WORLD POLITICS

Overall grade boundaries

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 12	13 - 24	25 - 36	37 - 49	50 - 61	62 - 75	76 - 100

Standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 - 4	5 - 7	8 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 20

The range and suitability of the work submitted

All portfolios received met IA requirements, as stipulated in the M11 guide. Occasionally, some portfolios included only one commentary (instead of three). In this situation, candidates received no marks under criteria A and B.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

Generally, commentaries met word limit requirements (maximum of 750 words). Still, when these were not met adequate penalization was not always applied (candidates cannot score beyond a level 1).

Generally portfolios covered three different geopolitical issues, at least one of them related to a topic from Section III and at least one related to a topic from Section IV of the syllabus. It is recommended that, as part of their record keeping, candidates list the topic under which their commentary is submitted.

Criterion B

Generally, portfolios were adequately organized and presented. Record keeping was greatly improved.

Extracts were generally chosen from three different media sources. Still, when this requirement was not met, adequate penalization was not always applied (candidates cannot score beyond a level 1).

Extracts were generally relevant to the chosen topic. Still, and at times, these were not well chosen, as in the commentary appropriate links to such extracts could not be drawn; or some did not allow for much application of theory and concepts.

Criterion C

There was evidence of familiarity with specific terminology in most portfolios.

Definitions of key terms were carefully provided in some cases. Still, when this requirement was not met, adequate penalization was not always applied (candidates cannot score beyond a level 3). It is recommended that all terms, specific to the subject, be defined.

Criterion D

Most candidates were able to identify IR Theory and Concepts relevant to the extracts presented. Still, and at times, identified Theory and Concepts were not relevant to the topic/geopolitical issue under which the commentary was being submitted. In this case, candidates did not score beyond a level 2.

A difference can be drawn between candidates who applied IR Theories and Concepts to the extract in their commentaries (these could adequately link Theory and Concepts to the chosen extract); and those who merely exposed/described IR Theory that was relevant to their chosen extract and geopolitical issue. The latter did not score beyond a level 3.

Criterion E

Generally, evaluation of IR Theory was pursued.

At times, this was deemed inappropriate, as candidates evaluated facts presented, rather than the appropriateness of IR Theory to deal with a geopolitical issue. In this case, candidates did not score beyond a level 1.

When appropriate evaluation was pursued, this was often done to reasonable depth. When such depth was not achieved, evaluation was taken to be limited, and candidates did not score beyond a level 2.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Teachers should encourage candidates to meet word limit requirements

- Teachers should encourage candidates to select extracts from three different media sources (i.e. CNN, NY Times and BBC).

- Careful record keeping should be encouraged. Under their record keeping candidates must remember to include:

    o The title of the extract
    o The source of the extract
    o The word count of the extract (minimum 400 words)

o The date of publication of the extract
o The word count of the commentary (maximum 750 words)
o The date the commentary was written (within 6 months of the date of publication of the extracts)
o The topic from Section III or Section IV to which the commentary relates.

- Teachers should encourage candidates to select extracts that allow for in depth application and evaluation of Concepts and Theories (well chosen extracts).

- Teachers should encourage candidates to define all subject-specific terms in their commentaries.

- Teachers should encourage candidates to make explicit links to the extract in their commentaries, instead of just exposing/describing relevant IR theory.

- Candidates should be encouraged to evaluate the merits of IR theory in accurately describing the geopolitical issue at stake.

Standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	16 - 20	21 - 24	25 - 30	31 - 40

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates

Occasionally, candidates found difficulties in completing two essays in the allocated time. Occasionally, candidates found difficulties in understanding the demands of the question (i.e. to what extent questions demand that candidates present arguments and counter-arguments; candidates found difficulties in evaluating the merits of specific theory) Given the choice of questions, candidates seemed to be less prepared to answer questions on democracy, Marxism, and NGOs, all topics outlined in the program.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Most candidates were able to write structured and coherent essays, following an argumentative, rather than descriptive approach.

Generally candidates could display specific knowledge on Section 1 and Section 2 syllabus areas. The specificity at which this was achieved (for the explanation of IR Theory and provision of examples) served as effective discriminator between mark-bands.

Generally, candidates seamed more prepared to answer questions on the issue of nationalism; polarity; IGOs and sovereignty (specifically on the EU); technological advances and UN actions.

Most candidates were successful at defining IR terms.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Question 1

> Strengths: most candidates could effectively define the concept of nationalism and evaluate its relevance in modern international relations.
>
> Weakness: some candidates did not understand the specific demands of the question (instead of examining the relevance of nationalism in modern international relations, they evaluated positive and negative impacts of nationalism in international relations). Some examples presented were inappropriate (the global expansion of western ideology cannot be taken as a form of nationalism!); other examples were not relevant, as they did not focus on "modern" international relations.

Question 2

Strengths: the demands of this question were generally understood, although this was not a popular question. Effective argumentation and examples were generally provided.

Weakness: some types of democracy were described with inappropriateness (i.e. procedural democracy).

Question 3

Strengths: Most candidates demonstrated conceptual understanding, and could examine how polar arrangements in the international system can be taken to be a cause for war. Examples provided were generally detailed.

Weakness: the demands of this question were not always understood - questions were generally one-sided, as candidates could not examine limits to polarity theory as a means of explaining the origin of conflict. Further, argumentation was not always supported by the use of theory; hence arguments were not always effective.

Question 4

Strengths: this was not a popular question. Still, when chosen, candidates could effectively apply Marxist theory to explain the causes of two twentieth century wars.

Weakness: most answers lacked discussion of different variants of Marxism.

Question 5

Strengths: most candidates were able to effectively define the concept of regional IGO and sovereignty. Generally, candidates could examine the extent to which a regional IGO has constrained states' ability to take sovereign decisions, providing adequate examples. Strong knowledge was demonstrated on the aims and structure of the EU.

Weakness: some candidates could not demonstrate understanding on the concept of regional IGO (i.e. the UN is not a regional IGO!). Some candidates did not entirely understand the demands of the question (i.e. they focused on how the chosen regional IGO affected members' external sovereignty). Examples provided, at times, lacked detail.

Question 6

Strengths: this was not a popular question. Still, when chosen, candidates demonstrated understanding of and ability to apply levels of analysis theory.

Weakness: some candidates failed to demonstrate understanding of the concept of NGO (i.e. the UN in not an NGO). Generally, candidates failed to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of a particular NGO in complying with its mission.

Question 7

Strengths: there was generally a good understanding of the demands of this question. Candidates could effectively define the concept of technological advances and examine its impact on the global balance of power.

Weakness: at times, candidates failed to demonstrate understanding on the concept of global redistribution of power, hence focusing their answers on the impact that technology has bore on polarity, rather than examining if power has seen a more even distribution, as a consequence of the advances in the use of technology. Examples were generally commonplace, and lacked detail.

Question 8

Strengths: there was general understanding of the demands of the question. Good knowledge was demonstrated on the structure and aims of the UN. Some good knowledge was demonstrated on case-studies.

Weakness: most candidates failed to effectively define the term ·world governance." This often led to inappropriate analysis, as the term was incorrectly used (i.e. world governance standing for world peace); or implicit analysis on the UN's ability of achieving world governance.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- It is recommended that teachers cover all topics in the program.

- It is recommended that teachers train candidates into understanding the specific demands of questions (understanding of command terms)

- It is recommended that teachers encourage students to explore arguments and counter-arguments (when demanded by the question)

- It is recommended that teachers encourage students to utilize theory as a means of building effective arguments.

- It is recommended that teachers encourage students to examine examples in-depth.

Standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 14	15 - 20	21 - 25	26 - 30	31 - 40

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates

- Occasionally, candidates found difficulties in completing two questions in the allocated time.

- Some candidates found difficulties in defining terms as used by the source.

- Some candidates found difficulties in applying theory to the source (relevant theory was identified and described, but linkages to the source were not made).

- Many candidates failed to provide balanced responses when demanded by the question.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

- Generally, candidates were able to define relevant terms, referring to the source to provide evidence.

- Generally, candidates were able to identify and decsribe relevant theory.

- Some candidates were able to apply relevant theory to sources.

- Most candidates could demonstrate effective evaluation, supported by relevant theory and examples.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Question 1

(a) Most candidates could effectively define the term, and provide evidence from the source.

(b) Most candidates demonstrated understanding on the term's use by the source, though many failed to provide specific evidence of "collective international action" that the source demands for Syria.

(c) Most candidates could describe two differing perspectives on human rights (though at times this was done with vagueness). Some candidates examined their differences.

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Many candidates failed to use the source as evidence of any particular human rights perspective.

(d) Many candidates did not demonstrate understanding on the concept of UNMO, illustrating their answers with inappropriate examples (i.e. peacekeepers in Rwanda were not UNMOs). Many candidates failed to refer to source.

(e) Most candidates could adequately examine the extent to which national interests have prevented the UNSC from effectively protecting human rights. Some effective arguments were proposed, illustrated through detailed examples. In-depth knowledge was generally demonstrated on the Syrian case-study. Some candidates failed to focus their answers on the UNSC, and examined how national interests have influenced international action, in general terms. Some answers were one-sided, or failed to refer to the source.

Question 2

(a) Most candidates could effectively define the term, and provide evidence from the source.

(b) Most candidates could effectively define the term, and provide evidence from the source.

(c) Most candidates found difficulties in examining problems in the definition of war crimes. Some candidates failed to refer to the source.

(d) Most candidates could adequately discuss strengths and limitations of the application of international law, referring to the source.

(e) Most candidates could adequately evaluate the performance of the ICC in punishing war crimes, illustrating their arguments with evidence from the source. Still, some failed to restrict their analysis to the prosecution of war crimes.

Question 3

(a) Most candidates could effectively define the term terrorism, while some failed in describing its evolution into narco-terrorism.

(b) Most candidates demonstrated understanding on the term's use by the source, though many failed to provide specific evidence from the source of its use to fight terrorism.

(c) Most candidates could effectively examine different forms terrorism can take, referring to the source. Still, many struggled in explicitly analyzing difficulties in combating each variant of terrorism.

(d) Most candidates could analyze system level factors that demand international cooperation to combat terrorism, though system level analysis was generally implicit.

(e) Most candidates could effectively evaluate strengths and limitations of military counterterrorism strategies, illustrating views with reference to the source. Answers generally, lacked balance, as focus was laid on limitations.

Question 4

(a) Most candidates could effectively define the term, and provide evidence from the source.

(b) Most candidates could effectively define the term. Some failed at providing evidence from the source.

(c) Most candidates could effectively assess the causes for civil war in the past two decades. Still, many candidates failed at providing a balanced evaluation. Some candidates failed to demonstrate understanding of the concept of regional affiliation. Some candidates failed to effectively refer to the source.

(d) Most candidates could effectively apply state level analysis to describe constrains to transitions to democracy. At times, application of theory was mostly implicit. Some candidates failed to refer to the source.

(e) Most candidates could effectively evaluate strengths and limitations of civil war as a means to forcing democratic change, illustrating views with reference to the source.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- It is recommended that teachers train candidates to produce balanced responses, as many students lost marks as a result of only tackling 'one side'.

- It is recommended that teachers train candidates to refer to the source, when providing evidence, as many students lost marks as a result of such disregard.

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