

2021 VCE Global Politics external assessment report

General comments

Generally, the examination was handled well, and most students were able to attempt all short-answer questions.

Time management is a key skill for the completion of the examination, and students are encouraged to practise unseen questions under timed conditions to prepare themselves for the demands of the examination.

Responses that scored highly demonstrated an ability apply their knowledge and understanding under examination conditions and apply understanding to the given question. Responses that did not score well appeared to be formulaic or practised, or avoided dealing with all required aspects of the question.

Students should use the reading time to identify key concepts from the questions and understand what they are being asked to do with those key concepts. Equally, students should ensure they are clear on the command term featured in the question as this provides insight into what they are expected to do. For example, if a question asks the student to evaluate, then students must weigh up two (or more) sides of a proposition or idea, and come to a conclusion as to which is the most dominant, relevant or appropriate.

In Section A, students are reminded that they do not need to rewrite the question. Similarly, students are not required to provide rote-learned definitions for key terms. Responses that scored highly for questions such as 1, 6 and 9 were able to show understanding of the concept through explanation / use of an example. For example, students who were able to describe an example of international cooperation in their response, and show their grasp of the concept throughout, generally scored highly.

Specific and relevant examples feature in higher scoring responses. Students who wrote in a general sense, or inferred/implied events or circumstances, found it difficult to access full marks. This was especially significant for those questions that demanded a specific example.

Students are reminded that when they are asked for only one example, assessors will mark their response based on the first example they mention. In these circumstances, it is not beneficial in any way to include more than one example.

Specific information

Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

The statistics in this report may be subject to rounding resulting in a total more or less than 100 per cent.

Section A

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	2	22	75	1.8

This question assumed that maintaining sovereignty was an important aim for states, and students were required to demonstrate an understanding of why this was the case. Responses that scored highly were able to demonstrate an awareness of what sovereignty was, and linked this concept to elements of security, prosperity or the ability to represent the state internationally. Students were able to access marks without the use of an example.

Some students used the definition of sovereignty as their entire response, which limited their ability to access full marks.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Sovereignty refers to the widely recognised or legitimate ability to exercise effective control within recognised defined borders. This is the fundamental aim of all states because this claim to sovereignty is what grants them the power to create laws in their own territory and represent their state internationally in global forums. By maintaining sovereignty states also ensure the security of their citizens from invasion.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	7	24	39	29	1.9

Most students were able to identify a relevant and current transnational corporation (TNC) for this question. Responses that scored highly were able to specify a clear role of the TNC, as opposed to an aim. While there is commonly overlap in these areas, students are encouraged to think of roles as the part that the actor plays in the global arena, while the aims are objectives that the actor tries to achieve.

Some students were able to identify a role of the TNC, yet their example did not relate to that specific role. In these circumstances, students were unable to access full marks.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

One role of Samsung is to innovate by developing more advanced products. This is shown via innovations such as the development of the Bixby virtual assistant in 2015, to function as a virtual assistant and to better their phones functioning. In this way, Samsung fulfil their role to further the quality of their products.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	4	8	19	31	24	10	2.9

Generally, students were able to identify an issue requiring multilateral resolution (e.g. climate change / Paris climate agreement, people movement, NATO intervention in Libya, conflict in Syria, Iran nuclear deal, European migrant crisis). To highlight this concept, responses that scored highly referenced the need for

three or more actors to be actively involved, and some responses indicated that the actors directly involved were either unable or unwilling to resolve the issue, resulting in the need for more actors to be involved.

Some students were able to present an example of an issue requiring multilateral resolution, although some were unable to identify an element of the issue that directly challenged the sovereignty of a specific state. Students who referenced more than one state did not attract marks for their comments related to the second state.

Responses that scored highly were commonly able to identify the crucial element(s) of sovereignty that were being challenged in their chosen case study (political, territorial, fiscal, economic, environmental etc.).

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Climate change is an issue that requires multilateral resolution, which has thus resulted in the establishment of the Paris Climate Accord to ensure its 196 member states cooperate in reducing global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. The Paris Climate Accord has a significant capacity to challenge the sovereignty of its member states as it requires states to forfeit aspects of their domestic legislative sovereignty to comply with the stipulations of the Accords in mitigating the climate crisis. In order to comply with the Accords, China, as the world's number one emitter, is required to destroy 1588 coal-fired power plants, thus exemplifying the capacity of the climate crisis in necessitating a multilateral resolution, to undermine the legislative sovereignty of states as China cannot legislate freely on the issue of the environment without considering its obligations to the global community. Although, one fact that China has been building even more coal fired plans to stimulate the economy demonstrates how issues requiring multilateral resolution may challenge the sovereignty of states to the extent of its compliance.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	4	4	14	24	26	18	9	3.6

Overall, students were able to demonstrate a basic understanding of the function of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), one of the stated Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs) in the study design. Many students were able to offer an outline of some aims or roles, and reference their lending capacity or the number of member states to show their understanding.

Responses that scored highly were able to use specific examples of IMF action (Tunisia, Ukraine, Lebanon, Greece, Pakistan, Venezuela, Ecuador) to demonstrate either their power (using funds to support states in need) or their ability to challenge sovereignty (through structural changes to state economies). While evaluation was not required in this question, it was one way to demonstrate analysis of the power of the IMF. Alternatively, those students who were able to explain how and why the IMF was able to wield power (or why they were limited in their power) tended to receive higher marks.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Power refers to the ability of the global actor to influence the actions of another. As the IMF is an intergovernmental organisation, it wields a significant amount of power. One of the IMF's core aims is to provide monetary assistance under adequate safeguards to members experiencing balance of payments difficulties. This can challenge a state's economic sovereignty. For example, 'IMF promoted austerity in Ecuador has been disastrous and brutal' (The Guardian). In the provision of the \$4.2 billion loans the IMF set demands of Ecuador. To receive the loan, Ecuador was coerced to dismiss 3682 workers, impacting the unemployment rate. Furthermore, between 2017 and 2019, public investment fell by 64%. This is a clear example of the IMF's power. However, in the last 10 years, the IMF's role as the sole international monetary institute has been rivalled. The BRICS alliance have created a New Development Bank in 2014. With 30% of the world's GDP, the New Development Bank is a direct rival of the IMF. Thus, the power of the IMF has been diminished.

Question 5a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	13	38	49	1.4

This question required students to show an understanding of what trade is, and highlight a specific example of this being undertaken by their chosen Asia-Pacific state. Responses that scored highly were able to use a specific example that demonstrated a trade action (developing trade agreements such as ChAFTA and CSSTA) or discuss specific trade barriers, such as the USA's 25% tariff on steel or China's trade sanctions against Australian exports such as coal and barley.

Some students were unable to identify a specific example of trade being used, and were therefore unable to access full marks. Furthermore, some students used predictive statements about what might happen in the future, which did not meet the requirement for a specific example.

The chosen example of trade was required to represent the concept of foreign policy.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The foreign policy instrument of trade has been used by the USA in its establishment of trade deals, such as the Australian-US Free Trade Agreement (AUSFTA) which was reviewed in 2019 eliminating tariffs that average 4.3% on more than 99% of qualifying tariff lines, enabling the US to have greater preferential market access in Australia and promote the growth of its manufacturing industry.

Question 5b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	5	27	68	1.7

Hard power incorporates the use of coercion and/or force (often demonstrated through military power), or incentive (often demonstrated through economic power). Responses that scored highly were able to link their understanding of hard power to the 'hard' elements of their chosen example.

While some students were able to discuss general ideas of militarisation, it is recommended that students ensure their example is specific (event, action etc.) in its representation of the concept of hard power.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

One use of hard power by China is their aggressive use of political power in Xinjiang. Hard power refers to the ability of a global actor the influence the actions of another actor via incentive or coercion. In 2018, the CCP make a legal amendments to Article 33 of the Xinjiang region's regulations against extremism. This law enabled them to use educational transformation institutions to detain those the CCP asserted posed a threat to social cohesion and national security in China.

Question 5c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	3	1	3	6	10	14	17	17	14	9	5	6.0

This 10-mark question clearly asked for two national interest. Teachers and students are encouraged to think about this type of question in one of two ways. Firstly, this question can be seen as two five-mark responses. Secondly, it can be taken as a whole across the two nominated national interest outcomes worth 10 marks. Whichever way the student approached the question, evaluation was required to access higher marks.

Students and teachers are encouraged to think of evaluation as ‘weighing up’ two sides of a situation and deciding which is more dominant and/or prevalent. For example, students who were able to see each national interest as achieved to a limited or significant extent, and use evidence to support their evaluation of both sides, were generally well rewarded. Alternatively, students who were able to compare the achievement of national interest 1 against national interest 2 were also showing evaluation, and this was commonly highly rewarded.

Importantly, the use of specific evidence to indicate either the achievement or failure of a national interest is vital. For example, students who indicated that the state had fallen short in their pursuit of a national interest, without specific evidence to support their assertion, were generally limited in terms of their ability to access higher marks.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

National Security.

National interests are pursued by states to ensure their survival and to facilitate future growth. China’s success of achieving national security has been somewhat limited. On September 11 2012, Japan nationalised islands in the East China Sea, an action which China condemned. In response, China created an Air Defence Identification Zone in 2013. In 2015 there were more than 560 incursions by the Chinese airforce into Japanese territory. Spokesperson Liu Wei Min stated that ‘China will continue to take necessary measures to formally uphold its sovereignty in Diaoyu Islands.’

However, these acts of military power have been seen as aggressive by the international community. As such, in 2021 the alliance AUKUS was formed by Australia, the UK and the USA. First Post claims that the ‘alliance was formed as a response to growing Chinese aggression in the Asia-Pacific.’ This has damaged China’s ability to achieve national security with foreign minister Wang Yi stating that ‘AUKUS poses great danger to regional peace, stability and the international order.’

Regional relationships

Regional relationships refers to a state’s international relations with fellow states in its surrounding geographical area. China’s achievements towards regional relations have been fairly successful. With China creating the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), it has grown to quite a significant scale with 46 regional members. Having a starting capital of \$100 billion means that China can develop regional relations through aid. For example, in 2017 the AIIB allocated \$207 million to help assist the Manila Flood Management system in the Philippines. Furthermore, China’s use of chequebook diplomacy has gained it allies in the Asia-Pacific region. In 2017, China provided \$600 million to Cambodia to act as a proxy in ASEAN. Phay Siphon, a Cambodian spokesman states, ‘without Chinese aid, we go nowhere.’

However, China’s methods of achieving regional relationship, particularly through monetary coercion has come as a loss of international standing. President Obama stated that ‘China is using sheer size and muscle to strongarm smaller states into submission.’

Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	7	12	31	50	2.2

In this question, students needed to use a specific example to demonstrate their understanding of the concept of realism. The rote-learned definition of realism was not required, although some students did choose this option. Responses that scored highly were able to identify an instance where an actor has pursued their own interest over those of the global community (Operation Sovereign Borders, use of chemical weapons in Syria). To do so, some students chose to reference specific articles of international law

that had been breached to achieve the interests of that specific actor; this is a technique that is to be encouraged in student responses.

Students were able to use examples of actions undertaken by actors who have not signed (or unsigned a specific law – North Korean nuclear tests, for example). However, an actor simply not being party to a law did not effectively demonstrate the idea of realism unless linked to a specific action by that actor that contravenes stated ethics.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

North Korea has undertaken an inherently realist response to arms control as the state has prioritised its national security over the collective security of the international community. The state has defied the NNPT by initially withdrawing, and the conducting nuclear test in 2016 and 2017 and missile tests threatening both South Korea and Japan as recently as March 2020. By actively defying Article ii of the NNPT and developing nuclear weapons capability, North Korea has demonstrated a realist response to the ethical issue of arms control.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	6	4	10	20	25	22	14	3.8

This question required students to discuss the effectiveness of one international law on a specific ethical issue. Consequently, Responses that scored highly often looked at the laws in terms of its effectiveness and also its limitations.

A sophisticated way to assess effectiveness in these questions is to reference actors either meeting or breaching specific articles of international law.

Students who identified more than one international law were assessed on the first law they mentioned in their response. Students must read questions carefully and where questions refer to only one law, students should provide only one.

Some students were able to explore the way a law had provided a framework for the actions of global actors, and then used specific evidence to indicate the degree to which this met the ethics of the given law. Responses that scored highly were also able to clearly link back to the ethical issue specifically in terms of the law's impact more broadly.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The Conventional Relating to the Status of Refugees is only partially effective at deterring the issue of people movement. In Article 1, it established both what a refugee is and that states have a responsibility to protect them. Germany in 2015 followed this directive by allowing 1 million refugees into their borders as a part of their 'welcome culture' and successfully settled over half to the point of paying taxes. However, the Convention cannot ensure that states will fulfil their responsibilities. Japan, despite being a signatory, has only allowed access to less than 10 relocated refugees every year. The Convention also cannot prevent states from using loopholes to indicate compliance. To fulfil Article 3, the concept of non-refoulement, Australia implemented Operation Sovereign Borders in 2013. This sent irregular maritime arrivals to offshore detention and processing rather than deportation. This fulfils Article 3, but does not properly attempt to fulfil the responsibilities of Article 1, and the Convention cannot enforce compliance. Ergo, the CRSR has limits to its effectiveness in resolving people movement.

Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	7	4	10	16	26	21	15	3.7

This question required students to clearly indicate a debate from the study design and show an understanding of both sides of this debate. Responses that scored highly were able to indicate two different sides (often linked to realist and cosmopolitan perspectives) and then select relevant examples of how actors on both sides undertook specific actions that represented this perspective. Furthermore, these responses were able to discuss why these actors may have taken this view.

One method for highlighting perspectives is to reference either the meeting or breaching of specific articles of the international law by relevant global actors.

Those students who were unable to clearly articulate a debate, or simply generalised about a debate related to an issue, were unlikely to achieve high marks.

Students are asked to indicate one perspective on a specific debate, an action that represents that perspective and then a discussion of why that actor has undertaken that action. Students can then complete the same process for the other side of the debate. Some students spent a long time discussing the realist perspective of the debate, and did not adequately address the cosmopolitan side (and vice-versa).

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

In the debate 'economic challenges to the universality of human rights' varying perspectives have been initiated. In this debate, the realist side views that since sovereignty is paramount, states should be able to decide whether or not to allow child labour within their industries. This view has been enacted in Bolivia, which in 2014 legalised child labour from the age of 10 in its Child and Adolescent Code via two exemptions, including the maintenance of education. This directly contravenes Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and indicates a realist perspective that suits that need for cheap labour in Bolivia.

Contrastingly, the cosmopolitan perspective says that all states, regardless of development, must uphold rights for all. This has been employed in the Ivory Coast's response to human rights, as exemplified through its establishment of its 2016 \$132 million National Action Plan, which seeks to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2025, thus pursuing the attainment of Article 32. As a result of these efforts, the international Cocoa Initiative has suggested the human rights situation has 'improved exponentially' illustrating the significant extent to which the cosmopolitan perspective has been represented.

Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	9	13	32	45	2.2

While many students began their response with a definition of international cooperation, this did not necessarily attract marks. Rather, this question asked for a description of an example that represented the concept of international cooperation.

Common responses included the Paris Climate Agreement Operation Inherent Resolve and UNSC resolutions across a number of many and varied case studies. When using UNSC resolutions, it is important for students to be clear and correct in their articulation of the specific resolution, making sure it is both relevant and within the appropriate timeframe.

The response to this question did not need to fit into either an ethical issue or a global crisis, as the question did not stipulate this. Students were also able to use an example of crisis diplomacy provided it was expressed in the context of international cooperation.

Responses that scored highly were able to indicate clear commonality of purpose between global actors through their description of the chosen example. Where the student chose not to use an example, full marks could not be awarded.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

International cooperation is exemplified in the 2015 Paris Climate Accord in which 196 state-parties worked together and collaborated over a series of coordinated diplomatic meetings, to establish this treaty with the overarching goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degree Celsius. Hence, the PCA typifies international cooperation as states commit to collaborate and mitigate climate change in a sustained way to meet their common goals.

Question 10

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	11	13	19	25	21	12	2.7

This question contained two key elements that had to be addressed to access full marks.

Firstly, students were required to clearly state a relevant and specific cause. Students and teachers are encouraged to identify clear causes that are understood by students. Some students found identifying a cause of their chosen crisis challenging, which limited their ability to complete the function of the question. Furthermore, some students selected a cause that perhaps did not lend itself to the second element of the question. Responses that scored highly usually made an insightful choice of 'cause', which is indicative of being able to think in examination conditions and respond to unseen questions by applying understanding.

Secondly, students needed to select a response by a global actor that addressed the cause they had chosen. Some students used responses from actors that did not link to the chosen cause, and were unable to attract full marks. Responses that scored highly were able to link the actor's response directly to the stated cause.

Some students simply discussed a response to the global crisis without referencing a cause, which limited their ability to achieve high marks.

Students did not have to evaluate how successful this response was in responding to the cause, although this was an option some students were able to use effectively.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

One cause of climate change is deforestation, as the removal of carbon basin trees exacerbates the amount of emissions trapped in the atmosphere and thus contributes to ocean acidification and global warming. The Amazon is responsible for absorbing 10% of anthropogenic emissions, and thus, as deforestation of this resource was up 96% in 2019 to clear room for Brazil's cattle ranching, less carbon was absorbed. Finland has sought to intervene by calling on the EU to ban Brazilian beef imports. As the state condemned the deforestation of the Amazon for acting as a significant cause of climate change, it sought to prevent the removal of these carbon sinks by hindering Brazil's economic prosperity gained by their \$8.4 billion beef exports, and thereby encourage Brazil to mitigate its contributions to climate change.

Question 11

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
%	13	5	8	15	18	18	15	8	3.8

This question required students to make a choice in the examination of a relevant IGO responding to their chosen crisis. The most commonly referenced IGOs were the three listed in the study design.

Importantly, students and teachers are reminded that regional groupings, TNCs and non-state actors (NSAs) are not IGOs, and students who used these groups were unable to access marks.

Responses that scored highly were able to use specific examples of actions by the chosen IGO to manage or resolve the chosen crisis. Some students chose to show a degree of effectiveness and a degree of limitation, and generally these responses were well rewarded.

Many students were able to provide reasons for a lack of effectiveness in relation to the UN and armed conflict in Syria (UNSC Veto), although some found it difficult to link back to the impact on the crisis, preferring long discussions on UNSC deliberations. While this was not necessarily problematic for their response, students are reminded that this question asked about a specific crisis, and the impact of the chosen IGO (or lack thereof) had to be linked to specific discussions about the state of the crisis.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

One IGO, the United Nations has utilised crisis diplomacy in an attempt to resolve armed conflict to some effectiveness. By coordinating with the World Health Organisation and UNICEF, the UN has managed to distribute more than 300,000 cholera vaccines to those affected by the Yemen conflict. Furthermore, with its World Food Programme, the UN has distributed more than 100,000 metric tonnes of food aid, assisting more than 8 million Yemenis. In 2018, UN-led talks led to a ceasefire agreement between Sunni and Shia forces creating hope and a step towards alleviating the violence. However, despite a number of successes, the UN's response has been limited in its effectiveness. Saudi Arabia still has a seat on the UN Human Rights Council, despite its poor human rights record and rated as 'not free' by Freedom House in their annual report. Saudi Arabia's targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure is a serious breach of international humanitarian law. Furthermore, Despite Al Jazeera reporting that 'The UN has been warning for months of imminent famine,' the appeal to the international community only received \$1.7 billion of the required \$3.85 billion for food funding. As such, 8.4 million Yemenis are at risk of starvation, showing the limits to the UN's effectiveness in response to armed conflict.

Section B

Question completed	0	1	2	3	4
%	2	31	21	21	25

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Average
%	3	1	2	3	5	4	6	7	6	4	5	6	7	7	9	8	6	4	4	1	1	10.4

Many students chose to complete a rough plan of their essay in their Question and Answer book, and this tended to serve them well. For example, students with plans tended to organise their thoughts more clearly, had clear links between their arguments and were able to maintain a coherent argument throughout the

essay. The presence of a clear introduction is crucial, and introductions should outline the student's main argument, in addition to referencing the ideas they intend to use to support that argument.

In general, responses that scored highly were able to develop a clear contention in response to the question that the student would circle back to after each main argument. This is an effective way of ensuring students stay focused on the question and a central idea/theme is consistent throughout.

Further points for students to think about for higher scoring essays:

- Have I correctly engaged with the key terms in the question?
- How can I link my arguments so, rather than be disparate, they can all build towards an overall conclusion?
- Have I used recent and relevant examples to support all my assertions?
- Have I ensured the integrity of my quotes and sources, and analysed their value for my argument?

Responses that did not score well tended to use introductions to provide background to the topic, rather than outline a direction for their argument. Furthermore, these responses often highlighted a limited grasp of key course concepts, or a lack of willingness to engage with those concepts that the question asked for specifically. Some students appear to be most comfortable memorising an essay and writing it, with very few alterations, regardless of the question on the paper. These responses usually receive very limited marks.

Overall, essay writing technique is of significant value to be able to present a clear and measured discussion of various perspectives entailed by the question. Responses that scored highly were able to engage with the topic in its entirety, develop a reasoned and nuanced position, and express themselves clearly using relevant and specific evidence.

Question 1

This question was the most popular essay choice. The topic asked students to take a position on the degree to which two NSAs were able to challenge state sovereignty. Importantly, these NSAs needed to be those stipulated by the study design. Some students chose to use actors like the UN, the ICC or TNCs in their responses, which are not within the category of NSAs in the study design.

Another issue for some students was that this question asked for two NSAs to be discussed. Therefore, if a third NSA was used, it was unable to be allocated marks. Equally, if only one NSA was discussed, only limited marks could be allocated.

Responses that scored highly were able to draw comparisons between the degree to which NSAs were able to challenge state sovereignty (suggesting one was more capable than another) or evaluate each NSA against the capacity of states to assert their sovereignty in the face of the NSA's challenge. Both of these methods laid the foundation for students to be awarded higher marks. Students were not required to evaluate between the NSAs, but this was a common technique some students chose to use effectively.

Importantly, students were required to evaluate, and not just provide a simple narrative discussion of the various actions of NSAs.

The following is an introductory paragraph from a high-scoring response.

Sovereignty refers to the widely recognised or legitimate ability to exercise effective control within recognised defined borders. This is the fundamental aim of all states because this claim to sovereignty is what grants them the power to create laws in their own territory and represent their state internationally in global forums. By maintaining sovereignty states also ensure the security of their citizens from invasion.

Question 2

In this question, students were asked to demonstrate the impact pragmatism has on the way their chosen Asia-Pacific state uses more than one of its foreign policy instruments. Many students, while using the term

pragmatism frequently in their response, did not actually engage with the meaning of pragmatism. Therefore, these students found it challenging to draw clear conclusions about the degree to which pragmatism has an impact on foreign policy. Similarly, the key element to be analysed was the way pragmatism influenced the policy, rather than the way pragmatism influenced the various national interests.

It appeared some students used the term pragmatism interchangeably with realism (the pursuit of a state's interests) and this tended to lead to a fairly limited analysis of pragmatism. Teachers and students should be mindful of having a clear grasp of key terms and be able to apply them using specific examples. Lastly, the essay calls for foreign policy actions and students who used case studies of political/domestic power were unable to be allocated marks.

Responses that scored highly were able to engage with what pragmatism was in terms of dealing with how things are, rather than how the state wished they were. Some students referenced various ideals that were compromised when acting pragmatically, or compared the pragmatic actions of states against their idealistic actions. In general, this response was well rewarded providing the student referred consistently to pragmatism throughout the essay. As mentioned above, responses that scored highly tended to develop a relevant contention that students were able to relate back to throughout the essay.

The following is an introductory paragraph from a high-scoring response that clearly engages with the concept of pragmatism.

A state cannot solely rely on ideological principles to maintain effective sovereignty, but it must be equally flexible with its utilisation of foreign policy instruments. Australia's actions, whilst sometimes driven by an ideological viewpoint, are mostly dictated by pragmatic considerations, changing their actions to best fulfil their national interests. Australia's use of trade is rife with pragmatic motivations, choosing to pursue economic policies separate from its closest ideological allies. Likewise, Australia's usage of military highlights a desire to reinforce itself from any security threats. Aid, whilst sometimes associated with ideological considerations, is pragmatically distributed by Australia to achieve specific interests. Conversely, Australia's diplomacy highlights its more ideal-driven policies, with pragmatism failing to ensure success there. Ultimately, pragmatism influences Australia's use of foreign policy instruments substantially more than idealism.

Question 3

This question required students to discuss how an actor's perspective may influence the way they see justice in relation to one ethical issue. Students who referred to more than one ethical issue were not allocated marks for the second issue. Students were required to discuss two global actors, although they were able to bring in more than two to assist their discussion. Importantly, the entire definition of justice was used to allow students to draw on a wide range of perspectives and types of justice as part of their discussion.

Some students used ethical debates to approach the essay, and this often worked quite effectively. Unfortunately, students who simply discussed ethical debates but did not link their discussion consistently to the concept of justice were unable to access high marks.

Essays that scored highly were able to link the actors' perspectives to their views of justice, using clear examples of both actions and outcomes of justice, or lack thereof (punishment, compensation, sanctions, retaliation). Students are reminded of the value that specific evidence/actions can bring to an essay when linked to specific articles of international law.

The following is an introductory paragraph from a high-scoring response.

Justice in relation to human rights is not always achieved due to varying perspectives on what justice is. Justice is defined by a set of ethics based on fairness, equity and morals which seeks punishment when these ethics are breached. Many actors value the universal human rights as a way of ensuring all receive fair opportunities and conditions to have justice achieved. However, often the realist view can present a different interpretation of justice observed through economic challenges and strong respect for cultural

perspectives. Many actors also favour sovereignty over the application of justice when national interests could be compromised. Overall, justice is only delivered according to the principles and perspectives of the actor involved.

Question 4

This question required students to directly reference at least two specific key aspects, as listed in the study design, for their chosen crisis. Students who used causes or responses as key aspects were limited in their ability to attract marks. Importantly, the chosen key aspects needed to be discussed in terms of how they were being addressed by global actors.

Responses that scored highly were able to analyse the responses to specific key aspects in terms of the degree to which this response led to a resolution of the crisis. Some students made an attempt to evaluate between the various responses to key aspects by deciding which ones were most problematic for the continuation of the crisis; these essays were generally highly rewarded. Furthermore, some students were able to identify that the key aspects actually served to exacerbate the crisis. When supported with specific evidence, these responses were also generally highly rewarded.

Responses that did not score well tended not to link responses to the key aspects, or perhaps provided a general overview of a key aspect, with very little reference to the impact on the crisis. Similarly, some students found identifying specific key aspects (as listed in the study design) challenging, and teachers and students should be mindful of the importance of this ability.

The following is an introductory paragraph from a high-scoring response.

The key aspects of a global crisis must be addressed for effective resolutions to be reached, as the aspects themselves are what exacerbate and perpetuate the global crisis. The key aspects of terrorism, asymmetric warfare, non-state terrorism and state terrorism, each distinguish terrorism as a global crisis and exacerbate its impacts. When these key aspects are not addressed, effective resolution are unable to be promoted or even initiated, and terrorism is thus continued. However, when the key aspects of terrorism are directly addressed, often by multilateral actions, effective resolutions may be reached to a significant degree. That said, it remains that even these resolutions can, in some situations, exacerbate rather than resolve the crisis of terrorism.