



2010 International Studies GA 3: Written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

The 2010 International Studies examination was reasonably well handled by students. This indicated a greater familiarity with the study content and the expectations of the examination. It was pleasing to see that the majority of students completed the examination paper within the set time frame. Students generally coped well with the demands of the short answer questions, but need to be reminded to read questions carefully during reading time to ensure that sufficient detail is provided in responses in order to receive full marks.

The discriminating factor in determining student performance was again the extended response and essay questions. It was disappointing that many students chose to write pre-prepared responses that bore few links to the question at hand. Students who structured their extended responses and essay, referred to the question asked, and who provided clear and relevant evidence were able to score highly. It was disappointing that in the essay section some students were unable to focus their responses within the specified time frame. Students should be reminded that International Studies is the study and analysis of current events. As guided by this year's examination, studies should be focussed on the post-2000 era, although an appreciation of events prior to this date is expected. As a result, students who were able to show understanding and awareness of recent events in their analysis tended to perform well.

Most students demonstrated a sound understanding of the study content. It was, however, noticeable that the Global Conflict key knowledge dot point – the causes and nature of armed conflicts in the post Cold-War period, including global terrorism – which formed the basis of the second extended response requires further attention. Teachers are reminded to refer constantly to the study design. A good way to prepare students for the examination is to adapt the key knowledge and key skills components in the relevant section of the study design and turn them into questions.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

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

For each question, an outline answer (or answers) is provided. In some cases the answer given is not the only answer that could have been awarded marks.

Section A

Globalisation and Internationalism

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	5	30	65	1.6

Globalisation involves the increased mobility of goods, services, labour, capital, communication and technology on a global scale.

Responses needed to go beyond the economic aspects of globalisation to attain full marks. The inclusion of an example is to be encouraged as it can support a weak definition.

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

Globalisation refers to the universal mobility of goods, services, labour, capital, ideas and culture over state boundaries, leading to greater integration between people and states, and creating multi-faceted levels of interdependence.

Question 2

Students were awarded one mark for correctly stating one objective of the IMF and a further three marks for explaining one way the organisation seeks to achieve the objective stated in Question 2a.

Many students confused the means by which the IMF seeks to achieve its aims as an aim and could not be awarded any marks. A number of students were also unable to explain how the IMF seeks to achieve the aim stated in part a, instead discussing the achievement of another aim in Question 2b. Many students chose to elucidate their point with an example; the most popular were IMF work in Indonesia, Bolivia, Jamaica and Greece.

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Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	25	75	0.8

The stated objectives of the IMF are:

- promote international monetary cooperation
- promote high employment
- sustainable economic growth
- facilitate the expansion and balanced growth of international trade
- reduce poverty.

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	17	21	32	31	1.8

The IMF uses the following mechanisms to achieve its objectives:

- tracks global economic trends and performance
- alerts its member countries when it foresees problems
- provides a forum for policy dialogue
- passes on 'know how' to governments on how to tackle economic difficulties
- provides policy advice
- provides financing to members
- works with developing nations to help them achieve macroeconomic stability and reduce poverty.

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

The loans provided to member states require states to meet 25 economic reform conditions. These conditions involve the removal of trade barriers which allows for increased trade and investment between states. An example of this is the 1997 Indonesian loan and economic reform allowing for China to directly invest \$420billion thus promoting international monetary cooperation.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	8	16	28	28	20	2.4

To attain full marks students needed to describe in detail how globalisation has had a negative effect on the state. Many students simply described a negative of globalisation and did not relate it to the state. A majority of students failed to provide sufficient detail. Teachers should note that 'the impact of globalisation and internationalism on the role of the state and the concept of sovereignty' is a key knowledge dot point in the study design and should ensure that students are prepared to approach this area.

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

Due to MNC becoming the most powerful economic force in the world, they have the ability to undermine the sovereignty of a state. This was shown by the recent mining debacle in Australia where a hugely beneficial scheme for Australia was reduced to the point where it was irrelevant because mining companies used scare tactics to convince the Australian people that it would destroy the industry that supported them during the Global Financial Crisis. Due to there being an election taking place, neither party risked the tax.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	4	4	6	8	10	13	16	14	11	8	5	5.6

This question asked students to discuss how the United Nations has promoted internationalism and students chose to respond in a number of ways. Many students undertook a case study approach and discussed, via a number of examples, how the organisation has promoted internationalism. Other students examined the structure of the organisation and how this promotes internationalism. More able students discussed the extent to which the United Nations was able to promote internationalism, but this was not necessary to attain full marks. Students were not rewarded for providing vast detail on one case study, such as the Kyoto Protocol, unless they were able to relate this to how the organisation promotes internationalism.

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Popular areas of discussion were:

- Millennium Development Goals
- the work of the IPCC
- INTERFET
- UNHCR
- UNICEF
- structure of the General Assembly
- structure of the Security Council.

Global conflicts

Question 5a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	19	81	0.8

Students need to give one example of a non-state based terrorist act since 2004 to attain one mark. Acts with incorrect dates or those carried out by states were not awarded any marks.

Common responses included:

- 2004 Madrid bombings
- 2005 London bombings
- 2005 Bali bombings
- 2008 Mumbai attacks
- 2009 Fort Hood attacks
- 2009 Jakarta Ritz-Carlton and Marriott hotels
- 2010 Times Square attempted car bombing.

Question 5b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	36	28	37	1

To attain full marks students needed to describe one political effect of the act stated in 5a. Students who described social, economic or cultural effects did not receive any marks.

Common responses were:

- anti-terror legislation
- increased security at airports
- increasing/decreasing support for involvement in wars against terror
- increasing popularity for right-wing anti-immigration parties.

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

One political effect of the March 2004 Madrid bombings was that the government of Spain at the time was voted out at the next election, and Spain withdrew from the 'War on Terror'.

Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	4	56	40	1.4

To attain full marks students needed to identify one reason that makes the US a superpower and explain why. Simply stating 'nuclear weapons', for example, could not attain full marks.

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

The US accounts for 40% of global arms spending and has a defence budget of \$680 billion, six times that of its closest rival China.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	13	36	51	1.4

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To attain full marks students needed to identify one reason that limited the power of the US and provide some explanation as to why this was the case.

Common responses included:

- economic weakness
- unable to combat asymmetrical conflict
- weakening diplomatic power.

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

One reason why the power of the US is limited is due to its inability to adapt from conventional military tactics in dealing with enemies adopting asymmetrical tactics, such as it has encountered in Iraq and Afghanistan

Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	17	18	32	33	1.8

To gain full marks students had to explain the success of a state or group in a post-Cold War conflict. Students were awarded marks on the basis of the level of detail provided. The more able students discussed why or how the state or group achieved its success, but this was not necessary to attain full marks.

Common case studies included:

- the United States in Iraq
- the United States in Afghanistan
- al-Qaeda
- the UN in liberating Kuwait 1990
- Rwandan genocide.

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

Chosen state or group: The US

Chosen conflict: Afghanistan

One success of the US invasion of Afghanistan has been the effect on al-Qaeda. Although Osama bin Laden has not been captured or confirmed dead, the US has had significant success in limiting the operation of al-Qaeda. This can be seen in the CIA chief's estimation in July 2010 that 'less than 100; al-Qaeda fighters remain in Afghanistan.'

Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	8	5	7	9	10	12	13	14	10	7	4	5.1

It was disappointing that many students did not handle this question well. Many students responded with simple narratives of a particular conflict with no reference to the nature of conflict. Such responses struggled to attain more than half marks. Teachers should note that the first key knowledge dot point for this area of study is 'the causes and nature of armed conflicts in the post Cold-War period, including global terrorism' and ensure that this is investigated.

Common aspects of the nature of conflict explained included:

- location of conflict
- causes of conflict
- actors involved: UN role, US unilateral actions, rise of non-state actors
- form of conflict: increased terrorist activity, increased asymmetrical warfare, increased intra-state warfare, decreased inter-state warfare
- increasing civilian casualties.

The explanation of a number of these aspects was required to gain full marks. Sophisticated responses identified patterns that characterised the nature of post-Cold War conflict using several case studies, but this was not necessary to attain full marks.

Power in the Asia-Pacific region

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Question 10

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	17	47	36	1.2

Students performed poorly on this definition question. This was disappointing given that propaganda is clearly specified in the study design as a key term. Many students did not define propaganda as it relates to international relations and as such could only receive one mark. An example was not required to attain two marks but many students chose to include one. This is to be encouraged as including an example can often support a weak definition.

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

The publication of one sided information disseminated to promote a cause, usually of foreign policy or domestic policy, which has attracted international attention. E.g. China blocking Facebook and Twitter as a result of the July 2009 Urumqi riots involving the Uighurs to prevent communication of violence which occurred.

Question 11

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	5	31	64	1.6

This question was generally well answered; however, many students failed to relate their definition to international relations and as such could only receive one mark. Students are advised to prepare all key terms with examples as they relate to international relations as part of their examination preparation.

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

National interest refers to the aims, and ambitions of a state, primarily concerned with the maintenance of its security, and continued existence, but also levels of security, culture, economics and military.

Question 12a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	23	77	0.8

This question asked students to state one example of military power being used in the Asia-Pacific region since 2000. Most students were able to recognise that identifying examples used prior to 2000 would not receive any marks. Responses could be general, for example increasing the number of missiles facing the island of Taiwan, or specific, for example Chinese military exercises with the French Navy in 2004.

Question 12b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	20	23	57	1.4

To attain full marks students need to state one motivating factor for the example given in 12a., and then provide some detail as to this motivation.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response for 12a. and 12b.

This test was motivated by China's desire to intimidate the US by demonstrating it possessed the power to incapacitate US military satellites. This was done in the hope that a fearful US would not intervene in China's efforts to reunite itself with Taiwan.

Question 13

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	17	20	28	35	1.8



To gain full marks, students needed to describe how trade has been used as a policy instrument, identify the aim of the use of trade and describe this use. Simply describing the use of trade was insufficient to attain full marks as students needed to look specifically at how trade is a policy instrument – that is, what it is designed to achieve. Students either responded to this question by describing a number of examples of how trade has been used as a policy instrument or through the in-depth examination of an instance when trade has been used as a policy instrument. Both of these approaches were acceptable.

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

Since 2000, the PRC has made use of trade to further a number of its key policies. Firstly, it has invested billions of dollars in resource rich developing states, in order to gain resources such as oil, coal and steel as well as through the 'aid for oil' policy. Secondly, it has fostered trade ties with Taiwan, leading to the signing of the ECFA (June 2010), in order to reach the level of \$100billion in FDI by Taiwan in the PRC, both attempting to show Taiwan the benefits of the economic opportunities of the PRC as well as to cause it to become economically tied to the PRC so as not to be able to gain independence. Furthermore, it has signed agreements such as the 2010 ASEAN FTA in order to further liberalise trade, and to increase its economic development.

Question 14

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	8	4	5	6	8	10	12	15	14	11	8	5.8

This question had the highest mean of the three 10-mark questions, reflecting the students' and teachers' familiarity with this area of study. To attain full marks students needed to go beyond simply describing the story and discuss how the objective was pursued – that is, discuss different forms of power and/or foreign policy instruments. There was no need to discuss the effectiveness of these forms of power to attain full marks, but many of the more able students did so. Students who discussed the pursuit of two objectives were marked on the first one.

Common objectives discussed included:

- China's pursuit of territorial integrity
- China's pursuit of economic development
- North Korea's pursuit of independence
- Indonesia's pursuit of territorial integrity.

Section B – Essay

Australian Foreign Policy

Essay	None	1	2	3
%	2	32	48	18

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Average
%	2	1	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	6	5	7	7	8	9	8	8	7	5	2	11.9

Question 1

To respond successfully to this question, students had to address the extent to which regional relationships have been an important aspect of Australian foreign policy since 1996. Many students chose to discuss the importance of other factors to Australian foreign policy so as to gauge the importance of regional relations and this was acceptable. Students who responded with a simple narrative of Australian regional relations since 1996 were unable to attain the higher end of the marks. It should be noted that rarely does an essay question simply ask for a description and students must be prepared to analyse and evaluate. It was disappointing that some students chose to argue that it is only since the election of the Labor party in 2007 that Australia has engaged with our region; this is factually incorrect and suggests that greater appreciation of the history of Australian foreign policy is required. The more successful responses examined the security challenges and economic opportunities presented by the region as a means of explaining the importance of it to Australian foreign policy.

Question 2

This was the most popular of the essay questions. It was unfortunate that many students chose to respond with pre-prepared responses that examined the extent to which the positives of the alliance outweighed the negatives; such responses struggled to achieve the higher end of the marks. Students are to be reminded that they can only be assessed on the extent to which they answer the question at hand and must be prepared to think and respond accordingly in the examination. This question asked students to discuss the relative importance of security and economic factors with regards to the US alliance, and both needed to be argued. Some students chose to discuss other factors, such as idealism



and increased international presence. Common security aspects discussed included the 2001 invoking of ANZUS, invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, AUSMIN, TMD, military purchases, US bases in Australia and Trilateral Security Dialogue. Common economic aspects discussed included AUSFTA, trading deficit with the USA and investment into Australia.

Question 3

This was the least popular of the essay questions. Students were asked to discuss how the factors inform the debate over Australian foreign policy national interests. Many students chose to examine the relative importance of security, economics and idealism in influencing the national interest debate. A common approach to this question was through the use of examples, that is, the sale of uranium to India highlights the influence of economics over security in foreign policy. Other students chose to examine a number of issues in which there has been considerable debate to elucidate their argument; for example, refugee and asylum seeker policy, human rights and China, climate change and environmental security, the US alliance, multilateralism versus bilateralism and US versus China.