2.4 The Paper 2 essay

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 30 marks**

KEY WORDS real-world example • perspective • judgement • thesis

Objective

Bring the core and the thematic studies together in the **Paper 2 essay**: unpack the question, choose concepts and **real-world examples**, build an argument with **perspectives**, and reach a **judgement**.

You must be able to:

- unpack an essay question: command term, key concepts and scope
- choose real-world examples that are specific and recent
- link the four key concepts (power, sovereignty, legitimacy, interdependence) to a thematic question
- write an argument paragraph with a counter-argument
- reach a supported judgement

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

■ Five steps

1. **Unpack**: underline the command term (*discuss*, *evaluate*, *to what extent*), the concepts and the limits of the question.
2. **Define** the key concepts in your introduction, and state your **thesis**.
3. **Examples**: use two or three specific cases: name the actors, the place, the year, a number.
4. **Perspectives**: show how different actors (states, IGOs, NGOs, people affected) see the issue.
5. **Judgement**: answer the question, and say *why* one side is stronger.

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Weak and strong evidence

weak	strong
"Some countries ignore human rights."	"The ICC issued an arrest warrant for Vladimir Putin in March 2023, but Russia is not a member and he has not been arrested."
"Aid helps development."	"Under-five deaths fell sharply between 1990 and 2015, the period of the Millennium Development Goals."

Paragraph frame

Point (linked to the question) → concept → example with detail → explanation → counter-point → mini-judgement.

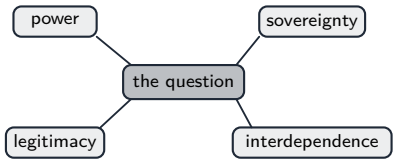
Worked paragraph start. "Interdependence limits the power of states to protect rights, because trade partners often avoid criticism: for example, …"

2 Practice

2.1 Unpack this question: "To what extent is the legitimacy of a state dependent on its protection of human rights?" Name the command term, **two** key concepts and **one** limit of the question. [2]

2.2 Rewrite this weak piece of evidence into a strong one: "Some peacekeeping missions fail." [3]

2.3 Explain how **two** of the four key concepts can be used in an essay on "development and sustainability". [4]

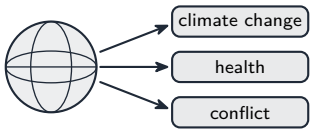


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2.4 Write **one** argument paragraph, with a counter-point, for: "Non-state actors are now more important than states in global politics." [6]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 *(Paper 2 style.)* "International organizations have little power to solve global problems." Discuss with reference to **two** global problems. [15]



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Solutions

Marking: **M1** a correct method, **A1** the correct answer, **B1** an independent mark.

Each answer shows the steps, then the **result**.

2.1

command term "to what extent": a judgement on how far, with arguments on both sides; concepts: legitimacy and human rights; limit: it is about states, not other actors

2.2

a named mission; a place and year; a precise detail showing the failure, e.g. "In Rwanda in 1994, about 2,500 UN peacekeepers had no mandate to use force to stop a genocide in which about 800,000 people were killed."

2.3

any two, explained: power: richer states and MNCs shape trade and climate rules; sovereignty: states decide how to use their own resources, e.g. forests; legitimacy: governments gain or lose support through development results (output legitimacy); interdependence: emissions in one country affect all; supply chains link producers and consumers

2.4

a clear point linked to the question; a key concept used; a specific example with detail, e.g. a large technology company's control of information, or an NGO campaign such as the 1997 landmine ban treaty; explanation of how it supports the point; a counter-point, e.g. states still make law, control armies and decide treaties; a mini-judgement

3.1

Mark with the markbands: [13-15] clearly focused on the question, accurate and relevant knowledge and real-world examples used as evidence, concepts applied, well-developed critical analysis, different perspectives evaluated, a reasoned conclusion; [10-12] focused, mostly accurate knowledge, analysis with some evaluation; [7-9] some focus, relevant knowledge, mostly narrative or description with limited analysis; [4-6] little focus, limited knowledge, mostly narrative; [1-3] little understanding of the question. Points that may be included: definitions: international organizations, power; thesis that answers the question; problem 1, e.g. climate change: the Paris Agreement (2015) set goals, but each state sets its own targets and there is no enforcement; progress: renewable energy has expanded under international targets; problem 2, e.g. global health: the WHO coordinated work on COVID-19 and smallpox was eradicated in 1980 through a WHO campaign; limits: the WHO depends on member states' funding and information; concepts used: sovereignty limits IGO power; interdependence makes cooperation necessary; perspectives of different actors (states, NGOs, people affected); balance between "little power" and real achievements; conclusion: a clear judgement, e.g. IGOs have power to coordinate, not to command

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