

History B

Advanced GCE A2 H508

Advanced Subsidiary GCE AS H108

Report on the Units

June 2009

HX08/MS/R/09J

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This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

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

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Advanced GCE History (H508)

Advanced Subsidiary GCE History H108)

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F981 Historical Explanation - British History

The first point I should like to make is that we are grateful to the teachers and the centres who have 'taken the plunge' and adopted Specification B. With some 1300 candidates sitting the Historical Explanation unit F981 and F982 in June 2009, we are now in a good position to assess progress and offer support. It is very encouraging that centres are tackling topics ranging chronologically from the 8th century to the late 20th century, and covering subject matter as diverse as Carolingian ecclesiastical policy and poll tax riots under Mrs Thatcher.

It may be helpful to recap a few points made in the January Principal Examiner's report. It is crucial that candidates try to offer two responses which are even in terms of length and detail. It is very disappointing for examiners to read one sound answer followed by another which is very short and weak. There was across the two units in both sessions a welcome lack of narrative or descriptive answers, even among weaker candidates. Centres are advising candidates to explain events and ideas in an analytical fashion, which has been a very encouraging feature to observe. Similarly we are seeing clear evidence of the planning of answers, and of candidates shaping material appropriately to fit the question set. For example, in ranking or prioritising factors, in some cases importance can be assessed over time in terms of short-term or 'trigger' factors against longer-term factors; in other questions a geographical perspective is appropriate when assessing influence, for example the location of a Tudor rebellion in relation to centres of power; in other cases importance can be assessed in terms of whether, for example, economic or cultural or political factors best explain a development or event. No single approach is applicable or desirable, and examiners adopt a 'best fit' approach in applying the generic mark scheme to students' responses.

Nevertheless some approaches are more likely to lead to success than others. The mechanical use of 'modes' is unwelcome. Occasionally students divided up their answers into sections corresponding to the empathetic mode (or the 'emphatic mode', as one centre labelled it), the intentional mode and so on. These modes were sometimes given alternative labels, for example 'contingent', or 'contigual'. Examiners were rarely convinced that students understood and could apply these terms profitably. Such artificial divisions of the subject matter can be restricting. Students should be discouraged at an early stage from trotting through the modes in the hope that something will 'stick'.

However, there were some candidates who were able to apply a framework to their answers which quite explicitly and knowingly used a knowledge of events, actions and ideas to offer analysis of an issue at a high level. These responses could be rewarded at 24 or 25 out of 25. In other words, very good answers which do not demonstrate such an awareness were effectively capped at 23/25. To repeat what was said in January:

'[The modes] should help candidates to plan and organise their work so that they are deliberately and consciously explaining ideas, or states of affairs, or intentions and actions. Where no explicit reference is made to these modes of explanation, it is still perfectly possible to secure Level 1, and a number of candidates did do so, because of the quality of their analysis and explanation. But in some cases they did not secure the highest marks within Level 1, which were reserved to those responses which did, knowingly and explicitly, use modes of explanation to inform their analysis.' Those last words are crucial. Selecting and deploying an appropriate way of analysing an issue is vital. Examples offered here may help.

Candidates attempted questions within each of the four topics: Lancastrians and Yorkists, Tudor Finale, Liberal Sunset and End of Consensus, with Tudor Finale proving the most popular. Some responses on 'favourite' topics such as the defeat of the Spanish Armada or the 1906 General Election produced rather formulaic answers in some cases which did not amount to much more than a survey of major causal factors. On a point of fact contemporaries would

surely have been displeased to learn from some responses to the question 'Why was the Spanish Armada defeated?' that luck, the weather and Spanish mistakes were readily pored over by candidates but that the seamanship and skill of the English sailors were either of so little importance, or were so taken for granted, that they were altogether ignored. More importantly, in order to achieve Level 1 examiners are looking for evidence of the effective linking of explanatory factors, and/or the ranking of such factors in intelligent fashion. Here is an example from a response awarded 23/25 in response to Q3a): Why did Philip II want to overthrow Elizabeth?

Overall it seems that the biggest factor contributing to Philip's wish to overthrow Elizabeth is conflicting religion which would then eradicate any potential threat that would come with a monarch of a differing religion. Although other factors like male pride and the threat of strong alliances with other countries would all have added together to contribute to Philip wanting to overthrow Elizabeth, singly all these issues may not have resulted in him wanting to overthrow her.

Question 5b) on the constitutional crisis was not well tackled by some students, with knowledge of Irish history and its impact on British politics shown to be limited; likewise Q6a) about the impact of the Boer War on attitudes to imperialism saw some digression from the question. However, there were some very positive and encouraging responses to questions on Harold Macmillan. Why did Macmillan resign in October 1963? saw the following paragraph from a candidate who had already discussed the creation of the NEDC and the 'Night of the Long Knives':

The Profumo Affair of 1963, the scandal involving the affair of John Profumo and Keeler served to highlight and illustrate the public's lack of belief and confidence in Macmillan's government as well as its policies. For example the friend of the man who had introduced Profumo to Keeler (Peter Rachman) was discovered to have been renting slum properties to immigrants at extortionate rates. This highlighted the major flaws of Macmillan's 'property owning democracy' which had been one of his integral intentions when he gained power. This showed that the principles defining his government were being critically undermined which arguably lost Macmillan support among the electorate as well as faith in his own ideas and intentions.

This Level 1 response neatly integrated ideas, actions and events.

F982 Historical Explanation - Non British History

Questions were attempted on Charlemagne, on Luther and the German Reformation, the French Revolution and on Russia in Turmoil, with the latter being by far the most popular choice of topic. It was also the unit which saw the greatest number of rubric infringements, which were few overall but were clustered here. Centres are reminded that where a candidate attempts, for example Q7a) and then Q 8a) each response is marked in the usual way but only the higher of the two marks is carried forward, so candidates are losing half the available marks for the paper.

Two good strategies emerged from some responses to Q 5a) How are the policies of the National Assembly best explained? and Q6a) How did France turn military defeats in the foreign war into military triumphs? For Q5a) one approach which worked well was simply to explore what the National Assembly was aiming to do, incorporating within this revolutionary ideas and principles, and then to look at what it actually did. One aim was to implement The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen – and this is how it was attempted; another intention was to keep the king involved in politics but to allow him less authority, and this is how it was tried, and so on.

Q6a): In conclusion many factors allowed the French to turn military defeats into military triumphs. In the early days of the war the troops summoned by 'Le patrie en danger' were crucial in defeating the Prussians at Valmy, as was the role of Danton and Carnot these key individuals made great contributions to the war effort at a time of crisis. However when the war became bigger and France's enemies multiplied these measures were not enough. The conscription of thousands of men gave the Republic numerical superiority and undoubtedly helped the French reverse the war. However crucially the allies failed to unite and march on Paris, this massive error allowed France to mobilise for total war and eventually merge victorious. In the early days of the war the decree of 'le patrie en danger' was the most important factor but we also cannot ignore the role of Carnot and Danton. (Level 1 24/25) This response therefore uses change through time as a means to explain the candidate's thinking. The same candidate offered a different approach to Q6b), Why were several parts of provincial France hostile to the actions of the revolutionary government in the period up to 1795? The approach is appropriate to the question because it distinguishes rural and urban reaction, and focuses on different regions of France:

In conclusion differing factors lay behind each province's hostility towards the government. In the rural West the Civil Constitution of the Clergy and its assaults on the established Catholic church created much of this hostility and later on fiercely Catholic peasants formed the core of the rebels in areas where 90% of priests were refractory. Many of these areas were also hostile towards the power the revolution had given to wealthy townspeople. The spark for rebellion was the introduction of conscription. Later on many rural people were hostile to the government over the maximum on prices and the use of the armee revolutionnaire to requisition grain. In the large towns of the south of France that became centres of federalism the excessive power of the Parisian sans-culottes and the revolution's attacks on property and liberty were more important in these usually Republican areas. The overthrow and execution of the Girondins was also an important factor particularly in Bordeaux. (L1 25/25)

Russia in Turmoil 1900-21

There were excellent answers to both Q7 and Q8. In the case of Q7 in particular, there was some overlap in content which might have been used between the a) and the b) questions, but this is not a problem provided that the material is shaped to the demands of the question as appropriate. Given that both the a) and the b) questions will come from the same part of the specification, this is not an issue which should worry candidates or centres. As has been said above, with popular topics there can be a tendency for candidates to list reasons or factors in a

perfectly sound fashion, topics which are then summarised in a concluding paragraph. A better strategy is for candidates to be encouraged to explore the links between the factors and to try to move their answer on. One example drawn from Q8a) Why did the Bolshevik government sign the treaty of Brest Litovsk? comes from a candidate who discussed Marxist-Leninist ideas on peace and international revolution, assessed Bolshevik propaganda, economic failings and the state of affairs regarding Russia's involvement in World War I, and then as part of their conclusion wrote:

However, although these reasons show that the treaty should be signed as soon as possible, it doesn't explain why the Bolsheviks signed it when they did. The trigger, the contingent reason was a threat that the German army held over them. We have already seen that Germany could also benefit from Russia pulling out of the war and for them, it was the sooner the better.

Turning from conclusions to introductions, centres and candidates are advised that in exam conditions a general introduction adds very little: There are many factors involved when discussing why the Red Army won the Civil War in 1918 involving both Bolshevik strengths as well as the weaknesses of their opponents. The time and energy would be better directed to the body of the essay. Speaking of which, the following passage comes from a Level 1 response to Q7a), Why did Lenin urge a Bolshevik rising in October 1917?:

During 1917 there were several key events which took place influencing the popularity of the Bolsheviks. Lenin knew that, in order to succeed, he must obtain as much available support so that when the revolution occurred he could be capable of holding on to power. The April Theses, while not directly causing the revolution, did give the people another choice. By promising peace, land and bread people knew that there was an option for real change. This is key in bringing forward the revolution, giving a bedding for the new government. The Kornilov affair can be directly related to this as in the same way it gave people a reason to support the Bolsheviks as protectors of the people. This key event dramatically turned around the fortunes of the Bolshevik party after the failed July Days. We can view this as a key factor in the availability of the revolution, as if they were still not trusted then the repercussions of an attempted coup would have been far harsher.

This paragraph shows a welcome willingness to stand back from the material in order to take stock and to link together events, ideas and actions coherently. It comes from the body of the candidate's answer, not from the conclusion.

It is hoped that at appropriate moments in their AS course students are encouraged to think about the aims of Unit 1, perhaps using analogies:

Think about driving a car. What do you need to complete a journey safely and on time? You need to decide the route, select a speed and an appropriate way of driving, and be alert to changing conditions, perhaps breaking up a long journey into separate sections and checking directions. Likewise with a History essay: there will be stronger and more appropriate choices of approach and direction depending on the question set. Or think of a building like a church. There are many different ways of looking at the building – from the front, from above, using a floorplan – but all the different ways will tell us something about that building. Likewise, if we want to understand more about this church and how it was used we will get different answers depending on the questions we ask: who built it? when? why there, exactly? what's it made from?

There were a number of spelling errors and grammatical confusions. As a literary subject, students should be aware of the effects which misspelling proper names in particular creates: 'Lennin' or 'Rusia' are less forgivable than mistakes with French names and places committed by students of the French Revolution, perhaps, but accuracy is all. Other common terminological inexactitudes included 'thrown' for throne and references to the 'casual mode' where causal matters were being discussed. There were a number of examples of what might

be termed conditional writing, as with this example in answer to the question about why poverty was a problem in Elizabethan England: In order for Elizabeth to have the money to solve some of the poverty, she needed another way to finance it. This is by increasing the taxes that were payed by the higher classes and the nobles. This causal effect would have upset the people of the higher classes and nobles that they have to pay more money to the poor. This in turn may make them disapprove of Elizabeth and turn against her rather than supporting her. Did her actions upset the nobility? Did they subsequently disapprove of Elizabeth? Another example was provided in response to Q4a): Bad harvests were one of the reasons that would have caused and effected national poverty. If farmers are effected by bad harvests due to crop disease or extremely bad weather then those that lease land off tenants or work on this land will no longer be needed to harvest crop. As was stated in January, however, it is ultimately the quality of the analysis and the supporting material, the substantive matters of the subject, which matter more than spelling, punctuation and grammar. As one senior examiner reported, the 'usual discriminatory factors applied' to Specification B, namely that candidates answer the question and that they know something relevant.

F983 Using Historical Evidence - British History

General points.

This was the first time that there was a substantial entry for these papers and there was a great deal that was pleasing in the scripts. Many candidates had been well-prepared for the examination, engaged successfully with the tasks and showed a good understanding of the topic they had studied. Most candidates had a secure grasp of the requirements of the paper. At the highest levels there were thoughtful and innovative answers, debating the interpretation using sophisticated inferences from the sources. Candidates were able to deploy a range of strategies to evaluate the sources, making sound use of their contextual understanding and of the information provided about the provenance of the sources. Most were clear that the first task demanded that they test the given interpretation and then adapt or replace it with an interpretation that better reflected the evidence inferred from the sources. Similarly many candidates were well-prepared for the opportunity provided by the second task, allowing them to display a more general understanding of the strengths of the given sources as well as issues and problems associated with them.

Inevitably some did not find the challenges presented by the examination as easy and consequently demonstrated poorer judgement in their approaches to the questions and less developed understanding of the nature of historical investigation. The following report aims to indicate strategies that proved successful in the hope that future candidates will be able to benefit, and to describe some of the less successful approaches so that candidates can be advised against them.

While the tasks set in these examinations appear somewhat mechanical in that the questions remain the same (Centres should note that there will be a slight rearrangement of the layout of the questions, placing the admonition to go beyond face value reading of the Sources and to interpret and evaluate them in context **before** the sub-questions), they do require significant conceptual understanding of the nature of historical sources. Hence while advice may suggest successful models for answers, it remains the case that not all candidates will be able to use this advice successfully. Nevertheless, being supported through appropriately structured answers may help candidates to develop their conceptual level.

Most candidates were able to complete both questions, although there was evidence of rushing in (b). This often resulted in very simplistic and unhistorical statements such as 'the source comes from the time, so is accurate' and conversely, 'the writer was not there or is remembering back and so does not know or will have forgotten the exact details'. A few candidates tried to answer both questions together, without specifying which material related to each answer. This is not a permissible approach, and in these cases candidates were awarded marks only for (a).

Many candidates were able to express their ideas coherently, developing sophisticated lines of argument with clarity and a good range of historical vocabulary. It is also true that a substantial proportion of candidates had a weak command of English. The meaning of their argument was often obscured by poor sentence construction and inaccurate use of vocabulary. The use of abbreviations for the candidate's ease of writing rather than the reader's comprehension is to be discouraged. This is not acceptable in continuous prose and on occasion could be construed as pejorative; AA for 'African American' in F984 Q4 was often juxtaposed with 'white Americans' written in full.

Advice:

Part (a) The best answers came from candidates who had clearly spent some time analysing the sources before they started writing. This was apparent because in many cases they were able to

start with an amended interpretation which was then shown not only to be a valid reflection of evidence inferred from the sources, but was also demonstrated to be an improvement on that provided. This approach enabled candidates to present a well-structured argument based on the sources. It is worth stressing that it is necessary to test the given interpretation as well as justifying a new one. These two tasks may be done simultaneously; indeed, in terms of time management they are best combined.

As suggested above, a possible drawback in starting with a new interpretation is that the candidate is so eager to justify the amended or new interpretation that he/she loses sight of the task, which must involve testing the given interpretation against the sources. While it is perfectly acceptable to suggest at each juncture how and why the new interpretation is an improvement on the given one, candidates are not answering the question if the given interpretation is simply abandoned or ignored.

Another aspect of planning, often seen combined with the above, is to 'unpick' the given interpretation. This is a useful approach in that it clarifies what has to be tested. This may involve providing definitions, for example of what might make a Tudor rebellion serious, or what distinguishes 'working classes' from 'radicals' in Britain in the period from 1780 to the 1880s. Deciding what constitutes 'economic factors' was helpful in answering question 1 in F983 and question 4 in F984.

Candidates did better when they grouped sources according to whether they supported or challenged the interpretation. This encouraged candidates to construct an argument and reached a judgement that could lead to an amendment to the given interpretation. This was certainly the most economical way of structuring the answer in terms of time management. It also led to greater clarity in justifying the replacement interpretation. Besides this candidates were more likely to cross-reference the sources if they were grouped, although it is worth noting that grouping does not in itself constitute cross-referencing. Besides identifying areas of agreement candidates need to analyse the common ground between the sources.

There was a tendency among some candidates to introduce the answer with some general remarks about the issue in the interpretation, generated from their knowledge of the topic. While this may be useful in setting the scene, in some cases the next move was to suggest a new or amended interpretation that was clearly founded in their knowledge rather than an analysis of the sources. Occasionally entire answers were generated from contextual knowledge with brief referencing of sources to introduce aspects or illustrate the response. In these cases candidates penalised themselves in AO2a and often AO2b. Besides this, knowledge that is used to test the interpretation rather than to support evaluation of the sources does not score highly in AO1.

The higher levels in AO1 require candidates to show an understanding of change and development (or indeed continuity) across time. Grouping sources certainly helps candidates to demonstrate this understanding since, in comparing or noting patterns among or between sources, change, development and continuity are often apparent.

Candidates have much to do in a short space of time, and it was therefore frustrating to note that many long scripts contained much that was at a low conceptual level. The most common tactic in these cases was to describe the source, its provenance and its content. The examiner knows what the sources are, so this tells him or her very little other than that the candidates can (or cannot) read the question paper accurately. Candidates would be better advised to spend the time saved by avoiding this approach in annotating the question paper so that they can focus what they write on the task of answering the question, selecting relevant aspects of the source content and provenance to form an argument. Besides wasting time, this approach often led candidates to engage in a commentary on the sources in part (a) that was better suited to part (b).

Part (b)

In general candidates' answers to part (b) scored less well than their answers to part (a). While this was sometimes a result of allowing insufficient time for the second answer this was by no means the only reason. While most candidates could make generic points about the uses and limitations or problems associated with particular kinds of sources and could identify (from the information given) the nature of the source, very few produced worked examples. It is essential that candidates develop examples from individual sources when illustrating more general points about types of source. The statement that a chronicle is likely to favour the monarch will only be highly rewarded if the candidate demonstrates that this is evident in a source provided on the paper. Far too many candidates fell back on general statements such as 'first hand evidence is more reliable and therefore more useful'. They also regarded any work of literature or art as being produced primarily to make money for the writer and were reluctant to see that it might be, for example, trying to make a political point. Similarly, the purpose of cartoons was seen as to entertain.

Candidates were less inclined to make use of their contextual knowledge in (b). This led to speculative answers, for example about the motives of speakers or writers. Better answers often made use of contextual knowledge to answer the issues raised by the sources.

The weakest candidates were those who had not moved beyond the concept that a source provides information rather than evidence, and regarded sources as useful or not according to the amount of reliable or 'true' information they contained. Some sources were labelled as factual and others biased and therefore unreliable. The former were considered to be useful and the latter of no use to historians. This was often a default position when time was running out, but is clearly to be discouraged as representing a very low level of thinking about the process of historical enquiry.

Candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with the requirements of the mark scheme at Levels 1 and 2: besides evaluating the sources, candidates need to recognise and suggest the kinds of questions historians might ask of the sources and different ways of 'reading' the sources in order to access these higher levels.

Comments on individual questions:

F983

1 (a) Most candidates were able to access this question fairly well. They could readily find evidence that supported the interpretation and were able to identify a number of different effects that could be classified as economic. What distinguished more successful answers was engagement with the issue of for whom Black Death was economically disastrous and for whom it carried some benefits. The main problem lay in defining 'economic'. While a broad range of issues can be and were accepted as 'economic', some candidates clearly had no grasp of the term.

(b) The main problem was generic comments without specific examples drawn from the Sources provided. Contextual knowledge was occasionally, for example to assess typicality, but often candidates resorted to speculative comments.

2 (a) The best answers began by unpacking the interpretation, identifying factors that could make a rebellion more or less serious. This question seemed to encourage candidates to group Sources according to the level of threat identified in them and hence showing their knowledge and understanding of change and development (or indeed continuity) across the time period. However there were also many examples of candidates using their contextual knowledge rather than evidence inferred from the Sources to build their argument. For example, candidates noted

that the Source was 'about the Pilgrimage of Grace', then gave a detailed account of the rebellion without specific reference to the source, using the description to test the interpretation. Most new interpretations were clearly sustainable and most candidates were able to base these on their previous analysis of the Sources, leading to efficient use of time.

(b) There was much evidence of generic points about particular types of Sources, especially chronicles, with far less evidence of application of these points to the specific Sources. However, some candidates developed general points very effectively. For example: "Source 5 holds information that seems to be politically slanted. William Cecil was the chief minister of Elizabeth I, resented by the Northern Earls. "The common people are ignorant, superstitious and altogether blinded by old popish doctrine" gives the impression that the rebels of the Northern rebellion were manipulated by the earls, whereas in fact they were part of a genuine Catholic uprising. For example the newly installed Bishop of Durham was overthrown and traces of Protestantism destroyed."

3 (a) Candidates were generally familiar with the issues addressed in the Sources. They were able to recognise the references to the French revolution in several of the Sources and explain why such references might frighten the ruling class while not necessarily reflecting the aims of working class protesters. Most candidates were able to contextualise the Sources relating to Chartism, and better ones recognised the references to the later splits in the Chartist movement regarding the best approach to gaining their objectives. Candidates were generally less secure in their knowledge of the changing status and form of trade unions. While there was much excellent analysis and evaluation of individual Sources and groups relating to similar types of protest, there was less evidence of an overall grasp of changes and developments in the aims and nature of protest across the period.

(b) Most candidates were able to suggest issues and problems concerning the typicality of the views expressed, especially in the light of low literacy levels. Many used their understanding of government use of spies to evaluate Source 4, but comments on the letters from employers (Sources 6 and 7) often made no distinction between letters and articles printed in newspapers.

4 (a) Better candidates were able to explore the idea of 'beneficial for whom', using, for example, Source 2 at face value as it asserts there were benefits for the employers, while noting the illegality of strikes, questioning the impact on workers. Source 1, 2 and 3 were often grouped and cross-referenced as Source 2 and Source 3 showed some of Source 1's points in practice. Evaluation of Source 3 was often well-developed: there were a range of approaches, for example questioning whether the figures reflected the government's actions or the impact of large scale army recruitment and later conscription. Newspapers were generally less well understood. The socialist attribution of Source 2 was used successfully by few, more saw the significance of one newspaper criticising the closing of another and some recognised that the Daily Telegraph was likely to criticise a Labour policy. Many candidates used change over time as a route into evaluating the interpretation and amending it. Generally restrictions on civil liberties were seen as more beneficial in times of war than in peace time.

(b) Candidates showed a sound understanding of the kinds of source available to historians of the post-1900 era. They commonly commented on the uses and issues associated with newspapers, although comments tended to be generic, despite the range of political perspectives of the newspaper extracts provided.

F984

1 (a) Candidates showed good knowledge of Viking methods of conquest and were able to use this to recognise the various tactics shown in the Sources. They entered into a debate about the strengths and weaknesses of the interpretation. They also recognised that the methods used depended on the time and the location and were therefore able to suggest amendments to the

interpretation. Candidates successfully grouped Sources according to the method described and engaged in some cross-referencing of points. Most candidates noted the preponderance of monastic chronicles, questioning the objectivity of these Sources.

(b) Candidates made some useful generic comments on the types of Sources provided. They were clearly aware of the range of other Sources available and could suggest what they might add to an investigation. Some candidates were able to identify and analyse relevant parts of Sources to illustrate the issues and problems they presented.

2 (a) The candidates who answered on this topic were often very strong. Many candidates engaged well with this question, using wide-ranging knowledge and understanding of the changes that occurred in the period to explore the evidence about the causes of the Renaissance. They showed a good understanding of the interpretation and were able to develop it, either by using referencing to other causal factors within the Sources or by challenging the importance of commercial factors. There was very good use of the Sources, with many candidates cross-referencing those mentioning Cosimo de' Medici. Complex arguments were developed by those who recognised that evidence of wealth alone is not enough to establish a causal link with the Renaissance. Hence they made good use of the Sources as a set by linking evidence of wealth with that of patronage in different Sources.

(b) Good use was made of contextual knowledge in evaluating the Sources. Candidates evaluated the Sources well, but were less successful in suggesting other questions the Sources could help to answer.

3 (a) There were many good answers on this topic. A minority wrote an essay concerning the interpretation, illustrated by evidence from the Sources and a few tried to use the 'great man' idea in January's interpretation to re-work the given one. However, most debated the interpretation thoroughly. The use of nationalism was picked up in Sources 2, 3 and 4, while Sources 1 and 7 were used effectively to challenge the interpretation. Strong use was made of contextual knowledge about the failure of the Frankfurt Parliament. Most candidates used the provenance of the cartoon (Source 6) in deciding what weight to give it.

(b) Good use was often made of the provenance to inform the evaluation of the Sources and assess the weight that could be given to them in relation to different enquiries.

4(a) Answers to this question were mixed. The best ones were well-focused and looked for evidence of changing attitudes across the period. They were able to pick up the more positive comments in the later Sources. Many also questioned how typical these attitudes were. Most candidates could identify, from the Sources, different factors influencing attitudes towards African Americans. A few had little idea what 'economic' might mean, and there were some very narrow definitions. The main problem with this question, however, was the tendency to analyse the Sources in order and individually. The Sources lent themselves to grouping and certainly there was scope for cross-referencing, but candidates rarely availed themselves of this opportunity and consequently many limited the level they reached. For example they often failed to see the possibility of cross-referencing Source 5 and 6 in relation to the Cold War, and some missed these references altogether. Few recognised the nuances of Source 2 and many used the reference to the Supreme Court's decision on Brown vs. Board of Education to comment on desegregation of schools rather than the point made by the Source.

(b) As with (a), many candidates worked through the Sources one by one. There was little attempt to meet the requirements of AO2a Levels 1 and 2. Speculative comments were prevalent.

Grade Thresholds

Advanced GCE History (H508)
Advanced Subsidiary GCE History (H108)
June 2009 Examination Series

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
F981	Raw	50	42	36	30	24	19	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
F982	Raw	50	38	33	28	23	18	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
F983	Raw	50	36	32	28	25	22	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
F984	Raw	50	40	35	30	26	22	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0

Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (ie after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
H108	200	160	140	120	100	80	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total Number of Candidates
H108	12.3	32.9	54.9	74.5	89.7	100.0	1271

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see:
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Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

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