

History A (Schools History Project)

General Certificate of Secondary Education J415

OCR Report to Centres

June 2013

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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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OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

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A951/11-14 Medicine Through Time/Crime and Punishment Through Time Development Study/Depth Study

General comments

The overall standard of responses was similar to last year with an encouraging number of candidates demonstrating the ability to select, recall and deploy relevant knowledge to respond to some challenging questions. There were many thoughtful answers, with candidates interpreting sources carefully and thinking through the full implications of questions. It is always good to see SHP candidates responding well to familiar topics from new perspectives. This is the hallmark of SHP history and many candidates respond well.

Medicine remains the more popular of the two Development Studies. Of the Depth Studies, American West had a larger entry than Germany and it was encouraging to see the entry for Elizabethan England increase somewhat and that for Britain 1815-51 remain relatively steady.

Rubric errors were few, with a small number of candidates attempting both Development Studies. However, there was a worrying pattern of candidates answering some questions reasonably well but unaccountably missing out other questions entirely. The overall quality of the candidates' spelling, punctuation and grammar was reasonable and often matched their historical knowledge and understanding.

There are important issues that apply across all the options. These were not, by any means, applicable to the majority of candidates but were the commonest weaknesses detected by examiners. Firstly, some candidates struggled with the relationship between their knowledge and the sources. Knowledge should be used to understand a source, e.g. the significance of wind-pump in American West Source B, or to evaluate a source through an informed use of the provenance (it is often useful to consider the purpose of the author/artist), or to explain other factors that are not present in the source as in American West Question 5(a). It is up to the candidate to decide which of these uses of knowledge is appropriate for any given question.

Secondly, candidates need to be clear about the difference between a description or an identification of a reason, and an explanation of that reason. Explanations often involve two stages instead of one. For example, in response to the question about why Indians were nomadic, it is possible to suggest that this was because they had to follow the buffalo. To turn this into an explanation it is necessary to say why the Indians were dependent on the buffalo.

Some candidates still struggle to cope with 'importance' questions. For example, in Medicine Question 2(b) the importance of the Four Humours to Greek medicine is not explained by describing the theory and the treatments connected to it. What is required is an explanation of why the theory mattered - e.g. it was the first natural explanation, or it provided doctors with a method of diagnosis and linked this to possible treatments.

It is always vital to stress to candidates the importance of reading questions carefully. This was demonstrated this year by the candidates who in response to Germany 6(a) wrote about all aspects of the Treaty of Versailles, or those who in response to Medicine 4(a), (b) and (c) based their answers on examples before the nineteenth century.

Finally, it is important to stress that there were many candidates who did read the questions carefully and had the necessary knowledge, understanding and skill to write interesting and valid answers.

Comments on specific questions

Medicine through Time

Question 1

In response to part (a) a good number of candidates were able to use their contextual knowledge to explain why they were either surprised or not surprised by the sources. For example, some candidates explained that they were surprised by the criticism of Galen when he was such a revered figure. Other candidates focused more on the date and placed their answers in the context of the Medical Renaissance. This led to them not being surprised by the content of the sources. The best answers used the two sources together and explained possible relationships between them in the context of the Medical Renaissance.

Part (b) produced many responses where candidates were able to use their knowledge to explain the treatment described in the source - e.g. the use of the Four Humours. Only the best answers, and there were not many of these, focused on the reference to the Medical Renaissance in the question and explained that the sources suggest that the Renaissance did not have much impact on treatments used.

Part (c) was either answered very well or very badly. Many candidates were able to explain that the cartoon was published to discourage people from using quack doctors. Other candidates did not realise that the cartoon is about quacks or had little idea of who quacks were.

Question 2

This was easily the most popular of the optional questions. Part (a) was answered well with many candidates familiar with the details of a stay at an Asclepion. The best answers to (b) focused on 'important'. They wrote about the importance of the theory being a natural one, how it led to treatments and a healthy life-style. Less good answers either described the theory or did not read the question carefully enough and wrote about the importance of the Four Humours in later periods. Part (c) produced many good answers. Candidates were generally familiar with contributions made by both Egyptians and Romans.

Question 3

This question was not answered by many candidates. Part (a) produced few good answers. Candidates were able to mention the lack of training of nurses and their poor quality (some mentioning Dickens), but the answers too quickly wandered into developments in the second half of the century. In response to (b) there were some good explanations of the importance of Lister's use of his carbolic spray but some candidates wrote about anaesthetics. For part (c) Nightingale's contributions to the development of nursing and the planning of hospitals was well known. Surprisingly, less was known about Seacole. It was clear that most candidates thought that Nightingale was more significant. They could have completed their answers by explaining why Seacole's work had little importance in the history of medicine.

Question 4

This question was the least popular of the three offered and answers often suffered from careless reading of the words of the questions. For part (a) not a few candidates wrote about examples from outside the nineteenth or twentieth centuries, while others confused Jenner, Pasteur and Fleming. In response to (b) there were again answers based on developments outside the nineteenth century. Part (c) was answered better with sound knowledge and understanding being demonstrated of *laissez faire*, the work of Chadwick and Snow, the Public Health Acts and the National Health Service.

Crime and Punishment Through Time

Question 1

Source A was a challenging one but many candidates coped with it well, explaining that the source provides evidence about attitudes towards taxes and therefore explains why smuggling took place. Part (b) was answered less well. The best answers focused either on the different types of smugglers there were to be found in the eighteenth century or on the provenance and purpose of the two sources. These were used to explain why the sources give different impressions of smugglers. Weaker answers did not go beyond describing the different impressions. In response to part (c) too many answers were restricted to the information in the source. Better answers focused on 'how far' and explained other reasons why the government found it difficult to catch and punish smugglers.

Question 2

Questions 2 and 3 were more popular than Question 4 although the latter produced better answers. In Question 2, part (a) was answered well with many candidates able to provide accurate information about the nature and workings of tithings. Many candidates struggled with part (b) and produced vague answers lacking specific examples such as: loss of rights for women once married, only sons inherited if there were sons and daughters, women were punished as scolds, most people accused of being witches were women and the fact that women were not executed if pregnant. Few candidates were able to survey developments across the Middle Ages for part (c), with the best answers just coming up with a few isolated examples of success and failure.

Question 3

Part (a) was generally answered well with many candidates able to write about the aims, the nature and working, and the effectiveness of the Bloody Code. There were also many good answers to part (b) although there was a tendency to identify factors such as the cheapness of guns, the use of isolated places, the status of many of those robbed and the ineffectiveness of local constables without explaining them as reasons for why highway robbery was a serious problem for the government. In answer to part (c) too many candidates made conditions in Australia sound like those in a holiday camp. Some rebalancing is needed with this topic. Many candidates appeared to be unfamiliar with the dreadful conditions in places such as Tasmania. Many also missed one of the important aims of transportation - to reform criminals. For most candidates, transportation was a failure because it led to more people committing crimes because they all wanted to get to Australia to make their fortunes by finding lots of gold.

Question 4

Few candidates attempted this question. Part (a) was answered well with plenty of details being offered about the early days of the police force. In response to part (b) candidates explained tollgates as a cause of the riots but struggled for a second reason. The best answers explained factors such as the new ownership of the turnpike trusts, tithes and the New Poor Law. There were some interesting answers to (c) with good points being made on both sides of the argument.

Elizabethan England

Question 5

Part (a) was answered by some candidates by merely paraphrasing the contents of Source A. However, there were many better answers with contextual knowledge being used to explain Elizabeth's reasons for writing the letter. Most candidates spent some time in response to part (b) describing the surface differences between Sources B and C. Although there were better answers that did contrast the portrayal of Mary in Source C as e.g. innocent with the rather factual representation in Source B, it was disappointing to see so many candidates failing to get beyond the details of Source C. In part (c) there were many good answers where candidates focused on future relations with Scotland and on Elizabeth's reluctance to have Mary executed.

Question 6

Part (a) produced many good answers with candidates able to provide a series of relevant problems such as religious divisions, the returning Puritans, the demands of Catholics and Puritans and the international situation. Some candidates referred nicely to 'the roller-coaster ride' of England's recent religious history. There were a few candidates who failed to restrict their answers to religion. In response to (b) many candidates explained Elizabeth's twin aims of unity (or at least compliance) and control. These were often explained very well. There were also plenty of good answers to (c) with many candidates reaching informed and mature conclusions based on argument and evidence. It was encouraging to see much accurate and relevant knowledge of Puritans.

Question 7

This question was slightly less popular than Question 6 and the answers were generally not as good. However, part (a) was answered well with much detail of the different types of vagrants and their activities. Most candidates were able to focus on activities and few wandered into punishments. Answers to part (b) often included much detail but the clearest and the best answers were also well organised. The plan that worked most effectively was to focus on the treatment of the deserving poor and then move on to the undeserving. There were some good answers to part (c) which focused on aspects such as the increasing, the wandering and the masterless nature of the poor as well as the political uses to which plays could be put.

Britain 1815-1851

Question 5

There were many outstanding answers to most of the questions on Britain 1815-1851. However, part (a) in Question 5 was not answered quite so well, with a number of candidates unable to connect the riots in Source A with the campaign for parliamentary reform. The better answers focused on not just the events portrayed in the source, but the possible reasons for the publication of the drawing at that time. Most candidates responded well to Source B, which is a challenging source, although some did misread it. There were, however, many excellent answers that responded to Peel and explained how the supporters of the Act got some, but not all, of what they wanted. Part (c) was answered well with many candidates thoroughly familiar with both Lovett and O'Connor and what they respectively stood for in the Chartist movement.

Question 6

Questions 6 and 7 were equally popular. In part (a) of Question 6 there were some rather general answers that could have applied to almost any period, but the better answers focused on details that could be related to the post-war slump. Criticisms of the Speenhamland System were explained in detail for part (b) with only a few candidates falling into the trap of just describing how the system worked. There were some excellent answers to part (c). Candidates had detailed knowledge of the conditions inside the workhouses but the best answers also explained factors such as the effect of trade slumps, or seasonal employment, in the north.

Question 7

Most candidates knew the relevant facts to answer part (a) well and only a few described railway building in general. Part (b) was answered well with the best answers ranging across a range of examples e.g. diet, employment, holidays and investment. Part (c) also produced many good answers. The opposition of landowners was well explained and the better answers went on to explain opposition from groups such as the owners of stage-coach companies, turnpike-trusts and barges.

The American West 1840-1895

Question 5

The best answers to part (a) were based on the understanding that Source A shows only one form of travel used by settlers moving west. The difficulties associated with these other forms of travel, e.g. wagon trains, were used to explain that the journey west was full of difficulties and far from easy. The weakest answers were restricted to the details in Source A. In response to (b) many candidates were able to use their contextual knowledge to explain the significance of some of the detail in the two sources e.g. the wind-pump and the sod house. The best answers went on to consider the idealised nature of Source C and the possible reasons for such a portrayal. Answers to part (c) were split into two groups - those focusing on the Boomers moving onto the land, and the better answers focusing on why they were being ejected. Manifest Destiny was prominent in many of the best answers and was used as a reason for being surprised.

Question 6

This question was far more popular than Question 7. Part (a) was generally answered very well. Answers to part (b) surprised examiners. There were many good answers with candidates covering reasons such as the weather, the buffalo and the notion of life as a circle, but there were also a number of candidates who failed to attempt the question even though they had mentioned buffalo in other answers. Answers to (c) were stronger on the reservations and their impact on the Indian way of life and culture. When some answers moved on to the army they became rather general. Only a few of the best candidates took the opportunity of linking the army with the Indians being forced on to reservations.

Question 7

There were very few answers to this question. Answers to part (a) were too general and lacked reference to details such as riding the line, checking the cattle and fences and living in line-camps. Dangers and difficulties were often identified but not explained for part (b) and little precise knowledge was demonstrated in many answers for part (c).

Germany c. 1919-1945

Question 5

The poster in part (a) was generally well understood and also placed in the context of the early 1930s. A good number of candidates explained the message of the poster but many went on to explain its purpose in context. In response to part (b) many candidates compared the details of the two sources but the best candidates realised the possibilities in evaluating the sources. This had an important bearing on whether one proved the other to be reliable. A few candidates were surprised by Source D in part (c) but most were at least able to use their knowledge of general anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany to explain a lack of surprise. The best answers placed their answers in the context of Nazi indoctrination of children.

Question 6

This question was less popular than Question 7. Unfortunately, in part (a) there were quite a number of careless answers where candidates ignored (or did not understand) the word 'territorial' and wrote about all of the other terms. The best answers to part (b) were able to offer genuine explanations. Less good answers contained as much knowledge but tended to write narratives of the events rather than explanations. Part (c) produced many good answers with explanations of the weakness of Weimar particularly good.

Question 7

Part (a) was generally answered less well than parts (b) and (c). Some candidates had no idea who the Gestapo were and even the better answers showed some confusion with the SS. Part (b) was answered well. Many candidates produced well-supported reasons with as much detail on the girls as on the boys. In part (c) there was some excellent analysis of the opposition groups such as Swing and the Edelweiss Pirates. For success, candidates tended to focus on propaganda and only the best candidates referred to factors such as full employment and 'Strength Through Joy'.

A952/21 Developments in British Medicine, 1200-1945

General Comments

Candidates displayed pleasing levels of contextual knowledge about nineteenth century public health, and good numbers of candidates were able to successfully apply that knowledge as they engaged with the task of evaluating the source material presented. Candidates had been prepared well for the examination, and they had clearly enjoyed studying this topic. There were very few scripts which demonstrated a failure to either engage with the topic or complete the required questions.

Responses to Individual Questions

Question 1

This was a more difficult source from which to draw inferences than in recent years, and candidates had to work harder to spot what they could learn about public health from it. As a result, some candidates had a tendency to use contextual knowledge about the growth of towns or the treatment of disease to answer the question. Whilst this was often relevant to the topic, candidates need to remember that this question requires analysis of the particular source. The burning of tar and an explanation of the miasma theory was a popular way to reach L3 and often candidates considered little else. In addition, many candidates focussed on the invalid inference that burning tar would be a toxic hazard and taint the meat. Answers reaching the top of L3 tended to mention 'Public Health was bad' in the very first sentence and then go on to lack of hygiene and a limited understanding of the spread of disease. The spread of 3 marks in L3 very much helped with differentiation. Mention of poor living conditions was sometimes invalidated by reference to back-to-back housing. Some considered the limitation of the source to reach alternative L3.

Question 2

Questions about the utility of sources have not been well answered in previous examination series. It was therefore very pleasing to see that candidates made a much better effort in answering this particular question. Some candidates found it relatively easy to reach L4 quoting one illustration of poor living conditions backed by a brief reference to 'Laissez-faire' or to the voluntary nature of the 1848 Public Health Act, while others wrote detailed, wide ranging and well supported answers, using both details in the source, the lack of understanding about the causes of disease (noting that the source pre-dated Pasteur's germ theory) and knowledge of the impact of industrialisation on the growth of towns and cities and the impact on living conditions. Candidates preferred to use contextual knowledge rather than other sources to further support their answers. Candidates who said this source was not useful focussed on the limitations and typicality of the source.

Question 3

Some candidates find comparing two sources a challenge and will describe the sources and then just state baldly they are 'similar/different'. However, once more candidates clearly understood the similarities and differences between the work of Chadwick and Snow. They recognised that both men acknowledged the importance of clean water supply and both men

wrote with the purpose of trying to bring about changes in living conditions. A pleasing number of candidates recognised that the key difference in the two reports was their differing explanations of the cause of disease. Chadwick emphasised miasma whilst Snow's investigations led him to the conclusion that cholera was water-borne. Additionally, some candidates noticed that Chadwick's report investigated the impact of industrialisation on the labouring classes, whilst Snow found that cholera affected 'rich and poor alike'. Those candidates who tried to compare the methodologies of the two reports were less successful.

Question 4

Another question that allowed for differentiation, especially with the spread of marks at L3, which many reached with reference to contextual knowledge rather than to cross reference. Many understood the idea of 'laissez-faire' and realised that the extract from 'The Times' was not to be read literally, but represented the views of the ruling classes towards the public health needs of the poor. There was a good deal of impressive knowledge on display, especially with regard to the opposition faced by Chadwick, the divisions in Parliament between the so-called 'Clean Party' and 'Dirty Party' and Chadwick's subsequent removal from office. This knowledge was not always applied to this particular source, and some candidates made the mistake of almost ignoring the source or the question. L4 was rarely achieved because of a perceived reluctance to use other sources. For example John Snow and cholera would be mentioned as contextual knowledge rather than direct quotes from source D and similarly 'laissez-faire' without quoting source B.

Question 5

Candidates were very familiar with this source. They understood the context well. There were many references to previous outbreaks of cholera; the voluntary nature of the 1848 Public Health Act; the 'Great Stink' of 1858, and Bazalgette's work on the sewer system of London. Unfortunately, some candidates were unable to relate this knowledge to this source. They sometimes commented on the message of the source, but well-constructed answers about the precise purpose of this source were less frequent. Candidates need to address details in the source to show the cartoonist's purpose. They could have made reference to the cartoon's scary images as an attempt to encourage the raising of money to improve the sanitation in the City of London, or the more direct message of the dangers faced by the public in the water of the River Thames.

Question 6

Some candidates provided very good answers to Q1 to Q5 but then failed to do themselves justice in Q6 because either writing an essay style answer dealing with several sources was too challenging, or they made valid generalisations but without identifying sources or using specific quotes. The fact that many of the sources could be used to both support and oppose the proposition should have made this an easier task. Candidates must avoid making passing reference to the sources. They must quote from the sources directly and ensure their quotes are used to address the specific question. Those candidates who achieved this did well. A few candidates spent a lot of time discussing the concept that 'It's not that they didn't care but they didn't understand'. If this was justified in relation to the question, they sometimes gained reward.

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

General Comments

This paper was about the Suffragettes. The sources and the questions were accessible to the great majority of candidates. It was a rarity to see an incomplete script. The topic was clearly well known, with answers to several of the questions often being supported by detailed contextual knowledge. Indeed, high level answers were often defined by the nature of the specific contextual knowledge required. However, there were also occasions when factual knowledge was not used in a relevant manner, but was included without thought to the question being asked. A good example of this was inclusion of unnecessary detail on the career of Emily Davison which found its way into answers to **Question 1**

Nonetheless, there appears to be a continuing improvement in the demonstration of the source-handling skills demanded by this paper. Not long ago, for example, questions requiring the comparison of sources would reveal significant shortcomings in candidates' understanding of what would count as similarities or differences. Now the idea that a valid comparison can only be made when a common criterion is used as the basis for the judgement seems to be well understood. Similarly, when evaluating a source's reliability, most candidates are now well aware that working only with the provenance of a source will not get an answer very far. On **Question 3**, therefore, a variety of techniques for assessing the reliability of the source content were used – analysis of the language used, analysis of purpose, cross-reference to other sources or to contextual knowledge.

One last general point: all positive answers to the questions on this paper are rewarded according to the level of attainment demonstrated. However, there is one way of failing to score, and that is not to answer the question. There were, then, a few candidates who, on **Question 4**, never stated whether or not they were surprised, or, on **Question 5**, never gave a reason why the photograph was published. The easiest way to avoid this problem is for candidates to begin each answer with a sentence which directly reflects the wording of the question asked – *'I am surprised by this source because.....'*, *'I think the reason why the photograph was published in 1913 is.....'* and so on.

Comments on Individual Questions

Question 1

Almost all candidates could make at least one inference about the Suffragettes from the source. Making an inference about Emily Davison was equally acceptable. The most usual inferences were that they were 'determined', 'brave', 'willing to go to great lengths', but there were several others that worked just as well: for example 'cunning', 'not always violent', and even 'religious'. The key to success on this question, though, is not merely making the inference, but demonstrating from the source content how the inference can be supported. As mentioned in the general comments above, there were some candidates who seemed to think that the prompt in the question to 'use the source and your knowledge' gave them licence to write all they knew about Emily Davison. This was not relevant to answering the question '*What can you tell from this source about the Suffragettes?*'

Question 2

The obvious surface similarities and differences between the two sources helped most candidates to produce a range of valid comparisons of content, such as both showed women fighting the police, and winning, yet one showed several women ganging up on one policeman, whilst the other showed many policemen ganging up on one woman. A point that confused many candidates was that Source B referred to Suffragists, yet showed the women being violent. Since this conflicted with their contextual knowledge, they struggled to make sense of what was going on, rather than pondering why the cartoonist might have wanted to represent the women in this way, which was the key to producing a higher level answer. Content comparisons alone are unlikely ever to constitute the highest level answers to comparison questions. Candidates should always look for something more, and the obvious route in this question was to explore the attitudes/purposes of the cartoonists. Many candidates who did this concluded that both cartoonists were hostile to women's suffrage, and these answers were well rewarded. However, whilst Source B was certainly hostile, a much more plausible interpretation of Source C was that it was sympathetic to the Suffragettes, and the best candidates therefore perceived a difference in the cartoonists' opinions.

Question 3

This question produced a wide range of answers, interestingly enough, because it was possible to argue effectively both that the source was reliable, and that it was not. The basic building block of most answers was first to note that the source was produced by the WSPU, and was therefore likely to demonstrate a pro-Suffragette bias, which would render it unreliable. Fortunately most answers then went on to provide further analysis. Many noted the essential plausibility of the account, given what we know about the way Suffragettes were treated by the authorities. However, at this level answers did not provide specific contextual knowledge to support the argument that the source was reliable. Some good answers argued that the source used emotive language and that this rendered it unreliable. As long as examples of the loaded language were provided – 'Atrocities in an English prison'/'she had dared to protest against the political slavery', etc – these answers received a good level of credit, but they still stopped short of asking themselves the crucial question of *why* the Suffragettes would be using such language – in other words, what was their purpose in publishing this pamphlet? Some of the very best answers addressed this issue of purpose, and argued that the source was basically unreliable because it was being used by the Suffragettes as a means of advancing their cause, of winning sympathy and support, and of discrediting the authorities. Finally, many candidates looked at what the source had to say about the treatment of Miss Martin and Miss Hall, and their reactions to this, particularly the reference to hunger striking, and linked this to specific contextual knowledge of force-feeding and the Cat and Mouse Act (allowed as evidence of the authorities' response to hunger striking, even though it was not passed until 1913), to reach the conclusion that the source was reliable in what it portrayed – another persuasive approach.

Question 4

As always with an 'Are you surprised' question, the weakest candidates merely identified aspects of the source that they found surprising or not, and failed to explain why. Most explanations relied on general contextual knowledge of the Suffragettes; that is, they would have applied at any time during the Suffragettes' campaign, and were not specific to 1913. A typical argument would have been 'surprised that the police were prepared to help the Suffragettes, as I thought that relations between the police and the Suffragettes were poor'. There were all kinds of possible arguments at this level. However, other approaches were possible. There were arguments based on the actions of the police which were internal to the contents of the source. These might, for example, have expressed surprise that the police told the women that it was safe to leave the Suffrage Club, even though the mob was waiting for them. It was also possible

to base an explanation on cross-reference to other sources, perhaps by comparing male violence towards the women in Source E with the treatment of the Suffragettes in Source D to conclude that it was unsurprising. The best answers, however, provided an explanation based on the specific context of 1913. In the light of the increasing violence of the Suffragettes' campaign in 1913, the violence of the mob became more explicable.

Question 5

When asked 'why' something was done, the answer must contain a reason. With regard to the publication of Source F, the most plausible reasons could be categorised as messages, purposes and context; that is, to say/tell something, to bring about something, or because of what was happening. Weaker answers fell into two further categories, information (to show what had happened) and audience interest (because people would want to know about it). In categorising answers, messages will invariably be regarded as weaker than purposes, since the message is merely the way in which the purpose is achieved. Context explains the issue of '*why then*', but on its own does not explain either message or purpose. In short, each of these aspects is part of a fully developed answer, so candidates should ideally aim to explain how the message helps bring about the purpose in its specific context. What then was Source F saying? Many suggested, for example, that the reason for publication was to show the Suffragettes as dangerous and irresponsible. Why was this a particular issue in 1913? A contextual reason for publication would cover the specific events of the Suffragettes' campaign in that year – because of Emily Davison and the Derby, the Cat and Mouse Act, the heightened violence. So what was publication of the photograph intended to achieve? However expressed, the fundamental purpose behind publication of this photograph was to discredit the Suffragettes, and to try and ensure that they did not get the vote.

Question 6

The final question always asks candidates to test a given hypothesis against the evidence offered within all the sources. The most effective approach is to take each of the sources in turn, and to show, using the source content, how it offers either support for or challenge to the hypothesis. Sometimes this content use is straightforward. The hypothesis to be tested this year was whether or not the Suffragettes were a serious threat to law and order. Looking at Source B, one can say that it supports the hypothesis because it shows the women fighting a policeman – this is sufficient in itself to demonstrate that they were a threat. But candidates found it significantly harder to argue that they were not a threat. For example, many took Source E and argued that it showed they were not a threat because the men were the threat instead. This is avoiding the issue – the fact that the men were a threat does not mean that the women were not. It needed some additional explanation – perhaps suggesting that the women could hardly be a threat to law and order if the police were prepared to help them – to clinch the point. Only on Source A did candidates find it easy to explain that they were not a threat. Here Emily's desire merely to ask a question, and her willingness to go peacefully with the policemen, was obvious material to use. A point made frequently in past reports has been that candidates must be aware that there will always be ways both of supporting and challenging the hypothesis, yet there were a significant number of answers this year that were convinced that all the sources showed the Suffragettes were a threat.

A953 History Around Us OR Modern World Study Controlled Assessment

There was plenty of evidence that the majority of centres have increasingly come to terms with the demands of this assessment and find it manageable to operate. This was illustrated by the very large number of centres who broadly complied with every aspect of the setting, management, marking and, finally, administration of the unit. Moderators report that marking is now firmly based on the generic mark scheme with most centres needing little adjustment. Further positives are the standard of annotation and summative comments, which helped the moderation process. One slight irritation is that for many centres, it is difficult to judge candidates who comment on “source X” when the source booklet they have used has not been included in the package sent to moderators.

Most centres have now shown the confidence in their own teaching programmes and resources to leave students to plan their own answers, with the necessary process of selection and deployment, which the vast majority of candidates take in their stride. However, a very small number of centres still insist on trying to give their candidates a steer with a broad plan for the answer. This runs counter to the parameters set for the assessment, but there is a much worse issue than this. Inevitably, and as again brought out by this year’s examples, this approach backfires because candidates fail to focus immediately on the specific task. They tend instead to wait until the conclusion to really deal with the question. Some other centres show a fixed view of what the answer is, and tend to penalise candidates who show other inferences or interpretations based on the evidence they have selected. Whilst these answers are perfectly justifiable, as they do not fit “the plan” they are under-marked. Marking really needs to follow the generic mark scheme, with an open mind.

There was a pleasing tendency to retain the crucial internal moderation process by bigger centres to ensure the right order of merit for their candidates. Undoubtedly other centres carried out internal moderation, but this was not made clear by the sample of candidates selected.

Evaluation of evidence remains a problem for a certain number of candidates within a few centres. The fact that it is not a widespread problem, but clustered, suggests that some teachers are still putting an undue emphasis on evaluating evidence. This usually has the effect of causing individuals to lose the flow of their answers. Using evidence to analyse the task, make inferences or build a stronger argument through the evidence offered, is usually much better than continually evaluating sources. In the final analysis, if evidence is really so suspect, should candidates be selecting it as part of their answers?

One issue that was raised in reports that needs attention quickly is the observation that some centres have tended to ignore the word count for the assessment. Individually this is a problem, because it encourages bright candidates to lose marks because their additional writing is often not so well focussed on the task. For candidates submitting their controlled assessment in 2015, the rules on word count will be strengthened, with nothing beyond 2000 words being marked. Teachers in charge of the assessment are also advised to look carefully at the new requirements for the marking of the task which come into force at the same time.

Congratulations to the great majority who now use the assessment effectively allowing their candidates to produce some pleasing history. Moderators have reported considerable numbers of tasks where the final product has been genuinely interesting, based around sound historical skills. Many also report that the candidates within centres seem to have approached their work with enthusiasm, judging by the way they have written up their answers. These comments, alongside the consistent level of marking, suggest most deserve a big pat on the back.

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