

Like a **debate**, a position paper presents one side of an **arguable opinion** about an issue. A position paper should convince the audience that your opinion is valid and **defensible**. It is important to **support your argument** with evidence, as well as to **refute the counterclaims** to show that you are well informed about **both** sides.

In the exam period, your own position paper text should be about 500-700 words long. Please remember to run it through the spell-checker before submission, include your bibliography, and consult the Position Paper Criteria in the Study Materials folder, as well as some other supplementary files and sample papers. **The text shall discuss 1 specific English academic text related to your field of study.**

## **Suggested Organization**

**Generally, over half (up to  $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of your text will be summarizing your source text and the rest will express your position (agreement or disagreement) to an aspect of it.**

## **Sample Outline**

### **I. Introduction**

- A. Introduce the topic
- B. Provide background on the topic to explain why it is important
- C. Assert the thesis (your view of the issue). More on thesis statements can be found below.

Your introduction has a dual purpose: to indicate both the topic and **your approach** to it (your thesis statement), and to arouse your reader's interest in what you have to say. One effective way of introducing a topic is to place it in context – to supply a kind of backdrop that will put it in perspective.

### **II. Counter Argument**

- A. Summarize the counterclaims
- B. Provide supporting information for counterclaims
- C. Refute the counterclaims
- D. Give evidence for argument

When you are summarizing opposing arguments, be charitable. Present each argument fairly and objectively, rather than trying to make it look foolish. You want to show that you have seriously considered the many sides of the issue, and that you are not simply attacking or mocking your opponents.

### **III. Your Argument**

- A. Assert point #1 of your claims
  - 1. Give your educated and informed opinion
  - 2. Provide support/proof using more than one source
- B. Assert point #2 of your claims
  - 1. Give your educated and informed opinion
  - 2. Provide support/proof using more than one source

### **IV. Conclusion**

- A. Restate your argument
- B. Provide a plan of action but do not introduce new information

The simplest and most basic conclusion is one that restates the thesis *in different words* and then discusses its **implications**.

# Sample Position Paper

Committee: International Labor Organization

Topic: Globalization and Development

Country: Romania

*\*This sample position paper was submitted by the delegation of Romania at the 2007 UNA-USA Model UN Conference in New York City.*

**1** In the past two decades the rapidly growing world trend has been toward globalization. With the emergence of the internet as a means of communication and the increasing accessibility of international trade physical barriers are not the only barriers withering away. Protective tariffs are plummeting and free trade agreements are becoming more prevalent. Romania appreciates that globalization creates favorable situations for expansion of commercial as well as economic assets. In the past year Romania has seen a foreign direct investment (FDI) increase of 199%. Inward FDI increased from EURO 234 million in 2005 to EURO 699 million in 2006. However, Romania realizes that increased globalization does not automatically produce more equality.

**2** Globalization and Development can contribute to the advancement of the overall international human condition; however, the delegation of Romania recognizes that without proper regulation, the potential for advancement will remain limited to an elite few individuals, businesses, and nations. Unless checked and aimed toward the common good, globalization cannot effectively serve the global community. Crucial in dealing with the complexities of globalization, good governance must act with solidarity and responsibility. Romania believes that in involving people in globalization we must promote moral values, democratic principles, inclusive global political culture, institutions that safeguard both individual civil rights and inherent freedoms, and the common good. In addition, coping with the influx of information from globalization governments must act with solidarity and insight. Access to digital education will undoubtedly result in the confidence of citizens in their respective administrations and allow for a greater degree of transparency, and therefore a lesser degree of corruption.

**3** Romania believes the multinational business community has the ability and the obligation to support pertinent values in human rights, labor standards, and environmental preservation. As stated by the president, Mr. Traian Basescu, Romania feels a "heartfelt attachment to multilateralism, as an effective instrument designed to identify the adequate answers to the challenges brought by globalization."

**4** Romania is party to the majority of multilateral treaties and conventions identified as such by the Secretary General in the context of the Millennium Summit in 2001. Romania has always supported innovative and effective ways of establishing cooperation within and between regional organizations. As one of the newest members of the European Union, Romania is an active member of the World Trade Organization, and looks forward to offering its support to the redirection of globalization to best benefit the global community.

(398 words)

**Task 1** Looking at the above text, try answering the following questions:

- 1) Can you identify the thesis statement?
- 2) How is the paper structured?
- 3) What are the arguments in individual paragraphs?
- 4) When analysing the introduction, does the flow of information go from general to specific?
- 5) Does the information lead to the thesis statement?
- 6) In terms of the sentence structure, what proportion of simple sentences are there?
- 7) What proportion of compound/complex sentences are there?
- 8) What are the strategies used to connect the sentences?
- 9) Are the connectors repeated? Or is there variety?
- 10) Should the sources be provided?