



2011 International Studies GA 3: Written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

The 2011 International Studies examination was well handled by the majority of students, who were familiar with the course content and the expectations of the examination. The majority of students completed the examination paper in the allotted time.

Time management in examinations is crucial and the best way for students to prepare for the exam is to practise examination questions under strict time conditions. Students must make good use of the reading time by considering how they will respond to each of the questions. Students should develop a specific plan for the extended response questions and the essay.

Good examination technique is very important. Where students have continued their answers in the extra pages at the end of the examination booklet, they should clearly indicate this on the question page and on the extra page at the end of the booklet. Black or blue pen should be used when writing answers. Students should respond directly to short answer questions

The discriminating factors in determining student performance were the extended response questions in Section A and the essay question in Section B. It is disappointing that many students focused on pre-prepared responses that bore little relevance to the question they were answering. However, students who structured their answers to the extended response questions and essay carefully, referred to the question asked and included lucid, concise and relevant evidence were able to score high marks.

Most students understood fundamental concepts and demonstrated a satisfactory understanding of the content. It was, however, noticeable that ‘analyse the role of key groups in globalisation and internationalism’ which formed the basis of Question 1, was not very well understood by some students.

Students should focus on using contemporary examples in Section B.

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
%	8	35	57	1.5

To gain full marks students needed to provide a good definition regarding the concept of sovereignty. For example, a state with a centralised government that has control and borders that are recognised by other states and global organisations such as the United Nations. Students who made only one point did not receive full marks; however, sound definitions that were supported by a relevant example scored well.

The following is an example of a good student response.

Sovereignty refers to the legitimate or widely recognised ability of a state to exercise effective control over its territory within defined geographical borders.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	Average
%	17	83	0.9

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The World Bank was created at the end of the Second World War, along with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). However, unlike the IMF, the World Bank has a specific focus on projects that will assist economic development. The objectives of the World Bank are to:

- strengthen economies and expand markets to improve the quality of life for people everywhere, but particularly the poorest people
- use its first-rate financial standing and access to the world's capital to invest in health, education and the environment, and to assist with economic reforms
- advise globally on the investment of private capital in development projects.

Students performed very well on this question.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	11	10	36	42	2.1

Students needed to name a UN agency and explain its role; for example, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) is working on the border of Sudan and Chad with refugees from Darfur. The word 'agency' was broadly defined as including any organisation that works within the auspices of the United Nations. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was also not an acceptable response.

For example, the World Health Organization (WHO) working to improve food safety, culminating with the adoption of a new food safety initiative.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	5	10	26	34	25	2.6

Students needed to correctly identify a specific UN decision or action that assisted the promotion of internationalism. Possible examples included: The Montreal and/or Kyoto Protocol, the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), the doctrine of Responsibility to Protect (R2P), the establishment of the International Criminal Court, resolution 1973 against the then government of Libya and the treaty banning the manufacture and storing of cluster bombs.

Students then needed to clearly explain how the specific action they identified had promoted the principles of internationalism – the concept or idea of bringing different sovereign states together to collectively address a common goal. For example, environmental degradation, poverty especially in developing states, upholding the universal principles of human rights for all in R2P and the bringing to justice of accused perpetrators of acts of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	9	6	8	11	12	12	12	12	9	6	3	4.7

Students needed to choose one of the key global organisations listed and explain how the chosen global organisation has responded to a specific key global issue since 2000.

The most popular issues and organisations explained were:

- World Bank -Millennium Development Goals – specific projects in Africa, South America and Asia
- World Trade Organization – International Trade – issues regarding the dormant/failed Doha Trade Round, the negative effects of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) on trade and a shift towards more protectionist policies by states as well as the resolution of ongoing trade disputes between states such as the US and China
- International Monetary Fund – global financial crisis leading to the current issues of sovereign debt in many states in the European Union (EU).

Students who structured their responses clearly with the use of appropriate paragraphs, with good ideas and coherence plus a brief introduction and conclusion did well in this question.

The following is an excerpt from a high-scoring response.

The World Trade Organisation aims to increase international trade through trade liberalisation policies and the upkeep of global trading rules. The WTO sponsored Doha round of talks, which is currently ongoing but largely forgotten, is an example of an attempt to increase international trade through the universal lowering of tariffs in this case related to agriculture. Although

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the talks have stalled because of subsidy programs in the US and EU, their success would represent the end to significant barriers on the international trade of agricultural goods.

Global Conflicts

Question 6a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	17	83	0.9

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

The most common non-state based terrorist acts provided were:

- 2004 Madrid bombings
- 2004 Australian embassy attack in Jakarta
- 2005 London bombings
- 2005 Bali bombings
- 2008 Mumbai attacks
- 2009 Jakarta Ritz-Carlton and Marriott Hotel attacks
- 2010 New York Times Square attempted car bombing
- 2011 Oslo attacks
- 2011 US embassy attack in Kabul.

Question 6b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	27	28	45	1.2

Students needed to describe one cause of the act stated in part a. Students who outlined effects of the terrorist act did not receive any marks. Students who stated a cause without giving a description did not receive full marks.

Common causes included:

- anti-US/western sentiment
- reaction against US policies in the Middle East during and after the first Gulf War
- the invasion of Iraq in 2003
- concerns regarding the spread of multiculturalism and Muslim culture in Europe
- a lack of identity and the attraction of terrorist organisations such as al-Qaeda.

The following is an example of a good response.

The Australian embassy in Jakarta was attacked in 2004 because of Australia's involvement in and support of the US invasion of Iraq as a part of its War on Terror.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	6	24	34	36	2

Students needed to describe one effect of international terrorism in the post-Cold War period. The effect may be:

- domestic (in terms of the political situation), enhanced security measures, new and comprehensive anti-terrorism laws, negative attitudes to many minority groups, rising levels of intolerance seen in the rise of many far right political organisations in the US and EU, human rights issues, torture/interrogation
- international in terms of the effect it has on other states and/or actors, invasions, military alliances (COW), rendition, Guantanamo Bay, retaliatory strikes, increase in displaced people and refugees seeking safety and opportunities
- economic significant/crippling financial imposts for extra spending and international commitments. For example, the US involvement in Iraq alone is believed to have cost in excess of USD \$ 800 billion.



Students needed to go beyond simply outlining the social, economic, cultural or political effect. There was however, no need to describe the terrorist act in this question.

Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	11	17	28	25	19	2.3

Students needed to focus on a conflict since 1990. The most common armed conflicts included: the war in Afghanistan, the invasion of Iraq, ethnic conflict/genocide in Rwanda, the Gulf War, the Russian/Georgian War, Bosnia, Chechnya, Darfur, Libya (2011), Lebanon-Israel (2006), etc. Students needed to explain the nature of the conflict in terms of:

- conventional or unconventional
- symmetrical or asymmetrical
- level of military technology used
- scope and range of the conflict
- number of groups or states involved in the conflict.

Unfortunately, some students did not answer the question asked. Students needed to discuss in detail how the conflict waged/conducted development of ideas and strategies. No evaluation was required.

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

The war in Afghanistan, between the Taliban and the US-led coalition has been fought mostly along lines of asymmetrical warfare since the US led forces removed the Taliban government in the opening months of the conflict. In this war the Taliban has used a variety of guerrilla tactics in order to both weaken the US hold over the region and to hamper the US's attempt at establishing a democracy in Afghanistan has been mostly successful....It can be said that the Afghanistan as an armed conflict, is defined by its asymmetrical nature.

Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	6	3	6	9	11	14	15	16	10	7	3	5.3

This question asked students to evaluate how the USA has been limited in using its power in regard to one specific conflict in the post-Cold War period. Students were also asked to name the specific conflict they would use in their response. The US incursion into Somalia (1992) and the first Gulf War were appropriate conflicts to use in this question.

Some students did not name an appropriate conflict. The 9/11 terrorist attacks are not a conflict and therefore was not a suitable answer. The War on Terror was also not a suitable example as it was not a single conflict. Some students writing on the War on Terror focused on a single specific conflict, most commonly Afghanistan or Iraq, to evaluate the limitations of US power. However, some students selected a conflict in which the US was not directly involved; for example, Chechnya, and to a lesser extent the air strikes in Libya, as an example of US power limitation, but did not explain how that conflict specifically highlighted a limitation of US power.

The more successful responses identified the strengths of US power in the context of the conflict in which it was involved and then began evaluating the specific limitations of US power. These limitations focused primarily on military matters such as insufficient troops on the ground, confused and shifting military and political priorities, insufficient planning and understanding of the local environment, and the difficulties faced by a state combating asymmetrical warfare waged by an amoral non-state actor(s).

Successful students who structured their responses clearly in paragraphs and included a brief introduction and conclusion performed well on this question.

The following is an excerpt from a high-scoring response.

The USA has had its use of political, military and soft power extremely limited during the occupation of Iraq, and has therefore struggled to achieve its objectives of democratising the state. Initially, the USA's political power was limited when they UN failed to authorise the pre-emptive strikes to allegedly destroy weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) with France promising to veto the action at the Security Council and Secretary General Kofi Annan declaring he invasion 'illegal' from the point of view of the charter. This demonstrates the inability of the US's political power to gain the support of a majority of states. However, the fact

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that the US was able to invade with a 'Coalition of the Willing', which included Australia, demonstrates that despite failure at the UN, the USA retains significant political and soft power.

Australian foreign policy

Question 10

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	41	21	38	1

Students did not handle this question well. Students had to define the arc of instability as it relates to Australian foreign policy. The arc is an interconnected chain of potentially unstable states in the Asia-Pacific region very close to Australia's northern coastline and of acute concern to successive Australian governments because of the risk of terrorist organisations, crime groups, drug traffickers and people smugglers gaining a foothold/control.

The following is an example of a good response.

An area to the north and east of Australia, including PNG, Fiji and the Solomon Islands, that is traditionally unstable socially and politically and therefore poses a threat to Australian security.

Question 11

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	11	12	29	31	18	2.3

This question asked students to clearly explain one way economic interests have been promoted by AFP since 2000. For example:

- the signing of free trade agreements with Singapore, USA, Chile and ASEAN
- increased emphasis on strengthening trade relations with the People's Republic of China
- the recent resumption of the live cattle trade with Indonesia
- the concerted push to establish the G20 as the pre-eminent global body to coordinate international responses to the GFC
- the recently announced expansion of the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Students who simply described economic aspects of Australia's Foreign Policy did not receive full marks. To gain full marks, students needed to explain in specific detail how the measure or initiative had promoted Australia's economic interests. Students need to be aware that Australia has attempted to but has not signed a free trade agreement with Japan, India or the People's Republic of China. Australia is not, and has never been, a member of ASEAN and signed the 'Closer Economic Relations Economic Agreement' with New Zealand in 1983.

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

Australian foreign policy makers have promoted her economic interests by signing free trade agreements with Chile, The US, Thailand and Singapore. They have also increased trade with China and Japan, our top two trading partners while also attempting to sign free trade agreements with them. Australia's focus on its economic interest can be seen through how it has continued with China and Japan despite concerns about human rights abuses in China and Japan's attitude to whaling.

Question 12

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	7	9	28	31	25	2.6

This question asked students to explain the benefits Australia has received from a specific regional relationship since 1999. The most commonly examined relationships were:

- People's Republic of China
- United States of America
- Indonesia
- Japan
- East Timor
- India
- ASEAN Regional Forum
- Solomon Islands
- Pacific Islands Forum

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- New Zealand
- Papua New Guinea
- Nauru.

Explanations of benefits included:

- East Timor and its independence from Indonesia (INTERFET)
- stability to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI)
- Indonesia and the Boxing Day tsunami of 2004
- the use of Nauru as an off-shore detention and processing centre for asylum seekers, which allowed Australia to outsource its refugee problems and avoid mandatory detention on Australian soil
- Australia's role at the Pacific Islands Forum and the ASEAN Regional forum
- Australia's support of the US in the War on Terror in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Australia's enhanced trade relations with the People's Republic of China (which is now its single largest trading partner accounting for some 20% of total exports, thus helping Australia to avoid the direct impact of the 2008 GFC and the subsequent global recession).

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

Australia has a regional relationship with East Timor. Australia has had multiple involvements in East Timor involving troop deployments, in 1999-2000 under the UN. Australia has also pledged some \$127.3 million towards East Timor in 2011-2012. Through this provision of humanitarian aid in this relationship the prospects of East Timor becoming a failed state on Australia's northern doorstep has been reduced.

Question 13

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	3	2	5	8	12	16	16	17	11	7	3	5.6

Students needed to demonstrate a very good understanding of the benefits of Australia's alliance with the US. Since 2000 this would include the cost and benefits of Australia's security and defence alliance with the US. Students could have approached this question in a number of different ways; for example, they may have chosen to focus on military, economic, political or cultural factors.

The more successful responses showed a sophisticated level of understanding and used very relevant, specific detail to support a well-reasoned argument. Some students included relevant quotes and displayed a sophisticated understanding of the terminology of the study.

The following is an excerpt from a high-scoring response.

Since 2000, Australia's alliance with the USA has largely ensured its sovereignty and security during a period on increasing instability characterised by global terrorism. However, despite the benefits that the US alliance brings to Australia it has also presented her with challenges. Therefore while, the US alliance is a very significant aspect of Australian foreign policy, it is but one aspect and thus should be balanced with other important considerations such as the increasing power and influence of China.

Section B – Essay Power in the Asia-Pacific Region

Question chosen	0	1	2	3
%	1	71	17	11

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	1	1	2	3	3	3	5	6	6	5	8	8	9	9	8	7	7	4	2	12.3

The more successful students used the essay as an opportunity to write a detailed, well-constructed and relevant response to one of the questions.

However, less successful students:

- used pre-prepared responses that did not relate to the question



- used unsubstantiated generalisations
- used personal commentary and thoughts
- did not use appropriate or relevant evidence
- presented only a descriptive response that did not discuss the topic asked
- used weaker arguments that indicated a less than thorough understanding of the study.

Students were given very clear instructions not to use Australia as an example in this section and most students adhered to this instruction.

Question 1

Students needed to assess whether military power is more effective than economic power in pursuing national interests. Successful students were able to explore the national interest of the state or states in the Asia-Pacific region, then carefully analyse the overall effectiveness of the use of both military and economic power. The People's Republic of China was the most common state chosen.

Students who wrote a simple narrative of the type of power a state possessed but did not include any real element of discussion were unable to gain high marks. Students should note that essay questions rarely ask only for a description, and they must be prepared to analyse and evaluate ideas. The more impressive responses carefully examined the challenges posed by military power and contrasted them with the potential opportunities presented by economic power.

The following is an example of a good introductory paragraph.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is a regional power in the Asia-Pacific region and an emerging global power. China has four national interest objectives as stated by President Hu Jintao of rapid economic growth, maintenance of territorial integrity, improvement in international standing and the creation of a socialist harmonious society. China has pursued these objectives through a range of power forms including economic power, military power and political/diplomatic power. These forms of power have been utilised with varying degrees of success and if China is to ensure its long term attainment of national objectives, then economic and diplomatic power are more effective than the short term gains achieved through its use of military power.

Question 2

To respond successfully to this question, students needed to address the importance of relationships with foreign powers for the state or states in the Asia-Pacific region. With China being a popular state to use as a case study it was disconcerting to see some students use Taiwan and Tibet as examples of foreign powers. This was not accepted.

Students who did very well on this question were able to identify a number of crucial relationships, explain their importance in regard to the successful pursuit of national objectives and support these statements with clear, relevant examples and analysis that clearly displayed the student's level of understanding and depth of specific knowledge.

The following is an example of a good introductory paragraph.

China has utilized its economic, military and diplomatic power to achieve its national interests of economic development, territorial integrity a harmonious society and an enhanced international standing. Its relationship with foreign powers is essential to the successful pursuit of these interests particularly by the US and Japan. Regional relationships are of high importance in accordance with China achieving its national interest objectives.

Question 3

Students needed to discuss the impact of differing interpretations of the national interest in one or more states in the Asia-Pacific region. Some students who selected Question 2 may have been better suited to answering this question as it would have allowed them the opportunity to examine in detail the ongoing conflicts and issues between the People's Republic of China and some of its restive provinces such as Tibet, Taiwan and Xinjiang.

Successful responses to this topic explained in detail why there would be differing interpretations of national interest within a state such as the People's Republic of China or Indonesia. Students discussed issues involving ethnic minority groups and the means by which power is held and exercised by the government.

The following is an example of a good introductory paragraph.

China aims to achieve its goals of economic growth, a good international standing, a harmonious society and most importantly territorial integrity. However, the desire per provinces such as Tibet, Taiwan, Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang make achieving these

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goals an issue, as they desire some formal level of independence and sovereignty. Consequently, Beijing's idea of 'One China' has resulted in a differing interpretation of the objective of territorial integrity that has impacted upon China in several ways.