

Name: ..... (       )       Class: 4..... / SG: ....

# Queenstown Secondary School



## Preliminary Examination 2024 Secondary Four Normal (Academic)

### Humanities (Social Studies) 2125/01, 2126/01

**22 July 2024  
Monday**

**Time: 0945 - 1130 hrs  
Duration: 1 hr 45 mins**

#### **Instructions to Candidates**

**DO NOT OPEN BOOKLET UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.**

**Section A [35 marks]:** Answer **all parts** of Question 1.

**Section B [15 marks]:** Answer **both parts** of Question 2.

For Examiner's Use	
Section A (35m)	
Section B (15m)	
Total (50m)	

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**This paper consists of 7 printed pages including this page.**

**[Turn Over**

## SECTION A (Source-Based Case Study)

Answer **all** questions.

### Being Part of a Globalised World

Study the Background Information and the sources carefully, and then answer all the questions.

You may use any of the sources to help you answer the questions, in addition to those sources which you are told to use. In answering the questions, you should use your knowledge of the issue to help you interpret and evaluate the sources.

<b>1</b>	Study Source A. What can you learn from the source about the impact of e-commerce on businesses? Explain your answer using details from the source.	[5]
<b>2</b>	Study Source B. Why do you think the infographic was published? Explain your answer.	[6]
<b>3</b>	Study Source C. Does this source prove that e-commerce businesses are treating the workers unfairly? Explain your answer.	[7]
<b>4</b>	Study Sources D and E. Does Source D make Source E surprising? Explain your answer.	[7]
<b>5</b>	How far do the sources in the case study show that e-commerce is beneficial for society? Explain your answer.	[10]

## Is the rise of e-commerce beneficial for society?

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Read this carefully. It may help you to answer some of the questions.

E-commerce or "electronic commerce" is the trading of goods and services online. The internet allows individuals and businesses to buy and sell an increasing amount of physical goods, digital goods, and services electronically. It has become more common after the Covid-19 pandemic, helping businesses to obtain a global reach in their goods and services provided.

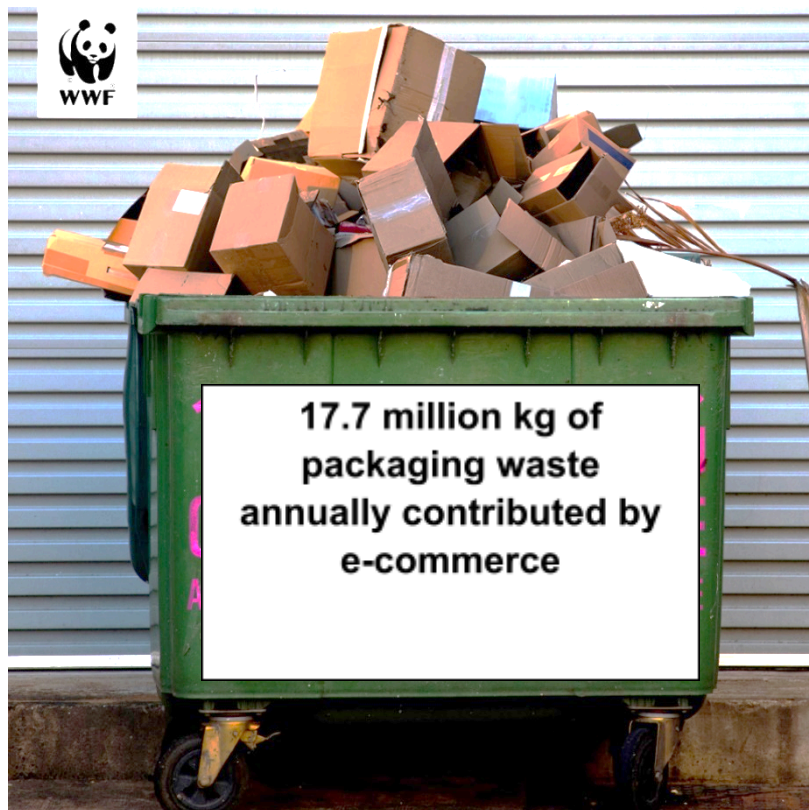
However, the surge of deliveries brought on by the rise of e-commerce has also surfaced concerns about its impacts on the environment due to the increased waste from packaging and carbon emissions from transportation. Companies have also been accused of exploiting labour to maximise their profits. Despite these concerns, e-commerce continues to rise in today's global economy.

Study the sources below to assess whether the rise of e-commerce is beneficial for society.

**Source A:** *From an article "Expanding Market Reach with E-Commerce" published on LinkedIn, a business and employment-focused social media platform.*

Today's hyper connected world offers businesses chances never seen before to engage with customers throughout the world, giving businesses of all sizes the opportunity to reach greater numbers of consumers than ever before. E-commerce has completely changed how companies run. Businesses are now able to sell goods and services to clients anywhere in the world thanks to the internet's worldwide reach. With its global reach, e-commerce platforms break down geographical barriers, enabling businesses to tap into international markets. This global reach expands the potential customer base and opens up new revenue streams.

**Source B:** *An infographic published by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Singapore in April 2022.*



**Source C:** *An excerpt from an article on e-commerce in India. The Indian Federation of App Based Transport Workers (IFAT) is a group that advocates for the rights of ride-sharing transport workers.*

Shaik Salauddin, who leads the Indian Federation of App Based Transport Workers, says there are 23 million gig workers\* in India working without proper legal protection. Companies including Swiggy, Flipkart and Zepto emphasise that they offer their workers benefits such as medical insurance, accident cover and maternity leave, but agreed that more could be done across the sector.

Salauddin says that, as competition has increased and growth slowed over the past year, many e-commerce companies have gone on cost-cutting sprees that have directly targeted gig workers in order to stay profitable. Wages sometimes barely cover petrol costs, while workers have to endure harassment, violence and “inhumane” conditions.

\*Gig workers: a person who does temporary work on an informal or on-demand basis.

**Source D:** *An extract from SHEIN's human rights policy, published on April 2024. SHEIN is an e-commerce platform in the fashion industry.*

SHEIN is dedicated to operating in a responsible and ethical manner. We are committed to honouring and protecting the rights of our employees and supporting our suppliers to protect the rights of their own workers. We see our responsibility for advancing human rights as:

1. Rejecting forced labour, harassment, discrimination, and unsafe working conditions for our employees. We do not employ children or prison labourers. We respect our employees' rights of assembly, speech, self-expression, association, and freedom from unlawful discrimination.
2. Protecting the human rights of our suppliers' workers. We recognize that our responsibilities extend throughout our supply chains, and expect our suppliers to share our commitment to human rights. Suppliers who work with SHEIN must strictly prohibit the use of forced labour and child labour.

**Source E:** *From an article "SHEIN responds to viral claim workers are hiding 'Help Me!' messages in clothes" published in June 2022.*

SHEIN has received a firestorm of backlash in recent years, with the brand specifically facing allegations of child labour and worker exploitation. In July 2021, Reuters reported that SHEIN had not made public disclosures about working conditions along its supply chain, despite it being required by law in the United Kingdom. In November of that year, a Swiss advocacy group found that a number of staffers, mainly migrants, in Guangzhou were working 75-hour weeks, higher than the legal average working hours.

**SECTION B (Structured-Response Question)**

Answer **both** questions.

**Living in a Diverse Society**

Study the extracts carefully, and then answer all the questions.

**Extract 1**

In a socio-economically diverse country like Singapore, there are some groups in society who may not have enough resources and opportunities to progress. This can lead to challenges which can affect their quality of life and opportunities for social mobility.

**Extract 2**

Prejudice refers to attitudes and feelings towards other groups that are not based on reason or fact. It can come in the form of stereotyping, assumptions, generalisations, beliefs, or feelings about a group.

**Extract 3**

Singaporeans are concerned about the heightened competition with foreigners over limited resources. These resources include job opportunities and infrastructure such as public housing and transportation.

6	Extract 1 states that some groups may not have enough resources and opportunities to progress and improve their quality of life. In your opinion, what can be done to help this group of Singaporeans? Explain your answer using <b>one</b> way.	[7]
7	Extract 2 and Extract 3 are about how prejudice and competition for resources may pose challenges in a diverse society. Explain how prejudice and competition for resources are challenges in a diverse society.	[8]

**END OF PAPER**

**Acknowledgments**

Source A: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/expanding-market-reach-e-commerce-digital-marketing-oab1c/>

Source B: [https://www.facebook.com/wwfsg/photos/a.118720993175/10158821277323176/?type=3&locale=ms\\_MY](https://www.facebook.com/wwfsg/photos/a.118720993175/10158821277323176/?type=3&locale=ms_MY)

Source C: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jul/30/innovation-and-exploitation-indias-e-commerce-boom-threatens-to-upend-local-businesses-and-workers-rights>

Source D: <https://www.sheingroup.com/human-rights-policy-2/>

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Source E: <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/fashion/shein-help-me-messages-tags-b2102095.html>

Extract 1: *Social Studies Secondary 3 Coursebook*, p. 210

Extract 2: *Social Studies Secondary 3 Coursebook*, p. 166

Extract 3: *Social Studies Secondary 3 Coursebook*, p. 173