

History B (Modern World)

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J417**

General Certificate of Secondary Education (Short Course) **J117**

Examiners' Reports

June 2011

J117/J417/R/11

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Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

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A971/11-17 Aspects of International Relations, 1919-2005 with the Study in Depth

General Comments

Many candidates were able to demonstrate sound factual knowledge of both the Core and the Depth Study for which they had been prepared. These candidates were able to use their knowledge to good effect in writing well-developed explanations and arguments and for supporting their evidence work. Some candidates, whilst demonstrating sound factual knowledge, needed to use this knowledge more effectively to answer the question as set.

It is important for candidates to use their time to good effect. On the whole most candidates used their time well, with most completing the paper. However, in some instances lengthy responses to questions carrying a lower mark tariff took valuable time which could have been more profitably used on questions carry greater marks. In other instances too little time was spent giving thought to an answer before commencing writing. Often this resulted in a lack of focus on the question as set and more on what the candidate wanted the question to ask.

There were many rubric errors, often with candidates attempting all three sections of the core resulting in an impoverished mark. In some instances it appeared as though this was the first sighting by some of the new question paper format.

Comments on specific questions

Core Content

Section A: The Inter-War Years, 1919-1939

Question 1

- (a) There were many excellent answers to this question with candidates immediately stating the main message. This was usually relating to the defiance of the League of Nations by Japan or the weak and ineffectual nature of the League. This main message was then supported by relevant detail from the cartoon and finally contextual knowledge. Many candidates were able to describe the cartoon in some detail but often failing to progress to the main message. These same candidates were content to use knowledge of Japan's invasion of Manchuria rather than relevant detail from the time of the cartoon.
- (b) Many candidates demonstrated a sound knowledge in relation to this question, moving immediately into explanatory mode gaining full marks for giving three explanations. Others needed to note that the question was about 'failure' in Abyssinia and not a more general overview of how the League operated or its failings. The Hoare-Laval Pact was an important aspect of this period but too often candidates were only able to demonstrate a rudimentary knowledge containing many inaccuracies.

Question 2

There were many good answers to (a) giving details of what Wilson wanted to achieve. Some candidates suggested more general answers such as a 'fair' treaty, wrote about what was achieved or concentrated on the two others from the 'Big Three'. These approaches received minimal credit. There were many excellent answers to (b) with candidates displaying clear understanding of the views held by many German people at that time. Often more explanations

than the two needed to gain maximum credit were provided. Some candidates were aware of the issues and identified them but failed to develop any explanation. Whilst there were some good answers to (c), some candidates failed to address the question by not addressing the issue of 'satisfied'. In these instances candidates were more content to describe and / or explain what each of the 'Big Three' wanted rather than explaining if their wishes actually appeared in the Treaty. Good quality answers explained the aims of each, why these aims had arisen and how far they had been satisfied. This approach avoided generalised comments about 'Lloyd George being in the middle'.

Question 3

In (a) Hitler's foreign policy aims were generally well-known. However, occasionally domestic policy aims were offered. Candidates in (b) were able to identify a range of reasons for Anschluss but were less confident in explaining them, with candidates often resorting to a description of events. In (c) most were aware of appeasement answering the question as 'arguments for and against'. There was less confidence, beyond giving encouragement to Hitler, in linking to the outbreak of war in 1939. Much stronger were the responses giving other reasons which were in many instances well-developed explanations. This resulted in many answers lacking balance.

Section B: The Cold War, 1945-1975

Question 1

- (a) Those candidates who quickly realised that this cartoon was critical of Nixon were able to offer a main message supported by detail from the cartoon. Some candidates were content to describe what they could see in the hope that a message would be found by the examiner. For many a lack of knowledge around the choices of 'Vietnamisation' and 'No Surrender' limited what could be achieved.
- (b) Candidates explained unpopularity through the role of the media, the increasing level of casualties, US atrocities and spiralling costs. This approach produced high quality explanations achieving high marks. Some answers lacked focus on the question producing a more general answer often focused on different forms of warfare.

Question 2

There were many good answers to (a) showing sound knowledge of the period. However, some candidates were unable to differentiate between Potsdam and the earlier Yalta Conference. This resulted in answers concentrating on decisions about the splitting of Germany and Berlin. Answers to (b) varied significantly in quality. Better responses showed a wider understanding, explaining issues around the atomic bomb, the actions of the USSR in their 'sphere of influence' and differing views in relation to Germany and Poland. Others were often limited to the issue of Communism v Capitalism or the removal, by the ending of war, of the need for co-operation. Answers to (c) showed knowledge of the main issues including what was happening in Eastern Europe, the Marshall Plan and Berlin Blockade and these were often explained. The failures for the USSR in relation to Yugoslavia and Greece received limited attention.

Question 3

Candidates in (a) demonstrated detailed knowledge of how Cuba had changed when Castro came to power, relating these changes to his relations with the USSR and the USA. Responses to (b) showed knowledge of some, or all, of the choices facing Kennedy, although in some instances these remained unexplained. In (c) those candidates who gave thought to their answer before committing to paper often produced the better responses. These candidates were able to use events leading up to the Crisis to explain their answer relating to 'who caused the Crisis'. This offered the opportunity to provide a more balanced answer. Some candidates concentrated on events that brought the Crisis to an end – not an answer to the question.

Section C: A New World? 1948-2005

Question 1

- (a) There were many good answers to this question. Those candidates who moved beyond the idea of 'publicity' and towards IRA 'manipulation' of the media quickly got to the main message. This was then supported by both detail from the cartoon and contextual knowledge. Some took a slightly different, but acceptable, view that the cartoon was about media bias, again supporting this with detail from the source and contextual knowledge.
- (b) Many answers showed a good understanding of the reasons for the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in relation to aspects including continuing the peace process, changing views of the IRA and the British government and the role of individuals. The mark scheme allowed credit for all the wider issues that candidates linked to the signing of the Agreement.

Question 2

There were many detailed answers to (a) showing a good knowledge of events in Hungary in 1956. Often the four marks were achieved long before the end of the answer. Particularly strong was detail about leadership. There were few weak responses. Again with (b) candidates were able to explain why opposition existed in Czechoslovakia to Soviet control. Aspects particularly well-explained included the state of the economy, censorship and the secret police. Weaker answers were characterised by a concentration on the proposals for solving the problems which moved away from the focus of the question. In answering (c) candidates showed detailed knowledge of Solidarity and Gorbachev's reforms and the issues he faced, but the explanation was not always linked to the 'collapse of the Soviet Empire' as directed by the question.

Question 3

Knowledge of the activities of Saddam Hussein against different ethnic groups was generally good with many answers to (a) containing details of his various activities. In answering (b) most candidates showed they had a good understanding of the issue of 'weapons of mass destruction' producing explanations which scored high marks. Whilst many answers concentrated on events prior to the invasion some went further to question the basis of the legality of the invasion. There were very few weak responses. There were many well-balanced answers to (c). Issues around American policies were explained as were internal issues following the removal of the harshness of the Saddam regime and religious divides.

Depth Studies

Part 2: Depth Study – Germany, 1918-1945

Question 4

- (a) This question was answered well by significant numbers of candidates who correctly, recognised that the purpose of the cartoon was to persuade children, and more specifically girls, to join the Hitler Youth. Less successful responses focused on the message rather than the purpose, typically commenting on the way the picture presenting the Nazi Aryan stereotype. The best responses used contextual knowledge about the importance of the Hitler Youth to Hitler's future plans and speculated about whether this poster was before compulsion was introduced.
- (b) Most answers tended to focus on the source content to explain (using contextual knowledge) the importance of public work schemes as a key policy in reducing unemployment, which were rewarded at Level 3. Better answers used knowledge of other policies such as conscription to test whether the source provided 'proof'. A significant number of candidates attempted to evaluate the source using provenance and were rewarded at Level 2.
- (c) There were many good responses to the question, with candidates recognizing the significance of the source content in relation to Nazi policies about women. However, many candidates provided one-sided responses and tended to be 'not surprised' by the reaction to Speer's request. Better answers provided a balanced response, typically expressing some surprise that this request was made by a leading Nazi given the official policy towards women.

Question 5

There were many good answers to (a) with candidates displaying a good knowledge of Hitler's change from a revolutionary to a legal strategy, which received full marks. Weaker responses described Nazi tactics which had not altered after the Munich Putsch, such as Hitler's speeches or use of propaganda. In (b) most candidates recognized the lack of appeal of the Nazis because of their extreme beliefs in the 1920s. More successful responses explained this through reference to Weimar's political stability during the Stresemann era and the inability of the Nazis to make an electoral impact. The best responses also explained the relative weakness of the Nazis during their period of restructuring following Hitler's release from prison in 1924 and their difficulty in shaking off their violent image. Most candidates, in (c), were able to explain the significance of the Depression to the Nazis' electoral take-off. Fewer candidates were able to accurately explain the role of the elites in bringing Hitler into power, although more were successful in explaining the importance of propaganda and Hitler's speeches in order to provide other reasons for Hitler becoming Chancellor.

Question 6

Part (a) was answered well with most candidates being able to identify the main types of Nazi propaganda. The best answers to (b) explained the event as an official retaliation for the assassination of Von Rath in 1938 but were also able to place it within the context of developing Nazi anti-Semitic policies in the 1930s. Less successful candidates only commented on general anti-Semitism as a reason. A number of candidates confused Kristallnacht with the Night of the Long Knives. There were many good answers to (c) with candidates understanding the importance of both coercion and consent as methods of Nazi control of the German people.

Terror was generally well explained and consent was mostly explained through propaganda and youth policies, including the school curriculum.

Russia, 1905-1941

Question 4

- (a)** Most candidates were able to explain the main message or provide a secondary message. The best answers explained that this was commenting on the terror and repression under which the Russians were living during the 1930s and were able to explain this through reference to the terror. Acceptable secondary messages referred to the poor treatment of the Russian people leading to poverty and famine.
- (b)** There were many good answers to the question with candidates understanding that this was to project a benign, paternalistic image of Stalin. Better responses were able to explain this as typical methodology in the development of Stalin's Cult of Personality. The best responses explained how this type of propaganda was designed to disguise the real brutality of Stalin's rule.
- (c)** Many candidates responded well to this question and were able to use contextual knowledge to explain the significance of the content of the course in explaining Stalin's rise to power. The best responses addressed 'how far' by explaining other reasons, such as Trotsky's weaknesses, typically his unpopularity within the Bolshevik leadership, or the lack of appeal of his policy of 'permanent revolution'.

Question 5

Most candidates were able to identify a range of grievances in answer to (a). The best answers were able to go beyond identifying the living and working conditions to comment about the political system, and resentment about the power of the autocracy. Many candidates in (b) were able to explain the importance of the October Manifesto in basic terms and the use of the Army to crush the strikes. Better responses explained these factors more fully by explaining the appeasing of the middle classes and the need to buy time until the army could be brought back from the war with Japan to use force. Weaker responses did not observe the dates in the question and commented on the period after 1906. In (c) candidates tended to answer the question well with a good understanding of the positive and negative features of tsarist rule in the period 1906 to 1914. Better answers explained the initial promise of the Duma, the benefits of Stolypin's Reforms and the impact of the Stolypin repression, whilst countering this with the disappointment in the reality of the Dumas and the Fundamental Laws and events such as the Lena Goldfields Massacre. Less successful responses were unable to provide a full explanation of the Tsar's failures. A significant number of candidates correctly identified Rasputin as a factor discrediting the monarchy but then drifted beyond the date in the question to talk about the Tsar's failures as Commander-in-chief during the First World War.

Question 6

There were mixed responses to (a) with a significant number of candidates confusing NEP with collectivisation or War Communism. Better prepared candidates were able to identify the principal features of NEP. The best answers commented not only on the mechanics of the policy but also its ideological departure from communism. Most candidates in answering (b) were able to explain some aspect of the kulak issue even at a basic level. Better responses were able to explain the ideological problem of private ownership and the obstacle they presented to the collectivisation of land. In (c) there were many explanations of the positive and negative aspects

of Stalin's Five Year-Plans. Better responses were able to provide some supporting detail in the form of specific industries, statistics, etc. Less successful responses relied on general assertions, typically that he modernised Russia or that there was a great cost in human lives, without giving any detail. Some candidates confused the Five-Year Plans with collectivisation.

The USA, 1919-1941

Question 4

- (a)** A number of candidates were able to use their contextual knowledge to explain the usefulness of the source, by detailing the NRA employment code and Blue Eagle scheme. The limitations of the source were explained by highlighting that the NRA was only one alphabet agency and explaining the functions of other agencies such as the CCC and AAA. However, a substantial number of candidates just described the source and were able to display only limited knowledge of the work of the NRA.
- (b)** Many candidates were able to identify the main message of the cartoon, focusing on the idea that Roosevelt was not being allowed to bring recovery to the USA. Candidates supported the message clearly, using details from the cartoon and contextual knowledge of the NRA and the Schechter Poultry Corporation. There were, however, still a number of candidates who described the source in great detail but did not actually focus upon the question set; such answers only access Level 1.
- (c)** A substantial number of candidates explained the source in depth and then explained other reasons for hatred of the New Deal, including the views of the Republicans, businessmen and individuals such as Huey Long and Francis Townsend. Candidates need to use their knowledge to explain, rather than just paraphrasing the source.

Question 5

In answering (a) candidates demonstrated excellent knowledge of the Republican government's policies. However, some candidates needed to look more closely at the specific nature of the question – concerning economic policies – as some wrote about Republican policies in general, rather than about their economic policies. In (b) candidates displayed excellent contextual knowledge of the plight of farmers in the 1920s, and used this knowledge to explain reasons for their financial difficulties effectively. Weaker answers simply identified the reasons – without explanation, answers cannot access the higher levels of the mark scheme. In (c) a number of candidates gave detailed explanations of reasons for the economic boom, including Republican policies, the automobile industry and the effects of World War 1. They also explained the effect of hire purchase clearly, detailing how people were able to buy consumer goods before they had the total purchase price by paying in instalments. However, a number of candidates were unable to differentiate between hire purchase and buying on the margin, and some wrote about the economic bust rather than the boom.

Question 6

Detailed knowledge of what happened to the Bonus Marchers was displayed, with a substantial number of candidates gaining full marks. However, there were also many candidates who were unable to recall any relevant knowledge about the Bonus Marchers. There were excellent answers to (b) based on explanations of speculation. However, some candidates described the Wall Street Crash rather than explaining the reasons why it happened. Answers to (c) focused upon the appeal of Roosevelt as a man who cared about ordinary people, shown by his efforts during the weeks before the election when he travelled around the USA. Candidates also

explained the Americans' perception of Hoover as being uncaring, due to his policies such as rugged individualism, and his treatment of the Bonus Marchers. However, some candidates only explained Roosevelt's success after he became president; this was clearly not relevant to this particular question.

Mao's China, c.1930-1976

Question 4

- (a) There were many good answers to this question with candidates putting the quotation firmly in the context of the time. This fixing of context enabled candidates to consider the issue of surprising and not surprising and to come up with valid explanations. Many explained their surprise that Mao, who never accepted criticism, was now willing to receive comment, whilst equally others considered the devious nature of his motives. Some candidates used information relating to periods after the date of the quote making their explanations invalid.
- (b) The vast majority of candidates were able to explain the message of the source with many going on to assert the purpose of taking the photograph in terms of encouraging more to join the Red Guard as this was the right thing to do. A significant number were able to put the purpose into the context of anti-communist elements that Mao sought to remove.
- (c) Many candidates were more content to describe what could be seen in the source rather than identify the main message. This brought responses along the lines of 'young people are sweeping up for Mao'. Soon extended this into a secondary message that 'young people are following Mao's instructions. This was then supported by details of the source. Those who moved a stage further and saw the pro-Mao nature of the poster, and thus the message, added source detail and context relating to the Cultural Revolution, scoring full marks.

Question 5

Only a small number of candidates attempted this question. They were generally well-prepared to meet the demands of (a) and (b) having a good understanding of Chiang Kai-shek's position with regard to the Communists. The quality of answers to (c) was perhaps more questionable. Many resorted to a descriptive approach to the Long March. This approach often resulted in an imbalance of explanation, with the idea of success being explained, whilst most of the comments on the other side were descriptive in nature.

Question 6

There were many strong answers to (a) with most scoring highly. The topic was well-known and answers were clear and concise. Candidates displayed good knowledge of activities within communes in answering (b), with the main points made being improvements in agriculture and the organisation of China's vast peasant labour force. Many were less secure when it came to explanation, where the context of involving communities in the Great Leap Forward was often missed. Surprisingly, the reinforcement of Communist values was not seen very often. In answering (c) most achieved both sides of the argument with explanation of the success of the First Five Year Plan and explanation of the failure of the Great Leap Forward. Better answers questioned 'success' in relation to both by considering the human impact, the role of Russian advisers and the falsification of information relating to communes.

Causes and Events of the First World War

Question 4

- (a) Many candidates developed the idea of 'The Dream' and the mocking nature of this in relation to the Kaiser or to the seriousness of the dream if the Kaiser's was to achieve his wish to increase his control around the world. This was often linked to the seriousness posed by such thoughts and the encouragement it provided for people to join-up. Less successful were attempts to offer a context as often the date of the postcard was ignored. Less strong answers such as 'the Kaiser is dreaming of power' were common.
- (b) The vast majority of candidates were content to view this source at face value rather than in the context of the period. To get to the higher levels candidates need to consider 'surprising' and 'unsurprising' against their contextual knowledge. Few went beyond the significance of the assassination in relation to the alliances which existed. This gave a Level 2 response, as it was not linked to why Lloyd George might have found this surprising. Few made use of the dates given in the source attribution.
- (c) Candidates appeared to find Source C highly accessible and had little trouble in giving the message. However, many then failed to consider 'purpose' as required by the question. Those who did progress into stating purpose failed to give any reason as to why the cartoon was specifically published in August 1914. In most instances, candidates moved beyond description of what was in the cartoon, although in a minority of answers description was a main feature.

Question 5

In answering (a) many candidates were fully aware that the Entente Cordiale was between Britain and France and that it was a friendly agreement. Some went on to put the agreement into a wider context which included the impact on Germany. Some candidates wrote about the Triple Entente by including Russia. Often these same candidates wrote of an agreement which was related to aggression. Answers to (b) were variable in quality. Many good answers built on events of 1905-1906, the continuing German–French aggression and the Kaiser's wish for a growth of empire. Very few references were seen to the threat of a German naval base. There were a number of responses to (c) which linked the assassination to the existing alliances within Europe to explain why there was war but often there was less success in putting forward explanation to produce other reasons. The answers often were a chronology of events from the beginning of the century. Whilst the understanding of the event was clear, the link to war was often unclear. A significant number of candidates referred to 'nationalism', 'imperialism' and 'militarism', important aspects of the period, but which remained unexplained.

Question 6

Generally answers to (a) about U-boat warfare scored well being linked to food and convoys. Some went further with links to 'restricted' and 'unrestricted' warfare, with mention of the Lusitania. Most in answering (b) made the point of the importance of Jutland in relation to British naval supremacy and the retreat of the German navy as well as the maintenance of the naval blockade of Germany. Only a small number of answers linked the outcome of Jutland to the adoption by Germany of 'unrestricted' submarine warfare. Many candidates demonstrated detailed knowledge of events surrounding Gallipoli in (c). Often included were points relating to the deployment of sea mines, out-dated maps, differing weather conditions, loss of the surprise element and the strategic positions of the Turkish army. Regrettably these points were not always explained in relation to the question, often resulting in an impoverished mark.

End of Empire, c.1919-1969

Question 4

- (a) There were many good answers to this question where candidates often started their answer with the purpose of the painting. Purposes offered included discrediting the British and gaining support for growing nationalism. In many instances these purposes were set into the context of the period. Weaker answers almost always included some knowledge of the event and often a message such as 'the Indians were massacred' or 'the British were brutal'. Very few answers resorted to basic description.
- (b) Many candidates made good use of the cartoon and were able to offer a main message relating to the British not wishing to relinquish their control of India. The message was well-supported by details from the source, but contextual knowledge was often weak.
- (c) In answering this question many candidates were happy to take the source as being a full explanation of dissatisfaction rather than using contextual knowledge to develop explanation in context. Some candidates were able to indicate other areas of dissatisfaction but again these were not always explained.

Question 5

Many candidates in answering (a) displayed appropriate knowledge with regard to Britain's Empire immediately after the First World War. Some answers failed to focus on the correct period and wrote about post Second World War, thus gaining no credit. Whilst there were some good answers to (b), the majority of answers failed to progress beyond Level 2. Answers tended to make general points about Nationalism, and occasionally generalisations about the world changing. Better answers focused more on specific examples. Part (c) brought many good answers with clear, concise arguments reflecting both sides of the argument. Some concentrated more on the coming to power of the Labour government and linked this to the need to address Britain's economic position. Seen less often but perfectly valid were explained references to the attitude of the United States, Macmillan's 'Wind of Change' speech and Britain's world standing emphasised by the Suez Crisis.

Question 6

Most, in answering (a), were able to recall two or three aspects to describe 'Partition'. The better answers to (b) explained two or three reasons as to why India was granted independence. These explanations showed a good understanding of the issues and included the change to the Labour Party, pressure from the United States and the economic situation of Britain after the Second World War. Some answers identified similar or other points, but failed to develop these into explanation, resulting in a mark towards the lower end of the range. Answers to (c) tended to be one-sided. Candidates found it easier to explain Mountbatten's successes rather than areas where he was less successful. This approach resulted in marks being limited to Level 3. Weaker answers often took the view that he was successful as he achieved independence.

The USA, 1945-1975: Land of Freedom

Question 4

- (a) Many candidates in answering this question failed to take note of the attribution, stating that the cartoon was against the ERA, when in fact it was mocking anti-feminists such as Schiafly. Unless this was understood it was difficult to get either the message or more importantly the purpose. Having said that, there were a number of answers which saw

this cartoon as encouragement for women to support the ERA and to discredit STOP ERA.

- (b)** Candidates often concentrated too much on the attribution producing answers that did not move beyond Level 1. Candidates need to put the source in a historical context to decide surprised / not surprised and to argue their point using their contextual knowledge.
- (c)** Contextual knowledge was generally well used in answering this question. This use enabled candidates to explain usefulness within a context thus allowing access to the higher levels. Less well-developed answers identified what was not in the source although these points were often not developed. The weakest answers relied solely on the source, taking it at face value as to its usefulness.

Question 5

In (a) most were aware of the Un-American Activities Committee and its work and had little difficulty describing its activities to gain high marks. Answers to part (b) often concentrated on McCarthy and the internal issues rather than on 'international' as required by the question. This approach limited the marks achievable. Those who read the question carefully often over-concentrated on Capitalist v Communist issues, although the best answers explained issues such as the USA in the World (Cold War, Korea) and increasing Communism in Eastern Europe and China. Answers to (c) concentrated too much on McCarthy's own role to the detriment of other issues which were required to give a more balanced view.

Question 6

Events in Birmingham, Alabama were generally well-known with candidates scoring highly on (a) by describing what happened, often in some detail. Many candidates were less strong on the contribution Johnson in (b) to improving civil rights being more content to write about racial injustice that existed. Answers to (c) were often very good with explanations relating to both Martin Luther King and Malcolm X giving a balanced view. Even the weaker answers showed knowledge of these two people but this was not developed into explanation.

A981 Aspects of International Relations, 1919-2005

General Comments

Only a limited number of candidates showed confidence in evaluating the sources as directed by the questions. Most candidates were more confident in describing rather than evaluating the sources. In evaluating it is important that candidates do so instructed by the question. Answers benefited from thought given to the demands of the question rather than a rush into producing an answer.

It is important for candidates to use their time to good effect. On the whole most candidates used their time well, with most completing the paper. However, in some instances there was evidence of the paper not being completed.

There were many rubric errors, often with candidates attempting all three sections of the core, resulting in an impoverished mark. In some instances it appeared as though this was the first sighting by some of the new question paper format.

Comments on specific questions

Core Content

Section A: The Inter-War Years, 1919-1939

Question 1

- (a) Many answers to this question were limited to the message of the poster often supported in some detail by details of the sources and in some instances contextual knowledge. Unfortunately most candidates went no further, failing to suggest why the cartoon was published. The few that took this step had no problem in identifying and then supporting purpose. Purpose related to encouraging the USA to change their attitude towards the League. Even when this was achieved few put the purpose in the specific context of Wilson trying to change US public opinion in 1919. Weaker answers were limited to the idea that the cartoon 'shows me...'
- (b) This was a different approach on this paper. Candidates who were confident in dealing with source evaluation made a good effort to produce an appropriate answer showing ability to think beyond 'prepared' approaches. The best answers put the idea of concern firmly into a context and used their knowledge of the period to support their arguments. Some also included in their argument the purpose of the sources. Weaker answers at best summarised each source to attempt a comparison.
- (c) There were some good answers to this question with candidates immediately stating the main message. This was usually relating to the defiance of the League of Nations by Japan or the weak and ineffectual nature of the League. This main message was then supported by relevant detail from the cartoon and finally contextual knowledge. Other candidates were able to describe the cartoon in some detail but often failing to progress to the main message. Contextual knowledge used was limited.
- (d) Only a few candidates demonstrated a sound knowledge in relation to this question, moving immediately into explanatory mode gaining full marks for giving three explanations. Others needed to note that the question was about 'failure' in Abyssinia

and not a more general overview of how the League operated or its failings. The Hoare-Laval Pact was an important aspect of this period but too often candidates were only able to demonstrate a rudimentary knowledge containing many inaccuracies.

Question 2

There were some good answers to (a) giving details of what Wilson wanted to achieve. Some candidates suggested more general answers such as a 'fair' treaty, wrote about what was achieved or concentrated on the two others from the 'Big Three'. These approaches received minimal credit. There were some good answers to (b) with candidates displaying an understanding of the views held by many German people at that time. Some candidates were aware of the issues and identified them but failed to develop any explanation. Whilst there were some good answers to (c) some candidates failed to address the question by not addressing the issue of 'satisfied'. In these instances candidates were more content to describe and / or explain what each of the 'Big Three' wanted rather than explaining if their wishes actually appeared in the Treaty.

Question 3

In (a) Hitler's foreign policy aims were known by some. However, occasionally domestic policy aims were offered. Candidates in (b) were able to identify a range of reasons for Anschluss but were less confident in explaining them with candidates often resorting to a description of events. In (c) most were aware of appeasement answering the question as 'arguments for and against'. There was less confidence, beyond giving encouragement to Hitler, in linking to the outbreak of war in 1939. Stronger were the responses giving other reasons which were in some instances developed into explanation.

Section B: The Cold War, 1945-1975

Question 1

- (a) This was a different approach on this paper. Candidates who were confident in dealing with source evaluation made a good effort to produce an appropriate answer showing ability to think beyond 'prepared' approaches. The best answers put the idea of surprise firmly into a context and used their knowledge of the period to support their arguments. Some also included in their argument the purpose of the sources. Weaker answers at best summarised each source to attempt a comparison.
- (b) Many candidates were more confident in using the source to identify message ('Vietcong guerrillas are young men and women') rather than purpose ('The poster will encourage more people to support the activities of the Vietcong against mighty America'.) Both message and purpose were often well-supported by details from the poster and contextual knowledge. Answers to this question highlighted the confusion between 'message' and 'purpose' in the minds of some candidates.
- (c) Those candidates who quickly realised that this cartoon was critical of Nixon were able to offer a main message supported by detail from the cartoon. Some candidates were content to describe what they could see in the hope that a message would be found by the examiner. For many a lack of knowledge around the choices of 'Vietnamisation' and 'No Surrender' limited what could be achieved.

- (d) Candidates explained unpopularity through the role of the media, the increasing level of casualties, US atrocities and spiralling costs. This approach produced explanations achieving good marks. Some answers lacked focus on the question producing a more general answer often focused on different forms of warfare.

Question 2

There were many good answers to (a) showing sound knowledge of the period. However, some candidates were unable to differentiate between Potsdam and the earlier Yalta Conference. This resulted in answers concentrating on decisions about the splitting of Germany and Berlin. Answers to (b) varied significantly in quality. Better responses showed a wider understanding, explaining issues around the atomic bomb, the actions of the USSR in their 'sphere of influence' and differing views in relation to Germany and Poland. Others were often limited to the issue of Communism v Capitalism or the removal, by the ending of war, of the need for co-operation. Answers to (c) showed knowledge of the main issues including what was happening in Eastern Europe, the Marshall Plan and Berlin Blockade and these were often explained. The failures for the USSR in relation to Yugoslavia and Greece received limited attention.

Question 3

Candidates in (a) demonstrated some knowledge of how Cuba had changed when Castro came to power, relating these changes to his relations with the USSR and the USA. Responses to (b) showed knowledge of some, or all, of the choices facing Kennedy although in some instances these remained unexplained. In (c) those candidates who gave thought to their answer before committing to paper often produced the better responses. These candidates were able to use events leading up to the Crisis to explain their answer relating to 'who caused the Crisis'. This offered the opportunity to provide a more balanced answer. Some candidates concentrated on events that brought the Crisis to an end – not an answer to the question.

Section C: A New World? 1948-2005

Question 1

- (a) Many answers to this question were limited to the message of the poster ('A warning that terrorists are using car bombs) sometimes supported by details taken from the poster. Unfortunately most candidates went no further, failing to suggest why the poster was published ('To get people to change their attitude and become more vigilant'). The few that took this step had no problem in identifying and then supporting purpose. Weaker answers were limited to the idea that the cartoon 'shows me...'.
(b) Some candidates, who moved beyond the idea of 'publicity' and towards IRA 'manipulation' of the media, quickly got to the main message. This was then supported by both detail from the cartoon and contextual knowledge. Some took a slightly different, but acceptable, view that the cartoon was about media bias, again supporting this with detail from the source and contextual knowledge. Weaker answers described what they could see, including numerous references to Margaret Thatcher being represented by each member of the camera crew.
(c) Most answers concentrated on what each source was about, producing a superficial comparison of the source content. If candidates are to access the higher levels by considering similarity and difference, it is important that message, purpose and motives are covered within the context of the period

- (d)** Many answers showed a good understanding of the reasons for the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in relation to aspects including continuing the peace process, changing views of the IRA and the British government and the role of individuals. The mark scheme allowed credit for all wider issues that the candidate linked to the signing of the Agreement.

Question 2

There were many answers to (a) showing a good knowledge of events in Hungary in 1956. There were few weak responses. Again with (b) candidates were able to explain why opposition existed in Czechoslovakia to Soviet control which may have included one, or more, of the state of the economy, censorship and the secret police. Weaker answers were characterised by a concentration on the proposals for solving the problems which moved away from the focus of the question. In answering (c) candidates showed limited knowledge of both Solidarity and Gorbachev's reforms and the issues he faced, resulting in descriptive answers.

Question 3

Knowledge of the activities of Saddam Hussein against different ethnic groups was generally sound with many answers to (a) containing detail of his various activities. In answering (b) most candidates showed they had some understanding of the issue of 'weapons of mass destruction' producing explanations which scored in the higher levels. There were very few weak responses. There were many well-balanced answers to (c). Issues around American policies were explained as were internal issues following the removal of the harshness of the Saddam regime and religious divides.

A972/21 British Depth Study, 1890-1918

General Comments

The overall impression gained from candidates' work this summer was that the paper proved to be a fair test of their abilities. Very few candidates seemed unable to access the majority of sources, although there was clear evidence in the case of some candidates that they had been preparing for questions on the Liberal welfare reforms. It cannot be stressed strongly enough that a policy of guessing the topic and slanting preparation heavily in favour of that topic is very unwise.

On the whole candidates responded well to the challenge of slightly different question styles and approaches to marking. The aim has been to place greater emphasis on answering the question set and to reward candidates who do this more highly than candidates who perform a set of pre-rehearsed routines relating to source material. Question 5 proved particularly satisfying in this respect with many students finding that the question encouraged them to put themselves in the position of a historian and consider sources in the way historians do.

Against this, many candidates impeded their own progress with formulaic approaches to handling sources which largely ignored the question. The perennial problem of large swathes of irrelevant contextual knowledge (or relevant knowledge used irrelevantly) made its presence felt. It is clear that candidates generally have little trouble remembering key facts and figures but they do find it hard to use them effectively.

In general, therefore, candidates performed well overall but centres can help the middle order and weaker candidates by devoting more time to discussing sources and how historians might use different sources in different ways for different purposes. All candidates should be regularly reminded of the importance of the need to answer the question set, not a preferred alternative which they have pre-prepared. They should also be reminded that an explanation of how a source supports the answer is more valuable than extensive quotation from the source to no obvious purpose. Similarly, a comparatively brief reference to the context of a source which supports an answer is more valuable than detailed contextual knowledge which has little clear purpose in supporting the candidate's answer.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Candidates usually perform well in this question and the more able candidates generally had little difficulty in pointing out that the cartoonist was criticising the rich because they were not doing their bit for the war effort and to make matters worse they were telling others to do their bit by eating less bread. Answers which recognised this were generally well supported by detail from the cartoon, such as the contrast between the wretched looking ordinary people and the well fed rich people in the back of the car.

Many candidates did not perform as well as they should have done, however, for the simple reason that they treated the cartoon as an information source rather than as a source which was trying to make a particular point. Several long, detailed and highly articulate answers were awarded Level 2 because they failed to recognise (or articulate) this fact. In essence, such answers were tackling the question: 'What does this source reveal about divisions in British society at this time?'. Sadly for these candidates this was not the question.

The question asked for the message of the source. Thus, any answer which recognised that the cartoon is an authored piece and not a photograph and that its intent is not to inform but to influence automatically reached Level 3, even if the message identified was a secondary message such as 'the rich are selfish'. Most candidates would be well advised with this question to take more time to think through their answer and even put themselves in the position of the cartoonist as he sits down to draw. The best answers to this question were usually precise, to the point and short.

Question 2

Questions which ask candidates to compare two sources usually prove difficult and so it was pleasing to see how many candidates handled this question well. Many candidates, however, still insist on summarising or describing both sources before making any attempt to answer the question. Such candidates seem to be working out what they think as they write but the result is often an answer to the question which is unclear or missing altogether. A further problem with this approach is that examiners cannot credit a summary of a source as support for a conclusion which comes at the very end of an answer.

Many candidates also struggle with the concept of trust or reliability, seeing sources as being inherently trustworthy or reliable. Again, this is something which could be usefully discussed in classes. Source C for instance, would be a very reliable guide on government recruitment methods in the war. However, as most candidates realised, it was not a reliable source on working conditions because of its purpose and also its portrayal of those conditions. Most candidates took this approach. They opted for Source B as the more trustworthy on the basis that Source C was less reliable as a source about working conditions for women. Relatively few candidates managed an effective comment on Source B. Those that did usually used a simple contextual reference to illnesses caused by chemicals or mentioned the explosions at Gretna 1916 or Silvertown 1917.

A final comment on this question is the danger of training students to try to see both sides in an argument. A small number of able candidates penalised themselves by trying to explain how they did and did not trust each source. Some followed this up with a conclusion which allowed the examiner to reward them. However, when a candidate attempts a balanced approach like this and fails to give a conclusion the examiner is left in the dark as to what the candidate is trying to say in terms of his or her answer to the question.

Question 3

Many candidates recognised apparent anomalies within the source, such as a volunteer being turned down for the army in 1915. Such answers were usually rewarded at Level 2 or Level 3 depending on how well developed they were.

However, the key to 'surprise' questions is context, which is not the same thing as contextual knowledge. Too many candidates took this question as an opportunity to simply describe government problems with recruitment or indeed poverty before the First World War and the origins of the Liberal welfare reforms. In this case, context implied explaining that it was surprising that a volunteer would be turned down at a time when Britain needed troops and there was an extensive recruitment campaign going on fronted by Kitchener. A very small number pointed out they were not surprised because they were aware of the no strike agreement which Lloyd George reached with the unions in 1915. Extensive detail was not needed, and many candidates reached Level 4 through this route concisely, with a comment in context rather than recounting extensive contextual knowledge.

The main feature of the source, however, was the strike. As a result, candidates who focused on the strike were rewarded for doing so although these were far fewer in number. Surprisingly few candidates commented on their surprise about miners going on strike given the general environment of control imposed by DORA at the time. A very small number made effective use of Source H to suggest that they were not surprised miners went on strike. More commonly candidates expressed surprise about the strike in the context of the Munitions Crisis of 1915 although some struggled to explain how this context was relevant. The overall impression was that candidates' knowledge of this particular aspect of the course was weaker than other elements.

Question 4

This question appeared to stretch candidates with some very strong answers and some very weak ones. At the weaker end, there was considerable confusion as some candidates appeared to think the diners in the poster were Germans. Some were unsure as to exactly who the Kaiser was. In general, however, most candidates were able to identify some of the messages contained in the source and a significant number of candidates reached Level 4 by identifying the main message rather than the purpose, which was that those who wasted food or resources were helping Germany. Students will probably find it helpful if time can be devoted in lessons to discussing the difference between message and purpose. Purpose is the intended outcome. In this instance, the purpose was to change people's behaviour so that they supported the war effort by conserving food and other resources. The message is the means by which the purpose is achieved: in this case the message was that those who do not conserve food are in league with the Kaiser.

Question 5

While this question may have looked familiar to many candidates it was different in one important respect. The question was left deliberately open to encourage them to think like a historian and consider the issue of whether each source was particularly useful for particular lines of investigation. Most candidates rose to this challenge impressively. There were relatively few answers which simply summarised each source and petered out. Most candidates reached Level 4 by explaining how at least one source (usually F) was useful if the historian was investigating the impact or extent of air raids.

Many candidates still seem to find it difficult to distinguish between reliability and usefulness. Many candidates correctly identified that Source G had a particular bias and that its purpose was to reassure the British public that air raid defences were effective. However, pointing this out correctly does not constitute an answer to a question on whether the source is useful. For that matter it does not constitute much of an answer to a reliability question either, unless the candidate addresses the issue of what issue the source is useful or reliable as evidence about. Effective answers argued that Source F was more useful as a source about the impact of air raids because of the bias of Source G, but the key here was that these answers addressed the issue of 'useful for what'? These answers gained Level 5. Answers which argued that F was more useful simply because G was biased usually found themselves in Level 3 or even Level 2.

Finally, a pleasing number of candidates achieved the top mark by recognising the usefulness of each source for what it revealed about the originator of the source. This was evidence of candidates thinking analytically, like historians, and is very much the kind of thinking which examiners want to see.

Question 6

The majority of candidates were well prepared for the demands which this question imposes and the majority were able to produce a balanced answer. The mark scheme was revised to clarify that candidates must explain how the sources they use support or do not support the statement. If candidates state that particular sources support the statement and then simply summarise those sources without further explanation then they will not rise above Level 1.

Another issue which arose in candidate answers was evaluation. Candidates clearly need to spend more time discussing the issue of evaluation and the key question of reliability. Sources are not inherently reliable or unreliable. They are reliable or unreliable as sources of information about particular issues. With this in mind many candidates need to think carefully when they argue that Source A supports the statement and then argue that the source is unreliable. Too often candidates undermine their own arguments by making a case and then saying the evidence which supports their case is worthless. A useful piece of advice to candidates for Question 6 would be to generally think in terms of positive evaluations which would support what they say, and to be very careful indeed about negative evaluations.

A972/22 British Depth Study, 1939-1975

General Comments

The overall impression from this summer's paper was that the candidates performed very well and that they found the paper interesting and even enjoyable.

On the whole candidates responded well to the challenge of slightly different question styles and approaches to marking. The aim has been to place greater emphasis on answering the question set and to reward candidates who do this more highly than candidates who perform a set of pre-rehearsed routines relating to source material.

Against this, many candidates impeded their own progress with formulaic approaches to handling sources which largely ignored the question. The perennial problem of large swathes of irrelevant contextual knowledge (or relevant knowledge used irrelevantly) made its presence felt. It is clear that candidates generally have little trouble remembering key facts and figures but they do find it hard to use them effectively. This was noticeable in Questions 4 and 5 in particular, where concise and targeted comments about context usually took candidates into the higher levels whereas long and detailed accounts based on factual knowledge usually had no impact on the mark awarded.

In general, therefore, candidates performed well overall but centres can help the middle order and weaker candidates by devoting more time to discussing sources and how historians might use different sources in different ways for different purposes. All candidates should be regularly reminded of the importance of the need to answer the question set, not a preferred alternative which they have pre-prepared. They should also be reminded that an explanation of how a source supports the answer is more valuable than extensive quotation from the source to no obvious purpose. Similarly, a comparatively brief reference to the context of a source which supports an answer is more valuable than detailed contextual knowledge which has little clear purpose in supporting the candidate's answer.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Relatively few candidates were able to get beyond Level 2 in this question. Many candidates did not perform as well as they should have done, however, for the simple reason that they treated the cartoon as an information source rather than as a source which was trying to make a particular point. Thus, a number of answers simply described what the source revealed about teenagers.

Rather more candidates did recognise the key point, which was that the question asked for the message of the source. Thus, any answer which recognised that the cartoon was an authored piece which was trying to make a point reached at least Level 2. Most failed to get beyond this because they argued that the message was, essentially, to deliver information about how teenagers were changing or behaving in the 1960s. This was indeed a message but it was a secondary message. The cartoonist was clearly critical of the direction youth culture was taking, although answers which argued that the cartoonist was mocking youth culture were also accepted. These answers usually reached Level 4 or 5 depending on the extent of development or support.

The best answers to this question were usually precise, to the point, and short.

Question 2

The majority of candidates were able to achieve Level 3 or higher in this question. It was pleasing to see relatively few answers which simply summarised each source and candidates should be encouraged to avoid this approach. Many candidates did compare extracts from the sources, but simply pointed to differences between them. However, a pleasing number of answers did progress beyond this, to assess the impression each source gave of the 1960s. Most commonly, the excitement and buzz of the 1960s was contrasted with the apparent enduring respect for traditional authority figures, indicating that perhaps the youth revolution was exaggerated. A significant number of candidates did manage to reach the top level, most commonly assessing the adult perspective of Source C as a reason for the differences between B and C.

Question 3

Many candidates found this question difficult, although those who took time to think through their answers generally fared better because they expressed themselves clearly and made it easy for examiners to understand the argument they were making. Many candidates did manage to achieve L4 (5 marks) by arguing that D did nor did not prove E wrong based on the content. However, too many failed to score above L2 marks because they simply summarised each source and then went on to using undeveloped comments based on the provenance of the sources to address the issue of 'proof'. Too many candidates who achieved L4 also then attempted to evaluate the sources in a simplistic way. The most common way that candidates reached L5 (an evaluation of D) was to comment on its purpose as advertisement, and what implications this has for its reliability. However, only a very small number explained this fully and supported their evaluation with reference to the language used in the extract. Hardly any candidates achieved L6, as their attempted evaluations of E stopped well short of a full appraisal of its reliability as a well-researched sociological study. In fact, many candidates were convinced that it could not be trusted because the government wished to cover up just how many teenagers were having sex! There were only a handful of responses which made use of evaluating these sources via cross-reference to others on the paper, as had been anticipated in the mark scheme. Numerous candidates attempted to bring in their own knowledge into this question, and sometimes this was done successfully, although the majority of the time it was misdirected and in some cases inaccurate. A fair number of candidates argued that because the Pill had become available on the NHS in 1961 this must prove that lots of teenagers were having sex. Many also talked about the Abortion Act of 1967. Finally, many candidates failed to maintain a consistent argument through their response, falling into 'D could prove E wrong because ...' but then going on to say 'However, E might prove D wrong because ...' In some cases this resulted in a very mixed-up answer.

Question 4

This question was generally handled well. The key factor in surprise questions is an understanding of the context of the source. Some candidates took the question as an opportunity to describe the youth culture of the 1960s in great depth but this was not necessary. Answers which pointed out that brass bands and rugby league were surprising because they were inconsistent with developments in youth culture at the time such as The Beatles were sufficient for Level 4. Some of the best answers used Sources B and D to illustrate this contrast.

One disappointing element was the number of candidates who clearly understood the source and probably understood the demands of the question and yet failed completely to address the issue of whether the source was surprising. Examiners cannot give credit to such answers as it would be unfair on candidates who have taken the trouble to direct their answer to the question.

Question 5

Most candidates clearly enjoyed answering this question and scored highly on it. The commercial purpose of the photograph was clearly understood and the techniques used to achieve that purpose (the messages) were identified and explained. Most candidates could see that the company wanted to sell minis (purpose) and was trying to do so by associating the mini with youth culture. In this example the difference was relatively clear and this question could be used as a teaching exemplar to help candidates understand the difference between message and purpose.

Question 6

The majority of candidates were well prepared for the demands which this question imposes and the majority were able to produce a balanced answer. The mark scheme was revised to clarify that candidates must explain how the sources they use support or do not support the statement. If candidates state that particular sources support the statement and then simply summarise those sources without further explanation then they will not rise above Level 1.

More candidates than usual achieved Level 4, mainly by using Sources F and H to help them to frame statements which summarised the extent of change and how this varied by geography and by time.

By contrast, a less successful element was the evaluation of sources in the answer. Candidates clearly need to spend more time discussing the issue of evaluation and the key question of reliability. Sources are not inherently reliable or unreliable. They are reliable or unreliable as sources of information about particular issues. With this in mind many candidates need to think carefully when they argue that Source A supports the statement and then argue that the source is unreliable. Too often candidates undermine their own arguments by making a case and then saying the evidence which supports their case is worthless. A useful piece of advice to candidates for Question 6 would be to generally think in terms of positive evaluations which would support what they say, and to be very careful indeed about negative evaluations.

A973 and A982 Historical Enquiry Controlled Assessment

This was the first moderation of a large number of candidates for Controlled Assessment. From the perspective of the moderators, the introduction of Controlled Assessment has worked very well. The vast majority of centres have used valid questions, nearly all candidates have had a clear understanding of what they had to do, and the mark scheme has generally been used appropriately. Many moderators have commented that the work produced by candidates has been fresher and better argued than the coursework on the legacy Modern World specification. It has simply been better history, and superior, with candidates given the opportunity to develop their analyses and arguments at length. Much of the work has been a delight to read.

Given the differences, in all kinds of ways, between the Controlled Assessment and the old style course work, it is impressive how many centres have got it absolutely right first time. There was, however, a small number of centres who did not quite get everything right. This will be highlighted in their moderator's report. These centres are strongly recommended to read the Guide to Controlled Assessment for this specification. It may not be a riveting read but it is very detailed and many centres have found it very useful.

The Depth Study question was by far the most popular question, with a good number of centres using the Role of the Individual question. Only a few centres used the Thematic and the Modern World Study questions. There were a few administrative issues this year. Quite a number of centres mistakenly entered to have their work moderated using the Repository. It should be remembered that the code 01 is for Repository moderation, while 02 is the code for postal moderation (the method used by nearly all centres). History departments might do well to remind their examination officers about this and about the fact that the request for the moderation sample will come automatically via email soon after OCR has received a centre's marks. Some centres were not aware of the email and waited for the moderator to contact them requesting the sample.

Apart for this, the administration of the Controlled Assessment by most centres was exemplary. Many provided very detailed summative comments on each piece of work that were useful to moderators. Many centres also enclosed their source booklet for moderators to see. It is not compulsory to have a source booklet, but when one is used it is useful for moderators to see it.

The rest of this report is divided into three sections about: the questions, the work and finally the marking.

The questions

Centres are reminded that the generic questions change every year. The ones for submission in May 2012 can now be found on Interchange. Centres are encouraged to send their question to the OCR consultancy service where they will be given feedback and approval. This service can also be used for feedback on centres' programmes of study.

There were almost no examples of inappropriate questions being used. Most centres appeared to have used the consultancy service to have their questions approved. It is important that all questions are based on the generic questions. A few centres allowed the candidates to contextualise the questions themselves. This did not work particularly well because the candidates did not always make appropriate choices of content. It is much better for the teacher to write the question and for all candidates to use it. It is also important that candidates' work is monitored to make sure they are using the correct question. A number of candidates carelessly wrote down slight variations on the proper question, often leaving out crucial words. For

example, candidates meant to be using a question starting with 'How far did' sometimes left these words out and ended up with a statement about content rather than a question. The result was that they wrote a descriptive answer.

The candidates' answers

There was much splendid work with many candidates writing extended analyses. The most impressive feature of many of the answers was their relevance and focus. These aspects of the work had been stressed in the Guide to Controlled Assessment and INSETs. The extent to which most candidates successfully responded to these requirements was heartening. There was almost no work that consisted of large sections of irrelevance. Much of the work displayed an impressive and detailed grasp of the topic, good organisation, the confidence to argue, and support for arguments coming from sources used as evidence.

However, there were some areas where there is room for improvement. While there was little irrelevant work, there were some weaknesses in terms of lack of focus. Sometimes the intended main focus of a question such as 'how far' or 'how successful' got lost beneath a wealth of detail. Some candidates found it necessary to write long introductions that added nothing to the answer. Candidates should be encouraged to state their answer to the question in their first paragraph. They have had hours to plan and to produce a rough draft. By the time they come to write up their final version they should know what their arguments are going to be and what their conclusion is. Some candidates only directly engaged with the question in their conclusion, which sometimes was a few lines at the end of the answer. They had used the majority of their answer to provide a relevant survey of the topic and the issues, without ever engaging head-on with the question. It might help them to state their conclusion in the introduction and then to think of their task for the rest of the answer as being to convince the reader of the strengths of their argument and point of view. Candidates will need to be careful not to write a one-sided answer. This can be avoided by explaining the weaknesses of alternative arguments, as well as the strengths of their own arguments. If candidates cannot cope with the approach described above then they should try and write a conclusion at the end of least a page or two rather than a few lines.

It is also important that candidates develop their own arguments and points of view. The best work was where candidates had the confidence to do this and where the arguments put forward by candidates from the same centre differed widely. They should be assured that there are no 'right' answers to any of these the questions.

Some of the work seen lacked depth. For the highest marks a good grasp of the topic, depth of analysis which involves sophisticated understanding, and detail are required. For the top band there must be complexity in the candidate's answer. For example, in response to a question asking how important one factor was as a cause, complex explanation would involve detailed and lengthy comparison of the importance of the various factors and a conclusion that involved linking, in one way or another, the different factors. This should also involve a clinching argument – why one factor was more important than another. A more average answer would explain the importance of a range of factors, but fail to compare importance or come up with a clinching reason.

Candidates should be encouraged to try and answer the question all the way through their answers. The most able candidates who are hoping to reach the top band will need to do this. If the question requires the importance of factors to be compared, they should do this all the way through and not leave it to their conclusion. However, a more average candidate might find this strategy difficult and might be better advised to leave the comparison to a sustained conclusion. Candidates should be helped to use a strategy that they are comfortable with and that they can manage.

While candidates are encouraged to develop their own arguments, they must be able to support them with evidence from sources. Moderators were impressed by how well many candidates did this. To be able to select relevant sources that provide evidence to support an argument, and then be able to cite the source and use it appropriately so that it effectively strengthens the argument are high level skills. It is pleasing to report how well many candidates fulfilled these requirements.

There were some candidates who cited sources by referring to them using only a number e.g. 'Source 15 in the source booklet'. This is not much help. It is important that candidates mention the provenance of the source used. This should be the original author or artist and not the textbook or website where the source was found. In other words 'as Roosevelt said in a radio broadcast in 1933' and not 'source from website about Roosevelt'. The provenance of a source matters and it can help to make a source particularly effective in supporting an argument. However, some candidates let the sources speak for themselves. Others wrote better answers by explaining how their chosen source supported the argument they were making.

There was some pointless and simplistic evaluation in some answers, although the overall impression of the moderators was how well this had been avoided. Some candidates used a source to support an argument only to tell the reader that the source was completely unreliable. Evaluation of sources for usefulness and reliability should be carried out when the sources are being selected. Candidates should be provided with a range of sources (these may, or may not be, in a source booklet) during the taught part of the course. Some of these sources will be relevant to the actual CA question. Candidates should select which sources they are going to use. There is no point in choosing sources that are not useful or reliable. If a reader of an answer decided that all the sources a candidate has used are reliable and useful for the purpose to which they are being used, then a judgement can be made that evaluation has taken place. It does not help the flow of an argument if it is constantly broken up by comments such as 'I found this source very reliable'.

Most candidates used sources far more than they used interpretations, but there was some very effective use of the latter, especially where the question lent itself to that approach – e.g. the relative importance of two individuals in the Role of the Individual unit.

Finally it is worth restating the point that the best answers were the ones that answered the question. Candidates who tried to go through the mark scheme like a check-list and use their answers to show case all their skills often ended up hardly addressing the question. Candidates must be reminded that their main concern is to answer the question. This will involve supported argument, and needs to be done, if possible, throughout the answer. The best answers were those where a conclusion was not necessary because by the time a moderator had read the first two-thirds of the answer they know what the conclusion was going to be.

Some answers were over-length. These often backfired in that their length was often a result of a failure to select and deploy effectively. However, most work seen was of a sensible length and within sight of the recommended number of words. This in itself was a significant improvement compared to the old coursework.

The marking of the work

As has already stated most centres clearly put a great deal of care and expertise into the assessing of the answers. The summative comments on each piece of work usefully related to the mark scheme and made clear why a candidate had been placed in a particular band. Most centres made accurate and sensible holistic and best-fit judgements and their marks were the same or very close to those of the moderators. A few centres provided comments all the way through answers and awarded bands to individual paragraphs – sometimes starting on the first page. Judgements about bands can only be made after reading the whole answer and summing up its overall qualities. Some other centres awarded a separate mark for each assessment

objective. This must not be done. One overall mark is to be awarded with a best-fit approach to the band descriptors taken together. The rank order in nearly all centres was correct. However, as would be expected with a new form of assessment, moderators made more adjustments to marks than with the old coursework. The biggest area of disagreement between markers and moderators was in the top band. It should be emphasised that to be placed in the top band work must be outstanding for GCSE and not merely good. Moderators are looking for a complexity in the analysis as described earlier in this report. The other area of disagreement was work awarded marks 20 and below. It was found that some centres were too harsh in this area. The further down the mark range the marks went, the harsher the centres were. It needs to be borne in mind that a mark of around 10 will be a bottom Grade G.

Overall, a successful first attempt at Controlled Assessment producing superior work to that often seen for coursework with many candidates writing, arguing and using sources like real historians.

Additional comments for A982

Most of the comments above, particularly those about candidates' answers and the marking of the work, apply equally to the short course A982 British Historical Enquiry. The only importance different between this and the full course is that for A982 the questions are provided by OCR. Despite this a few centres managed to use the wrong questions. It was not clear where they had got their questions from but they seem to be using Key Questions from the specification. The questions change every year and the questions for 2012 can be found on Interchange.

The first question: 'How successful were the Liberal reforms in dealing with the social problems of the time?' worked well. The main weakness was a tendency to describe the reforms leaving any assessment to a brief conclusion at the end. The best answers assessed the effectiveness of the reforms throughout and established criteria that could be used to measure success. Some answers to the second question ('The lives of women in Britain changed for the better between 1939 and 1975'. Explain how far you agree with this statement.') were too narrative based. They simply told the story of the lives of women from 1939 to 1975. This enabled them to cover the change part of the question, but assessment about 'better' was again left to a brief conclusion. Better candidates dealt with the question more thematically allowing them to build in assessment along the way.

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