

ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8021/12
Paper 1

Key messages

- Use the introduction to focus specifically on the key words of the question, not just the topic.
- Maintain an appropriate register through the whole response.
- Achieve clear communication through grammatical accuracy.
- Attempt appropriately ambitious vocabulary to enable the writing to become more engaging and communicate more complex ideas.
- Organise clearly and link ideas to allow the argument to develop logically to avoid fragmented structures, including repetition.
- Always attempt to conclude by evaluating what has been said, including making a personal assessment, rather than just repeating points.
- Use examples and information to support arguments, selecting and applying them appropriately rather than just describing at length.

General comments

Overall, responses successfully focused on the questions set but some did need to indicate this more in the introduction. Many were able to use link words and phrases ('however', 'in addition to', 'consequently') to give their argument shape and coherence, enabling logical progression towards a conclusion. A clearly structured introduction, which identified key words, not only demonstrated an understanding of the question but usually resulted in a clearly structured, relevant argument and avoided digression or pure description.

Nearly all responses had conclusions suggesting that the time allowed was well managed. Although many tended to summarise the argument in their conclusions a number of candidates did evaluate and introduce a personal judgement or assessment, firmly rooted in the material provided.

Grammatical accuracy (tense, correct use of article, agreement) was the key to clear communication within sentences. Similarly, effective linkage between sentences helped to communicate a clearly structured discussion. Some responses did use a vocabulary range, achieving greater precision and sophistication in their communication. However, for some responses had time been left to check for errors and even re-read the essay completely, corrections could have been made to small errors that impeded meaning, including over-ambition.

Most responses used examples and information to support arguments. Sometimes these could be overly descriptive and distract from the argument rather than enhance it but, generally, a good knowledge was shown throughout; many candidates selected examples carefully and then used them to develop their ideas.

The focus now is on clear communication and a well structured, engaging argument and it was felt that many candidates achieved this. Also, nearly all candidates acknowledged the need to write in an appropriate register and to the correct length. Any essay plans tended to be short and there were few crossed out false starts so, again, time was used efficiently.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Many responses tended to describe what was happening in terms of 'decline of religious observance' without addressing 'reasons' for it. More successful responses focused on issues such as a fast-paced world, dominance of consumerism, worries about extremism, the undermining of religion by science and changing

family attitudes, especially amongst the young. The most successful ones tried to explore and assess how these had had an impact on observance of religion in their society, concluding that it depended on how entrenched religion was in some societies, whether secularisation was becoming a global phenomenon and what the impact of technological progress is having.

Question 2

The success of the responses depended on a secure understanding of both 'colonialism' and 'legacy'. Some tended to link to the activities of major powers, particularly the way their businesses were infiltrating certain parts of the world. More successful responses linked the past to the present, using examples to explore whether colonial powers of the past still had influence today and whether any legacy was indeed 'alive' or not. The best responses demonstrated a clear, thoughtful understanding of the key words of 'colonialism' and 'legacy' using a range of appropriate examples to illustrate 'many forms', often providing a balanced view.

Question 3

Many responses simply described the catastrophic issues caused by global population growth without a focus on the two key words 'sustainable' and 'desirable'. More successful responses made clear links between over-population and the consequent dangers presented by pollution, global warming and other environmental dangers. 'Sustainable' was considered in terms of over-crowding, housing, health issues and resources such as food, water, medicine and energy. Some considered it to be 'desirable' to improve the workforce and knowledge base of society. Those who explored 'to what extent' were most successful, providing a balanced discussion and concluding that the problems probably outweighed the benefits.

Question 4

Many responses described 'beautiful spaces' in their own country and discussed how they were beneficial. More successful responses considered 'valued and maintained' but this was sometimes more implicit than explicit. 'Beautiful spaces' ranged from parks, woodland and beaches to restaurants and listed buildings, such examples often described at length and showing good knowledge. The most successful responses did focus on the extent to which government or local authorities prioritised such spaces and valued them enough to provide funding. Some examined the input of local communities and the way volunteers helped maintain certain places, valuing them as areas of healthy relaxation to be shared by everyone. Often it was concluded that a space is only 'valued and maintained' if it has some commercial potential, using tourism as an example.

Question 5

Many responses considered 'edit genes' in terms of designer babies and cloning, as a way of choosing human characteristics. More successful ones explored the benefits of gene editing and the advantages and disadvantages of it. Comments tended to examine health issues: how diseases could be eradicated such as cancer and other serious hereditary diseases. Issues such as affordability were considered: those with more money benefiting the most hence creating more division in society. The dangers of abuse were also highlighted with the potential to create super humans for destructive purposes. The most successful responses demonstrated relevant scientific knowledge to argue convincingly about the advantages and disadvantages of gene editing and then making a final assessment.

Question 6

Most responses focused on 'monitoring' and were able to explore issues such as detecting illegal activities (terrorism, money laundering, indecent images, bullying and other valid areas). More successful ones clearly focused on 'crime and terrorism' with reference to national security, the necessity for police to be ahead of criminals, counteracting cyber-crime and even monitoring internet abuse and hate crime. The most successful responses balanced this with privacy issues and the potential for the innocent to be wrongly accused. In the end responses concluded that 'monitoring' was essential to keep everyone safe in a more complex digital age but that there needed to be proper legislation to ensure it was used fairly and responsibly by the authorities.

Question 7

Many responses tended to generalise about 'traditional crafts' with references to tourism, national identity and keeping such skills alive. The more successful ones gave details of specific crafts (games, basket

weaving, souvenir items such as candles, clothing, pottery) and were able to discuss how vital this was for their own country with a focus on boosting local economies. The most successful ones balanced this with the argument that such traditions were no longer important as they prevent local communities and families from prospering in a more globalised, modern world and such crafts were often factory produced anyway. However, conclusions did acknowledge that such crafts are a part of many traditions which enable a country to preserve its heritage and that this may be more important than anything else.

Question 8

Responses tended to generalise about the way the sea could inspire a range of moods and emotions. More successful ones applied this to specific examples but tended to be too descriptive usually referencing contrasts between storm and calm, its power and mystery and the way it inspires a sense of escape and adventure. The most successful ones used a range of examples, were selective and considered the writer's attitude towards the sea as revealed by their writing.

Question 9

Many responses understood the question but tended to solely focus on 'rarely tells the truth'. Generic examples were given (food/shampoo/soap) arguing that 'they never worked at home like in the advert' therefore they never told the truth. More successful ones selected specific adverts and considered a more balanced view: purpose and target audience were discussed as well as the need for factual information in charity and technology advertising. There were references to the visual impact of advertising: that fast food outlets can make food look more desirable than on the advert and celebrities can make beauty products appear to have miraculous effects on people's looks. Holiday adverts were often considered as showing just the positive aspects of a destination therefore revealing partial truth. The most successful responses addressed 'to what extent' concluding that in the end advertising is a selling method of business so has to look attractive and persuasive, with the inevitable consequence of distorting reality in the process.

Question 10

Many responses showed good knowledge of city characteristics describing parks, buildings, the people, the theatre, transport, traditions and atmosphere, sometimes also considering such negatives as pollution or over-crowding. More successful ones focused on 'unique' and 'significant' with examples emphasising this: a unique building with religious significance or an area of a city well known for its markets. The most successful ones addressed 'explain the extent' with some arguing that most cities have high rise areas but the design is often unique, concluding that uniqueness is only really significant if that particular characteristic cannot be found in any other city.

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Paper 8021/22
Paper 2

Key messages

Candidates should always read the questions carefully, to ensure that they know what to do before they begin writing their answers.

Questions which ask for use of own words are testing understanding of the material, so copying sections of language from the material will not score high marks. Technical terms and individual vocabulary items may be used, if the context is altered sufficiently to demonstrate comprehension.

Word counts should always be observed strictly and candidates are reminded that no material which exceeds the stated limits can be considered.

Where a specified number of points is asked for, the first attempts only are considered. For example, if two reasons are sought, only the first two attempts will be considered. In responding to such questions, candidates might therefore be well advised to state first the points which they consider to be the strongest.

Vocabulary or phrases sought from the text or from candidates' own knowledge, to replace other terms, will always need to be in the same grammatical form as the original, for example an infinitive, an adjective, or a noun.

General comments

On the whole, candidates seemed to engage well with the material in both **Section A** and **Section B**.

There was sometimes a noticeable difference in the level of confidence in written English between questions requiring close reference to the stimulus material and those which asked for a candidate's own ideas. Occasionally, answers were too imprecise or unclear to gain credit.

In **Questions 1(a)** and **1(b)**, the vast majority of candidates refrained from making reference to the other two options, i.e. the ones other than their selection. Sometimes, a direct contrast was used but this could not be credited although superlatives such as *furthest away*, *largest population* and similar were allowed. Where an occasional response made fuller reference to two or even all three of the countries, the better or best answer was credited.

Nuance was sometime an issue in 1a and 1b, for example making too absolute and assertive a claim. Brit's having studied Portuguese at school for a couple of years is unlikely, for example, to make conducting complex business negotiations *easy*, so it would have been more accurate to suggest that his previous experience *may* help him to talk to the people there, or to understand day-to-day exchanges and perhaps break the ice with the people he meets.

Copying ('lifting') of material was the most common reason for marks being denied in **Questions 1(a)**, **1(b)**, **2(b)(i)** and **2(b)(ii)**. In questions which specify use of own words, little to no credit can be gained in this way. It is recognised that certain vocabulary items have few likely synonyms and so the original can be used but then needs a context of the candidate's own, in order to show understanding and thus gain marks. Most often, this will require altering the verb, at least. Some of the attempts to change or link the material were inaccurate and/or had rather contrived or contradictory links, demonstrating that what had been copied had not been understood.

There was some tendency to offer too many answers for the number of marks available, and therefore some candidates failed to gain credit for correct material which they had negated by earlier incorrect, lifted or

imprecise attempts. Similar comments apply to word count questions, where too lengthy a preamble and/or an incorrect initial response meant that later points, which might have received credit if counted as an attempt, could not be considered.

In the vocabulary questions (**1(d)** and **2(d)**), there needs to be some precision over the amount of material provided in the response, to match the correct grammatical form of the original (see below for details). It was not uncommon for the correct answer to appear, but with too much additional material to be able to gain credit. Where more than one attempt is made to provide a response, again only the first can be considered.

Some examples of more complex, idiomatic phrasing:

1(a) Dafoo:

- The country's close proximity to Exlun Industries will provide breathing space for Brit's growing fatigue and separation from his family.
- To balance his work and family life, Dafoo is the closest country to Exlun Industries' headquarters, meaning he can still work and return home as fast as possible.
- The relatively stable economy holds promise for trade deals.

Gania:

- Despite Gania losing its younger generations for their career considerations, the establishment of Exlun Industries could provide a wide range of job opportunities for them, and thus stem the tide.
- Gania's youth are well versed in English.

Banu:

- Younger people are more keen and open to buy gadgets and many are also addicted or more impulsive to obtain their wants. Therefore as 60 per cent of Banu's population consists of young people, it will be better for sales.
- Banu's population is mostly teens and young adults, making it easier for Exlun Industries to boost their sales as technology is currently taking over the youngsters' lives.

(b) Dafoo:

- Dafoo is nearby to Exlun Industries' headquarters, which defeats the purpose of looking for an unsaturated market.
- The bureaucracy in Dafoo might hinder prospects for quick decision-making.

Gania:

- The country's fading natural resources point towards an economic halt that would be disadvantageous for trade deals in the long run.
- Zexon Tech has its headquarters nearby Gania which shows that Zexon Tech already has a stronghold in Gania, so it is going to be difficult for Exlun Industries to dominate the market against them.

Banu:

- There are minimal English speakers, which could make it hard for Brit to communicate.
- Simin is envious of Brit's merits in Exlun Industries. He has connections in Banu so could try to deter Brit's progress.
- However, the citizens can barely speak English so they will find it difficult trying to communicate, let alone promote their products.
- The long journey might hinder Brit's fatigue and, in turn, his performance.
- The huge distance involved will make for expensive logistics.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

The most common misunderstandings relating to the material for **Section A** were in the relative distances, stages of development and size/composition of population. Few candidates chose the same option for both **Questions 1(a)** and **1(b)**.

Question 1

- (a) Dafoo was the most popular choice, followed by Gania and then Banu. Common advantages cited for Dafoo included the closest proximity, being the most developed and economically stable country and the connection with the Portuguese Brit had studied at school, while the main disadvantages were seen to lie in the slight economic concern of the income now rising more slowly and the lack of young people, especially in regard to selling technology products.

For Gania, the main advantages were taken to be the current economic state, large population size and Italian being spoken, where a link to Brit's wife could be established. Disadvantages included the looming economic worries, the much closer proximity of rival firm Zexon Tech, and the exodus of younger people, the most likely consumers of Exlun Industries' products.

Banu was seen to be an emerging market, with great potential, with a large proportion of young people, and some candidates picked up the potential link to Spanish with Robina. However, it was easier to argue Banu as the least suitable choice (1(b)), given the infrastructural deficiencies, unlikely to be solved by international aid any time soon, given the current economic climate, alongside the limited knowledge of English among the inhabitants and the fact the Simin might jealously guard his own contacts in the country.

In addition to the general points mentioned above regarding copied/lifted material, the most common issues in this question related to balance. Where attempts were discounted because they were insufficiently clear, incorrect or had not been expressed in own words, this sometimes meant that the remaining points were incorrectly balanced. For example, the creditworthy attempts would contain the same number of advantages and disadvantages, or more disadvantages than advantages. In such cases, the responses were limited to Levels 2 and 3 respectively.

The balance point needs to be developed negatively too, in order to access the full range of marks, rather than balanced with a further benefit of the same point, or refuted and a solution proposed.

- (b) See **Question 1(a)** for popular choices of advantages and disadvantages. The most common issue here, other than copying too directly from the material, was the requirement to offer only three disadvantages but also one advantage. The most successful responses gave a developed advantage first, as those which had left this until last but who had exceeded three disadvantages, lost marks because only the first four attempts could be considered, and if the fourth was also a disadvantage, this clearly negated any later advantage. Those who mixed the two, along the lines of *Although.../While...* often missed out on a mark for development for their advantage, where the introductory statement had to be taken as an attempt.
- (c) Of those candidates selecting the correct response, most were able to offer a suitable justification as to why the Managing Director speaking fluent German was the least relevant of the additional information, along the lines of none of the three short-listed countries having German as a main language. However, there was a particularly strong distractor, with how Brit had met his wife, and other responses did not refer to the additional information but to the main part of the text, citing, for instance, population sizes.
- (d) (i) Of the four sub-sections of **Question 1(d)**, this was quite often correct but throughout this question, it was common to see an answer to one of the other sub-questions instead.
- (ii) This was the most commonly correct of the four parts to **Question 1(d)**, perhaps because *(the) (most) lucrative* could be accepted, as well as *(very) buoyant*.
- (iii) This appeared to be the hardest of the four parts to **Question 1(d)**.
- (iv) This appeared also to be quite testing but candidates quite often had the correct response (*on board*) as part of a longer phrase, for example *have him on board*, which was not deemed correct, as the grammatical form was not identical.
- (e) Word count was the main issue here but there was also some misreading of the question, which asked about exaggerations regarding the company's position, rather than about Brit. Too many responses started with *the best MBA course in the world or experience gained in a range of top companies*. If a correct point was also stated, the 30-word limit may well already have been passed. Where answers about the sales team and/or having the clear strategy for the company's

future were correctly identified, candidates often found it difficult to explain their choice(s), and especially to do so within the word limit allowed.

Section B

Despite the glossing of two key terms (*rewilding* and *dominion*), there was evidence to suggest that some candidates found the material quite challenging. In responses to **Question 2(b)(i)**, for example, rewilders were not infrequently taken to be animals, sheep-hating conservationists were going to be eaten by wolves (**2c**), and wolves were predators of dogs (**2bi**) and humans, as were deer (**2c**). There also seemed to be some confusion about where (or not) wolves are to be found, while the reference to countries confused some candidates, as the Dutch were not always understood to be residents of the Netherlands, and the French farmers were also variously placed in the Netherlands and Britain (**2bii** and **2c**).

Question 2

- (a) Most candidates found this question straightforward and selected the correct piece of information. There were some misunderstandings, along the lines of there being no wild animals in Britain, or using a different part of the material, such as the other reintroduced animals mentioned, or the reference to fairy tales.
- (b)(i) Most candidates managed to score at least a couple of marks here, and some did very well, although there was some confusion about where all this was happening, and the success in changing perceptions of wolves was sometimes taken to mean that the wolves' nature itself had been altered, i.e. they had *become* more shy/peaceable. Rewilders were sometimes understood to be animals and there were some erroneous comments about French farmers. Use of own words, even allowing for technical terms to be used (wolf/wolves, predators, anti-wolf, outskirts of Rome) was the most frequent issue observed, aside from any misunderstandings as to content.
- (ii) While there were some fully correct answers to this question, a number of candidates apparently found it difficult to use their own words to convey either the renewed presence of wolves in the Netherlands or the relative size of the two countries. A mark was available for reference to the surprise at the British timidity over the issue, but this point was rarely included.

There were also some misunderstandings and/or reference to the wrong sections of the material, for example the French farmers and the wolves killing sheep. Some candidates had reversed the situation, thinking that wolves were in Britain but should be in the Netherlands.

- (c) Length of answers was the main issue identified with this question, as many candidates rewrote the question stem, thus using up a large percentage of the 20 words allowed and considered for the response. The most common points to be awarded marks were the references to wolves doing the job of humans, numbers being reduced and the conservationists being happier. The *sheep-hating conservationists* were sometimes thought to be the intended prey of the wolves, while the term *human predator* was sometimes also misunderstood, i.e. believed to imply that wolves (or sometimes deer) would hunt humans.
- (d)(i) Of the five sub-questions in **2(d)**, this was the most commonly correct, for example using *to control*, *to withhold*, *to keep in check*, *to hold back*, *to bury* or *to subdue*. Aside from any issues over meaning, one of the most common errors was not to supply a verb as an infinitive, to match the question's *to suppress*.
- (ii) Repetition of the word *worth* was a common reason for a mark not to be awarded here, as was a too literal rendering of the phrase, i.e. linking too closely to the literal cost or expense, rather than the idea of giving up or sacrificing one thing in order to gain something better. As this was an idiomatic phrase, a little more flexibility was possible in terms of the length and form of the new phrase supplied.
- (iii) The term *integral* was rarely understood as being *essential*, *crucial* or *necessary*. It was quite common to see *rare* as a response here, while *useful* and *important* were deemed to be insufficiently strong to credit.
- (iv) Similarly, the term *exponents* was not often understood to mean *supporters*, variously rendered as *opponents* (i.e. the exact opposite), *components/parts* or *experiments*, most commonly.

(v) This was sometimes understood, with common correct responses being *intrusive*, *intruding*, *encroaching*, and *not native*, but common wrong responses included *dangerous* or *new*.

(e) Few candidates scored all five available marks in this question. Key points to note are that it is the original words and phrases which are to be used, i.e. not those supplied by the candidate in **2(d)**, and that the same grammatical form must be used, e.g. *to suppress* but not *suppressed*. Furthermore, the same context as the material should not be used, so any responses using *invasive* in the sense of animals or species would be too close to the original sense. Finally, candidates should ensure that their sentence carries sufficient context to make the sense of the word absolutely clear, and that the opposite could not be substituted and the sentence still make sense. *It is important to suppress feelings of sadness.* (The opposite would also make sense here.)

A very short sentence is unlikely to convey sufficient clarity and precision of meaning. *That story book seems integral to read.*

The following are examples of good responses:-

to suppress: Following the judge's decision to let the murderer free, the murderer struggled to suppress a smile of victory./The widow was unable to suppress her tears over the death of her husband./He tried to suppress his anger so that he would not throw a tantrum in front of his friends.

a price worth paying:

- Sacrificing my sleep for my biology test was a price worth paying since I achieved an A.
- Sam had to resign from his high profile job but he found it a price worth paying to spend more time with his children.
- Divorcing and giving her 20 per cent of his net worth is a price worth paying as he cannot stand her.

integral:

- The president's charisma and energetic nature has been an integral factor for his re-election.
- Bill Gates played an integral part in Microsoft's development during the early 80s.
- Extra-curriculars are integral to building a good university application.

exponents:

- The exponents of flat earth dismissed all the current scientific evidence they were provided by the media.
- Exponents of Gandhi believed in non-violence.

invasive:

- The government's plan to monitor online activity received major backlash for being too invasive on citizens' privacy.
- Cancer is caused due to invasive multiplication of cells.

There were correct examples using privacy, military and footballing contexts. One quite cleverly crafted example managed to use the same context (the Axis and Allied forces from the Second World War 2) to elucidate all five terms and gain full marks.

(f) Responses here tended either to go beyond the required three attempts and/or to ignore the reference to *all forms of rewilding*, such that answers referring to danger to human life and other points linked specifically to wolves alone, were not creditworthy. The most common correct answers were related to the unpredictability of (ecological) consequences and the possibility of disaster. References made to the Buddhists releasing the crustaceans were sometimes correct if copied from the material but where candidates had attempted to re-word this, it was evidence that the point had not often been understood.

(g) Most candidates scored one of the available two marks here, usually the reference to the *labradoodle*, while the *wolf kept from the door* allusion was less frequently seen. Some candidates restated the answer to **2(a)** as part of the answer here, while others quoted different parts of the material, which were not personal comments to the author, and these were clearly incorrect.