

Critical Thinking

Unit: F501: The Language of Reasoning: Medium banded candidate style answer.

Introduction

OCR has produced these candidate style answers to support teachers in interpreting the assessment criteria for the new GCE specifications and to bridge the gap between new specification release and availability of exemplar candidate work.

This content has been produced by senior OCR examiners, with the input of Chairs of Examiners, to illustrate how the sample assessment questions might be answered and provide some commentary on what factors contribute to an overall grading. The candidate style answers are not written in a way that is intended to replicate student work but to demonstrate what a “good” or “excellent” response might include, supported by examiner commentary and conclusions.

As these responses have not been through full moderation and do not replicate student work, they have not been graded and are instead, banded “medium” or “high” to give an indication of the level of each response.

Please note that this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of grade boundaries or endorsed answers.

Read document 1 “Degrees of value”, and answer questions 1 to 10.

Document 1

Degrees of value?

A degree used to be the pinnacle of education. However, there are now many reasons why degree-level qualifications are of very little value and are not worth having. 1

School leavers are having second thoughts about university, aware that an average graduate starting salary of £17,000 is hardly going to cover debts of up to £15,000 after three years of university. It is obvious that graduate salaries no longer match the crippling costs of getting a degree. 2

Recently 16,000 university students were interviewed and only one third expected to get, or look for, a graduate-level job when they left university. This, combined with evidence from employers showing that 11% of graduates who are in work, have jobs in sales and customer support, makes it clear that getting a degree does not lead to better employment prospects. 3

If we want our young people to go on to have marketable skills, we must ensure that we give them all the information they need about future employment prospects. The British Chamber of Commerce has suggested that the real skills shortage is in skilled construction and engineering technicians. This shows that degrees are not reflecting the needs of the economy. 4

The situation is worsened by the increasing numbers entering university. Twenty years ago only one in eight young people went to university. Now it is one in three. This lowering of entrance standards has devalued degrees. Confirmation comes from the fact that there are now more students studying for a degree in management than in the traditional subjects of physics and chemistry put together. 5

Some have argued that the planned increases in vocational degrees will result in higher status for degrees as vocational graduates are currently less likely to be unemployed than graduates with academic degrees. However, vocational degrees such as acupuncture and aromatherapy have been given the ‘thumbs down’ by some employers in these areas because they do not teach sufficiently specific skills and are not academically rigorous. 6

1(a) Identify the main conclusion of the argument presented in the passage.

[2]

| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner's commentary</i> |
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| <i>There are now many reasons why degree-level qualifications are not recognised as highly as they were and so they are not as useful.</i> | This is a paraphrase of the main conclusion which has a similar meaning but lacks the precision e.g. "so they are not as useful" is not quite the same as "are not worth having". However, the candidate has recognised the correct part of the passage and the paraphrase contains similar ideas. |

2(a) Identify the reason in paragraph 2 that is given to support the main conclusion. [3]

| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner's commentary</i> |
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| <i>Graduate salaries no longer match the cost of getting a degree</i> | The candidate has identified the correct part of the paragraph but has omitted the word "crippling" and has not substituted another word with a similar meaning so the reasoning is weaker than the original. |

(b) Identify the reason in paragraph 4 that is given to support the main conclusion. [3]

| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner's commentary</i> |
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| <i>The British Chamber of Commerce has suggested that the real skills shortage is in skilled construction and engineering technicians so this shows that degrees are not reflecting the needs of the economy.</i> | The first part of the answer is an example given to support the reason. The second part of the response is the correct reason but too much additional material has been included for a high mark to be given. |

3 Identify the hypothetical reasoning used in paragraph 4. [2]

| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner's commentary</i> |
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| <i>If we want our young people to go on to have marketable skills, we must give them information about future employment prospects.</i> | The candidate has identified the correct part of the paragraph but some words are omitted e.g. "ensure that we" and "all the", which does slightly alter the meaning. |

4 In paragraph 6, the author states: "Some have argued that the planned increases in vocational degrees will result in higher status for degrees."

(a) Identify what component of the argument this is. [2]

| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner's commentary</i> |
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| <i>Counter assertion</i> | It does state the opposite to the main conclusion, justifying the use of the word "counter" but there is a reason attached which means it is a counter argument, rather than a counter assertion. |

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| (b) Explain your decision. | | [2] |
| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner's commentary</i> | |
| <i>The statement gives the opposite point of view to the main conclusion.</i> | This is only part of the answer. Since the candidate failed, in part (a), to recognise this statement as part of a counter argument he/she has not developed the answer sufficiently in part (b). | |

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| 5 Assess the evidence in paragraph 2 about graduate salaries and debt by suggesting <u>three</u> ways in which this evidence may not be representative of all students. | | [3] |
| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner's commentary</i> | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We do not know the sample size so the number of students surveyed may not have been large enough to be representative.</i> • <i>Some students will have a starting salary which is higher than £17,000 so they will be more able to pay the debt.</i> • <i>Some students take another course after graduating rather than starting work, so they will not have to pay off the debt.</i> | The first two bullet points are correct but the third bullet point is wrong as it merely defers the payment of the debt, rather than removing it altogether. | |

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| 6 In paragraph 3, the author uses the results of research conducted on 16,000 students. | | |
| (a) Explain one way in which this could be a good piece of evidence. | | [2] |
| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner's commentary</i> | |
| <i>16,000 is a lot of students.</i> | This is a statement which does not link to the idea that the information was being used for a statistical purpose, in that there is no reference to this being a sample or in any way a representation of students in general. | |

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| (b) Explain one way in which this might be a weak piece of evidence. | | [2] |
| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner's commentary</i> | |
| <i>The students interviewed might have all been at the same university</i> | If this is correct then it is a weakness as the views of the students at one university may not be typical of the views of students at other universities but the candidate does not explain this so there is only some credit for identifying the source of a weakness. | |

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| 7(a) To support the reasoning in paragraph 4 what must the author assume about the subjects covered by degree courses? | | [2] |
| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner's commentary</i> | |
| <i>The author must assume that there are no degree courses in subjects such as construction.</i> | The candidate understands that the assumption comes from the link between the reason and the conclusion in the last two sentences i.e. the idea that there are insufficient graduates skilled in construction and engineering to meet the demands of the economy but they make too wide an assumption when they say that there are "no" degree courses in these subjects. | |

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| (b) Assess the assumption you have given in part (a). Explain whether this is a reasonable assumption to make, referring to material in the passage. | | [2] |
| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner's commentary</i> | |
| <i>The passage suggests that people go to study management and vocational courses.</i> | The candidate does not answer the question as they make no attempt to assess whether the assumption is reasonable or not. | |

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| 8 In paragraph 5, the author uses evidence about the numbers of students taking management degrees. What must the author assume about the entry requirements of management courses to support his argument that degrees have been devalued? | | [2] |
| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner's commentary</i> | |
| <i>It is easy to get on to a management course.</i> | There is no reference to the entry requirements and the evidence is supporting the idea that there are more people studying management than physics and chemistry so the answer also requires some comparative reference to the entry requirements for these subjects, which this candidate fails to do. | |

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| 9 Give <u>one</u> reason that would support an argument in favour of taking a degree course. | | [2] |
| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner's commentary</i> | |
| <i>You can have a good time at university</i> | It is a valid point about going to university but it is not linked to the idea of taking a degree course, which is in the question. | |

10 In paragraph 3, the author argues that degrees do not lead to better employment prospects. Does the reasoning in this paragraph support the author’s overall argument? Explain your answer.

[6]

Candidate style answer

Examiner’s commentary

The evidence does not support the argument that degrees do not lead to better employment prospects because the fact that only a third of the 16,000 graduates interviewed expect to get a graduate level job when they left university does not mean that this will actually be the case. Their response could have been influenced by “scare” stories in the media of unemployed graduates or many of them may be looking to take a break to travel etcetera before looking for career employment. The second piece of evidence is also weak since if 11% of graduates are in jobs with limited employment prospects then this means that the majority i.e. 89% are possibly in higher level work. In addition, some of this 11% could be in sales management, reducing further the support for the reasoning that degrees do not lead to better employment.

The candidate examines in detail the evidence in the passage which is used to support the reasoning that degrees do not lead to better employment prospects and makes a valid assessment that the evidence gives only limited support to this statement. However, the candidate does not examine whether or not this reason supports the main conclusion i.e. that degree-level qualifications are of little value and are not worth having. This means that the candidate has not answered the question. Grammar, spelling and punctuation are adequate.

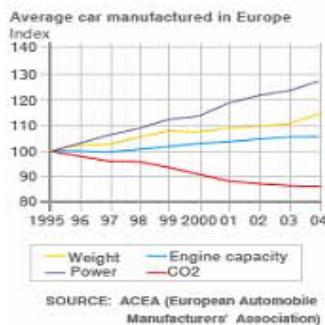
Section: B

Read document 2: "Car makers blame drivers over CO₂" and answer questions 11 to 19.

Document 2

Car makers blame drivers over CO₂

CO₂ EMISSIONS FROM CARS



The European Commission has proposed a new strategy to reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from new cars and vans sold in the European Union, by forcing car-makers to make an 18% cut in carbon dioxide emissions from new cars by 2012. This strategy is to ensure the EU meets its greenhouse gas emission targets. By improving fuel-efficiency, the European Commission claims that this strategy will deliver substantial fuel savings for drivers. To encourage the car industry to compete on the basis of fuel-efficiency instead of size and power, the Commission has invited manufacturers to sign an EU code of good practice on car marketing and advertising.

1

The chief of industry body SMMT*, Christopher MacGowan has responded to these proposals by saying "low-emission cars already exist, the real problem is that motorists do not buy them." In a statement SMMT said, "While the motor industry accepts that it has an important part to play in the climate change debate, it has grave concerns over the impact of proposals made, as this would result in less choice for the motorist and higher prices on the dealer forecourt." Car industry officials insist they have already done much to improve efficiency, any further improvements would be prohibitively expensive. According to a Renault spokesman, "Each car could be 3,000 euros more expensive to make, if the industry is to meet the Commission's proposed requirement."

2

However, in the history of environmental legislation manufacturers have tended to exaggerate the cost of new legislation, according to BBC environment analyst Roger Harrabin, "It is unlikely that more fuel-efficient cars will cost more. Often when new laws are passed, they unveil cleaner models already on the drawing board but held back to squeeze maximum profit out of existing models." In the long-run consumers should be better off according to environment commissioner, Stavros Dimas: "Our analysis holds that the extra capital cost of making cars more fuel-efficient will be more than offset by the fuel savings over the car's lifetime," he said. "More fuel-efficient cars are good news for consumers. Not only will people be reducing their contribution to climate change that threatens us all, they will also pay less in fuel bills."

3

Car industry officials insist they have already done much to improve efficiency. In 1996 the car industry agreed to reduce emission output by 25% to 140g per kilometre by 2008. "We have proven that we are doing our bit by hitting interim targets of our voluntary agreement," Mr MacGowan said. But industry analysts point out that despite such lofty talk the industry does not stand a chance; "The European Automobile Manufacturers Association will miss the target" according to Lehman Brother's analyst Christopher Will. He observed that the car industry had achieved a 14% fall in average CO₂ emissions to 160g per kilometre by 2005 but commented, "However, going forward would be much tougher. The easy improvements are behind us, and progress is now at an even slower rate"

4

* SMMT – The Society of Motor Manufacturers Ltd

Adapted from *Car makers blame drivers over CO₂*, by Jorn Madslien, Business reporter, BBC News Website 7 January 2007

11 Assess how far the document "Car makers blame drivers over CO₂" is a credible report You should make two points, identifying and explaining relevant credibility criteria.

[6]

| Candidate style answer | Examiner's commentary |
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| <p><i>The BBC News website has a good reputation, which increases the credibility of the document.</i></p> <p><i>The BBC News website has no expertise in the matter of car manufacture and CO2 emissions, as its job is to collect news, not test cars. This weakens credibility.</i></p> | <p>This will gain some marks The candidate has used two relevant criteria and explained why they are relevant to this situation, but has not told us how they affect credibility. The candidate has remembered to assess credibility of the document as a whole and not individuals.</p> |

12 Look at the graph in Document 2. Explain whether this graph is relevant to the discussion in Document 2.

CO₂ EMISSIONS FROM CARS

Average car manufactured in Europe

| Year | Weight | Power | Engine capacity | CO2 |
|------|--------|-------|-----------------|-----|
| 1995 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 1996 | 105 | 105 | 100 | 95 |
| 1997 | 108 | 110 | 100 | 92 |
| 1998 | 110 | 115 | 102 | 90 |
| 1999 | 112 | 120 | 105 | 88 |
| 2000 | 115 | 125 | 108 | 85 |
| 2001 | 118 | 130 | 110 | 82 |
| 2002 | 120 | 135 | 112 | 80 |
| 2003 | 122 | 140 | 115 | 78 |
| 2004 | 125 | 145 | 118 | 75 |

SOURCE: ACEA (European Automobile Manufacturers' Association)

[3]

| Candidate style answer | Examiner's commentary |
|---|---|
| <p><i>The graph does not show much to do with how making cars more fuel-efficient will affect their price, so it is not relevant.</i></p> | <p>This answer will gain some marks because, although it is relevant, it does not give enough detail.</p> |

13(a) Assess the credibility of Christopher Macgowan, the chief of the industry body The Society of Motor Manufacturers Ltd (SMMT). You should make two points, referring to credibility criteria in your answer and explaining how these may strengthen or weaken his credibility.

[6]

| Candidate style answer | Examiner's commentary |
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| <p><i>Macgowan's credibility is weakened by his bias, as his job is to defend car manufacturers.</i></p> <p><i>Macgowan's credibility is strengthened by his reputation as chief of the SMMT; to have reached that position, he must know what he is talking about.</i></p> | <p>This will gain some marks. The candidate has used two relevant criteria and explained why they are relevant to this situation, but has not told us how they affect his credibility.</p> |

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| <p>13(b) What else would you need to know in order to reach a judgment about the credibility of Christopher Macgowan’s statement? You should make one detailed point.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[3]</p> | |
| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner’s commentary</i> |
| <p><i>We would need to know whether other car manufacturers agree with him or not.</i></p> | <p>The candidate has made a relevant point, but has not given enough detail to show how us why it is relevant, so only gains some of the marks available.</p> |

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| <p>14 Assess the credibility of Roger Harrabin, BBC Environmental analyst. You should make two points, referring to credibility criteria in your answer and explaining how these may strengthen or weaken his credibility.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[6]</p> | |
| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner’s commentary</i> |
| <p><i>He must have expertise in car emissions to have got his job as an environmental analyst.</i></p> <p><i>He has no motive to lie about what the car makers are doing, as he is not connected to them.</i></p> | <p>This will gain some marks The candidate has used two relevant criteria and explained why they are relevant to this situation, but has not told us how they affect his credibility.</p> |

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| <p>15 In paragraph 4 Mr Macgowan claims that “We have proven that we are doing our bit by hitting interim targets of our voluntary agreement.” Identify one piece of evidence that supports this claim.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[2]</p> | |
| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner’s commentary</i> |
| <p><i>The car industry has achieved a fall in CO2 emissions.</i></p> | <p>In this answer, the candidate has stated the correct point, but forgotten that use of the word “identify” in the question means that a precise quote is needed. It will gain some credit because the point made is the right one.</p> |

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| <p>16 There is agreement that the EU strategy to reduce CO2 emissions from new cars will lead to cars costing more. Identify two of the claims that support this idea.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[2]</p> | |
| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner’s commentary</i> |
| <p><i>A spokesman said that that each car would cost a lot more if made to EU requirements.</i></p> <p><i>A SMMT spokesman said cars would cost more.</i></p> | <p>These answers would not gain marks because they are paraphrases not quotes, and the candidate should have noticed that the use of the word “identify” in the question indicates use of the original wording.</p> |

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| <p>17 In paragraph 4, Christopher Will claims that “the easy improvements are behind us, and progress is now at an even slower rate.” Give one reason that would support this claim.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[2]</p> | |
| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner’s commentary</i> |
| <i>We don’t have the necessary technology.</i> | This answer is not developed enough. |

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| <p>18 In paragraph 3, Stavros Dimas claims that “the extra capital cost of making cars more fuel efficient will be more than offset by the fuel savings over the car’s lifetime.” Assess the reasonableness of this claim, with reference to material from the passage.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[4]</p> | |
| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner’s commentary</i> |
| <i>You will have to save a lot of money on petrol before you have saved the extra 3000 euros your car will cost.</i> | This candidate would be awarded some marks. There is a valid point made and there is a relevant reference to the passage, but it is not detailed enough to gain a higher mark. |

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| <p>19 You should make an informed judgement about whether Christopher Macgowan or Roger Harrabin is the more credible. You should make two developed points that contrasts the relative credibility of the two men.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[6]</p> | |
| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiner’s commentary</i> |
| <i>Both Roger and Christopher have expertise in their own fields, but Roger probably has more expertise because he knows about environmental issues in general. Also Christopher has a vested interest to be on the side of the car makers, as he works for them, and there is a lot of money involved. So Roger is more credible.</i> | This answer would get some marks; the candidate has used two credibility criteria, but has not applied them both to both people. To get a higher mark, the candidate needs to refer to the expertise of Christopher, and the (lack of) vested interest of Roger. |