Cambridge International AS Level

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES **8030/01**

Paper 1 Written Examination **October/November 2025**

INSERT **1 hour 30 minutes**

INFORMATION

- This insert contains all the resources referred to in the questions.
- You may annotate this insert and use the blank spaces for planning. **Do not write your answers** on the insert.

This document has **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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The following documents consider issues related to gender issues. Read them **both** in order to answer **all** the questions on the paper.

Document 1: adapted from 'Women in Tech Are Rising Higher in China Than in the US', an online article written by Sarah Lacy and published in 2017 by *The Atlantic* magazine. The author is an American technology investigative journalist who founded her own company.

Over many years women have played an equal work role in China. I found several common views of why things are so different for professional mothers in China. During Communism, women were expected to work just as hard as men to provide for the many. Zhao says, "They needed the entire population to be working." Also, Fong explains, "If you are a female born after 1980 in a major Chinese city, your chances of attaining higher education are significantly better." In recent years more women are reaching high status work positions in the tech industry. The tech industry in China is both young and a massive opportunity. So, women get opportunities they wouldn't have in a more mature tech industry. That matters more now to the US, because the tech companies in China are successfully competing with our US companies.

Women at senior levels in industry have had a positive impact on China's business success. If the US wants to keep up we need to look at China and the role of women. Whilst in China for a summer investigating this, I found that Jean Liu, the president of Didi, China's largest app-based taxi service, was a woman and a mother. Her company defeated the American company Uber in the fight to run taxis in China.

We need to learn from the Chinese success of having women at senior levels. I was surprised by how many of the executive officers running Chinese companies were women. A high-profile example is the venture capitalist Chen Xiaohong, who recently raised a $500 million investment fund, mainly in tech. This is the largest female-run investment fund in the world. The largest female-run fund in the United States is half that size. My favourite part of a *Bloomberg* financial article about her stated: "Her work habits would have been unusual, if not unacceptable, in the West. She brought her firstborn son to the office every day for three years. She says that bringing her children helped build a bond with many of the entrepreneurs she backed. Her son did cry and disrupt meetings, but that didn't stop her. It gave her a chance to develop a more personal relationship with founders."

Studies illustrate this difference in gender culture. The US Silicon Valley Bank did a study of 900 or so clients across the US and China, examining how women got on at senior levels. The results were surprising for Americans who hadn't done business in the tech world in China. When asked how many chief executives at their company were women, 54% of US tech companies answered "one or more". However, in China, nearly 80% said this.

When enough senior women are empowered in an organisation, they overwhelmingly support other women. This has had a huge ripple effect on women's roles in the tech industry in China. Women have created 55% of new internet companies and more than 25% of all entrepreneurs are women as shown in statistics from the Chinese government. While the percentages may not be quite that high, women are getting more opportunity at almost every stage in the tech industry in China.

Chinese women bring success to the tech industry. We need to be more like China and include women at senior levels in the US tech industry.

Document 2: adapted from 'Designing A Fairer Future: Why Women In Tech Are Key To A More Equal World', published by the *United Nations Development Programme*: China (UNDP: China) in 2021. The authors are UNDP consultants and resident representatives in China.

Too often, women are under-represented in tech and disadvantaged by it. Gender inequality can also lead to bias in decision-making and design. The aim of UNDP: China is to raise awareness of gender stereotypes in science and technology and to encourage more girls and women to reach their full potential in these fields.

In the United States, only 50% of all tech start-ups surveyed by Silicon Valley Bank had at least one woman at an executive level. The figure in China is better, over 70%. However, more women are needed in senior roles in China to achieve equality. According to the Chinese Academy of Sciences, women make up less than 30% of China's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) students.

This is concerning because when women are a minority in tech, decisions shaping everyone's future are based only on men's experiences and judgments. This results in products that do not always support women. According to the American Public Health Association, female drivers are 47% more likely to be seriously injured in a crash than male drivers. Why? Because car safety products, including seat belts and air bags, are modelled to fit the typical male.

Tech companies who fail to hire and promote women are also losing out. The Peterson Institute for International Economics found firms without any female leaders are less profitable. Also, society suffers when women play a smaller part in companies, including in tech. According to the Harvard Law School Forum, businesses without women on their boards are less likely to deal with risks like climate change. Women are under-represented in the fast-growing tech sector. We, at UN Women in China and UNDP:China worked together with policy-makers, business leaders, academics and international organisations. We discussed how to change this underrepresentation in our recent campaign, #Her Story #Women in Tech. Conversations with female tech leaders helped us pinpoint why women struggle in tech. We believe there are two barriers.

Firstly, there are self-imposed barriers: lack of confidence and attitudes to family life. An internal Hewlett Packard report found women will only apply for a job when they meet 100% of the criteria, while men apply when they meet just 60%. Additionally, tech positions often require long working hours and sacrifice of family time. Women tend to feel more ashamed if they prioritize career over family and so are less likely to apply for these jobs.

Secondly women struggle in tech because of gender stereotypes. Merritt Moore, the "Quantum Ballerina", shared that some professors may not want women in the lab. They worry that the presence of women will distract men from making scientific breakthroughs. Jian Lili, Founder & CEO of MyTherapist said sometimes female entrepreneurs have to behave in a more masculine way to be successful.

To avoid perpetuating these traditional gender stereotypes, women must be part of the digital economy. We need companies to respect Equality policies. This is something even China's biggest tech companies have struggled with. We need gender-specific job advertisements. Flexible working arrangements are also crucial to retaining women. This includes structuring the working day around the family, not the other way round.

Greater action is needed across all of society, including in China, to achieve equality for women in the tech industry.

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