility to be exercised while others felt that it was a primary duty of the state to protect the health of its citizens. Problems faced by the authorities in seeing to the needs of people living in remote rural areas were often highlighted. A few candidates described the work of charities and local religious organisations as being of great importance alongside the contribution of government. It was argued by most that vaccination programmes being effective in immunising large numbers of people must be the prime responsibility of state authorities. Others argued that to 'diminish inequalities' governments need to provide health protection to the disadvantaged.

Question 2

Space travel and exploration should be managed by private companies rather than governments. Discuss this view.

Those that attempted this question had good knowledge of the current private and nation state endeavours in space travel and exploration. Many felt that if private companies wish to spend huge sums of money in this context, that is their prerogative so long as ethical and strategic concerns are not ignored. As far as governments are concerned, many felt that international rivalry rather than cooperation was more likely today than in earlier decades.

Furthermore, it was argued that governments have a range of other priorities and responsibilities that should direct their attention to the everyday needs of their peoples. It was argued that private companies may have profit as their sole concern whereas governments should consider domestic needs as well as the benefits of scientific exploration of the galaxies. A few candidates focused on the word 'travel' in the question to suggest there is a significant difference between enjoying a trip into space and working for months in a space station.

Question 3

Books inspire the minds of children. To what extent do you agree with this claim?

This question attracted enthusiastic responses from many whose experience of reading in their earlier years as well as now means a lot to them. These anecdotal memories from childhood enriched the essays. There were examples given from fiction, non-fiction, biography, autobiography, comic books, and Manga. Inspiration, a key term in the question, was addressed by commenting upon how the lives of others broaden our awareness of how challenges can be overcome in our own lives. References were made to the heroism of real and imagined characters. Inspiring a love of language, the broadening of vocabulary was often mentioned. Texts studied in school, for example Arthur Miller's 'The Crucible' and Steinbeck's 'Of Mice and Men,' were viewed as formative, moral experiences. Paddington Bear and the sense of wonder brought by him and other characters such as St Exupery's 'The Little Prince' were frequently included in essays. A few responses mentioned how reading speeches, for example those of Martin Luther King, continue to be an inspiration to them.

Question 4

Designers should always ensure that what they create is visually attractive. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

Many responses to this question included the idea 'that beauty is in the eye of the beholder.' Another argument that was frequently encountered was that design must be useful, practical, and safe as well as attractive to the eye. Some argued that furniture, for example chairs, should enable comfort and posture and not simply look attractive while ignoring function. Clothes' design was occasionally featured in responses to

this question. In the majority of responses design was recognised as a vital component in a variety of objects and places, for example in buildings and means of transport.

Question 5

Spending on foreign aid should be a priority for wealthy countries. Discuss.

The advantages and disadvantages of giving and receiving aid were considered by all those who attempted this question. Access to the resources of poorer nations was often seen as a self-interested motive of wealthier nations. Military and strategic aims of donor countries were often seen as primary concerns of those countries rather than their desire to support human beings suffering from various inequalities. The moral responsibility to assist the less fortunate was emphasised although many argued that individuals and non-governmental organisations were more likely to exercise their responsibilities unconditionally. A distinction was drawn between military and medical aid, for example. Many candidates wrote about the prevalence of corruption around the world and of how aid both financial and material fails to reach those most in need. The responsibility of former colonial powers to those countries whose wealth they extracted was one of the most compelling arguments put forward.

Question 6

To what extent is it desirable for all people in your country to earn the same amount of money?

Very few argued in favour of income equality being desirable for all people in the country focused upon. These learners acknowledged that this aspiration was idealistic but envisaged greater social cohesion if economic disparities in income were to be reduced or even got rid of. Most responses, however, offered variants of this point of view: 'To be a cashier does not require the same amount of training as a doctor.' There were several arguments along these lines but with different scenarios.

Most candidates wrote about the negative aspects of earning the same amount of money. In support of this some essays argued that without entrepreneurs a country would stagnate. Political systems, that have attempted income equality, were usually seen as failing to satisfy people's needs or even worsening the situations they find themselves in.

The pressure on governments to provide a range of services within a country was recognised by many. Learners argued that without differential taxation, meaning that higher earners pay more, countries would be unable to develop infrastructural projects benefitting the health sector or the transport network. There were thoughtful arguments related to the lack of affordable housing within specific countries. Candidates felt that a more equal distribution of income might help families and individuals to rent or purchase a house while others expressed concern about the mechanics of achieving more income fairness in a country arguing that only a wealthy elite with tyrannical powers could impose income equality on the rest of us. This was a popular question that elicited a significant number of thoughtful responses.

Question 7

Ageing populations bring many benefits to society. To what extent do you agree?

There were several sensitive responses to this question which considered both the negative and positive effects upon societies with a high percentage of older people. Many took the view that older individuals either on their own or in groups 'help by offering insight and wise guidelines.' There were references to the support given by grandparents in the raising of families and a few candidates mentioned the reverence given to the old in certain cultures in different parts of the world. A few essays argued that older generations sometimes 'serve as a hindrance to societal change and progress.' Opposition to technological advances was seen as unhelpful, a frequent example being the fear of Artificial Intelligence which many learners saw as unwarranted. A key word in the question is 'ageing'; this was occasionally interpreted as referring to population growth. However, this did not necessarily cancel out relevance as some candidates successfully argued that population growth can put a strain on services such as the provision of healthcare for people of all ages.

Question 8

To what extent should environmental impacts influence what people choose to wear?

Those that responded to this question took a broad view of what 'environmental impacts' are. Some saw the topic as being concerned with the ecological health of the planet while others wrote about the need to dress appropriately according to cultural norms or the prevailing weather conditions. Both approaches were given credit although the ecological perspective offered more scope for interesting exemplification. Several candidates referred to the dumping of discarded textiles in landfill sites and the wasteful aspects of 'fast fashion'. Recycling and re-using initiatives were applauded as was the growing desire of many people not wear items derived from animals. However, there was a recognition that relatively small groups of indigenous peoples must rely upon what is naturally available around them.

Question 9

It is unacceptable to monitor people using information obtained from their mobile devices. Discuss.

Most of the responses viewed the practice of monitoring as a potential breach of personal privacy. The widespread experience of receiving targeted advertisements was seen as being, in most cases, intrusive. Identity theft and impersonation were seen as grave dangers. Others were concerned about the motives of governments in monitoring their citizens. These responses suggested that some governments would use the information obtained to identify individuals who hold views contrary to those in power, perhaps leading to arrest, interrogation and even imprisonment. This fear was balanced by arguments that suggested that surveillance of mobile devices can help to prevent crime and extremism. There were many well-argued responses to this question, and very few assertive responses seen.

Question 10

Any media with disturbing content should always begin with a clear warning for viewers. Discuss.

Learners adopted a variety of approaches to this question. A few argued that it was patronising to preface news items about disasters or war with statements like 'some viewers may find what follows disturbing.' They felt that the news should speak for itself and did not need warnings. However, there was also a recognition that young or vulnerable people should be protected and that responsible adults should try to ensure that they are not traumatised. Many felt that the ratings given to movies or films offer sufficient guidance as to the age groups the material is suitable for. Others made the point that very disturbing content cannot be accessed by minors but some candidates wrote that while that may be case, there are many people able to access material that is damaging to them. There were also references to the inappropriate use of social media to embarrass or shame individuals. Essays that used this example pointed out that those who circulate offensive and hurtful material have no concern for the welfare of others.

ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8021/21
Comprehension

Key messages

Candidates should ensure that they thoroughly read the material in the insert for both **Section A** and **Section B**, and all the related questions before they start composing responses. This will help them recognise the precise expectations for each question type and where the relevant information for each question is located. It is considered good exam practice for candidates to grasp the following points from the outset:

- Where to find the appropriate information in the material, particularly if directed to a certain sub-section only. Examples include, in **Section A**, being asked to locate information from 'the Background and the Additional Information only' (**Question 1(a)**) or 'the Additional Information' (**Question 1(g)**). In **Section B**, the relevant part of the material may be indicated using line references (in 'word count' and 'own words' questions) and/or by including key words from the material in question stems.
- How much information is required in response to each sub-question, considering the number of marks available (e.g. all the one-mark questions, which require a single piece of information); whether any development of the ideas is necessary (**Question 1(e)**), the extended response, levels-assessed question), and any questions which specify a particular number of reasons or ideas required (**Question 2(e)**).
- The demands of questions containing rubrics such as 'using your own words as far as possible' (**Question 2(b)(i) – 2(b)(v)**), or the instruction to summarise part of the material within a specified number of words (**Question 2(f)**, 'in about 50 words').
- When candidates need to write in continuous prose (full sentences) to gain full marks (**Questions 1(e)** and **2(f)**).
- Which questions, if any, invite candidates to offer their own knowledge, interpretation or wider thinking to answer a question, meaning that the answer does not appear in the material but is suggested by themes or content found therein. Examples of this are **Questions 1(h)** and **(i)** and, to a lesser extent, **Questions 2(b)(i) – (v)** and **2(g)(i) – (v)** (own words and synonyms respectively).
- Any other important stipulations, such as 'Apart from the cost...', in **Question 1(e)**.

General comments

Candidates showed a reasonable level of understanding of the material in both **Sections A** and **B**. Overall, there seemed to be a good degree of engagement with the topics and questions set. There were few direct rubric infringements. Candidates tended to write a sensible amount in response to the 8-mark question (**Question 1(e)**), where an extended, developed answer was required. There were relatively few response areas left blank. Most candidates also organised their writing in the appropriate response areas.

Communication of ideas in written English was almost always successful. Very few responses lacked clarity due to grammatical, spelling or expression errors. However, some answers lacked full clarity and precision, or were ambiguous in their interpretations, and this sometimes limited the number of marks awarded.

Some question types on this paper have more challenging or specific rubric demands. Some candidates found it difficult to select the essential relevant points from the material and offer sufficient detail and precision in their responses. This was especially true of the summary question (**Question 2(f)**), which involved a word limit or questions demanding that ideas be communicated mainly in candidates' own words (**Questions 2(b)(i) – (v)** and **2(g)(i) – (v)**).

Unless directed to summarise or to use 'own words' in response to questions, candidates are advised to copy the relevant material they have selected, in order to avoid losing the precision and full detail of the original. Paraphrased answers may gain credit but are not required.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Section A tests skills related to 'logical reasoning'. Candidates need to show understanding of the overall context and situation, as well as some of the most important details when making their selections of relevant material and, when asked to do so, develop or explain their ideas. **Section A** material related to the impending press launch for a celebrity-chef-designed range of tableware. Candidates seemed to engage reasonably well with the premise involved and showed a good level of understanding of the most important considerations and stakeholders. However, some responses lacked focus and logic, and occasional factual inaccuracies were cited. **Question 1(e)** required candidates to develop points for full credit. In this context, development means explaining the importance or relevance of the information presented, or the ability to make connections between pieces of information found in different parts of the material, for example between 'Caradoc's email' and the 'Additional Information'.

- (a) When seeking evidence for Ereeka's potential lack of necessary experience to organise a 'memorable' press launch, most candidates correctly referred only to information found in the Background and Additional Information sections of the material, as instructed by the question rubric. Most successfully identified, from the former section, was the fact that 'Ereeka had only started this job three weeks earlier', while a good number of responses also mentioned point 13 from the Additional Information, which stated 'One month ago, Ereeka graduated from university with a degree in archaeology.' It was necessary to include the subject studied for the second mark, or to say that her specialism was unrelated to event management, or similar. The time scale alone was otherwise deemed to repeat or overlap the first point. It was also possible to gain credit by referring to Caradoc Schmidt's appointment of his daughter to the role, despite her lack of relevant experience, or to mention nepotism and similar.
- (b) Almost all candidates correctly identified the disadvantage of The Beeches as a potential venue, stating that it was only 'a two-star hotel' (Additional Information point 17). Some responses were distracted by its location (a potential advantage, being much closer to the offices) or incorrectly asserted that its rooms cost \$3000 per night, whereas this was only true of the presidential suite at The Tuila Hotel and Conference Centre.
- (c) Most responses correctly calculated that the likely date of the press launch could not be earlier than Orlando Teeme's first available date, as reported to Ereeka by his personal assistant. This was 10 March (Additional Information point 15). Some candidates incorrectly repeated Caradoc Schmidt's preferred window, so *in the week commencing 14 February*. Others suggested *1 March*, the date Klaus Corper, Director of Manufacturing stated as being possible, were overtime to be allowed. An occasional candidate picked up on the likely repair date for the audio-visual equipment at The Tuila Hotel and Conference Centre, suggesting *9 March*, or making some sort of related calculation.
- (d) Apart from the few responses that mentioned the production costs of the tableware range or the delays caused by the design change, almost all responses correctly focused on budgetary considerations related to the press launch at The Tuila Hotel and Conference Centre. Creditworthy responses, however, required some degree of precision and, in some cases, calculation of the appropriate sums involved. It was essential to mention the 'gourmet' buffet lunch, at a cost of \$2400 or double the standard offering, in order to show understanding of Caradoc Schmidt's stipulation in his email for Ereeka to ensure that 'the buffet lunch for attendees is of an excellent standard'. Most candidates correctly included Orlando Teeme's rather excessive personal expenses, gaining credit for mentioning the limousine (at \$500) and the presidential suite's price tag (of \$3000), as per his demand to be 'chauffeured to and from the venue. Limousine, naturally' and for 'the best suite of a hotel' respectively. Most responses cited the prices of these two items, separately or combined, while a few noted that this already represents *more than 10 per cent of the total budget*. The cost of lunch and of Mr Teeme's personal expenses were the points most frequently credited, occasionally with accurate mathematics offering a combined sum of \$5900. Very few responses mentioned that Mr Teeme might make further expensive demands, as yet unknown and uncoded, which could again impact the budget, and possibly at short notice.

When it came to presenting the costs relating to the delegates' attendance, candidates often did not make accurate calculations. This tended to be due to misunderstandings regarding what would be required rather than the calculation being incorrect. For example, some responses indicated that every overnight guest would be charged at a rate of \$3000, whereas this was the price for the presidential suite only, with the standard overnight rate set at \$250 per person. Candidates needed to look carefully at Additional Information point 1 regarding the likely number and make-up of the launch guests too. It was reasonable to suppose that at least the 60 national and 40 international journalists would require overnight accommodation, at a total cost of \$25 000. The 20 local ones, at the non-residential daily rate of \$50, would add an additional \$1000. All 120 confirmed guests staying the night would cost \$30 000. This already matches the budget total, an observation that was worthy of an additional mark, as was the potential cost should all 150 invited journalists turn up and desire to stay overnight, at a total cost of \$37 500 which would, therefore, already exceed the planned budget. It was insufficient to state, as in Caradoc's email, that 'the budget is \$30 000'. Similarly, it was too vague to say only that *the costs will exceed the budget*. This is implicit in the question, which asks about why an increased budget will be necessary. However, mentioning an appropriate range of costs which would exceed the budget, with reference to the current limit, was deemed worthy of understanding how this excess was going to occur.

- (e) Most candidates focused their responses appropriately on the disadvantages of The Tuila Hotel and Conference Centre as a venue for the press launch. However, many responses included one or more references to costs and expenditure, despite the clear instruction in the question stem not to do so ('Apart from the cost, explain...'). To achieve full marks, responses must be consistently focused, clearly expressed and offer at least three developed ideas.

Many candidates gained marks at least at the top of Level 2, or in Level 3. Weaker responses were brief or undeveloped. Most candidates successfully offered at least one or two reasons why The Tuila Hotel and Conference Centre might not be completely suitable for the press launch. Most candidates attempted to develop at least one of their selected ideas. A fair number of responses included two ideas connected with other information from the material, meaning that Level 3 marks could be accessed. Responses which remained in Level 3 usually either featured at least one 'minimal' development and/or lost full focus or clarity in communicating their ideas. Answers evidenced by only one development being offered, even though more valid individual ideas had been presented, could not exceed Level 2, since the key skill of analysis was not sufficiently demonstrated to gain higher marks. A small number of responses was placed in Level 1, due to not selecting enough relevant points, not developing them or by severe weaknesses of expression and clarity.

Many candidates offered a developed point linking Caradoc Schmidt's request in his email for a venue 'within 5 km of our offices' with Additional Information point 6, stating that The Tuila Hotel and Conference Centre is 'located... eight kilometres from Basix'. This itself required understanding, from Additional Information point 2, that Schmidt + Daughters Tableware is situated in Basix. Some candidates made unlikely suggestions as to why this might be problematic for the launch, along the lines of *people might refuse to come*. It was, however, acceptable to make reference to the potential inconvenience of the additional travel for employees of the company involved in the launch, if they needed to make multiple journeys to and from. This seemed logical, even given the relatively small additional distance.

Additional Information point 16, relating to the head chef's accident, was also frequently cited as a disadvantage. A successful connection could be made to Caradoc's stipulation, in his email to Ereeka, that the buffet should be 'of an excellent standard'. An example of a minimally developed point here is: *The venue's head chef suffered an accident where both his wrists have broken. This means the buffet requirements likely would not be met*. (There is a lack of detail as to what those requirements are, or how the accident might impact the delivery of a quality dining experience for guests, but a connection has been implied to Caradoc's email and the stipulation regarding the quality of the buffet. There is also a little nuance, with 'likely'). There were some good explanations as to how the chef's predicament might impact the experience for guests at the launch. However, some candidates were too assertive in their attempted development of this idea, suggesting that *there will be no food for the guests*, proposing that *Orlando Teeme will have to take over in the kitchen to cater for the launch*, or implying that *Ereeka will have to find and pay for a new chef for the event*. There were also some misreadings of the material which mentioned the chef's mishap as occurring *in the fall*, rather than 'in a fall'. This could be tolerated in general, but some responses went into detail about the autumn season of the year and then struggled to make sense of the

events in the material. All were occurring in the spring, long after any broken bones should have healed.

The unreliability of the audio-visual equipment at the venue was also mentioned in most responses (Additional Information point 11). However, the continuation of that point relating to the likely repair date of 9 March was not in itself sufficient for a development of the idea, being found at the same place in the material. Some candidates erroneously suggested that this might require postponement or even cancellation of the event, something which seemed unlikely, given the cost and the number of journalists travelling from distant places to be there and whose attendance had already been confirmed. A good number of candidates made reference to the repair date in relation to the likely date of the launch. However, not all these calculations were accurate, so it was only those who recognised that the launch would probably *take place on 10 March / will occur only a day later* who could gain further credit. It was also possible to make a connection with the website's claim of 'excellent facilities, including the latest in audio-visual equipment'. Candidates could, therefore, call into question the reliability of the website's other claims and overall approach to customer service. Some responses also picked up on the nuance of the information about the engineer's visit, when they would 'come to the venue to try and repair it', as being no guarantee of success. Some sensible comments referred to the general *importance of high-quality presentations at such an event*, especially given *the high number of national and even international journalists who have said they will attend*.

Common reasons for not gaining full marks included lack of detail and precision. For example, the venue's opening date of 15 January, if presented as a stand-alone statement, could not gain credit as it does not clearly present a disadvantage. This could be achieved even by the use of modifiers, such as *The Tuila Hotel and Conference Centre has only been open since 15 January*. This idea could be explained and developed with regard to the possible *inexperience of staff* and procedures, or the fact that *Ereeka will have access to very few reviews to check how other large events have been handled there before*. It was also possible to pick up on the venue's website statement that 'large corporate events with up to 150 delegates' could be hosted. Strong responses recognised the proximity of this figure to the invited number of guests, and even to the confirmed number (120), given that Schmidt + Daughters Tableware and Orlando Teeme's entourage would also be in attendance. Even stronger responses noted that this would make the experience *crowded / cramped / unpleasant*, and *far from the high-end, memorable occasion envisioned by Caradoc and demanded by Mr Teeme*.

- (f) Candidates generally understood the intended focus of this question. There were occasional responses which linked Klaus Corper to the issues with the press launch, rather than the manufacturing of the new tableware range. Some mentioned Orlando Teeme's availability, the demands he makes regarding his attendance at the press launch, or the forthcoming revelations about his alleged theft of his juniors' recipe ideas, none of which answered the question set. There was also some repetition of the question terms, especially 'stressful', when trying to include observations of Orlando Teeme's character traits, inferred from his telephone conversation with Ereeka. To be valid, any such consideration needed a clear link to Klaus and *why* this would make working together 'particularly stressful'. Orlando's demanding and superior nature, as well as the fact that he seems not to listen to people and wants to communicate through his personal assistant – all of which might reasonably be picked up from the conversation with Ereeka – could be developed appropriately in relation to Klaus but was not creditworthy on its own. There were also some general comments about how launching a new product range is always a stressful time, which missed the 'particularly' of the question stem, or that Klaus Corper is working to a deadline.

Stronger responses picked up on the 'issues at every stage of production', the process being 'about two months' behind schedule and, infrequently, the need to be 'allowed overtime', from Klaus' meeting with Ereeka. However, some attempts to render these ideas remained too vague, such as *they are running behind / late*. There were also successful points made from Additional Information point 5, relating to how Orlando had changed his initial design. The 'gold edging' of the second version was often mentioned too, though few candidates were able to suggest why this would be problematic for the manufacturing team, in terms of its technicality, difficulty or even cost. An occasional strong response was able to infer that, given Orlando's busy diary, *it might have been difficult for Klaus to schedule meetings or telephone conversations, slowing down the decision-making process* and causing him additional pressure and concern.

- (g) Most candidates correctly identified Additional Information point 10 as the correct response, with the key element being that Orlando Teeme was about to be exposed in a national newspaper for

'stealing recipe ideas'. Some unsuccessful re-workings of this statement accused Mr Teeme of *stealing* more generally, which could not be credited. Distractors included reference to perceived personality traits, from the telephone call with Ereeka, and the production delays caused by the design change.

- (h) Almost half the candidates were able to offer one or two sensible suggestions in response to this question, with the most common being that Orlando Teeme's *status as a celebrity chef* would almost guarantee *increased exposure to potential clients*, for example by appealing to his current fan base. A third related point was how this might lead to *increased sales*, revenue and/or profit for the range. Candidates seemed, however, to find it difficult to go beyond these more obvious ideas. Some responses repeated the same ideas, along the lines of *The tableware range will gain more attention and recognition... and create a buzz, making it more popular (1). This will attract more attention and appeal to more people, so being a good means of publicity and advertising (1)*. More successful responses included specific references to Orlando Teeme's professional experience as a chef and how this might inform his knowledge of tableware and what food-loving or home-cooking fans might desire. They also mentioned the potential for Mr Teeme to showcase the tableware in his television shows, restaurant(s), cookery books and similar. His appeal to fans was used more originally by candidates who suggested customers *might want to buy and use tableware items which they believe a celebrity chef himself uses*, at work or at home, an idea sometimes developed with the sense of quality being guaranteed. There was also mention of how, *with his professional reputation on the line in this way, there might be an incentive for Orlando Teeme to produce something of good quality*. There was occasional successful deployment of marketing-based vocabulary, such as *higher price point, signature branding, brand recognition and pull factors*.

Less focused answers mentioned the potential gains, usually financial, to Mr Teeme himself (wrong focus in terms of who would benefit); the merits of the designs mentioned in the material (too specific); suggestions that Orlando Teeme would otherwise be representing products designed by someone else, or that the in-house design team is not capable / too slow / not professional enough (all too speculative). Other incorrect responses criticised Ereeka or her sisters as potential designers, whereas there was no suggestion in the material that their roles would involve this. An example includes: *The company's staff may not be qualified to design since it seems Caradoc Schmidt employs his relatives straight from high school without any working experience or acquired skills*. A few candidates made vague suggestions about Orlando Teeme's ideas being new or offering variety, or even that Caradoc Schmidt might want to toughen Ereeka up by getting her to manage such a demanding character (even though she was not involved in the product design and manufacture). An occasional response had misunderstood the question entirely and wrote about why Schmidt + Daughters Tableware does have, or even should have, its own design team.

- (i) This question asked candidates to offer their own suggestions, in response to the concept of why celebrities might choose to travel in chauffeured limousines. Most candidates were able to offer the idea of such travel being a show of status. As with **Question 1(h)**, there was some repetition of very similar concepts, presented as if they were separate ideas, such as *Celebrities wish to demonstrate their status and importance. They feel superior and as though they are better than ordinary people*. Such responses could only be awarded one of the two available marks. Second marks were given where wealth was mentioned, whereas even stronger responses referred to *the potential safety concerns posed by over-zealous fans, the desire for privacy from the paparazzi* – although *wanting attention* and the *desire to make an entrance* were more commonly cited – and *the increased space for relaxation / work / to accommodate additional personnel*. It was also possible to gain two marks by referring to the impacts on the celebrity themselves and on others, such as their fans or the general public.

Section B

Question 2

Overall, candidates engaged well with the material in **Section B**, relating to Romanian artist and illustrator Iulia Bochis. Its presentation, however, in the form of a series of questions and answers, seemed to confuse a few candidates. This became evident in **Question 2(f)**, where candidates were asked to summarise and explain the structure of Iulia's book. A small number of responses described the structure of the **Section B** article itself, rather than the book entitled *The Sun, The Sea and The Stars* mentioned within the given line references.

As in **Section A**, candidates should keep in mind that in one-mark-tariff questions, only the first idea can be considered for credit, although an introduction such as repeating the question stem is tolerated. Another useful principle applicable generally in **Section B** is that, unless a question specifically demands the use of own words or has a word limit imposed, it is unnecessary to do anything other than copy the selected idea(s) exactly as they appear in the material.

- (a) The majority of responses correctly identified that Iulia Bochi became interested in illustrations when (she) 'started using social media'. Distractors from the first paragraph included references to the specific named works of Monet and/or Van Gogh, or citing the sentence following the correct answer, relating to 'the works of different artists and poets...'.
(b)(i) This question was an 'own words' question, but the same principles apply as when candidates are asked to render full sentences or short paragraphs 'using your own words as far as possible'. One or two key terms, or a complete phrase, is required for the single mark's credit without being copied from the material, meaning candidates need to supply their own terms to communicate the same meaning in a similar grammatical format. Different verb forms from those in the material are allowed, as are nouns from verbs, and similar (e.g. *changing* or *change* respectively, from 'changed'). The substitution of singular for plural nouns, and vice versa, however, does not demonstrate sufficient independence from the original, e.g. *desires* from 'desire' (**Question 2(b)(ii)**).

In **Question 2(b)(i)**, many candidates repeated 'something' or 'changed'. Responses which offered entirely new terms were sometimes too specific, e.g. *she did not want to work in an office anymore*, and *she was done living a dull life*, or suggested a more deliberate decision than the original text had implied, such as *she started changing her perspective* or *she realised that change needed to happen*. Occasional alternatives for 'changed' included terms such as *mutated*, which sounded too biological, and *transitioned*, from which a more definite change of identity could be inferred. Successful examples include *She transformed internally, a transformation happened within her, I had a mental epiphany, she experienced an inner shift, she had a change of heart, and she started to feel and think differently*.

- (ii) This proved to be the most difficult of the five sub-questions in **Question 2(b)**. The most common reasons for not gaining the mark here were the copying of 'felt' and/or 'travel' and the omission of 'felt' (a past tense being required for credit) and/or the sense of 'strong (desire)'. Occasional responses referred to *a compulsion to have new experiences*, and similar, with the latter term deemed too vague as a synonym for 'to travel'. Creditworthy responses included *really wanted to explore the world, (she) experienced a deep urge to undertake journeys, had a powerful yearning / aspiration to go around the globe, longed to explore different parts of the world, fervently craved to explore the world outside her own environment, and had a great longing to visit new places*.
(iii) The phrase of the question stem needed to be rephrased as a noun or noun phrase, so responses beginning '*There were...*' or '*She came across...*' were not acceptable. Some candidates missed the plural of 'obstacles' by starting with *something*. Successful renderings include *challenges that prevented (her from), hurdles to be overcome, roadblocks and circumstances that held her back (from)*.
(iv) The sense of 'much' was not always included in responses or was repeated from the question stem. However, most candidates seemed to understand the terms quite clearly and either sense of 'much' here – 'in depth' or 'for a period of time' – was acceptable for credit.
(v) The terms 'better', 'moment' and 'now' were frequently copied from the question stem, the latter sometimes in formulations such as *it was now or never*. The past tense and sense of comparative or superlative were missing in many responses. For example, '*The present is (was) the right (optimal / best) time to...*'.
(c)(i) The five sub-questions of **Question 2(c)** required candidates to locate an appropriate synonym for a given word or phrase in the material. In this style of vocabulary question, the principle is that the original sentence found in the material will make sense, both grammatically and semantically, with either version of the selected word or phrase in place, i.e. a direct substitution of interchangeable terms. Precision is vital, especially in not providing any more words than necessary. Some candidates included superfluous run-ins or run-ons within their responses to **Question 2(c)**. There were also some entirely incorrect answers which presented a term not found within the line

references stated in the question stems. Many candidates offered their own definitions or synonyms, more in the style of **Question 2(b)(i) – (v)** and **Question 2(g)(i) – (i)(v)** respectively.

In the first of these sub-questions, it was common for responses to include a run-on from the material, usually *transformative, and completely changed my approach to life*, whereas the adjectival 'life-changing' of the prompt required only another adjective, so 'transformative' alone was the correct response. Other candidates attempted their own definitions instead of looking in the material for their answer.

- (ii) Candidates found this question challenging. Many responses did not offer a direct grammatical or semantic replacement for 'imagination'. Some answers included distractors from the material which was not required.
 - (iii) Similarly to **Question 2(c)(ii)**, run-ins were common, with '*quotes that...*' frequently preceding the correct response; 'touch'. It was more common, however, for candidates to include the run-on '*...me*'.
 - (iv) While the correct response 'antidote' was identified by many candidates, some included the unnecessary *potential...* before their answer, so could not gain credit. A few selected the following sentence from the material, relating to *seeking the light and finding solace (even in the midst of challenging times)*. This was too distant, in terms of meaning and grammatical form, from the question prompt 'remedy'.
 - (v) Many candidates correctly identified 'uplifting' as the synonym for 'encouraging', although some included the superfluous *very...* before this, or even *I find these words very uplifting*. Incorrect responses commonly either offered their own definition or quoted something from the material which they believed to be 'encouraging', such as the quote '*All the flowers of all the tomorrows are in the seeds of today*' or '*I always try to sow beautiful seeds*'.
- (d)(i) To gain the single available mark for this question, candidates needed either to render the concept of receiving 'messages from around the world', or of Iulia's hearing from 'people' that her 'work brings them a sense of lightness and comfort', with either of those two being sufficient for credit. Most responses to this sub-question were successful. Responses tended to include both ideas and thus made two attempts at possible creditworthy points. Paraphrasing of the first idea was rarely successful, with responses often implying that Iulia herself was travelling around the world and receiving messages all the while.
- (ii) Most candidates correctly identified that Iulia compares her site with 'a sunny garden for people to sit and relax in at any time'. Some responses paraphrased this unsuccessfully, for example as a *peaceful and relaxing garden*, losing the essential term 'sunny'. More rarely, some candidates reverted back to the idea of a *potential antidote* in their responses.
- (e) Almost all candidates identified the correct concepts for their 'advantage' and 'disadvantage', but it tended to be those who copied their chosen sentences carefully who gained both marks. Attempts to paraphrase either idea often omitted one or more key details (most often 'individuals' or 'communities' in the advantage, and either 'real' or 'lasting' in the disadvantage) or lost the precision of the original, for example in rendering 'far-reaching voice' as *strong voices* and 'Everything changes so quickly' as *The virtual world is in constant change*.
- (f) Where sub-questions test summary skills by imposing a word limit, candidates must aim for precision, both in the content selected from the material and how they communicate the relevant points. A few responses significantly exceeded the word limit. There was a tendency to include erroneous information from the material in responses, mainly because the opening sentence of the paragraph indicated by the line references was a distractor. Similarly, some candidates included the final sentence of the paragraph, which also did not relate to the structure of Iulia's book. Few candidates used their limited word count unnecessarily by opening with a lengthy introduction or repetition of the question stem, or by citing line numbers of the material selected which was not required. Most responses were written in continuous prose as reminded by the rubric instruction. Some responses did not include entirely grammatically correct or full sentences throughout and were therefore limited to a maximum mark below the full tariff for the question. Most candidates struggled to find or communicate more than three valid points (please see below) among the five marks available.

Most candidates were able to gain two or three of the available five marks within the word count. It proved more challenging to provide sufficient detail and precision for a fourth or fifth mark. Most candidates scored one or both of the first two creditworthy responses, and many could convey the points about the book's structure reflecting the four / changing seasons, and how these were explored in parallel to the different stages of human life. Some successful conflation of these two points was also evident, which is good examination practice for summary questions. An example includes *Iulia's book structure follows the four seasons and their similarity to different stages of human life* (16 words, 2 marks). 'Autumn' was the first of the seasons mentioned, which may have caused many of the responses to misrepresent the term 'the nature of change'. Suggestions such as *the changes in nature* or *how natural the process of change is* were not deemed close enough in meaning to gain credit. The third mark to be awarded frequently was that relating to winter and turning inwards for a period of self-reflection.

Some responses confused the book title and description with the extract appearing in the insert, and described its structure and organisation instead, referring to the paragraphing and 'question-and-answer' style.

- (g) (i) Each of the five sub-questions in **Question 2(g)** required candidates to provide their own synonym for a given word or phrase from the material. The replacement proposed must be grammatically and semantically identical, meaning that either version could be used within the original sentence and make complete sense.

In this first part of **Question 2(g)**, which proved the most challenging of these sub-questions, candidates occasionally copied 'thought(s)' from the question stem or offered a different grammatical sense, such as *forces you to think* and *encourages thinking*. Adjectives too vague to credit were *interesting*, *meaningful* and *imaginative*, while some attempts had the wrong sense entirely, such as *mind-blowing* or *mind-altering*. Examples of creditworthy responses were *intriguing*, *interesting to ponder*, *challenging to consider*, *sparking the mind*, and *making one reflect*.

- (ii) The wide range of potential synonyms and re-phrasings available to convey the noun 'perspective' made this the most straightforward of the five sub-questions in **Question 2(g)**. While there were some less precise interpretations attempted, such as *experience(s)*, *thought(s)*, *imagination* and *vision*, candidates often referred to terms such as *viewpoint* / *point of view*, *one's view on a topic* / *the world*, *someone's way of thinking (about something)*, *how people see the world*, *the way someone's line of thought goes*, *ideology*, *one's take (on an issue)* and similar.
- (iii) While the adjective *strong* was the most common correct response for 'resilient', it was also possible to gain credit with *not giving up*, *persevering*, *overcoming adversity*, *tough*, *steadfast*, *able to overcome adversity*, *able to withstand life's troubles and challenges*, *unwavering*, *firm against difficulty*, *standing strong*, and similar. Inaccurate attempts included *resistant*, *confident*, *determined*, *independent* and *patient*. Ungrammatical suggestions often started with an infinitive verb, such as *to be*.
- (iv) Successful candidates most often came up with *peace*, while other valid responses included *comfort* and *refuge*. Unsuccessful suggestions were *hope*, *calm*, *tranquillity*, *warmth* and *peace of mind*. Potentially correct ideas were sometimes negated by the inclusion of a verb form at the start of the response, such as *finding peace* or *to have peace*.
- (v) This appeared to be among the most difficult of all five synonym-style sub-questions in **Question 2(g)**. Possibly due to the social media context, the most frequent correct attempt for 'superficial' was *fake*. Thinking along those lines, however, led many candidates to suggest words such as *unreal*, *virtual*, *not real*, *fictional*, *self-centred*, *materialistic*, *artificial*, *ever-changing*, *supernatural* and *unnatural*. Occasional candidates came up with *shallow*, *lacking depth* or *hollow*, all of which were good synonyms and matched the original context grammatically.

ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8021/22 Comprehension
--

Key messages

Candidates are advised to thoroughly read the insert material before attempting the questions.

It is essential that candidates read the question carefully and note the specific instructions and guidance. For example, in **1(c)**, candidates were instructed to not refer to Barton Build and in **1(d)**, candidates had to avoid references to Sarantown Select. Similarly, in **2(g)**, candidates were asked to avoid repeating material from **Section B**.

In questions where candidates are instructed to answer using their own words, they should avoid using the words in the original material. It is unlikely that the words from the original material will gain credit, however technical vocabulary is occasionally allowed.

In the word count **Question 2(b)**, candidates must note the word count and provide succinct responses. Candidates should avoid an introduction or repeating the question in their answer.

If a question does not instruct candidates to write a response within a certain word limit or using their own words, candidates are advised to copy the relevant text from the material. Some responses were not detailed enough, and rewording of the original material affected the precision of the responses.

General comments

Most candidates showed sound understanding of the material in **Section A** and **B** and there was a good degree of engagement with the questions. Blank response areas were rare and **1(c)** responses were generally detailed, with a large number of points being addressed. Most candidates appeared to be well prepared for the range of question styles in the exam.

Candidates generally communicated their ideas successfully and clearly. Some responses lacked clarity and precision which limited the number of awarded marks.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Section A material was based on two building companies – Sarantown Select and Barton Build – who tendered for the Sarantown University contract to build a new accommodation block for final-year students. Candidates were required to use the information provided, including the contract brief, information regarding each company, extracts from the companies' presentations and the additional material to demonstrate understanding of the context and material. While a few responses lacked focus and logic, it was the overall lack of precision and detail which most often resulted in lost marks.

- (a) In this question, candidates were asked to explain how Sarantown University would be more likely to recover the building costs if they were to choose Sarantown Select's proposal. Most successful responses were able to locate the relevant material and express their answer clearly. For example, *'Sarantown Select charges \$2.1 million for the build costs of the accommodation block. It does not exceed Sarantown University's budget of \$3 million and is almost \$1 million cheaper. Therefore, it will take a shorter time for them to recover the building costs.'* Other creditworthy responses noted

the number of potential students staying in the accommodation. *'They will be able to host more students at a lesser build cost.'*

Weaker responses lacked sufficient detail or misunderstood the question. Some candidates confused building costs with the running costs of the building and noted the importance of solar panels in the reduction of electricity costs. Furthermore, references to Sarantown Select's proposal costing \$2.1 million (on its own) lacked the necessary precision.

- (b) In (i), candidates were directed to the additional information and were asked to state the piece of information which suggests that Georg Walters' claim to offer 'fully-costed construction plans' might be untrue. Here, additional point 13 or a reference to Barton Build's swimming pool project resulting in a large overspend gained credit. In (ii), candidates were directed to the additional information again and asked to state two pieces of information which suggest that tourists may not wish to stay in the new building. Candidates gaining the highest credit were able to note two of the following valid points – 6, 9 or 16. In both (i) and (ii), some candidates attempted to reword the information in the correct point and in some cases the rewording lacked the necessary precision. The most common example of this was for point 6 where candidates noted *'it is not in the city centre'*. This statement could also apply to additional information point 1 and the absence of sufficient detail meant the response could not be awarded credit. Candidates are advised to write the number of the correct information point or copy it out in full.

- (c) In this levels-based question, candidates were asked to explain why Bilal Mendes-Smith is more likely to choose Sarantown Select to design the new student accommodation block. It was important to note the guidance within the question to not refer to financial reasons. In this extended writing question candidates were required to offer and develop four points to obtain the maximum ten marks. Strongest responses were able to link ideas from different parts of the **Section A** material and make connections, whilst providing adequate detail. For example, *'Sarantown Select was established by three former students from the university. They know what students from Sarantown University need and want in their rooms; therefore, the building design they provide will be appropriate and suitable. The Sarantown Select design involves the use of solar panels to provide power for hot water and lighting, encouraging sustainability and environmentally-friendly methods in order for the new building to obtain the energy efficiency certificate that is required. Furthermore, their designs also include a space for bicycle storage which is useful, especially when most students ride bicycles when getting around the campus and city centre. Lastly, Sarantown Select won a regional award in the past for a high school's computer and resource suite and this shows how skilled they are.'*

Weaker responses tended to list valid points which were not developed. Examples of such responses included 'solar panels on the roof will power all the hot water and lighting', 'Karen Stevens allowed a space for bicycle storage', 'the rooms will be soundproofed' and 'it will accommodate 180 students.'. Such responses were generally limited to maximum of four marks.

- (d) In this question, candidates were asked to explain four reasons which suggest that Georg Walters has not read the contract brief properly. Candidates were advised to avoid references to financial considerations. Most successful responses were able to make connections and link ideas across the **Section A** material and develop four different points. Examples included *He was not aware of the local planning rules that restrict the height of new buildings to no more than three floors. The plan that Barton Build presented was six storeys tall. Georg designed the building to have cafés and an entertainment system installed which may not obtain the energy efficiency certificate which new buildings require. The brief specified that they wished for the building to have all of the necessary and shared facilities. Yet, Barton Build recommended extravagant facilities such as ensuite bathrooms and air conditioning. Barton Build's plans were submitted two days after the deadline which suggests their incompetence. Sarantown University is looking for reliable designers.*

Weakest responses referred to financial aspects or lacked the required detail. Some misunderstood the question. Examples of such responses included *All new buildings must obtain an energy efficiency certificate, however, in Barton Build's plan, there is no mention of conserving energy or installing solar panels. Students attend university courses for 40 weeks of the year. Students do not want an international airport lounge. They have rooms for conference guests and tourists and this can make the dorms overcrowded. Students would not want to stay in a place where there are too many people.*

- (e) This question assessed candidates' ability to explain how Bilal Mendes-Smith could have made the contract brief more specific. There were two very different approaches to this question, with both gaining credit. Some candidates focused on the vague language used in the contract brief, whereas others cited the key information which was missing. Creditworthy responses included *He could have specified which shared facilities were needed and the deadline for submitting the plans. Bilal could have mentioned the specific budget for the project as well as any restrictions the designers would have to abide by. He could have been more specific about the 'other considerations' and 'budgetary constraints.'*

Section B

Question 2

Candidates generally engaged well with the material on quiet quitting.

- (a) Most successful responses identified three different language features in lines 1 – 3. In this question, candidates were able to gain credit by citing the correct grammatical terminology or language feature, as well as correctly copying an exact example from the material. Creditworthy responses included *Contractions like 'you're' instead of using 'you are'. 'Busted a gut'. The use of rhetorical question e.g. 'Fed up with answering emails from your boss at the weekend?' Speaking in the second person.*

Weaker responses usually contained untargeted language and inaccurate copying from the material. Such examples included the use of ellipsis, which cannot gain credit, as well as omitting the question mark at the end of the rhetorical question.

- (b) In word-count questions, candidates are advised to avoid repetition of the question and introductions to their response. It is also recommended that candidates make full use of the word count in order to cover all the necessary points. Most successful responses were able to clearly note three valid points in about 30 words. The following is an example of a strong response. *'They feel undervalued and exploited due to the competitive pressure and intrusion on their time. Aiming for a work/life balance, they're unwilling to do more than they're obliged to.'*

This question proved to be a successful discriminator for candidates. Most were able to note the negative feelings that individuals begin to have in relation to the workplace, however, some candidates focused their whole response on this one point. An example of this is *'In a competitive world, individuals feel the pressure to complete tasks which results in frustration, exhaustion and demotivation.'*

- (c) This question required candidates to identify four of the ways in which the WFH phenomenon has changed people's attitudes to work and leisure time. Overall, this question proved to be challenging for the candidates, with some omitting the necessary detail. Precision is important; for example, to gain credit for the sixth point on the mark scheme, candidates were required to reference 'well-intentioned messages' arriving 'during travel / holiday time' which 'intrude / pressurise'. Some candidates cited some, but not all, of the required details. Two examples are *'The employees are constantly reminded of what awaits back home, even during the holidays'* and *'Work can now reach you, even during holidays.'* In some instances, responses referred to lines 27 – 29 of the insert material which focused on rising living costs and not the WFH phenomenon.
- (d) In this question, candidates were instructed to answer using their own words as far as possible. In order to gain credit, candidates needed to rewrite each of the five phrases so that the meaning remained the same. There were some very successful responses. In (i) the following responses gained credit: *'Many workers aim to satisfy', 'The vast majority are looking to impress'*. In (ii), creditworthy responses included *'It is amplified in the case that workers connect with who they are working for. Especially if they enjoy working with their manager.'* In (iii), the following responses gained credit: *'If you're walking away from the herd, you would not be appreciated', 'People who do not participate are likely to be reprimanded.'* In (iv), the following responses were successful. *'The problems that are already prevalent go unacknowledged', 'Present problems are seldom discussed.'* In (v), creditworthy responses included *'Creates more problems for your coworkers'* and *'Adding more to the plate of fellow employees.'* Weaker responses were characterised by lifted material which was often uncreditworthy. Furthermore, if there were missing elements in the rewording, the response was deemed too vague.

- (e) In all six sub-questions, successful responses noted the wording of the question and cited the exact word in the material. Minor spelling errors were tolerated; however, candidates who noted several words or part of a sentence were unable to gain credit as the response lacked the necessary precision. '(To) stop working' (iii) and 'mutinous' (iv) proved to be good discriminators for the candidates and were found to be challenging.
- (f) In this question, candidates were instructed to use their own opinion to suggest one example of a reward an employee might be able to negotiate with their supervisor and to justify their response. There was a good range of valid responses, for example: *'They could negotiate an overtime bonus where they would feel valued and credited for their extra effort at work'*, *'An employee can negotiate a recognition reward such as 'employee of the month.' This gives them motivation to work harder and they feel valued for their hard work.'* Candidates were able to achieve some credit for noting a valid reward or for providing a valid justification. Uncreditworthy responses were characterised by a lack of precision and misunderstanding. Such responses cited a reduction in working hours, job rotations and flexible working which are not examples of a reward. Responses which were associated with a change in contract were unable to gain credit.
- (g) The final question on the exam paper asked candidates to use their own opinion to explain the meaning of the quotation. Candidates were instructed to not refer to **Section B** material. Candidates who gained some credit were able to successfully reword the quotation, whilst those gaining the highest credit were able to reword the quotation and further develop their answer or provide exemplification. Creditworthy responses included the following. *'Some people tend to be stubborn and refuse to acknowledge any wrongdoings, possibly because they have always been praised growing up or they do not wish to admit they made any mistakes.'* *'The quotation means people rarely change unless they recognise a problem themselves. If someone does not see their actions as harmful or wrong, they have no incentive to adjust, making outside efforts to reform them ineffective.'*

ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8021/23 Comprehension
--

Key messages

- In question **1(c)**, many candidates exhibited good organisational and analytical skills. These candidates incorporated connectives, conjunctions and linking phrases to good effect. Their answers were fluent and structured, and the considerations offered were signposted clearly as advantages or disadvantages of Option B to students. Their responses were nuanced, used modal verbs (for example, 'which should result in candidates getting to lectures on time', 'it might please the 35 per cent of candidates who said the bakeries in Battax was their favourite aspect of studying there', 'many candidates, however, may have to wait in the rain') and employing words such as 'likely' (for example, 'it is likely that doubling the number of buses will result in candidates being less anxious about missing the first lecture of the day'). They exhibited a good command of the language, using expressions such as 'the proposed route', 'less chance of encountering high volumes of traffic', 'will help alleviate the financial worries of the 25 per cent who stated this as a concern'. A few responses included informal language (for example, 'wanna' and 'like' used incorrectly as well as 'cause' used in place of 'because'). Most candidates complied with the instruction to answer in continuous prose. However, although **1(c)** requires responses to be written in continuous prose, it is worth noting that it is not an essay-style question, so candidates do not need to include an introduction or a conclusion. Many responses matched the criteria found in Levels 1 and 2. Weaker responses were too generalised, too assertive, and/or too speculative, and some answers lacked clarity and/or cogent arguments that responded to the question posed.
- Unless a question specifically requires a personal opinion or an overall view, it is essential that responses are precise, detailed and based on relevant material from the Insert. It is recommended that candidates refer back to both the questions and the material in order to familiarise themselves with the relevant details as much as possible, then include all such details in their responses.
- If a question does not instruct the candidate to write a response in their own words or within a certain word limit, candidates should copy the relevant wording from the material. Responses in own words to certain questions (for example, **1(a)**, and **1(d)** **1(e)**, **2(b)**, **2(c)**, and **2(e)**) were sometimes not detailed enough to gain credit.
- Most candidates noted the word limit in **2(e)(ii)**, **2(f)** and **2(g)** and adhered to it. One of the key skills examined on this paper is the ability to compose succinct responses, and correct answers after the word limit has already been reached will not gain credit. Candidates are advised not to include an introduction or repeat the question. Some responses were not written in complete sentences in order to overcome the restriction of the word count, and this limited the marks awarded.
- In **2(d)**, a small number of candidates copied words and phrases from the material and placed them in quotation marks. When responding to questions requiring the use of the candidate's own words, words and phrases that are copied from the material cannot be credited, even when the candidate acknowledges and attributes them by placing them in quotation marks.
- It is crucial that candidates read the question carefully and respond to the focus required by that question. For example, in **1(c)**, some candidates wrote about tourists and residents rather than students. Others ignored the direction to include one disadvantage.
- It is important that candidates note the section of material that they have been directed to in the question (e.g. the Background for **1(a)**, Option A for **1(b)(i)** and **(ii)** and so on). Option B for **1(d)**, lines 26 – 29 for **2(d)**, lines 38 to 41 for **2(e)(ii)** and lines 50 to 53 for **2(f)**.
- Regarding questions worth one mark (e.g. **2(a)** and **2(b)** **2(c)**, **2(e)(i)** and **2(h)**), it is important to note that only the first response or idea is marked. Some candidates employed semi colons, 'or', 'and' or 'which,' to offer extended answers.

General comments

- It is recommended that candidates write their answers as legibly as possible to ensure that responses can be read and marked in their entirety.

- Candidates should indicate clearly if their answer to a question is not in the correct response area for that question. When candidates cannot fit their response into the response area, they are advised to request an additional booklet rather than write in the margins.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Successful responses offered evidence from the Background. Creditworthy responses included: 'Battax is home to an expanding university', 'Battax has a growing candidate population', 'Battax has been designated a cultural heritage site so there is a higher number of tourists visiting the area'. Weaker responses were characterised by candidates offering responses that were either too vague (for example, 'Battax has a lot of tourism' or 'many candidates take the bus' which lacked the idea of *increasing* volume of traffic) or did not answer the question, for example, 'Battax has many historical buildings.'. Other incorrect responses referred to the diagram for Option A, for example, 'the main bus stop is next to the drop off zone'.
- (b) (i) Responses scoring highly on this question offered evidence from Option A and correctly identified the problem for taxi drivers as the introduction of a free shuttle bus for tourists, or that taxi drivers were no longer permitted to enter the drop off zone. They were then able to develop the point by relating Option A to the livelihood of the taxi drivers (for example: 'tourists will take the free shuttle bus so taxi drivers will lose many customers'; 'as taxi drivers are no longer allowed to transport tourists to the drop off zone, they will earn less money and may struggle to keep their job'). Weaker responses referred to Option A but repeated the problem rather than providing a developed explanation of the problem.
- (ii) Stronger responses either identified two specific and distinct advantages of Option A or identified one advantage and developed it convincingly (for example: 'tourists will have a more relaxing journey to the drop off zone as they will likely encounter less traffic as a result of taxis not being allowed on the route'; 'tourists will have less waiting time because the shuttle buses will run every 15 minutes and are double decker so can accommodate more passengers in one go'). Weaker responses contained generalisations about reduced traffic and/or failed to relate the advantages to tourists specifically (for example, 'there will be less traffic on the roads'). Some repeated the advantage (e.g. 'tourists will have a free shuttle bus so would not have to spend any money to get to Battax').
- (c) There were many excellent responses to this question. Most successful responses interpreted the evidence offered in the material and read between the lines to show understanding of the advantages (and one disadvantage). These responses gathered pieces of information from across **Section A** to create four clearly expressed, cogent points. They offered advantages that had been developed, whether by explanation, exemplification and/or linking two pieces of information from different parts of **Section A**, thereby highlighting their ability to present sustained and relevant analysis. They also understood that the most convincing responses are nuanced ones. Strong responses typically developed their points well by offering accurate interpretations of the pie charts, for example 'Another advantage of Option B is their use of an alternative route which protects candidates from the traffic expected from the 3 million tourists arriving in the following year as currently 75 per cent of candidates worry about being late for lectures'. Valid points beyond the mark scheme included the following: 'An advantage is that as well as avoiding the congestion caused by traffic around Battax Old Town, the route has halved from 8 km to 4 km making it likely to be a much quicker journey to university'; A disadvantage is that the new bus route will go through Serenity Park where members of Peace 4 Communities live. The sixty active members of this group want to reduce noise and traffic pollution so this might increase the stress of candidates as it could lead to possible conflict between the members and the candidates.'.

Some candidates confused the data in the pie charts, most commonly reversing the 70 per cent/30 per cent split of students with a shorter or longer walk to the bus stop (for example, 'However, 70 per cent of students live between a 6 – 30 minute walk away from the new bus stop so it will take them longer to get there and they will be late for lectures'). Some candidates did not note the focus of the question and offered advantages to residents, tourists, or both. Some advantages and/or

developments were too vague to be creditworthy. Weaker responses were characterised by the repetition of advantages, or an advantage and its development being separated from each other in the answer, thus affecting the clarity and fluency of the response.

- (d) Most successful responses focused on problems for either the residents close to the train station, or those living in Serenity Park. Examples of candidates developing points well included the following: 'Residents expressed concern about the increasing noise and litter coming from the train station. If the university bus stop relocated to the train station, the situation would only get worse from the number of candidates gathering there'; 'Residents of the Peace 4 Communities action group are opposed to traffic noise and will object to the candidate buses travelling through Serenity Park creating noise and pollution'. Less successful responses focused on existing problems for residents, rather than those that would be *created* by Option B (e.g. 'Taxis will still be permitted in the drop off zone so there will be a lot of congestion and pollution'). Valid points beyond the mark scheme included: 'Duplicating the number of buses on the alternative route through Serenity Park would create congestion in this tranquil area causing annoyance to the residents that live on this side of town.'
- (e) Stronger responses focused on the 'Conversation between candidates on the university bus' for example, 'Because the visiting engineer posted a video that went viral about how he was stuck at the Battax bus stop thanks to the long queues. This gives the university a bad image and defamation of the town like this could affect the outcome for the accreditation.'. Valid points beyond the mark scheme included references to student punctuality and attendance. Responses which were too vague to gain credit made references to 'Favourite aspects of studying in Battax', for example, 'Only 25 per cent of students said the reputation of the engineering department was important to them'. Candidates did not understand that this does not necessarily mean that the department did not have a good reputation and would therefore not prevent them from receiving accreditation. Some candidates misread the question and stated reasons why the department *would* be likely to receive accreditation.
- (f) Most successful responses were focused and precise. They understood the consequences of when the questionnaire was handed out, for example, 'students may have been late owing to problems with traffic.' Some responses were too vague, for example, '30 per cent of students handed in the questionnaire'; 'the survey was handed out during the first lecture'. Inaccurate responses included assertive or generalised comments about the nature of questionnaires.
- (g) This question was not answered well by many candidates. Most successful responses explained one way a busy town could reduce the amount of traffic and did not repeat information from **Section A**, as directed. Some candidates identified ways to reduce the amount of traffic but did not offer any development of the idea, for example, 'introduce cycle paths', 'build a bypass', 'encourage people to work from home'. Many incorrect responses were characterised by answers focusing on Battax (e.g. tourists should only be allowed to travel to the drop off zone after 10 am', 'relocate the main bus stop to the train station and double the number of buses in that area'). Other incorrect responses focused on managing traffic rather than reducing the amount, such as introducing more traffic lights, traffic police or widening roads and increasing the number of lanes.

Section B

Question 2

- (a) Successful responses noted the instruction to identify the exact word in the material and quoted only the relevant word that had the same meaning, for example offered 'collective' in (i) rather than 'collective understanding' (which was not creditworthy) and 'recognised' in (ii) rather than 'increasingly recognised'. Some candidates misread the question, offering their own definitions of the three words or including the three words in their own sentences to show usage.
- (b) Creditworthy answers offered either 'They saw greater weight loss' or 'They saw greater waist circumference reduction' as the first idea. Some candidates attempted to use their own words, omitting the comparative (or a suitable alternative) in the process which could not be credited.
- (c) Creditworthy answers focused on Brady Holmer, as directed and cited either 'increased hunger levels' or 'overeating' as the first idea. The most frequently seen inaccurate response was 'It may have varying effects on appetite, weight and energy for different people.'.

- (d) Many candidates did well in this question. Successful responses noted the line references and focused on the key messages contained within them. Creditworthy phrases included the following: 'going for a stroll' for bullet point 1; 'research shows' for bullet point 2; 'diminishes', 'decreases', 'helps prevent' for bullet point 3; 'the chance of an early death', 'the probability of an early death' for bullet point 4; 'heart disease' for bullet point 5; 'the improvement in health decreases after the standard 10000 steps', 'beyond the threshold of 10000 daily steps the benefits start to dwindle' for bullet point 6; 'a separate research paper discovered that the scenario was much the same for dementia', 'a separate investigation conjured comparable findings for dementia' for bullet point 7; 'as few as 3800 steps', 'a paltry 3800 steps', 'a mere 3800 steps' for bullet point 8; 'daily', 'every 24 hours' for bullet point 9; 'can be beneficial', 'can reap rewards' for bullet point 10; and 'especially if someone walks with more vigour', 'walks at a faster rate', 'increases their speed' for bullet point 11. The phrases most commonly lifted from the material were 'going for a walk', 'walking', 'premature', 'cardiovascular' and 'a day'. Some candidates answered using their own words but did not gain credit for the content of their responses as they were too vague (for example, 'chance of death' rather than 'chance of early death' for bullet point 4, or 'caused by serious illnesses' rather than 'caused by heart disease' for bullet point 5). Some weak responses stated the candidate's own opinion on the benefits of walking, usually related to well-being, rather than noting what was said in lines 26 – 29.
- (e) In (i), successful responses offered 'They performed better cognitively' as their first idea. In (ii), responses scoring highly noted the line references and included all three key elements in their summary and responded in continuous prose. A common mistake was 'They performed as if they were 9 years old' for bullet point 1. In (iii), strongest responses focused on Steve Magness and noted all the key elements as outlined in the three bullet points in the mark scheme. Weaker responses misinterpreted 'establish a routine' for 'establish a bedtime routine', or 'adopting good habits' for bullet point 1. Neither of these were creditworthy. Some responses could have been improved by keeping the wording of the original material, for example, 'stop using devices at night,' rather than 'cut down on your device use at night' for bullet point 3. Some candidates omitted crucial information, for example 'go outside to help regulate your circadian rhythm' for bullet point 2 which was too vague.
- (f) This question proved challenging to the candidates. Successful responses noted the line references and included both key elements in their summary and responded in continuous prose. Weaker answers were vague, for example, 'five might actually be the minimum' or copied out information about 'cognitive decline, dementia and diabetes' from outside of the line references stated.
- (g) Strongest responses to this question noted the line references and included both key elements in their summary and responded in continuous prose. Weaker responses copied information about the need to drink 6 – 8 glasses of water a day rather than focusing on the reasons why the recommendation is not based on hard science, as directed in the question.
- (h) There were many creditworthy synonyms beyond the mark scheme, for example, 'to figure out what is really true' for 'sift fact from fiction', 'the key message' for '(the) bottom line', 'moving faster' for 'stepping up the pace' and 'decrease in normal thinking abilities' for 'cognitive decline'. Candidates found (iv) difficult and many incorrect answers related to health in general, for example, 'deterioration in health' or 'loss of bodily functions' which could not be credited. There are three ways candidates could have improved their responses. Candidates are required to use the same grammatical form as in the question (e.g. 'walk faster' is not the correct grammatical form to replace 'stepping up the pace'), provide only one synonym per question (especially as only the first answer is marked), and ensure that the synonym offered matches exactly the original word/s. For example, the synonym should match 'cognitive decline', rather than encompass the wider idea in the material of health conditions.