6.5 Power and Developments: 30-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer all 12 questions. Allow about 30 minutes. The short questions build knowledge for essay work. Date evidence, define your criteria and support classifications and judgements. No calculator is needed.

1 Power-comparison exercise. A historical evidence snapshot reported in the August 2024 Edexcel Paper 3B marking guidance gives the USA approximately 40% of global military spending and China approximately 14%, with China ranked second. These rounded shares are not October 2026 data. Calculate the USA:China spending ratio in its simplest whole-number form and the gap in percentage points. Explain two reasons why this comparison cannot by itself settle which state is more powerful overall.

(Total for Question 1 is 5 marks)

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2 Evaluate the extent to which developments in power since 2000 have created a multipolar world order. In your answer consider hard and soft power, state classifications, spheres of influence, global institutions, bilateralism and nationalism, and the spread of democracy, rule of law and liberal economies.

(Total for Question 2 is 30 marks)

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Mark scheme · 6.5 Power and Developments: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

Uses the common global denominator to compare 40 with 14, for example 40/14 or 40:14.	**M1**
Obtains 20:7 as the simplest whole-number ratio (about 2.86:1), dependent on method.	**A1**
Obtains a gap of 26 percentage points, not 26%. Ratio and gap remain approximate because the inputs are rounded.	**B1**
Explains one limitation, such as spending being an input that does not guarantee capability, efficiency or desired outcomes.	**B1**
Explains a distinct limitation, such as omitted soft power, alliances, economic leverage, dated evidence or differing purchasing power. Credit any two valid explained limitations across these last two marks.	**B1**

Answer: 40:14 simplifies to 20:7, or about 2.86:1. The gap is 26 percentage points. Spending measures an input rather than successful influence; soft power, alliances, economic leverage or effectiveness may produce a different comparison.

Question 2

Level 0 No rewardable material.	**0**
Level 1 Limited knowledge; assertions about world order with little analysis or supported evaluation.	**1-6**
Level 2 Some relevant knowledge and partial analysis. Evaluation is uneven and the judgement has limited support.	**7-12**
Level 3 Generally accurate knowledge supports relevant analytical chains and consideration of competing arguments. A reasoned judgement is present but its criteria or evidence are uneven.	**13-18**
Level 4 Accurate, well-selected dated evidence supports sustained analysis and balanced evaluation of competing interpretations. A supported judgement uses clear criteria for polarity and recognises important limitations.	**19-24**
Level 5 Precise knowledge supports coherent, sustained analysis and evaluation across the argument. Weighs competing evidence, distinguishes capabilities from outcomes and reaches a supported judgement using explicit criteria. Unipolar, bipolar, multipolar or qualified interpretations can all receive full marks when supported; no contested conclusion is compulsory.	**25-30**

Indicative content:

- AO1: 10 marks; AO2: 10 marks; AO3: 10 marks. Use best fit across knowledge, analysis and evaluation. Indicative content is not exhaustive and different valid evidence and supported conclusions receive equal credit.
- Define polarity through the concentration and distribution of effective power. Distinguish a global pole from a regional influence, an institution or a member of a grouping. Explain the criteria used for counting a pole.
- Issue 4 (May 2026) asks students to consider the shift from US unipolarity towards multipolarity since 2000. This is a proposition to investigate with evidence, not a conclusion that must be endorsed to gain marks.
- The USA is the named superpower example. Its approximate 40% share of global military spending in the August 2024 guidance, compared with China's 14%, supports an argument for continuing material asymmetry. These rounded historical inputs cannot establish October 2026 shares or automatically demonstrate effective hegemony.
- China's second-place military-spending rank in that snapshot and its named emerging-power status support discussion of changing capabilities. An emerging power may also be argued to have become a great power if dated evidence and criteria justify that classification. The labels need not be mutually exclusive.
- The specification's BRICS examples are Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, as printed in May 2026. This is not an exhaustive contemporary membership register. A grouping is not necessarily a unified pole: demonstrate common action before aggregating members' capabilities. Date any membership claims.
- Soft power depends on attraction and legitimacy, not merely publicity or the existence of diplomatic contact. Military force may achieve a narrow aim while damaging attraction; attraction may ease cooperation without overcoming a rival's vital security interests.
- Issue 4 requires consideration of renewed spheres of influence involving Russia, the USA and China. The 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine is evidence of coercive action recorded in local guidance, but a sphere-of-influence claim requires evidence about effective control and the responses of other states. Do not treat claimed influence as legitimate entitlement.
- Declining global institutions, greater bilateralism and nationalism may indicate fragmentation and bargaining among several centres. Alternatively, bilateral deals can reflect one state's dominance; institutional disagreement alone does not prove institutional disappearance. Weigh capacity and actual outcomes.
- Democracy, rule of law and liberal economies are distinct. Market opening need not produce accountable government; elections without rights or independent checks need not establish liberal democracy. Similar economic models across states need not mean a common foreign policy or one centre of power.
- Democratic, semi-democratic and autocratic classifications require evidence about competition, accountability and constraints. Failed concerns institutional capacity; rogue concerns a contested judgement about threatening foreign policy. Avoid using either as a neutral synonym for an adversary.
- Judge whether the evidence supports continuing US unipolarity, increasing US-China bipolarity, multipolarity or different patterns in different policy areas. Compare both supporting and contrary evidence, and explain the limits of the judgement. No one interpretation is required.

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