

# **History A (Schools History Project)**

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J415**

## **OCR Report to Centres**

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**June 2012**

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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 specification 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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# **A951/11–14 Medicine Through Time/Crime and Punishment Through Time Development Study/Depth Study**

## **General Comments**

Many of this year's candidates produced answers that demonstrated good knowledge, and the ability to use it in a relevant and focused way. However, a gap is gradually developing between the performance on the source-based questions and the structured essay questions. There was also a growing number of candidates who did not answer the questions set. Instead, they appeared to be answering slightly different questions that they seemed to have been prepared for. This is commented on in more detail below. Medicine remains the more popular Development Study by some distance while The American West and Germany are the most popular Depth Studies. Elizabethan England and Britain have about 700 candidates each.

There were many strengths demonstrated in candidates' answers but there were also some areas that would benefit from special attention in future. Some of these are new, others have been mentioned in previous reports.

Some candidates did very well on the structured essay questions but less well on the source-based questions. Some candidates found it hard to interpret and use sources they had not seen before. It is possible, as a good number of candidates showed, to use contextual knowledge and understanding to interpret sources that have not been seen before. Indeed, this is at the heart of working with historical sources. Even if candidates had not seen Source A in the American West, most should be able to use their knowledge of the course to work out that it is about the Mormons rather than illustrating a solution to problems of overcrowding in the East. The key to being able to tease out the message and purpose of sources is to have plenty of practice in the classroom. This does not have to be based on past examination questions. Imaginative activities using packs of sources can be far more effective in developing the mental agility required. Candidates do not benefit from sets of rules about how to use sources. Such rules cannot be helpful with every source. Each historical source is unique and needs to be treated on its own merits.

Chronology still remains a challenge for a surprising number of candidates. Some do not appear to have the 'big picture' of their Development Study. Candidates often have detailed knowledge and good understanding of patches of the content – eg the story of Paré or smuggling, but find it much more difficult to show understanding of the relationship of events hundreds of years apart. It is always worrying to be told that the Anglo-Saxons were prehistoric or that the NHS was established in the nineteenth century.

Many candidates would benefit from activities using timelines and focusing on making links and comparisons across long periods.

Chance proved to be a surprisingly difficult concept for some candidates who thought that it meant people 'taking a chance'. Others inappropriately tried to turn a whole range of developments into chance ones, while some selected an appropriate example but were unable to explain which part of, eg the story of the discovery of penicillin, exemplifies the role of chance.

Centres would be advised not to try to prepare candidates for particular questions, as there is no guarantee that these questions will appear in any single year's paper. Such candidates appeared to be lost when their 'prepared' questions did not appear, because they answered them anyway. They appeared to be unable to adapt their knowledge and understanding to the requirements of a slightly different question. Examiners marked the scripts of a number of candidates who clearly had the necessary knowledge but were unable to deploy it to the particular requirements of questions. It was common to find candidates eg describing Mary's plots rather than explaining why she plotted, telling the story of the Gunpowder Plot rather than explaining why the plotters were punished so harshly, or describing what Nightingale did rather than explaining why this mattered in the history of medicine. In answers to the source questions some candidates did not pay attention to the wording of the question, eg Medicine 1b, where they explained ways in which the source was not useful when they had been asked to explain ways in which it was useful. It is more useful to construct activities that develop candidates' ability to deploy knowledge and understanding in a relevant way, rather than having them learn pre-prepared answers.

Some candidates would have benefited from a clearer understanding of what constitutes an explanation. For two of the parts of the structured-essay questions, narratives, descriptions and identifications will not earn many marks. The candidates who produced the best answers explained two or three factors in reasonable detail rather than briefly summarising six or seven factors. Activities that do not require much writing but that allow candidates to distinguish between genuine explanations and other forms of answers would be very useful.

## **Comments on specific questions**

### **Medicine Through Time**

#### **Question 1**

Most candidates answered part (a) well and were able to explain historical reasons why they were surprised or not surprised. Some identified a valid reason but did not explain it. Those who used the dates of the sources and then referred to Greek and Roman ideas were usually able to do well. In (b) some candidates wrote about witch doctors and medicine men but nevertheless were able to score some marks by explaining the reasons for the beak and the sweet-smelling herbs inside it. Other candidates wrote good answers explaining why a plague doctor would be dressed this way. Part (c) was answered very well. A large majority of candidates were able to explain the message in the context of Snow and cholera, and a good number went on to explain a valid purpose.

#### **Question 2**

This question was easily the most popular of the optional questions and all parts were generally well answered. Part (a) produced many very good answers although some candidates continued their answers long after scoring the maximum 5 marks. There were many good answers to (b) usually based on Paré and Fleming. Some candidates had problems with the idea of chance, as was discussed earlier in this report. There was a wide range of answers to part (c). Some candidates lacked specific examples of the government hindering or helping and wrote long general answers that could have applied to almost any time period, while others did much better by focusing on, eg the Romans and public health, the laissez faire policy of nineteenth-century governments, public health reforms and help given to the NHS.

### Question 3

In response to part (a) there were some general answers, some answers that referred more to the Renaissance period and some good answers that reflected the fact that the candidates had specifically studied medieval doctors. In (b) many candidates were able to write about the dominance of Galen preventing the introduction of new methods, and some explained why many of the developments did not appear to people at the time to have a practical application. The best answers to part (c) explained the contributions of both great men and other factors, such as the new attitudes of the Renaissance or the printing press. Some candidates mistakenly used Harvey as the other factor while others only wrote about Paré and Vesalius.

### Question 4

Part (a) was not generally answered well. A worrying number of candidates wrote about the twentieth century and those that did write about the nineteenth century produced general answers lacking specific examples. The question (part (b)) about Florence Nightingale was answered much better than questions about her have been answered in past papers. Many candidates now seem aware of her work on hospital design and the development of nursing, as well as her work in the Crimea. Most candidates were able to explain about Lister's work in part (c) but some struggled to find other developments earlier in the century – indeed, some candidates resorted to examples from the entire history of medicine, while others confused Lister and Simpson.

## Crime and Punishment

### Question 1

In response to part (a) many candidates were able to explain some differences and similarities between the two sets of laws, but some of the answers were not set in the context of the development of the idea of the King's peace. Part (b) was answered well with most candidates able to infer valid impressions of law enforcement from Source C. There were some excellent answers to part (c) with candidates not only explaining the anti-police message or purpose of Source D but also setting their answers in a valid historical context. For most candidates this was the early hostility to the establishment of a police force.

### Question 2

This was easily the most popular of the optional questions and the best answered. Answers to part (a) were generally relevant and detailed although some candidates focused more on the causes of vagrancy. There were many good answers to (b) with treason, the importance of Parliament and Catholicism all regularly featuring in answers. In response to part (c) many candidates were able to explain why highwaymen and smugglers were a problem but only a few suggested a clinching argument for one being more of a problem than the other.

### Question 3

There were not many answers to this question. In part (a) many answers could have applied to any police force anywhere. Better answers focused on features such as top hats, blue coats and truncheons as well as the deficiencies of the new recruits. The best answers to part (b) focused on a key individual such as Fry or Howard. Those that did not do this produced very general answers. Many of the answers to part (c) also lacked specific knowledge.

#### **Question 4**

This question was not popular and many of the answers lacked specific and relevant detail. Although the twentieth century period comes at the end of the course it still needs to be covered in the same detail as other parts of the specification.

#### **Elizabethan England**

##### **Question 5**

In response to part (a) some candidates thought that Foxe's Book of Martyrs was popular with Catholics but there were many interesting and excellent answers exploring why it would have been popular with Protestants and with Elizabeth's government. The best answers to part (b) focused on the details in Source B and on explaining why these particular reforms were being demanded early in the reign. Answers in the middling range wrote about Puritan beliefs and aims more generally. Part (c) was answered well, with many candidates focusing on the production and publication of the drawing. There were also some good answers that focused on the treatment of the Jesuits by Elizabeth's government.

##### **Question 6**

Some answers to part (a) were rather vague and some went too far into Elizabeth's reign, ending up by writing about plots and rebellions. Part (b) was generally well answered with candidates able to explain two or three valid reasons for Mary's involvement in plots. There were some excellent answers to (c) with many candidates demonstrating detailed knowledge of the Armada. However, some candidates explored arguments for the Armada being a threat and arguments supporting the view that it was not a threat, when they needed to focus on the word 'greatest' compare it with another threat.

##### **Question 7**

This question divided candidates into two broad groups. There were candidates who in part (a) could provide details about the behaviour of the audiences and crowds. Better candidates took notice of the word 'crowds' and this gave them more to write about than just the audience inside theatres. There were many good answers to part (b) including reference to the use of sub-plots and to the necessity of referring to aspects such as the scenery, the time of day and the beauty of female characters. Only the best candidates were able to produce worthwhile explanations of why the theatre can be seen as a great achievement, but many candidates made a good job of explaining an alternative choice, such as the defeat of the Armada.

#### **Britain 1815–1851**

##### **Question 5**

The best answers to part (a) explained the reactions of particular groups such as factory owners, reformers and the women themselves. Less satisfactory answers tended to be based on everyday empathy. Part (b) produced a wide range of answers. Some candidates thought that Londonderry was supporting reform, while some asserted he was against reform, but the best candidates used what they had been told about him and the content of his speech to get to his purpose. In response to part (c) weak answers were based on just the evidence in the source or the fact that it was from a novel, but better answers used knowledge of factory reforms to test the impression created by the source.

### **Question 6**

This question was more popular than Question 7 by some margin. Most candidates were able to answer part (a) well, but it was surprising to find some explaining how railways had replaced cars and aeroplanes. Part (b) was generally answered well, although there was a tendency to write about five or six reasons briefly rather than explaining two or three well. There were many good answers to part (c) with trade and industry being explained particularly well. However, not many candidates were able to construct a clinching argument and gain the eighth mark.

### **Question 7**

Part (a) was answered well, with most candidates demonstrating good knowledge of the main events, although some wandered too far into the Six Acts. For part (b), as with part (c) in Question 6 some candidates wrote about too many reasons and not in enough detail. Two or three reasons explained well would have produced higher marks. There were some very interesting answers to part (c). Some candidates went through their prepared answers on physical and moral force but most explained how both the vote and unemployment and hunger were important to the Chartists and some argued that the vote was simply the means to the end of economic and social improvements.

### **The American West 1840–1895**

### **Question 5**

In part (a), most candidates understood the anti-Mormon nature of the cartoon and were able to place their explanations in the context of the 1840s. Either message or purpose was explained by many candidates, although the latter of course gained more marks. A few candidates thought the cartoon was about over-crowding in the East. Some answers to part (b) demonstrated that candidates' knowledge of the Mormons in the East and at Salt Lake is stronger than their knowledge of the journey. Although there were good answers that did explain the functions of Winter Quarters, some candidates thought the source was about Salt Lake. In part (c) some candidates assumed that Source C described what the Mormons found at Salt Lake. There were better answers that explained both how what is described was achieved by the Mormons and what else had to be done.

### **Question 6**

This question was much more popular than Q7. Part (a) was well answered, although some candidates wrote far more than they needed to. There were many good answers to part (b) with candidates able to explain how the main function of the reservations was one of control. Candidates knew many reasons for the defeat of the US army in (c) but sometimes failed to explain them properly – another example of too many reasons, when fewer reasons with better quality explanations would have scored more marks.

### **Question 7**

Although this question was not popular, parts (a) and (b) were answered well. In (a) candidates had detailed knowledge of the activities of the vigilantes, while in (b) they were able to focus on the particular problems of mining towns, rather than writing about law and order more generally. Part (c) was not answered so well, with knowledge of the Johnson County War proving weak.



## **Germany**

### **Question 5**

In part (a) a high level in the mark scheme depended on understanding that the cartoonist is suggesting that Germany was deceiving everyone. A reasonable number of candidates understood this and used their contextual knowledge to construct good answers about likely German reactions. There was still scope for other candidates to write reasonable answers and receive some marks. Part (b) was generally answered well with candidates understanding the context of the French occupation of the Ruhr and using this to suggest a valid message, or even better, purpose. For part (c) nearly all candidates recognised inflation and its effects in Source C but the best answers explained the message of the cartoon in the context of 1923.

### **Question 6**

There were good answers to part (a) but some candidates had a very uncertain grasp of the chronology of these vital years. The Enabling Act, the Reichstag Fire and the Night of the Long Knives were all thrown in by some candidates. A clear overview of just the essential events of these years would be useful to many candidates. Many candidates were able to explain a number of factors in part (b) although fewer factors with better explanations would have brought higher marks. There was, however, a good number of excellent answers. Some candidates mistakenly thought that going back to the Beer Hall Putsch was a useful move. Part (c) was generally well answered with many candidates familiar with the importance of both events.

### **Question 7**

There were some good answers to part (a) but too many candidates focused on actions towards the Jews rather than attitudes towards them. A more careful reading of the question would have helped many candidates. In response to part (b) most candidates were able to explain the changes the Nazis made, compared to life under Weimar, but the best answers also explained the later partial reversal of policy by the Nazis. Candidates are now very familiar with the various anti-Nazi youth groups and they wrote about these well in response to part (c). The part of the answers on the Hitler Youth and the education system were sometimes too descriptive and failed to directly address the issue of how far they were effective in winning loyalty and support.

# A952/21 Developments in British Medicine, 1200–1945

## General Comments

Candidates generally did well on this paper. They clearly knew a lot about the topic and many candidates also had a competent understanding of the demands of the various questions. It was evident that some centres had used the 2007 paper (1935/21) as a way of preparing their candidates for this exam. Candidates often demonstrated impressive contextual knowledge. However, this was not always deployed well in answering specific questions. It was also clear that centres had trained candidates to make cross-references to other sources, but in some questions such cross-references were used merely to support the information in the particular source for that question. When asked to make cross-references to evaluate the purpose or reliability of the sources, candidates were generally less successful.

## Question 1

Most candidates achieved level 3 or 4 on this question. They were able to make strong inferences and backed these up well. However, some candidates could have added more support by making more specific reference to the picture. The majority of candidates deduced that Fleming's presence in the window was an indication of his importance.

A small, but significant, number of candidates spent time discussing the reliability of this source; mainly basing this on the tidy appearance of Fleming's lab or the proximity of the window to the hospital. This was, of course, of no value for this question. A small number of candidates mistakenly took this source to show that the church had now accepted natural explanations of disease, or that 'religion' had now accepted Fleming's work.

## Question 2

Many candidates were able to make sound comparisons of sources B and C. However, some candidates were only able to identify areas that agreed and disagreed and were therefore stuck at level 3. A number of candidates were able to comment on the reliability of source B and Almroth Wright's desire to promote Fleming and St. Mary's Hospital. Fewer candidates commented convincingly on Florey's motives for writing the letter in source C, assuming that he was seeking personal glory, money or was simply jealous. There was not a lot of use of contextual knowledge to assess the motives of these sources and few candidates were able to make telling cross-references.

## Question 3

This question was answered well by many candidates, with almost all being able to make valid comments about their level of surprise. Many candidates cross-referenced this source well with others (especially Source C). More able candidates made good cross-references with the other sources *and* their own contextual knowledge. Some pointed out their surprise that Fleming might appear so modest; having understood that, whilst he felt he did not deserve all the credit, he did admit that he rather enjoyed the publicity he was getting. Other candidates successfully used knowledge about the work undertaken by Florey and Chain after 1938 and acknowledged that what Fleming said was unsurprising, since it was, in fact, the truth. A smaller number of candidates dwelt on Fleming's possible motives for writing this private letter to Florey. They speculated about his personality, ranging from the modest, retiring professor to the arrogant and vain Scotsman! It was not clear what had led them to such assertions. The truth is probably somewhere in between. Fleming certainly realised the limitations of his work, but he never refused the opportunity to be interviewed. He was even known to have staged re-enactments of his discovery for the media.

#### Question 4

This question was well-answered by most candidates, with the majority gaining level 4. Candidates demonstrated their own knowledge well in this question, referring to D-Day and mass-production, amongst other things. Some candidates also cross-referenced this source well with others (eg C or G). However, again, few candidates used both the sources and their own knowledge. This was a shame, as many candidates were actually making non-specific cross references to other sources and missed out on the top level merely because they didn't make these specific. Some candidates confused the chronology of Fleming in relation to this question. Too many tried to make use of their knowledge that Fleming was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1945 to connect this with the publication of the Time magazine piece in 1944. Such arguments were unconvincing. Some also felt that the magazine front cover was a recruiting poster. A small number of candidates confused World War One and World War Two. Others said that 1944 was after the war (or even before it!). Some said that the Americans had only just joined in the war in 1944. However, such weaknesses should not detract from the impressive contextual knowledge that was demonstrated by a significant number of candidates.

#### Question 5

Whilst candidates were able to pick up on valid points for both useful and not-useful, a significant minority didn't really understand the implications of this source and seemed reluctant to suggest that there was a deliberate attempt to exclude Florey and Chain. A number of students asserted that the source told them 'what penicillin was and where it was produced.' when, in fact, the source didn't, but the script did. It was disappointing that candidates did not speculate in greater numbers about why the crossing out of Florey and Chain had been done. Very few were prepared to consider whether there was an editorial conspiracy. Several candidates put forward simplistic arguments about the BBC being the bastion of truth (!), or that Fleming himself had probably sneaked into the studio to cross their names out. Even more able candidates stooped to saying that the source was unreliable because it was produced in 2008, many years after the original broadcast.

Some more able students were able to cross-reference this source with sources C or E, to explain the importance of the media in creating the 'Fleming Myth.' Such candidates really stood out. They were able to comment on the media frenzy in 1942 and the fact that Wright's letter (Source B) and Florey's reluctance to talk to the press (Source C) probably contributed to the elevation of Fleming to celebrity status.

#### Question 6

Whilst the majority of candidates answered this question well and achieved level 3, there were a number of candidates who did not make enough use of the sources. This was actually a problem for some of the more able students, who clearly knew a great deal about the story of Penicillin; they used it as a chance to write an essay about the topic and neglected to make adequate use of the sources. Most sources were correctly interpreted in terms of whether they supported or opposed the statement. Source F caused the most problems, as few candidates were able to unpick the subtleties of a 'source within a source' and treated the entire source as an entity that either supported the statement or did not.

Comments on reliability were usually undeveloped and amounted to little more than 'this source is biased.' Fewer candidates this year tackled question 6 first, but those that did still suffered because they had not built up a proper overview of the sources or the issues prior to tackling the hypothesis.

# A952/22 Developments in Crime and Punishment in Britain, 1200–1945

## General Comments

This paper was about the Rebecca Riots. The sources were accessible, and the questions produced a wide range of positive responses from candidates. Almost all candidates were able to answer all the questions, and there was little evidence of them experiencing time pressures. The sources were used effectively at face value, though, as always, what distinguished better answers was an ability to look beyond the surface of the source, perhaps analysing the intentions of the author or the reliability of the information, in order to reach an explained conclusion. The task on this paper is not merely to answer ‘What do I think?’, but rather ‘Why do I think it?’ Candidates are prompted to use the sources and their knowledge to help them construct an explanation. On some questions the sources will offer more help, and on others contextual knowledge will be the key. What the rubric clearly excludes is speculation and unfounded assertion. Here is one example of the difference this can make. In Question 4 candidates were asked whether they thought a rioter who had been found not guilty at his trial should really have been found guilty. Some answers were based on assertion – *I think he was guilty but the jury might have been bribed to find him not guilty*. There was nothing in the source to support this idea. Other answers used contextual knowledge to explain – *I think he was guilty but the jury found him not guilty because juries often worried that the penalty of transportation did not fit the crime*. On all of the questions, the quality of the explanation offered to support the candidate’s argument was what made all the difference.

## Comments on Individual Questions

### Question 1

This question was answered well by most candidates. The source offered ample opportunities to make inferences about the rioters, ranging from the obvious (eg violent, dangerous) to the more inventive (eg literate – they could write the letter; considerate – they did not just attack but gave a warning). Most candidates were able to make at least a couple of valid inferences, so the determinant of whether or not an answer achieved the highest level was the ability to explain, using the source content, how these inferences were reached. An inference is something one can tell from the source, even though the source does not actually say it, so ‘determined’ and ‘poor’ were both ruled out as they were words used in the source.

### Question 2

This question was perhaps the best example of where candidates could provide a sound answer by using the sources at face value, but needed to look beyond the surface of the sources if they were to provide a properly developed answer. The task was to compare two pictures of the rioters. There were many surface similarities and differences, and almost all candidates could detect some of these. A minority of answers showed candidates could see the similarities and differences, but did not know how to compare. In these answers, candidates would write first about one source, then about the other, and then claim that they were similar or different, but without ever directly matching content from the two sources to show how. Better answers moved on to other kinds of comparisons. This could be on the causes of the riots, but here answers often missed the true comparison by claiming that the pictures showed different causes. They did not; both showed that the tollgates were a cause, but Source B suggested other causes as well. The best answers looked at the attitudes towards the rioters of the artists who drew the pictures. To be able to do this properly it was first necessary to infer these attitudes correctly from the sources – the disapproval implicit in Source B, and the admiration shown in Source C.

Some candidates saw instead the reverse, or disapproval in both. Though arguments based on these misinterpretations were given some credit, they were clearly flawed.

### Question 3

When candidates are presented with a question in the ‘Are you surprised?’ format, they can be confident that somewhere in the source there will be something surprising. There will, of course, also be aspects that are unsurprising since, in the final analysis, any source will be explicable in its historical context. However, the true focus of the question is not simply on the identification of something which is or is not surprising but on how effectively the surprise, or lack of it, is explained. In this question, the source was genuinely surprising since the chief law officer in the area was sympathising with the rioters. Many answers said no more than this, missing the need to explain why they were surprised. Alternatively, the source could be seen as unsurprising, since the law officer makes it clear that force will be used to bring the riots to an end. Again, why is this unsurprising? There were many possible approaches to providing an explanation: using the context of the riots, the broader context of fear of revolution, cross-reference to other sources, understanding the nature of the job that the law officer was expected to do, and so on. There were many instances where candidates used these approaches effectively, and what these answers generally had in common was a clear awareness of the requirements of the question. Are you surprised – yes or no? What is it that you are/are not surprised by? Why are you surprised/not surprised by this? All three of these elements are necessary in constructing an explanation.

### Question 4

This question again raised the issue of the difference between what a source says and what it means. The source offered indications both of the guilt and of the lack of guilt of the Rebecca leader. It stated that the jury found him not guilty, but it also made it clear not only that there had been witnesses to him taking part in destroying a tollhouse, but also that he admitted being present. Using these details of the source content to discuss the issue of guilt constituted a reasonable answer, and most candidates were able to do this. Better answers moved on from these surface details and asked questions about the source. For example, using contextual knowledge of the riots or, for example, of the Bloody Code, it was possible to question the jury’s verdict of not guilty. Perhaps the jury would sympathise with the rioters, or would fear the consequences of reaching a guilty verdict, or simply felt that exposing the rioter to the full punishment of the law would not fit the nature of the crime – all of these could explain why a guilty man might be found not guilty. Finally, a good proportion of answers noted that the source itself was questionable. A letter written by a man who was in charge of policing in the area, and whose own property had been damaged in the riots, would have an obvious interest in having the Rebecca leader found guilty. He even refers to the jury as ‘our jury’. Not, then, the most reliable of witnesses, which might indicate that the Rebecca leader could have been not guilty.

### Question 5

Whenever a question about source utility is asked, a majority of answers will reply that it is useful for providing information (ie what the source says about the matter in question) or that it is not useful because there is information that it does not provide. Such answers receive a good level of credit, particularly if they deal both with useful and not useful, but never constitute the best approach to the question. Often the issue of reliability is important in utility questions; whether or not one can believe what a source says is bound to influence one’s judgement of its utility. However, this still leaves open the fundamental point that even an unreliable source can still be useful as evidence of something – it all depends on how it is to be used. In this question lack of reliability was not an issue, but the source’s surprising trustworthiness was. Rather like Source D, Source F was produced by the authorities, yet it demonstrated sympathy for the rioters. It was, then useful as evidence of this attitude – a point made by many candidates, whose answers were therefore clearly superior to those who based their judgement on utility solely on surface information. It was though, possible to push this argument one step further, and make a point about the source’s counter-intuitive reliability serving to enhance its utility.

The source was written by the commander of the troops sent to Wales to deal with the riots. You would expect such a man to be hostile to the rioters. The fact, then, that he is sympathetic makes his evidence about the abuses committed by the Turnpike Trusts even more credible, and thus useful. A significant number of candidates were able to include this line of reasoning in their answers.

### **Question 6**

The last question always adopts the same format, requiring candidates to test a hypothesis against the evidence offered by all the sources. The set of sources always contains evidence both for and against the hypothesis, and the task for candidates is to use the sources to show how. Some sources are more straightforward to use than others. For example, most candidates could see that the commander in Source F was sympathetic in suggesting, say, that an enquiry should be set up into the running of the Turnpike Trusts. Some sources, like Source D, can be used for both sides of the hypothesis; many answers said this source was sympathetic because the High Sheriff said he was fighting the battles of the Rebeccas, but unsympathetic in calling them childish and absurd. Other sources need to be correctly interpreted in order to be used appropriately; Source B, clearly hostile to the Rebeccas, could not then be used to argue sympathy merely because it mentioned the causes of the riots. A key issue in this particular question was that it asked about the attitudes of 'people'. It was therefore essential that the use of a source included, at least implicitly, some awareness of the 'people' whose attitudes were being discussed.

## A953 Controlled Assessment Report

The recent moderation process for A953 produced considerable praise for the quality of work provided by a great many candidates and the efforts made by many centres to mark the responses accurately. There was a broad range of feeling that at the third run through of controlled assessment, the vast majority of centres and, consequently, their candidates have understood the key principles of the assessment. The standards for both the History Around Us and Modern World Study were equally high, but tended to be based around the same key features.

The quality of the teaching programme is critical in achieving a large measure of success with a group. Providing the breadth of context to allow candidates to confidently tackle the task and sharpening source skills with provision of a good range of evidence is essential and appears to be the norm in History Departments across the country. To quote a senior moderator in support of this:

“Taken as a whole the work seen was impressive. It would seem that, three years into Controlled Assessment, centres are in tune with its requirements and that candidates are well prepared for its demands. Appropriate sites have been selected: mills, castles and stately homes, for example, have all worked well; modern studies have been well taught and supported by a variety of relevant sources. Teachers are to be commended, I think, on their ingenuity and resourcefulness.”

Clearly, there are many examples from centres that moderators feel displayed all the best characteristics of good historical writing. There is much that teachers can feel proud of in their candidates' work.

Whilst this creates a very positive picture for the majority, there are some centres that have not adapted well to the demands of controlled assessment. The success of the many highlights their situation even more than in a normal exam cycle. Where centres panic about the level of their achievement, it is all too easy to jump into measures which they hope will improve the situation, but that often make the picture worse. Beyond the teaching programme and correct resources, the next most important issue is to take control of the things that you can. For example, ensuring that the candidates are ready for the task by providing a mock assessment which can be used to give feedback, greatly increases candidates' awareness of the demands of the assessment and can boost their confidence. Also, providing a clear framework for candidates to help them use their planning time properly means the candidates can be left to do their own work at the appropriate time. We saw a few examples this year where these opportunities had been ignored and, instead, staff had tried to provide additional help and scaffolding at an inappropriate time.

When candidates are clear that they need to address the specific question for as much of the answer as they possibly can, using historical reasoning and sources to support their points, the majority rise to the challenge. Mock assessments allow those students who drift into narrative to be reminded of this in the correct way. Hopefully the small minority will be encouraged to use the simple guide.

Around the marking of the work this year, there were also strides forward with more centres having no or minimal mark alterations. For centres which were used to no change to their marks year after year, this is a real achievement, given the tolerances that are now applied. As the mark scheme is a constant, it would be hoped that this trend for more accurate marking will continue. The realisation that the various bullet points on the mark scheme are not of equal weighting has been a major element in why marking has advanced. The first two bullet points are the key drivers behind deciding a candidate's band and mark. There is, however, still a tendency for some centres to be too generous with better candidates and somewhat harsh with weaker ones.

From the administrative aspect, many centres set exemplary standards in both timing for the delivery of the materials to the moderators and in terms of how their candidates are presented with front sheets. Marking commentaries to help the moderators understand the marks given are also often of a high calibre. Unfortunately, because generic requests are made for the materials to be included in the moderation submission, other useful information such as sources are not provided. When middle-ranking candidates make rather unclear reference to sources, the provision by the centre of a copy of a source booklet or a list of the set of sources candidates drew their answers from would be of great assistance. The “old-fashioned” request for a student’s exercise book with the teaching programme in can also be really useful in making judgements.

Overall, a year of considerable progression with much for teachers involved in the process to take pride in. Please note that individual feedback from moderators comes through on the OCR Interchange site. Many of these reports are be positive and helpful in nature. For many centres, there was real evidence that their candidates had been set a valid challenge and had risen to that challenge.



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**1 Hills Road**  
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**OCR Customer Contact Centre**

**Education and Learning**

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: [general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk)

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