6.4 Global Governance: Human Rights and Environmental: 30-minute Pack

about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Edexcel A-Level Politics, Global Politics option. Answer all 12 questions. For extended answers, other accurate, relevant and substantiated arguments can receive full credit. Zero marks where there is no creditworthy response.

1 Evaluate the extent to which state sovereignty is the main obstacle to effective global governance of human rights and the environment. Use clearly dated examples and consider alternative explanations.

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(Total for Question 1 is 30 marks)

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Mark scheme · 6.4 Global Governance: Human Rights and Environmental: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

Level 1 Limited relevant knowledge, with assertions and little developed analysis or judgement. **1-6**

Level 2 Some accurate knowledge and explanation; a relevant argument is developed, but evaluation or evidence is limited. **7-12**

Level 3 Accurate knowledge supports developed arguments on both sides, covering human rights and the environment, with some supported evaluation. **13-18**

Level 4 Detailed evidence supports balanced analysis across both areas; weighs sovereignty against alternative explanations and reaches a reasoned judgement. **19-24**

Level 5 Precise, substantiated knowledge supports sustained analysis and evaluation across both areas. Explicitly weighs competing explanations and criteria of effectiveness, addresses counterarguments and reaches a convincing judgement. Any supported conclusion can receive full credit. **25-30**

Indicative content:

- Effectiveness can mean establishing standards, widening participation, providing remedies, changing behaviour or reducing harm. A judgement that distinguishes these criteria is stronger than equating effectiveness with the existence of an institution.
- Sovereignty limits coercion: ICJ contentious jurisdiction rests on state consent, sometimes given in advance. The ICJ determines state responsibility, not individual criminal guilt. Its advisory function must be distinguished from binding judgments between parties in contentious cases.
- Nicaragua v United States, ICJ merits judgment of 27 June 1986, illustrates adjudication of state conduct concerning non-intervention and use of force. Its existence shows law can scrutinise powerful states, but a judgment alone does not demonstrate compliance. Do not infer a conviction or sentence of a US individual.
- ICC jurisdiction and complementarity limit access, while cooperation is needed for arrests and evidence. The Lubanga trial judgment of 14 March 2012 concerned individual responsibility for conscripting and enlisting children under 15 and using them to participate actively in hostilities; it did not convict a state or establish universal jurisdiction.
- European institutions offer a regional route to accountability. Hirst v United Kingdom (No. 2), ECtHR Grand Chamber judgment, 6 October 2005, found the blanket prisoner voting restriction violated Article 3 of Protocol No. 1. It did not grant every prisoner an unconditional vote or imprison ministers. The Council of Europe Committee of Ministers supervises execution; the EU Court of Justice is a different institution.
- R2P, endorsed in the 2005 World Summit Outcome, paragraphs 138-139, qualifies an absolute reading of sovereignty but retains state responsibility and Security Council collective action under the Charter. It covers four atrocity categories, not a general licence to use unilateral force.
- Selective intervention can reflect veto politics, strategic interests, capacity and uncertainty about consequences. Security Council Resolution 1973 (17 March 2011) authorised measures to protect civilians in Libya subject to its terms, including excluding foreign occupation. This is evidence of authorisation, not proof of lasting humanitarian success. Assess claims of Western double standards using comparable criteria and evidence rather than assuming motives.
- For the 1990s, Security Council Resolution 929 (22 June 1994) authorised a temporary multinational operation in Rwanda for humanitarian purposes, while Resolution 955 (8 November 1994) established the ICTR. Delayed protection and retrospective accountability are distinct measures of effectiveness: a tribunal cannot reverse earlier civilian harm. Do not award unsupported claims that intervention invariably succeeds or invariably fails.
- Environmental sovereignty affects ambition and domestic implementation, but consent can also create durable cooperation. Rio (1992) provided the UNFCCC framework; Kyoto (1997) differentiated quantified commitments; Paris (2015) combined broad participation and successive NDCs with nationally determined ambition. Their different designs require different effectiveness tests.
- IPCC assessment can improve shared understanding but cannot settle distributional disputes, negotiate treaties or enforce emissions targets. UNFCCC parties make agreements and governments implement policy; the secretariat supports the process. Distinguish scientific authority from political and legal powers.
- Alternative obstacles include development priorities, historical responsibility, financial and technical capacity, measurement disputes and the tragedy of the commons. Sustainable development seeks accommodation; deep-green perspectives question whether shallow-green reform can address underlying patterns of production and consumption.
- NGOs and global civil society can expose abuses, supply expertise and mobilise public pressure in both areas, sometimes shifting incentives without coercion. Unequal resources, access and accountability can limit their influence; do not assume campaigning guarantees policy change.
- A substantiated judgement may treat sovereignty as the central institutional constraint but explain why capacity, power inequalities and distributional conflict determine when that constraint matters. Conversely, sovereignty can enable commitment and domestic implementation, so other obstacles may be judged more decisive. Credit other valid evidence and conclusions without requiring every example listed.

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