



**Cambridge Assessment
International Education**

Example Candidate Responses – Component 2

**Cambridge International AS & A Level
Global Perspectives & Research 9239**

For examination from 2023



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Introduction

The main aim of this booklet is to exemplify standards for those teaching Cambridge International AS & A Level Global Perspectives & Research 9239, and to show how different levels of candidates' performance (high, middle and low) relate to the subject's curriculum and assessment objectives.

In this booklet candidate responses have been chosen from the June 2023 exam series to exemplify a range of answers.

For each question, the response is annotated with a clear explanation of where and why marks were awarded or omitted. This is followed by examiner comments on how the answer could have been improved. In this way, it is possible for you to understand what candidates have done to gain their marks and what they could do to improve their answers. There is also a list of common mistakes candidates made in their answers for each question.

This document provides illustrative examples of candidate work with examiner commentary. These help teachers to assess the standard required to achieve marks beyond the guidance of the mark scheme. Please also refer to the June 2023 Examiner Report for further detail and guidance.

The mark schemes used here are available to download from the [School Support Hub](#). These files are:

9239 June 2023 Mark Scheme 02

Past exam resources and other teaching and learning resources are available on the [School Support Hub](#).

How to use this booklet

This booklet goes through the paper one question at a time, showing you the high-, middle- and low-level response for each question. The candidate answers are set in a table. In the left-hand column are the candidate answers, and in the right-hand column are the Examiner comments.

Example Candidate Response – high	Examiner comments
<p style="text-align: center;">Should farmers continue the practice of genetically modified crops?</p> <p>Genetically modified organisms, or GMOs, are crops that have had a desirable genome inserted into them from another plant, preventing them from naturally occurring in nature (Yali). This was discovered by Werkissa Yali, an expert in plant biotechnology from the Department of Crop Science at the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research. These desirable genes range from those increasing the nutritional values of crops to maximizing the produced yield of that crop, which have been widely impacting farmers throughout the world. Jennifer Thomson, researcher at the Department of Molecular and Cell Biology from the South African University of Cape</p>	<p>1 The title successfully sets up a debate between contrasting perspectives and the issue has global relevance.</p>
<p>Answers are by real candidates in exam conditions. These show you the types of answers for each level. Discuss and analyse the answers with your learners in the classroom to improve their skills.</p>	<p>Examiner comments are alongside the answers. These explain where and why marks were awarded. This helps you to interpret the standard of Cambridge exams so you can help your learners to refine their exam technique.</p>

How the candidate could have improved their answer

- The first implication of the question was explored through the theme of increased crop yield and this could have been better developed. Although the increasing yields point was well-supported, the candidate made an inferential leap. The candidate’s comment that food insecure regions could feed more people without disrupting existing farming practices is assertive and hence the increased yield theme was not fully developed.
- The candidate’s critical evaluation skills were lacking in range. Although there was some insightful consideration of the data provided by the source ‘GRAIN’, most of the other critical evaluation did not move beyond credibility and provenance and was not always well developed.

This section explains how the candidate could improve each response. It helps learners to improve their exam technique.

Common mistakes candidates made in this question

- Candidates needed to carefully consider their title questions. The best questions were concise and set up a debate between contrasting perspectives. The issue raised by the title question needed global significance and should provide enough scope so several implications of the question could be analysed. This would be best achieved by identifying a theme (e.g. Economics or Ethics) with which to explore the title question. Candidates needed to keep the essay focused on their chosen title question.

This section lists common mistakes as well as helpful guidance from the examiner. This will help your learners to avoid these mistakes. You can use this alongside the relevant Examiner Report to guide your learners.

Essay

Example Candidate Response – high

Should farmers continue the practice of genetically modified crops?

Genetically modified organisms, or GMOs, are crops that have had a desirable genome inserted into them from another plant, preventing them from naturally occurring in nature (Yali). This was discovered by Werkissa Yali, an expert in plant biotechnology from the Department of Crop Science at the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research. These desirable genes range from those increasing the nutritional values of crops to maximizing the produced yield of that crop, which have been widely impacting farmers throughout the world. Jennifer Thomson, researcher at the Department of Molecular and Cell Biology from the South African University of Cape Town, has found that that global hectareage of GMO crops planted from 1996 to 2014 has increased a “100-fold,” or roughly an additional one million square meters. With such a great worldwide presence, GMOs are being prepared for consumption and large-scale commerce, thus globally affecting the individuals consuming them as well as the economy. As the dominating growing countries of Brazil, the United States, and Argentina continue this practice, the economy and biological safety of plants comes into question. The engineered increased crop attained as well as proven economic benefits farmers receive from farming GMOs have gained the support of many. However, with rising concerns of biodiversity issues as the plants continue to be modified and farmers’ growing economic dependence on them has also evoked a growing opposition to this farming practice. This begs the question: should farmers continue the practice of farming genetically modified crops?

2

For starters, it is proposed that genetically modified crops should be farmed and utilized as they allow for increased crop yields. As certain crops get the new gene implemented into them, they

3

Examiner comments

1 The title successfully sets up a debate between contrasting perspectives and the issue has global relevance.

2 Crop yields, economics and biodiversity are introduced as themes that will be used to consider the implications of the question.

3 The start of the debate is signalled and the candidate makes it clear that the pro genetically modified (GM) crops perspective is being supported using the theme of crop yields.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

attain higher rates of growth than the non-edited crop counterpart. An expert PhD professor, David Zilberman, at the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics in the University of California conducted a meta-analysis of 147 studies analyzing this occurrence. He discovered that, on average, genetically modified crops had yields increased by 21.6% compared to the parent crop (Zilberman). This increase in yield has demonstrated an incredible advancement in the scale of food production, significantly expanding the scope of people that can be fed with the same crop being grown and the effectiveness of farming. For instance, because of the growth of genetically modified corn soybean crops, their production has increased by 357.7 million tons and 180.3 million tons, respectfully. This was deduced by Daniel Norero, a biochemistry PhD graduate from the Catholic University of Chile. He had previously conducted numerous field experiments with plant genomes and editing processes as well as conducting personal research on this field, qualifying his expertise. His findings, however, may prove somewhat limited since they do not explicitly include a start date of when he began gathering his research, complicating the gauging of the true growth since the original crop production remains unknown. Despite this, the 21.6% global production increase found by Zilberman proves a significant increase, making Norero's findings somewhat more contextualized and supported. With this increased availability of healthy foods, since the most common GMOs are in corn, potatoes, and soybeans, **4** malnourished and food insecure regions can feed more individuals without drastically altering these existing regional farming practices. Thus, because of the benefits in increased food production, people have increased access to crops without relying on outside aid, thus why they should continue to be farmed.

4 The candidate demonstrates synthesis by making explicit links between evidence taken from two sources, Zilberman (USA) and Norero (Chile).

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

Similarly, genetically modified crops offer farmers financial growth as they profit from the use of this efficient agricultural method. After the large-scale adoption of genetically modified farming, various countries' farmers have experienced extreme economic growth, such as in China. GRAIN, an international nonprofit, works to support small farmers and research to tackle biodiversity issues, developing years of experience in credibility in this topic. It examined China's economy based on GMO profits, finding that it increased from \$600 million in 2016 to \$6 billion in 2020 (GRAIN). One limitation of this data is the individual farmer profits were not addressed, instead calculated by totaling the entirety of China. Such method makes it difficult to draw specific conclusions on which areas or demographics of farmers were profiting the most as there could be a pattern there, though now remaining inconclusive. Regardless of this ambiguity, it still proves just how drastically the farmers of that region have profited from the introduction and widespread utilization of GMO agriculture, proving to be an insanely lucrative addition to the economy. Graham Brookes, a writer from the federally chartered and funded United States National Center for Biotechnology Information, studied this same farmer impact. Brookes is a published economist from the United Kingdom, progressing their works through financial publications and research, maintaining credibility. They found that in the United States, each farmer that began growing genetically modified crops would achieve an increase in \$112 per hectare grown compared to the traditional crop (Brookes). As each farmer employs this tactic, financial growth has proven to follow through GRAIN's and Brooke's findings, with farmer profits amounting to something even greater. With the contribution of each country's economy, with countries like Brazil and Argentina similarly financially growing like China, the global economy thus develops and grows to a larger scale. Each individual farmer contributes to this, all

5

5 China is introduced as a global context within which to explore the economic implications of the question.

6

6 The evidence of increased profits for farmers in China is not simply accepted, instead, the data produced by the source 'GRAIN' is evaluated with developed critical insight.

7

7 The candidate synthesises the economic evidence and arguments from China and the USA to build the perspective in favour of GM crops.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued	Examiner comments
<p>fostering international trade and markets. Thus, farmers have proven to attain more money when utilizing GMO agricultural, proving beneficial to keep farming. 8</p> <p>However, others argue that genetically modified crops endanger the global biodiversity of other plants. As these GMO seeds begin to grow, they rid the area of biodiversity and the naturally occurring plant variant it was derived from. The International Institute for Sustainable Development, an independent global agricultural-development policy expert group, has petitioned and reviewed countless agricultural safety policies from 1990. This experience and longevity of practice allows for a true understanding of the issue, though potentially biased against certain aspects of genetic modification. The institute has found that with these modified crops being planted, they may develop certain resistances and even overtake other plants already existing in the area while simultaneously decreasing the biodiversity of that specific region (International Institute for Sustainable Development). While mutations are typically favorable for farmers, plants may have these mutations negatively impact other plants around them, such as with pests. Biodiversity continuously diminishes since the genetically modified crops cannot naturally exist, weaning out the popularity of the naturally existing one even further. The Journal of Ecosystem and Echography, an international research corporation on the effects of agricultural practices, has held over three-thousand annual conferences on this issue. It has also produced further research and collaboration among other groups, establishing itself as a reliable dominant figure in this field. The organization has found that monarch butterflies that consume the leaves of genetically modified corn in India were growing slower and were more susceptible to death than when consuming the same unmodified crop, with the same being true for pink bollworms feeding on modified cotton (Journal of Ecosystem and Echography). With this being the case, the 9</p>	<p>8 The candidate's essay is effectively structured. 'Thus' signals an intermediary conclusion to the economic implication of the question. The use of 'however' at the start of the next paragraph signals a shift to the contrasting perspective.</p> <p>9 A global source, the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) is used to inform the biodiversity implications of GM Crops. The candidate outlines the credibility of the IISD to justify the appropriateness of the source for this essay.</p>

Example Candidate Response – high, continued	Examiner comments
<p>biodiversity of other organisms is now in danger, affecting both other plants and insects as well.</p> <p>The reliable findings of the International Institute for Sustainable Development and the Journal of Ecosystem and Echography both illustrate the damage modifying just one specific of crop may pose, impacting the biodiversity of the crop itself and any surrounding species. The issue expands further than just the modified crops' safety and wellbeing alone, thus bringing in many concerns about their continued farming.</p> <p>Likewise, it is argued that once farmers begin farming genetically modified crops, they develop an economic dependence on this practice while lesser-developed farmers cannot even partake in the practice. Since the seeds of these crops typically cannot naturally reproduce, the farmer must purchase new crops to grow every time they seek to plant them. Claremont University in California, a top ten nationally ranked liberal school, led research projects and laboratory work on this issue studying genetic modification among qualified students in the school. The university found that the increased adoption of markets selling GMO seeds would create a farmer dependence on the corporations that control these prices and supply of products, even proving unequal to less-advantaged growers (Claremont University in California). This dependence proves risky to farmers as they seek certain benefits from the crops and may already have established routines in purchasing them, not being able to switch to other crops. Should the sellers decide to raise prices of the seeds, the farmers would have no choice but to oblige and in turn lowering their financial returns while disproportionately affecting lower-income farmers. Unethical business methods from the corporate behalf may prove detrimental to the farmers seeking products, being a risk that every farmer must entail. Matin Qaim, a peer-reviewed author certified in plant genetics and worker at the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural</p>	<p>10 The candidate demonstrates a strong engagement with the source material as the arguments about the threats to biodiversity are presented. Again, there is a consistent synthesis of source material used to build the perspective against the continued use of GM crops.</p> <p>11 The economic implications of the question are offered further analysis as the candidate discusses the concept of farmer dependence. Using the economic theme to consider both the pros and the cons of GM crops demonstrates balance and fair consideration for both perspectives.</p>

Example Candidate Response – high, continued	Examiner comments
<p>Development in Germany, had published in the Annual Review of Resource Economics. He had</p> <p>12 found that the high seed and credit prices coupled with poverty of certain farmers may prove completely unapplicable to a large sector of farmers, benefitting those dependent on the crop but not this sector (Qaim). Farmers that cannot afford this consistent purchasing of seeds and</p> <p>13 materials are not able to reap the benefits of their growth, which typically occurs in lesser-developed regions and countries. Due to this financial inequity, certain regions would have lower food production and economic growth as discussed as being the benefits of GMO agriculture. Thus, the farming of GMO crops has been opposed because of this unfair economic treatment and disparity present.</p> <p>Both perspectives on the continuation of genetically modified crop farming held logical claims backed by credible sources. Those arguing for the continuation of this practice were strengthened by the detailed statistics on the increased in crop production and yields, logically connecting that to an increase in people fed. It also offered specific numerical data from China and the global economy demonstrating the financial growth that occurs with the introduction of this GMO practice. The argument was somewhat weakened for the economic perspective as it failed to include a start date on a statistic mentioning this growth, making the reliability harder to track</p> <p>14 and verify. For those opposing this farming, the point that lesser-developed farmers did not have access to this practice was weakened by the assumption that they even want to partake in it. There was no specific finding stating the number of this portion of farmers, making the true scope of this issue harder to grasp and questioning if this truly seems problematic to the affected group.</p>	<p>12 The synthesis of the sources is less explicit here, although there is an awareness of the links between the Claremont University source and Matin Qaim. Qaim is a German source. This adds to the global range of sources used in the essay. The sources referenced have authors from the USA, South Africa, Ethiopia, UK and Chile, as well as the previously mentioned IISD.</p> <p>13 The candidate's citations have been clear throughout the essay and the references are easily found in the bibliography.</p> <p>14 The candidate attempts a comparison of arguments to support the final judgement, but this lacks development and balance.</p>

Example Candidate Response – high, continued	Examiner comments
<p>Before my research, I was unaware of what genetically modified crops brought with them, only considering them on a very surface level basis. Once I begin researching the advancement in crop production as well as the economic boost it offered to farmers and countries alike, I began to favor the practice of their farming. I continued to find specific countries as well as</p> <p>15 international data that supported this notion, furthering my belief in this practice. However, as I continued investigating them, I had found that the modification process may prove detrimental to the species itself as well as those around it, making me question whether this practice was even safe. As I found the economic disparities surrounding the access to seeds and reliance on corporations, I realized that this farming practice was essentially aiding farmers that could already afford it while neglecting those without much money. I now believe that farming genetically modified crops should continue but be more strictly regulated to prevent negative biodiversity effects as well as controlling the corporate greed hurting smaller farmers.</p> <p>My research relied on countries with GMO farming already in place such as India, the US, and China. Countries that have yet to implement this practice were not included since the effects of GMOs could not be studied, though further research into why they have not yet picked up this method should have been done. This may have offered further insight on the practicality of the practice and varying viewpoints of different countries, allowing for comparisons between the</p> <p>17 two.</p>	<p>15 There is a clear reflection on how the research process and engagement with contrasting perspectives have impacted the candidate.</p> <p>16 Through the reflection the candidate further develops the comparison of perspectives seen on the previous page in comment 14. The earlier attempted comparison of perspectives makes no mention of biodiversity, but here the threats to biodiversity are explicitly compared to the economic gains and this supports the conclusion.</p> <p>17 Further research is specified and there is some attempt to justify why researching countries that are yet to engage with GM crops have not adopted this farming practice.</p>

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

Works Cited

18

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- Zilberman, David, et al. "Agricultural GMOs—What We Know and Where Scientists Disagree." *Sustainability*, vol. 10, no. 5, May 2018, p. 1514, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su10051514>.

18 The candidate's bibliography is well organised in a logical alphabetical manner and the references are appropriately presented. Referencing is full and effective.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued	Examiner comments
<p style="text-align: center;">Works Cited</p> <p>11, International Institute for Sustainable Development. <i>Biosafety: Ensuring the Safe Use of Modern Biotechnologies</i>. 2021, https://www.iisd.org/articles/deep-dive/biosafety-ensuring-safe-use-modern-biotechnologies.</p> <p>Brookes, Graham. "Farm Income and Production Impacts from the Use of Genetically Modified (GM) Crop Technology 1996-2020." <i>GM Crops & Food</i>, vol. 13, no. 1, Aug. 2022, pp. 171–95, https://doi.org/10.1080/21645698.2022.2105626.</p> <p>Claremont McKenna College. <i>Economics Impacts of Genetically Modified Organisms: An Analysis of Bt Cotton in India</i>. 2019, https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3189&context=cmc_theses.</p> <p>GRAIN, "GMOs in Asia: What's Happening and Who's Fighting Back?" <i>Grain</i>, 13 July 2022, https://grain.org/en/article/6863-gmos-in-asia-what-s-happening-and-who-s-fighting-back.</p> <p>Journal of Ecosystem & Ecography. "Genetically Modified Organisms (Gmos) and Its Impact on Biodiversity." <i>Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) And Its Impact On Biodiversity 4507</i>, OMICS International, 25 June 2013, https://www.omicsonline.org/proceedings/genetically-modified-organisms-gmos-and-its-impact-on-biodiversity-4507.html.</p> <p>Norero, Daniel. "GMO Crops Have Been Increasing Yield for 20 Years, with More Progress Ahead." <i>Alliance for Science</i>, 23 Feb. 2018, https://allianceforscience.org/blog/2018/02/gmo-crops-increasing-yield-20-years-progress-ahead/.</p> <p>Qaim, Matin. <i>The Economics of Genetically Modified Crops Annual Review of Resource</i>, 2009, https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/10.1146/annurev.resource.050708.144203.</p>	

Example Candidate Response – high, continued	Examiner comments
<p>Teferra, Tadesse Fikre. "Should We Still Worry about the Safety of GMO Foods? Why and Why Not? A Review." <i>Food Science & Nutrition</i>, vol. 9, no. 9, July 2021, https://doi.org/10.1002/fsn3.2499.</p> <p>Thomson, Jennifer A. "The Pros and Cons of GM Crops." <i>Functional Plant Biology</i>, CSIRO Publishing, 2 Oct. 2017, https://doi.org/10.1071/FP17031.</p> <p>Yali, Werkissa. <i>Application of Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) Crop Technology and Its Implications in Modern Agriculture</i>. 2021, https://doi.org/10.17352/2455-815X.000139.</p> <p>Zilberman, David, et al. "Agricultural GMOs—What We Know and Where Scientists Disagree." <i>Sustainability</i>, vol. 10, no. 5, May 2018, p. 1514, https://doi.org/10.3390/su10051514.</p>	<p>Mark for AO1 = 20 out of 25</p> <p>Mark for AO2 = 8 out of 9</p> <p>Mark for AO3 = 6 out of 6</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 34 out of 40</p>

How the candidate could improve their answer

- The first implication of the question was explored through the theme of increased crop yield and this could have been better developed. Although the increasing yields point was well-supported, the candidate made an inferential leap. The candidate’s comment that food insecure regions could feed more people without disrupting existing farming practices is assertive and hence the increased yield theme was not fully developed.
- The candidate’s critical evaluation skills were lacking in range. Although there was some insightful consideration of the data provided by the source ‘GRAIN’, most of the other critical evaluation did not move beyond credibility and provenance and was not always well developed.
- Although the candidate’s suggestion for further research was relevant and pertinent to the essay, the development of it was not sharply focused. The candidate could have developed the point about practicality and why certain countries do not use the practice, rather than moving to a separate idea of comparative research.

Example Candidate Response – middle	Examiner comments
<p>Are mental health apps more beneficial than in-person mental health aid? 1</p> <p>Caring for mental health is an essential part of life that affects many people. “1 in 5 Americans will experience a mental illness in a given year”(CDC 1). Apps are increasingly being used to reduce this. “Mental health apps ... help users improve their emotional well-being, become more mindful, and address common mental health issues” (Dorwart 1). Globally, “ ... spending on mobile mental health applications... (reached) close to US\$500 million”(Auxier 1). But people are wary of the usefulness of the apps. “Young people may not be receiving the mental health support they need because of a lack of trust in the smartphone apps that deliver such services...” (Henderson 1). Although these apps have benefits, it is questioned if they are more beneficial than in-person mental health aid. This is significant as vast amounts of people around the world are affected by mental health issues and many of them turn to apps for help.</p> <p>In this essay, in-person mental health aid refers to traditional therapy and psychiatry. Traditional therapy is, “... a term used to describe in-person talk therapy.” (Better Help 1). Traditional therapy is another word for in-person therapy. Additionally, “Psychiatry is the branch of medicine focused ... mental, emotional and behavioral disorders”(American Psychiatric Association 1). App contributors and some mental health workers believe mental health apps are more beneficial than in-person aid because the apps allow users to talk to inaccessible people and track their own progress. They are also cheaper than traditional help and allow new therapists to get experience. Other mental health workers oppose this view by stating the apps risk users’ privacy and require technology that is inaccessible to many. They also state in-person therapy has features that apps do not offer.</p> <p>To begin, mental health apps are believed to be more beneficial because they help users reach inaccessible people. Anna Bulgakovaa describes Oyama, a Finnish mental health app that</p>	<p>1 The title poses a question that can be answered yes or no, so there is an inherent debate. There is the potential for global relevance.</p> <p>2 The candidate’s introduction juxtaposes quotations from various sources, demonstrating that there are sourced arguments for and against mental health apps.</p> <p>3 The candidate’s definition of terms does not add to the debate.</p> <p>4 The candidate’s comparison of unsourced claims is focused and some implications of the question are emerging: privacy, cost and accessibility.</p>

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued	Examiner comments
<p>offers a “peer-support anonymous community... (to) chat with others with similar experiences.”(1) The users of Oyama get to talk to people all around the world. This cannot be done as easily with in-person therapy as alternatives like group therapy take effort from every party to show up and participate. This information comes from EU startups, a magazine that focuses on European apps. This means that the source has expertise in apps and how they work. However, this source presents an assertion without backup as the magazine does not cite any sources that can prove this claim to be true. The expertise makes the argument seem valid as they suggest that the purpose is to help the reader understand certain apps. The lack of cited information weakens the argument as the sources lack any way to prove this claim. Sarah El Gharib, a content and communications manager at the newspaper Global citizen, states an app called, “TrustCircle... (helps) people get access to psychiatric services no matter where they are in Kenya” (1). This app was made by the US to give people in Kenya access to psychiatry, which is needed as there is only about 1 psychiatrist available per 5 million people in Kenya. Clearly, mental health apps are more accessible in Kenya than in-person mental health aid. Gharib focuses on communications, meaning that she lacks expertise in mental health apps. This weakens the argument as their knowledge of how apps affect others is questionable. But, Gharib offers relevant information, as she provides a global example of how people have more access to apps. The lack of expertise holds more weight as the relevant information may not come from a credible source.</p> <p>8 Secondly, mental health apps allow users to track their moods. According to Zawn Villines, a journalist who specializes in medical topics, The app Moodkit, “... displays a person’s moods in week- or month-long charts...” (1) This is beneficial as it can help users identify what triggers their negative emotions. And, since traditional therapists do not go through their client’s</p>	<p>5 The Finnish example gives a global context. However the candidate’s point regarding group therapy is pertinent, but left undeveloped.</p> <p>6 The candidate offers two strands of critical evaluation – credibility and unsourced claims. These are both partially developed and slightly generic.</p> <p>7 Another global context emerges. The candidate’s point about accessibility in Kenya is relevant, but not developed. There is more focus on critical evaluation than building the perspective.</p> <p>8 The candidate provides an effective structural signpost signalling a new point for this perspective.</p>

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

day with them and see exactly what brings on certain moods, therapy cannot provide this feature.

This information comes from an article peer-reviewed by Jennifer Litner, a licensed marriage and family therapist, which adds to the credibility of the source as more than one person, including someone who has experience working in therapy, approved issuing this information. Although Villines failed to cite a source from where they got the information, the article's reliability outweighs this weakness as it comes from a reputable source, making the argument agreeable.

10

Additionally, mental health apps allow new therapists to get experience in the field. Harris Meyer states that apps that allow users to virtually talk to a therapist "... attract therapists who are less experienced because the pay is typically lower than what... (experienced traditional therapists) earn, said Laura Groshong, director of policy and practice for the Clinical Social Work" (1). This is beneficial because the opportunity to get experience makes therapists more qualified and prepared for further work in their careers as they learn to better help clients by actively doing it. Meyer is a medical and law reporter, thus he does not specifically work with

11

mental health or apps. Yet, Meyer states the source of this information and mentions that Groshong has expertise in social work which strengthens the argument because it comes from a credible source. This overshadows the author's lack of expertise because the information comes from a source with vast amounts of knowledge on the topic.

Another reason is that they are a cheaper alternative to traditional therapy. " Therapy costs are \$60 to \$90 per week...(which) is cheaper than most traditional therapy,...(that) is priced between \$75 and \$200 or more per session..." (Fader 1). This makes therapy more accessible to many as those who cannot afford traditional therapy can still get the help they desire. This comes from Sarah Fader who is a contributor to BetterHelp, a mental health app startup that allows

9

9 The candidate continues to refer to a range of relevant source material, but engagement is underdeveloped.

10

10 The candidate offers the same two strands of critical evaluation as applied to the Finnish source.

11

11 This point is less effective. Attracting less experienced therapists is not necessarily beneficial nor is the point clearly compared to traditional therapy.

12

12 The abridged quotation lacks clarity. The candidate partially develops the point with a single sentence. The cost implication of the question is relevant but is underdeveloped.

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

users to virtually talk to a therapist. This strengthens the argument because means this is a relevant source that pertains to the topic being researched. This also means that the source has a vested interest, as they may want to portray BetterHelp in a positive light in order to get more users. This weakness weighs more on the argument as the claim may be misrepresented.

Ultimately, these arguments are strongly supported by relevant examples, fact-based evidence, and some reputable sources. These arguments are weakened by the lack of counterarguments addressed, and not all the sources are credible as Fader has a vested interest and Gharib lacks expertise.

14 On the contrary perspective, apps expose users to privacy issues. Stephanie Collier states “...many apps are not transparent about their security features, and less than half of mobile apps for depression have a privacy policy”(1). This puts the users at risk of having their confidential information leaked to outside sources. This is unlike in-person aid because therapists and psychiatrists are not allowed to discuss their patients’ information with any outside source within reason. Since Collier is a director of education in psychiatry and is a psychiatrist herself, she has much expertise in mental health. Collier being a psychiatrist means that she has a vested interest. She may want to portray apps negatively in order to increase the amounts of patients she gets, increasing profits. This has more weight on the argument as the information may be inaccurate as it comes from a biased source. This argument is different from the argument made by Villines because it shows that even though people may be able to track their moods, this feature may be harmful if the information can be leaked.

Additionally, many people do not have access to the necessary technology for mental health apps. “India is home to nearly a quarter of the world's offline population; China houses more than 730 million; Indonesia 210 million” (Ferdman 1). Because many mental health apps

13

13 The vested interest point is well made and the weakness identified is relevant and developed.

14 The candidate provides a clear structural signpost, signalling a shift to the contrasting perspective.

15

15 There is some synthesis shown by contrasting the Collier source with a source from a first perspective.

16

16 The candidate identifies the global contexts, but they are not developed.

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued	Examiner comments
<p>require an internet connection, this makes mental health apps less accessible than in-person aid. This source is neutral and uses fact-based information which strengthens the argument because the information is not centered around an opinion. This information also comes from Roberto Ferdman, a reporter who focuses on economics, which means that he lacks expertise in mental health. This has less weight on the argument because the information does not come from a biased source. Unlike the argument made by Fader, this argument shows that mental health apps only make help more accessible to those higher up in society, and not necessarily the majority of the world's population.</p> <p>17 Another argument that supports this perspective is that in-person therapy encourages more understanding. "In-person sessions allow therapists to read nonverbal cues that support verbal communication." (Albatrosov 1). Nonverbal communication can help a therapist understand their client. It is mostly lost when having therapy through apps because they offer text and call therapy sessions. Natasha Lynn Albatrosov, a crisis counselor for the 988 Suicide and Lifeline has expertise and is a reliable source of this information. This has the largest effect on the argument because she knows firsthand what it is like to help people virtually, which also means that she lacks a vested interest in mentioning the benefits of in-person therapy. But, this source uses an assertion without backing up the information with evidence. Unlike the argument made by Gharib, this argument shows how traditional therapy may be more effective.</p> <p>18 Finally, unlike mental health apps, in-person aid gets clients out of their usual environment. A therapist's office provides, "A location that feels neutral (which) can increase your comfort when sharing private information" (Albatrosov 1). In-person therapy may be more beneficial because apps do not offer a physical, safe space, so users may not be honest. In addition to this, "...(one) may need to stay in (a) hospital when... (they) can't cope with ...(their)</p>	<p>17 Some synthesis is shown by contrasting Fader's argument about price accessibility with Ferdman's point about access to the internet.</p> <p>18 The candidate's point about non-verbal cues is relevant, but the contrast with Gharib is not made clear.</p>

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued	Examiner comments
<p>mental illness symptoms at home and need more intensive help" (Your Health in Mind 1).</p> <p>Unlike apps, in-person aid offers a place where patients can get intense help that they cannot provide for themselves. "Your Health in Mind" is run by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, meaning that this source has expertise much like Litner. Similarly to Collier, there is a vested interest in getting more by getting more in-person patients.</p> <p>Overall, the arguments are strengthened by strong examples and relevant evidence. The claim that people lacking internet access reduces apps' accessibility refutes the counterclaim that apps help more people than in-person mental health. However, not all the sources are credible as Collier and Your Health in Mind have a vested interest.</p> <p>I can conclude that mental health apps are not as beneficial as in-person mental health aid because apps' privacy issues are harmful to users, not everyone has access to the apps, and in-person therapy has more beneficial practices. Before researching I held this view, and after I found the privacy issues and the in-person therapy benefits confirmed this belief the most. This is because the apps can harm users, and they do not allow therapists to observe nonverbal cues or for users to leave their environment. This shows that the apps may not work for users as well as in-person therapy and psychiatry. However, I did learn that apps do have benefits that in-person aid does not offer.</p> <p>There needs to be more investigation into how mental health app startups can fix their drawbacks. Information on how apps can be more transparent about their privacy policies, for example, can be expensive yet necessary. This research is significant as it will increase the effectiveness of mental health apps, making sure all users are safe, healing, and growing.</p>	<p>19 The safe space point is the fourth separate point on this side of the debate. It is relevant, but not developed.</p> <p>20 The candidate offers a brief perspective summary, but there is no comparison with the contrasting perspective.</p> <p>21 The candidate establishes a reflective tone, but the impact of the work carried out on the point of view is not developed.</p> <p>22 The support for the conclusion that traditional therapy is the most effective is quite one-sided.</p> <p>23 The candidate suggests further research, but this lacks clarity and development.</p>

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

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24

24 The candidate's citations are clear and the references in the bibliography are well organized. 17 different sources are cited for a 2000-word essay.

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued	Examiner comments
<p>Meyer, Harris. "Are Mental Health Apps a Good Alternative?" <i>Los Angeles Times</i>, 7 July 2022.</p> <p><i>SIRS Issues Researcher</i>, explore.proquest.com/sirsissuesresearcher/document/2700867502?accountid=13061. Accessed 11 Jan. 2023</p> <p>MPH, Stephanie Collier, MD. "Is a Mobile App as Good as a Therapist?" <i>Harvard Health</i>, 7 Feb. 2022, www.health.harvard.edu/blog/is-a-mobile-app-as-good-as-a-therapist-202202072683. Accessed 10 Jan. 2023.</p> <p>Villines, Zawn. "Mood Tracker Apps: Learn More about Some of the Best Options Here." <i>Www.medicalnewstoday.com</i>, 31 Aug. 2020, www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/mood-tracker-app. Accessed 14 Feb. 2023.</p> <p>Your Health in, Mind. "Psychiatric Hospitals." <i>RANZCP</i>, 2019, www.yourhealthinmind.org/treatments-medication/psychiatric-hospitals. Accessed 31 Jan. 2023.</p>	<p>Mark for AO1 = 14 out of 25</p> <p>Mark for AO2 = 4 out of 9</p> <p>Mark for AO3 = 5 out of 6</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 23 out of 40</p>

How the candidate could improve their answer

- The candidate incorporated too many sources and different ideas, so several areas lacked development. The actual engagement with the source material seldom moved beyond one sentence of analysis. For example, the source 'Fadar' was used to introduce the cost benefits of online therapy which was an important implication for the question, but the candidate offered one abridged quotation and just one sentence of development for what should be a key point in favour of the perspective.
- Conclusions should follow on from a comparison of perspectives. Rather than offer two separate and brief summaries of each perspective, the essay could have been improved by offering an explicit comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of each perspective before arriving at the final conclusion.
- A reflective tone was established, but reflection on how the work carried out affected the candidate's viewpoint was not developed. Rather than listing the strengths and weaknesses of the different therapy options, the candidate could have demonstrated more clarity and insight into how engaging with different perspectives had consolidated their opinion.

Example Candidate Response – low	Examiner comments
<p style="text-align: center;">“Should books be banned by the government” 1</p> <p>More than 1500 books were challenged or banned by schools, libraries, and university in 2021, many having black and LGBTQ+ topics. (The Washington Post, 2022) A book banning is a form of censorship that gives individuals and officials the right to remove and ban certain books from libraries and the country. These book bans can be for a plethora of reasons from the content to the way it can belittle a country and its beliefs. There are places such as North Korea that ban some literature to make sure only their ideas seem important and relevant. Book bans are becoming a large problem all around the world in places like China, Europe, and Africa.</p> <p>Others believe that book bans are important because they keep young readers from reading inappropriate content or being persuaded by an author. Many times, books are banned from schools and libraries because the content inside is not suitable for young audiences. Parents are getting upset and wanting to choose the stories their children have access to. They did not want their kids exposed to some content and want to keep their kids “pure.” (Perkins, 2022) Parents' decisions are important seeing as they are the ones in charge of their children. Slowly they are becoming more angered as their thoughts and opinions are thrown to the side. Although, there are some books that you can still read even though they are banned. Many times, these books are still read to experience realism and foreign topics you usually would not read about in normal books.</p> <p>3</p> <p>Governments should not be able to ban books because it affects children's thoughts, understanding of the world and opinions. This does not allow authors to write what they want. We can solve this problem by protesting the bans and creating an opt out option for parents who do not want their child reading certain books. Teens and adults are creating banned book clubs in</p>	<p>1 Prefacing the title with the word 'should' is likely to provoke a debate. However, there may not be much research available to support both perspectives.</p> <p>2 The candidate's references to global contexts are not supported by sources.</p> <p>3 The candidate makes some assertive statements regarding parental views.</p>

Example Candidate Response – low, continued

Examiner comments

opposition of the book bans, others are creating organizations fighting for the end of them. Many parents, authors, and readers are getting mad on both sides of the situation.

To begin we will look at the first viewpoint, “books shouldn’t be banned by the government.” Advocates of this claim are people a part of the LQGTQIA+ community, many among the black community, students, librarians, and authors trying to write the books they want. Many work to write literature only to have it removed for the influence it has involving different communities. Almost every country such as the United States, Africa, and the United Kingdom have citizens fighting for the removal of book bans and acts on censorship. An article from The Washington Post, “Banning books about Black and LGBTQ people isn't protecting America's youths.” easily conveys their ideas of this viewpoint. Their argument is about taking

books off the shelf and how it does not allow there to be titles for everyone. Librarians say that there should be books for all whether someone else likes the literature or not. They believe that removing books just based on who they are about is not a good enough reason for them to be taken away for readers wanting to read them. The author used the social and political lens to express the ongoing battle of book bans.

The article has many different strengths and flaws. One strength is that they made it clear how they feel and had a compelling case over the topic. They included information from PEN America, such as the detail “from July through March found 1,586 instances of books being banned.” and “that more than 40 percent of the bans were “tied to directives from state officials or elected lawmakers to investigate or remove books in schools.”” (The Washington Post, 2022) The editorial board wanted to get the point across of the massive increase of book bans over the past year and the people who were mostly involved in it. Using statistics can show that the author knows how to use diverse sources for their information.

4

4 The candidate’s introduction has set up a debate, but there is some lack of focus. Censoring access to books in schools and governments banning books are not the same thing.

5

5 The USA is established as a global context, but the presentation of the author’s argument lacks some cohesion.

6

6 The candidate’s critical evaluation of the Washington Post source is not well focused and some of the reasoning lacks clarity.

Example Candidate Response – low, continued	Examiner comments
<p>Another strength they have is an exceptionally large dynamic of information around the topic of book bans are how it harms diverse groups. They speak on how areas are removing books just because they are about the LGBTQ+ and black including the books “Lawn Boy” by Jonathan Evison and “Gender Queer” by Maria Kobabe. Then swiftly move on to how removing books affects libraries, and it is wrong to not take the librarians' and authors' thoughts on the book into consideration. The use of credible sources strengthens their argument because they add tons of information and better help understand the topic. This also shows that they can include their opinion while also using reliable research from others.</p>	<p>7 A second strength is identified using credible sources. The candidate does not explain who these credible sources are.</p>
<p>The author's article also had a few weaknesses. One weakness is that they use the logical fallacy talking about how wrong it is to remove books and how eventually removing all these books will become counterproductive. Though they do not include what might happen. They say that something will happen. While you never know what might occur from these bans, it could be good or bad. This weakens his neutrality and creates a hole in what he is talking about.</p>	<p>8 The first weakness of the source is not logically expressed.</p>
<p>The second weakness is that the author does not seem to be an expert on the topic. We do not know who wrote the article, only that they are an editor for The Washington Post. They seem to be outsiders writing their thoughts on the topic. This tampers with his credibility on the topic because we do not know if this person is a part of an organization or working in any way to stop book bans. Sense they are just an editor they might not have access to the most accurate information.</p>	
<p>Secondly, there is the alternate perspective “Some books should be banned by the government.” One of the many places that ban books because of the way they are run is North Korea as Kim Jong-un wants full loyalty to him and his country. This view is held by parents,</p>	<p>9 The candidate clearly signals the move to the second perspective in favour of banning books.</p> <p>10 The candidate makes a fleeting reference to North Korea, but this is not used to support the perspective. The discussion moves back to the USA.</p>

Example Candidate Response – low, continued	Examiner comments
<p>political officials, and government officials. A source that enforces this idea is “Conservative Muslims join forces with Christian right on Michigan book bans” by Tom Perkins. Perkins talks about how many parents (mainly Arab families) are getting displeased and wanting to censor the books their children read. They did not want their children exposed to certain things and wanted to keep their kids “pure.” Stating how parents' decisions are important because they are the ones in charge of their children. Now they are becoming increasingly angered as their thoughts and opinions are being thrown to the side. (Perkins, 2022) It is unfair that some parents do not have the same advantage to voice their ideas on what books their children read. You can apply S.P.R.I.T.E. to the process of banning books using the social, political, religion, economics lens.</p> <p>There are multiple strengths and weaknesses with this source. One of the strengths is that the author uses a large sum of quotes from other articles and people with very similar beliefs. He used quotes like “We do not want our kids to be exposed to this. These books should be banned.” and “Democrats have a BIG problem. Over 800 Muslim and Christian parents showed up to protest the sexualization of their kids in Dearborn Public Schools!”. (Perkins, 2022) Using these quotes is a wonderful way to show that the author did their research and knows with a they are talking about. They used evidence from people who support the issue and agree with the topic. This also shows that they really took the time to understand what the problem and situation is.</p> <p>Perkin’s other strength is that he writes for a very trusted newspaper, this can help benefit his ideas and make them better trusted by the people reading it. Seeing as this is a larger, more well-known paper he would not have much reason to lie about his information. As it can only hurt him and The Guardian. In addition, it makes the article look better using correct information and only influences the readers to really think about what he is writing.</p>	<p>11 The candidate's paragraph about parents wanting to censor what their children read lacks clarity and is not explicitly linked to the title question.</p> <p>12 Critically evaluating the source with references to the use of quotations is developed and exemplified.</p>

Example Candidate Response – low, continued	Examiner comments
<p>This source has the weakness of not using information from the United States and the rest of the world. They keep all the information they use limited to just Michigan and do not use outside areas. If they had used these places, it would have added to their ideas and only made the article better. Including places around the world shows that they not only took what is happening in Michigan but notice that it is happening in other places. This would show how much more important it is to acknowledge the situation.</p>	<p>13 The candidate identifies and partially develops the narrow focus of the author’s research as a weakness.</p>
<p>Nevertheless, after all my research, at this moment I believe that governments should not have the ability to ban books. Even though parents’ ideas are especially important to their child’s future. This is causing discrimination and not creating fair opportunities for everyone. I feel as though this is more important. There really is not much reason for people to have less of an opportunity because some believe that their opinion and what they enjoy is better than others.</p>	<p>14 The candidate’s comparison of perspectives is not developed and the reasoning lacks clarity in places.</p>
<p>My viewpoint has not changed at all from the start, I always thought that books had no reason to be banned. My research made me realize multiple things I did not know about both perspectives. I did not understand the extent of books being banned and thought the numbers</p>	<p>15 A reflective tone is established and the candidate describes what they have learned. They begin to consider the impact on their point of view.</p>
<p>were lower. I did not know how bad North Korea’s restrictions really were, seeing how it affected book bans alone makes me want to learn more and understand everything that they deal with there. It also helped me understand that it is not the only place dealing with this, places like China and Egypt also deal with many restrictions and issues. (Samarakkodige, 2022) Learning more also confirmed my ideas and shaped my opinion. Learning about how much book bans affect people and some’s career helped carry my thoughts.</p>	<p>16 The candidate introduces new global contexts and research after the conclusion is reached.</p>
<p>My research was only on certain areas but there are still many other places dealing with book bans. The middle east is highly affected having internet restriction, films and books removed because they go against many countries’ strict rules. They remove books that have a chance of “brain washing” people into other beliefs. For example, books by Leo Tolstoy, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, and George Orwell are being banned for the way they produce their beliefs and ideas on the poor and rich. Other books are being removed for realism on a topic, freedom, and thoughts on society. (Cerezo, 2022) To make the situation worse there really is not a way to know the full extent of things like this from what the government may be hiding.</p>	<p>17 The source Cerezo is introduced in the penultimate paragraph. It is not clear which perspective this is supporting.</p>
<p>Clearly, this worldly debate is extraordinarily complex and requires much more investigation. There are many missing pieces to this situation, information is nowhere to be found and not fully understood. With all that said, my position on book bans is that governments should not be able to ban books and other forms of censorship.</p> <p>Word count: 1847</p>	<p>18 There is an unsupported call for further research.</p>

Example Candidate Response – low, continued

Examiner comments

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19

19 The bibliography is well organised. Some of the citations in the essay are missing from the bibliography, e.g. Samarakkodige.

Mark for AO1 = 12 out of 25

Mark for AO2 = 4 out of 9

Mark for AO3 = 3 out of 6

Total mark awarded = 19 out of 40

How the candidate could improve their answer

- The range of sources used to support the debate could have been broadened. Essentially each perspective was supported by a single source, The Washington Post, against book banning and Perkins for banning some books. Having single source perspectives prevented the candidate from synthesising source material together. Both sources referred to the USA, so there was a lack of global range.
- There was a lack of focus on the title question. The candidate's main arguments presented in the essay were focused on censoring school libraries. There was very little discussion of governments banning books. Having a title question that better represented the debate presented would have allowed for implications of the title question to be analysed.
- The candidate's structure of the essay could have been improved. Firstly, some of the reasoning was not clearly expressed and ideas were not well-communicated. Secondly the essay spent too much time critically evaluating source material and so the actual debate between contrasting perspectives was not given space to be developed. Finally, bringing in new ideas and contexts after the conclusion had been reached was not effective structuring and these two components should have been reversed to improve the structure.

Common mistakes and guidance for candidates

- Candidates needed to carefully consider their title questions. The best questions were concise and set up a debate between contrasting perspectives. The issue raised by the title question needed global significance and should provide enough scope so several implications of the question could be analysed. This would be best achieved by identifying a theme (e.g. Economics or Ethics) with which to explore the title question. Candidates needed to keep the essay focused on their chosen title question.
- The essays were assessed against ten different aspects. Many candidates did not address all of these aspects in their essays. Common omissions were critical evaluation of source material, comparison of perspectives and further research. Candidates should carefully plan their essays to make sure all assessment areas were addressed.
- There was often a tendency for candidates to use too many sources. An ideal essay would use three or four sources to support each perspective. Ideally an essay would establish three or four themes with which to consider the implications of the question and each theme would be supported by two sources, allowing the opportunity to demonstrate strong source understanding and synthesis.

Cambridge Assessment International Education
The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
t: +44 1223 553554
e: info@cambridgeinternational.org www.cambridgeinternational.org

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