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Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel GCE
in Global Development (6GL01) Paper
1

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Grade Boundaries

Paper Introduction

Most candidates were able to provide some information for most questions, and stronger responses focused well on the questions, answering them in an evaluative way. There were, however, some gaps in candidates' knowledge and understanding, particularly relating to governance, the ways in which economic development and protest affect rights, human development and global development interventions. Candidates do need to be prepared to answer questions on any area of the specification, and to have familiarity with all the terminology on the specification. Some candidates tended to give answers to questions which had been asked in previous years, which indicated that they had practised and been prepared, but was not a productive strategy in terms of responding the questions which had been asked this year.

6GL01_01_Q01ai

Most candidates were able to identify a reason from the text.

6GL01_01_Q01aii

Most candidates were able to identify one or two reasons, but many struggled to 'outline' the reasons. Some candidates picked on specific evidence, not always the most relevant evidence, rather than the broader reasons. A significant proportion of the cohort assumed that 'sustainable' meant environmentally sustainable rather than economically sustainable. Although this interpretation was not fully supported by the passage, responses were rewarded according to their merits. A minority of candidates picked up on the statistic of 8% growth, and assumed that this growth rate was an indicator of stability.

6GL01_01_Q01bi

Most candidates appeared to be unfamiliar with the concept of 'governance', although it is in the specification. Most simply talked about governments, and many were able to make some strong points in this way. However, many responses were vague, suggesting, for example, that 'strong government will lead to increased economic development,' without indicating how or why, using examples or showing the mechanisms by which this might work. A significant minority took this question as an opportunity to contrast autocratic and democratic governments, generally without considering governance, and often making sweeping generalisations about the nature of autocratic and democratic governments. Some candidates confused social and economic development.

6GL01_01_Q01bii

Most candidates were able to provide an informed response to this question, with generally acceptable ideas about how economic development and rights are linked. Candidates could have improved by examining the link more closely rather than assuming it to be constant - many responses were overly descriptive or assertive. A significant proportion of candidates confused having the legal or political right to do something with having the opportunity to exercise their right.

6GL01_01_Q02ai

Most candidates were able to identify two reasons, picking key ideas. Many were able to outline the ideas more fully.

6GL01_01_Q02aii

Most candidates were able make relevant comments on the basis of information, and some candidates were able to consider both negative and positive effects, often contrasting peaceful and violent protests. However, a significant proportion of responses lacked explanation of how or why protest might affect human rights. A number of candidates generalised from a single, often historical example, with limited explanation of how or whether such an event might recur.

6GL01_01_Q02b

Many candidates were able to make some comments about global communities and human development. There were some very strong responses which considered a range of global communities, including the UN, Amnesty, the Red Cross and social media communities, and examined how they could affect human development in terms of MDGs, support for freedom of speech, freedom from political oppression and more basic meeting of human needs in times of disaster. A significant proportion of candidates interpreted human development as personal, individual development and talked about how Facebook and Google could help us learn more and develop as people. Again, candidates could improve by really focusing on the skill of examining, rather than writing simple facts and opinions.

6GL01_01_Q03a

Most candidates who chose to respond to this question had something to say relating to global development, although a surprising number of candidates left a blank for this question. The strongest responses referred to different possible definitions of development, including human, social, economic, political etc., considered the idea of unequal development around the globe and referred to core and peripheral countries, discussing why people argued about how to define global development. A significant proportion of candidates simply defined global development, whilst others provided answers to previous questions or talked about aid.

6GL01_01_Q03b

This was the more popular of the two longer questions, and candidates responded across the full range of the mark scheme. A surprising number left blank spaces, but there were also some responses of very high quality, which really considered what it meant for an economically developed country to develop, structured their arguments well, and questioned. Many considered further economic development, competition to stay on top, further exploitation of the peripheral countries for example. Others considered countries which were economically developed but could develop further in terms of social or human development. Candidates were generally more clear sighted about the need for China to develop socially than the need for the USA or the UK to develop socially. Weaker responses tended to list examples without analytical or evaluative comment and without using them to drive an argument. A number of these responses focused on less economically developed countries, which was not helpful. Generally, candidates could improve by answering the question rather than simply writing what they know.

6GL01_01_Q04a

Most candidates were able to say something about the main arguments of dependency theory, although there were again a surprising number of blank scripts for this question. The strongest responses were able to talk about the core, the periphery and the ways in which interdependence is held to lead to underdevelopment and exploitation in some cases.

6GL01_01_Q04b

Most candidates who chose this response were able to give some information, and responses covered the full range of marks. The strongest responses really evaluated whether global development interventions had been successful or not, and why. Often, candidates chose the MDGs, and many of these strongest responses argued that they had been generally, but not completely successful. These strong responses were well structured and well argued. However, a significant proportion of candidates were unsure what a global development initiative was, and gave irrelevant examples. Many responses were descriptive and assertive.

Paper Summary

Overall, candidates were generally able to display knowledge, albeit with gaps. In future years they should be prepared to answer questions on all aspects of the specification. Candidates can answer 'What?' questions with descriptive answers and examples. However, they could improve by focusing on the demands of particular questions. They could benefit from thinking about how and why one thing leads to another, how well things work, how effective actions are, to what extent something is the case. They could improve by using their examples to demonstrate points in support of their main ideas.