

GCE

History A

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **AS H105**

OCR Report to Centres June 2017

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

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British period study and enquiry

Y131/01 Alfred and the Making of England 871–1016

General Comments

The paper produced a number of very good responses, with many candidates displaying the key skills required to score well on both sections of the paper. Knowledge was often of a very high level and candidates were able to manipulate it to address the issues in the question and place the sources in their historical context. Judgements were usually well supported, with the focus on analysis rather than description of events.

Question 1

This was perhaps the weakest of the responses as candidates sometimes lacked the precise knowledge of Alfred's programme of study and therefore wrote in more general terms about learning. However, most responses did attempt to apply some knowledge to the Source and were able to comment on its provenance. The stronger answers reached a supported judgement about the utility of the source as evidence for what he wanted children to study, rather than just producing a more general assessment.

Question 2

The sources were handled well and most responses were not only able to explain the view of the source about why Alfred promoted learning, but were able to consider the provenance and apply precise knowledge directly to the source in order to evaluate the validity of the view it offered about the issue in the question. Most responses were balanced in their treatment of the sources, although sometimes less attention was given to B, perhaps because it had been discussed in Question 1. Similarly candidates attempted to use both provenance and historical knowledge to evaluate, which is a requirement of the higher levels. Judgements were usually about the sources and whether they supported the view in the question, rather than whether knowledge about the topic allowed the view to be supported.

Question 3

Candidates displayed a good depth of knowledge about Edward the Elder and were usually able to analyse a range of issues. However, some responses tended to explain why Edward was successful rather than focus on 'how successful' and this limited the mark that could be achieved. Issues such as the threat from the Vikings, Scotland and Wales, the succession issue and Scandinavian settlement featured in many answers and most were able to make supported judgements about whether the problems these created were dealt with successfully, with some arguing that Edward was fortunate in some areas but was successful in many respects.

Question 4

The question required candidates to evaluate the relative importance of factors that enabled Athelstan to establish himself as king of all England. Most were able to consider a range of issues and these often included his capture of York in 927 and its significance, his ability to deal with the threats from the Scots and the Vikings. Some answers considered his development of links with the continent and argued that this was important in providing valuable allies at a time that the kingdom was expanding. The issue of developing internal stability was considered and some made reference to the legal and administrative changes. There was a wide range of issues that candidates could consider and examiners did not expect them all to be considered in the time allowed, what mattered was the quality of the analysis and judgement.

Y132/01 Anglo-Saxon England and the Norman Conquest 1035–1107

General comments

A number of candidates used the wrong source in Question 1, and many essays were seen that were little more than lists and that therefore did not reach the higher levels.

Question 1.

A surprising number of candidates used source A instead of C - perhaps because it was the first source listed in the paper. Those who used the correct source were often aware of Eadmer, as an author, particularly his links to Anselm. Some candidates were aware of hagiography and the *Vita Anselmi*, but most simply described him as Anselm's companion. Mid-level answers focused more broadly on William Rufus's relationship with the Church. These answers, as expected, referred rather generally to immorality at court and the sale of bishoprics. Most answers were able to focus in some measure on Rufus's relationship with Anselm - notably, the Council of Rockingham. However, better answers were able to note the broader context of the Norman kings and papal relations by referring, briefly, to the Conqueror's links to Rome and refusal to pay homage to Gregory VII.

Question 2.

Some candidates were able to handle source A quite skilfully by recognising that, although it appeared to show positive relations, underneath it actually demonstrated a troubled relationship. This was achieved through context because candidates were aware of the nature of the compromise Rufus was forced to strike with Anselm to secure his appointment. However, B was generally not handled well. Candidates found it difficult to link it to the question, but better answers often mentioned the Conqueror's relationship with Gregory VII. Source C did not pose much of a problem because Eadmer was well known. In a number of answers only C was evaluated, perhaps because candidates immediately recognised Eadmer's name. Source D from Florence of Worcester was not always handled well and some candidates referred to him as 'she'.

Question 3.

This was the more popular question and candidates were able to list, usually in chronological order, the rebellions against William during this period. It was pleasing that few candidates strayed outside this period; where this did occur, it was common to find reference to the 1075 rebellion. Eustace of Boulogne's 1067 attack on Dover was usually omitted. Some candidates decided to address the reasons why the rebellions weren't successful (such as a lack of leadership) without properly addressing the rebellions themselves. Knowledge was often uneven: understanding of the 1069 rebellion was usually mixed. The sequence of events is difficult to grasp, but there needs to be greater understanding of why this rebellion was so dangerous. Malcolm of Scotland's role in the north also needs to be better understood. Some candidates mistakenly linked the Treaty of Abernethy (1072) to the 1069 rebellion.

Question 4.

Candidates found this question more challenging. Too many answers simply listed various factors illustrating change or continuity over the Conquest that were not all linked to the question. Thus, the use of writs was included but could be only tenuously related to the question. Candidates often were aware of general points - such as the imposition of castles in urban areas - but were unable to cite supporting evidence.

Y133/01 England 1199–1272

General comments

There was a wide range of responses on this Unit, but with most responses showing an understanding of the period, even if they were not always able to relate their knowledge directly to the question set. The essays did show a contrast, with Question 4 usually producing stronger answers than Question 3. Once again the importance of reading the question carefully was an issue, with a number on Question 3 simply writing all they knew about William the Marshal rather than weighing up his role against other factors in the survival of the monarchy and therefore producing only a partial answer.

Question 1

There were very few responses which did not deal with Source B. Few candidates had difficulty in understanding the view of the source, but they were not always able to link the material to the focus of his 'fighting capacity'. Some made mention of Wendover's reference to John's luck to argue that was the only reason for his initial success, whilst others used knowledge of his campaigns to argue that when he applied himself to the task he did show military skill and balanced this against other factors in analysing the source. Most were able to make some comment about the provenance, aware of the attitude of many monastic writers to John.

Question 2

As with Question 1, the sources were understood by most candidates and were explained in relation to the question. Provenance was often better handled than the use of own knowledge in evaluating the sources, with knowledge often quite general or not well linked to the actual sources and therefore not used effectively. As with Question 1, candidates were able to comment about the authorship of A and B and make comments about John's relationship with the Church and monasteries in general, whilst Source C as a letter from John could also be evaluated in terms of both authorship and purpose. Some weaker answers drifted to a general examination of John's relationship with his barons and then attempted to use that to address the actual question.

Question 3

This was the less popular question and there were few answers that were able to weigh up William the Marshal's role in the survival of the monarchy across the period. Many simply described what the Marshal did and even in these responses often failed to go beyond the first year of Henry III's rule and did not consider his role in the minority government. A few weighed up his role against the death of John or the French invasion and how these changed perceptions. Knowledge of the early period of Henry III's rule and the role of the government was quite limited.

Question 4

Most answers weighed up the influence of the Lord Edward by comparing him with other factors in the overthrow and defeat of de Montfort, although some focused entirely on assessing the various contributions of Edward; either approach was acceptable. Knowledge of the Lord Edward and his role was often good and sometimes excellent. Some argued that it was de Montfort himself who brought about his own downfall with his arrogance, whilst other responses looked at the attitude of the nobility. Those who focused more on the Lord Edward considered issues such as his military skill and ability to unite, and contrasted some of his appeal to that of his father.

Y134/01 England 1377–1455

There were no entries for this component

Y135 England 1377–1455

General Comments

The sources did prove problematic for some and in a number of instances acted as little more than a stimulus to write all they knew about the reasons for the growing dissatisfaction with Henry VI's government. Candidates should remember that this is the source section of the paper and that responses to Questions 1 and 2 need to be driven by the Sources. The essay section saw a difference in the quality of the responses, with many answers to Question 4 being weaker.

Question 1

There were only a few answers that did not use Source C, but Centres and Candidates do need to be aware that Question 1 will not always use Source A, as was reflected in other Question 1's both this year and last. Candidates do need to read the question carefully. That said, those who did use Source C were mostly able to explain what the source was saying about the reasons for conflict and were often able to evaluate it by using a good range of contextual knowledge. However, in some answers, such was the depth of knowledge that the source almost got lost and it would be helpful for candidates to remember that this question carries only 10 marks and that precise and well-chosen own knowledge closely linked to the source will score well. The provenance proved more problematic and a number of candidates struggled to go beyond generalised comments about the writings of a chronicler.

Question 2

Candidates had little difficulty in accessing the sources, but as suggested in the general comments they were often the springboard for lengthy and detailed passages of own knowledge that was not used to evaluate the Sources. As a result, answers often became more like the traditional period study essay rather than an assessment of the Sources and their view about the extent to which Henry's policy towards France was responsible for the growing dissatisfaction. Of the three Sources, Source A was the most problematic as many simply accepted the content at face value and that Henry was able to resolve the problems with France with the result that there was little or no dissatisfaction. Source B was generally handled well and most were at least able to comment on the provenance by reference to the date. In dealing with Source C stronger answers were aware that the issue over taxes was closely linked to the war against France, whilst some simply dismissed the source and argued that neither B or C showed that Henry's policy towards France caused dissatisfaction.

Question 3

There were a number of very good answers to this question. Not only did these show a good understanding of the named factor, but they were able to link foreign policy to the actions of Warwick and Margaret to show the interplay between factors. Knowledge of the marriage negotiations was usually sound and many had a good grasp of Edward's relationship with Burgundy. In commenting on the role of Warwick in bringing about Edward's failure most were able to assess its importance alongside Warwick's personal ambition. Answers usually considered a good range of issues and many reached a supported judgement often arguing that it was either foreign policy or the ambition of Warwick that was crucial.

Question 4

Not only was this question less popular, but it tended to be less well handled. A significant number of answers showed little knowledge about Edward's management of the nobility during his second reign and resorted either to generalisations or used information from his first. There was a greater awareness of Richard's management, but often the focus of the answer was more on Bosworth and why he was defeated.

Y136/01 England 1485–1558: the Early Tudors

General Comments

The sources were not always handled well and candidates would be well advised to read them carefully and think about what their actual view is about the issue in the question. The essay topics and questions reflect the fact that in any unit questions will be set that are drawn from any two of the Key Topic areas and Centres and candidates should not expect a pattern or that one question will be set on each monarch. Similarly, the exact focus of essays may be on a broad or narrow range of issues, but will always be drawn from the Key Topic areas.

Question 1

The question required responses to focus on 'reactions to the First Prayer Book' and a number simply ignored this and evaluated the utility of the source in more general terms. Many were able to extend the information in the Source by reference to the Western rebellion, although there were some who confused it with Kett or Wyatt. The provenance of the Source was often accepted at face value with relatively few responses considering the purpose of the source, either as an attempt to justify a Second, more radical prayer book, or possibly to discredit Somerset's regime. Many commented on the harsh nature of the response by Northumberland's government and therefore argued that this suggests they were concerned by the number who had failed to attend church and some did link this to other evidence of religious disquiet.

Question 2

This question was not always well handled and many responses did not always grasp the view about the issue in the question offered by the source in question. In dealing with Source A many suggested that it was not difficult because the Prayer Book contained the pure word of God, but did not examine whether this was readily accepted and link this to the difficulties that C suggests. There was some consideration of the issue of images and altars and some were aware of the problem of destroying images, referencing Injunctions and Proclamations. However, many accepted the source at face value and did not consider its purpose. Source B was generally handled better, but few commented on the date of either this source or A to question whether it was difficult only under Somerset. Some did comment on the authorship and argued that Bucer might, because of his religious views, exaggerate the difficulties. Source C was also handled poorly by many who did not comment on the date and the fact it suggested that even at the end of the reign there were problems, although the some did question this because of the provenance and then challenged it by use of knowledge of wills or the triumph of Mary.

Question 3

This was the most popular question and many candidates were at least able to explain a range of reasons. There were some weaker answers that described events, but most had a good understanding of Catherine and her situation by the mid 1520s and Henry's concerns. There was generally a good discussion of Henry's motives with some assessing the extent to which he genuinely believed that his marriage was wrong and others considering the role of his love for Anne, often using the letters he wrote to her as evidence. Some answers focused more on factional issues and drifted from the real focus of the question.

Question 4

Not only was this question less popular, but it also saw a number of weak or poorly focused responses. Many focused on why there was opposition, rather than how much, and knowledge of those who did oppose the changes was often limited or general, with at times responses not going beyond either the Pilgrimage of Grace or Thomas More.

Y137/01 England 1547–1603: the Later Tudors

General comments

The sources were not always handled well and candidates would be well advised to read them carefully and think about what their actual view is about the issue in the question. The essay questions, despite both being on topics central to the period, were often poorly answered and often displayed a limited understanding of two key concepts associated with this period; inflation and faction.

Question 1

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Question 3

This was the less popular question in this section and few candidates showed a good grasp of the concept of faction, with many simply writing all they knew about opposition at court and in parliament. Knowledge was often quite general or not well focused on faction, or where it was present limited to Cecil and Essex at the end of the reign. The factional struggle in the early part of Elizabeth’s reign was either poorly understood or ignored, particularly in terms of either foreign policy or the rising of the Northern Earls. Although it is a challenging concept it is central and candidates do need to be aware of its significance.

Question 4

The concept of inflation was often poorly understood, or simply ignored, in a significant number of answers. When inflation was discussed it was rarely in terms of creating financial problems for Elizabeth and was seen as causing social problems and led to large amounts being written about poverty and vagrancy which, at best, had limited relevance. Candidates were happier writing about other issues, particularly war and there were a few who argued that this was the

most serious problem but only at the end of her reign because she had been able to clear her original debt. Candidates wanted to write at great length about monopolies, but again understanding was often superficial. Few considered the outdated nature of the taxation and assessment system.

Y138 The Early Stuarts and the Origins of the Civil War 1603–1660

General Comments

Although most candidates understood the sources they often failed to read the attributions and dates carefully and therefore missed crucial points. In answering Question 1 it is important that responses focus on the precise issue in the question and do not evaluate the general utility of the Source. The essay questions witnessed some disappointing responses, where candidates simply did not know enough about the Catholics or religion as a cause of the Civil War.

Question 1

There were very responses that did not use Source C. Most were able to explain the reasons offered by the Source for the introduction of the Major Generals and there was often a sound discussion of the provenance, with many commenting on the purpose of the Source, aware that Cromwell had to justify and defend their introduction to a reluctant parliament. Many were therefore able to argue that it was useful only in giving the reasons used to justify their introduction and challenging some of the comments made by Cromwell about some of those appointed and the actions they took.

Question 2

Although some did consider the nature of Source A and commented on the fact these were instructions and did not therefore show whether they were a success, most simply assumed that they showed success, clear evidence of the need to read the source and its attribution carefully. Source B was often handled well, with some commenting that it showed success as they were able to resolve issues, commenting on 'Our business goes now very well', whilst others noted that in the case of Whalley he had to exceed his powers. Some did comment on the provenance and noted that it might be an attempt to justify his behaviour and therefore less reliable. In discussing C this was often treated in a superficial manner, perhaps because candidates assumed this was allowable because it had been analysed in Question 1, but this is not the case. Others did focus on the provenance and were also able to bring in own knowledge about their dismantling after a short period to challenge the view.

Question 3

This question was not well handled as many knew insufficient about the Catholic issue and often failed to go beyond a limited treatment of the Gunpowder Plot. Some did link it to foreign issues, but most attempted to weigh up the Catholic threat against other religious issues, although understanding of the Millenary Petition and the Hampton Court Conference was also limited. Knowledge of the latter part of James' reign was also lacking.

Question 4

Although candidates were often able to offer reasons for the outbreak of the Civil War there were very few who had sufficient knowledge about religion and its role. This was surprising given the importance of religion on events in both Scotland and Ireland, as well as in terms of legislation passed in Parliament. Most were happier writing about other issues, particularly political, the role of Charles and his attempt to defend his prerogative, as well as the Five Members. There were very few responses that commented on how religion affected the formation of sides in 1642. Too many answers spent too long considering the events of Personal Rule and seemed unaware that the events of 1640-2 were crucial in causing the outbreak.

Y139 The Making of Georgian Britain 1678–c.1760

There were insufficient entries for a report.

Y140 From Pitt to Peel: Britain 1783–1853

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No. 1

The question required candidates to consider the utility of Source B as evidence about the Anti-Corn Law League but there were a small minority who instead wrote about Source A. Candidates must address provenance in their answers and apply own knowledge to test the source's utility about the issue in the question.

Stronger answers were able to display very good contextual background on the Anti-Corn Law League, discussing its finances or the election of MPs to Parliament. Several candidates also recognised the danger to the working classes that repeal of Corn Laws might give manufacturers an excuse to lower wages.

In terms of provenance, a minority of candidates recognised Albert's interest in the Anti Corn Law League and social issues but many argued that that Albert would be against the Anti Corn Law League because he was a member of the aristocracy and would therefore lose out if the Corn Laws were repealed. Many candidates missed "Sir Robert thinks," and did not realise that Albert was reflecting Peel's views at this point in the source. Relatively few candidates seemed to be aware of the nature of a memorandum and missed out on the evaluative aspects of this in their answers.

Question No 2

Again, as with the performance of candidates last year, the main reason why answers did not reach the higher levels of the mark scheme was because candidates failed to consider both contextual knowledge and provenance. For a significant number of candidates there was some uncertainty about the meaning of the term 'political' in the question and so answers were not as sharply focused as they might have been.

Few candidates recognised that Source A was addressed to the Cabinet and therefore a fairly restricted audience. It was often described as a public document used for persuasive purposes. It was also clear as with Source B that few candidates were able to demonstrate the purpose or discuss the nature of a memorandum. Most candidates were able to discuss the provenance of C and understood that this source claimed that Peel was motivated by social justice rather than political reasons.

One issue for a significant minority of candidates was that the sources were quite often just referenced after a paragraph of contextual knowledge, rather than the sources being the driving focus of the answer with contextual knowledge used to evaluate them. This meant that their answers were quite often uneven in focus and therefore couldn't attain the higher levels of the mark-scheme.

Another area of concern was in terms of judgement, which is required for the higher levels. In this question the judgement must be based on the sources, not on contextual knowledge. Judgement should also consider the reliability of the given sources, not just their content.

Question 3

This was the more popular of the two essay questions. Given the limitations of time it was not expected that learners would consider all of the radical challenges of the period, but they did need to consider sufficient so that any judgement was based on a sufficient range of issues to make sure the judgement reached was valid.

Weaker answers tended to describe the radical challenges or the reasons for them or became confused with the time frame in the question. Weaker answers listed the physical response to various challenges, such as the Blanketeers etc. but many creditable attempts considered legislation and analysed 'How successful'. The best answers were able to discuss the efficacy of government agents in undermining the Pentrich Rising and the Cato Street Conspiracy, or the use of force to disperse the Peterloo meeting. Candidates tended to be less successful in examining the ways in which Lord Liverpool's government was not successful with only a minority discussing how the reputation of the Tories was tarnished as a result of their actions or indeed how protest continued despite their actions.

Question 4

There were many good answers to this question, addressing the command term 'How far', and covering the inadequacies of the electoral system whilst also bringing in the influence of the Whigs and popular unrest as other factors.

Poorer answers did not properly address the inadequacies of the electoral system and became rather tangled in the long term causes including the Whigs, French Revolution and the weakness of the Tories. There was a tendency for a minority of candidates to simply describe the inefficiencies of the electoral system but without fully addressing the requirements of the question. Candidates were less successful in examining other reasons for the passage of the Great Reform Act, with only the best candidates discussing the role of William IV, although a number of candidates correctly related the passage of Catholic Emancipation as a precedent for reform.

Y141 Liberals, Conservatives and the Rise of Labour 1846–1918

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No. 1

In general terms this question was well-answered by the majority of candidates. Where it was completed less successfully was when candidates had a tendency to describe rather than evaluate the source. A small number of candidates misread the question and considered the utility of Source A rather than Source B and candidates should be reminded to read each question carefully.

Weaker responses failed to address the focus of the question properly, preferring to discuss advantages of the electoral pact to the Liberals rather than to the Labour Party. Others tended to discuss the general utility of the source without specific reference to the terms in the question. These 'general utility' answers hovered in the mid-range (Level 4-3) band.

Provenance was usually well-handled although some candidates were unaware of the role of a 'secretary'. Many referred to Jesse Herbert as 'she'. A small number of candidates confused Gladstone with his father.

Better responses were able to discuss the benefits of a pact with an established political party and were able to use contextual knowledge to demonstrate the areas where cooperation was useful.

Question No 2

There was a good range of responses to this question. Where candidates were less successful, their responses tended to describe the sources and failed to apply contextual support to evaluate them. Most responses were able to at least attempt to address the question and understood how the sources could be used to address the issue in the question. Provenance was underdeveloped in a number of answers, and sometimes ignored, meaning that candidates were unable to access the higher levels of the mark-scheme.

Most candidates were able to access each source successfully with Source A handled particularly well in showing how the association with the Liberal Party would undermine the position of Labour MPs. Contextual knowledge of Keir Hardie was usually sound. A majority of candidates were also able to show how B could be used to demonstrate how the Liberals might exploit the LRC although fewer candidates were able to discuss how the LRC would benefit from the link with the Liberals.

The source that posed the most problems for many candidates was C, the meaning of which was sometimes skewed by candidates to fit the question. However, many candidates were able to discuss this source as evidence of divisions within the Labour party as an explanation for their weakness. The better answers could discuss Webb's background and her weaknesses as an author in light of her more extremist views.

Question 3

Fewer candidates attempted this question, which drew a range of responses in terms of quality. A significant number of candidates failed to discuss the reasons for the split, or how it led to Whig victory in 1847. Knowledge about the split was often quite generalised. Few candidates discussed Derby's administrations and the issues of leadership. Better responses were able to discuss the divisions between the Protectionists and the Peelites and struggle of the Protectionists to unite behind one figure. The unpopularity of the Corn Laws was generally well-known.

Surprisingly there was a lack of evidence of the counter arguments. Only the best responses were able to discuss the popularity of Palmerston and his Foreign Policy successes or the economic prosperity of the years 1859-66 confirming the success of free trade.

Judgements were generally weak, with simple comparisons between the split and other factors more prevalent on this question.

Question 4

This was the more popular question in this unit and most candidates had a sound knowledge of Disraeli's domestic reforms. Most candidates were able to discuss a reasonable range of reforms and highlighted the permissive nature of much of the legislation. Most candidates were able to discuss the reforms to help living and working conditions although fewer candidates were able to expand the scope of their answers to look at the Friendly Societies or reforms for merchant seamen.

Alternative views were put forward with most responses examining Disraeli's desire to win votes and to quell the fears of the working classes. The best responses were also able to discuss how Disraeli was forced to deal with issues created by Gladstone. Judgements were generally about Disraeli's motivations, and tended to be well-supported.

Y142 Britain 1900–1951

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No. 1

In general terms this question was well-answered by the majority of candidates. Where it was completed less successfully was when candidates had a tendency to describe rather than evaluate the source. A small number of candidates misread the question and considered the utility of Source A rather than Source B and candidates should be reminded to read each question carefully.

Weaker responses failed to address the focus of the question properly, preferring to discuss advantages of the electoral pact to the Liberals rather than to the Labour Party. Others tended to discuss the general utility of the source without specific reference to the terms in the question. These 'general utility' answers hovered in the mid-range (Level 4-3) band.

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Better responses were able to discuss the benefits of a pact with an established political party and were able to use contextual knowledge to demonstrate the areas where cooperation was useful.

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There was a good range of responses to this question. Where candidates were less successful, their responses tended to describe the sources and failed to apply contextual support to evaluate them. Most responses were able to at least attempt to address the question and understood how the sources could be used to address the issue in the question. Provenance was underdeveloped in a number of answers, and sometimes ignored, meaning that candidates were unable to access the higher levels of the mark-scheme.

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The source that posed the most problems for many candidates was C, the meaning of which was sometimes skewed by candidates to fit the question. However, many candidates were able to discuss this source as evidence of divisions within the Labour party as an explanation for their weakness. The better answers could discuss Webb's background and her weaknesses as an author in light of her more extremist views.

Question 3

This was the less popular of the essay questions and it elicited a broad range of responses. Weaker answers tended to grasp for sufficient evidence to answer questions on this topic. Many candidates concluded that it was Mosely who undermined the party because of his record of changing political allegiances but only the strongest answers were able to discuss his style of leadership or the lack of appeal for his aristocratic background.

Some candidates were able to discuss the other reasons why the BUF failed and were able to point out the lack of other credible leaders of the movement, the stability of the British political system and the lack of press support for the party. Many candidates frequently concluded that the BUF's links to Nazi Germany and fascist Italy were the reasons for their lack of popularity. Only the strongest candidates were able to discuss the party programme and its limited scope. Whilst many candidates could point out that the BUF had a reputation for violence, only the best answers were able to substantiate this point with reference to the Battle of Cable Street, for example.

Question 4

This was the more popular of the essay questions. In general terms candidates were able to demonstrate sound, detailed knowledge of the topic and correctly identified the focus of the question. Knowledge of the named factor, the poor leadership of the TUC, was usually sound and fairly detailed. There were references to the TUC being forced into a strike and the lack of preparations on their part, in particular the significance of allowing the Daily Herald to go on strike.

In arguing the alternative viewpoint, many candidates were able to argue that the government's preparations formed the main reason for the failure of the strike, with many looking at the mobilisation of the army and the role of the British Gazette and the BBC. A smaller number were able to point out the lack of solidarity amongst the trade unions and working class as reasons for its failure, whilst only a handful mentioned the reluctance of the Labour Party to strike.

Whilst some candidates were able to provide a well-explained list of factors, not enough answers were held together by a convincing line of reasoning. Only a few candidates were able to address relative importance successfully and candidates should be encouraged to look at relative importance in order to access the higher levels of the mark-scheme.

Y143 Britain 1930–1997

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No. 1

This question elicited a variety of responses, some of variable quality. Weaker responses used very little contextual knowledge with many candidates merely repeating relevant information from the sources, with little development. There was some confusion as to the nature of what happened at Dunkirk with some seeing it as a failed invasion of Europe whilst some answers also struggled with the chronology of the war, particularly with regard to the Norway campaign and Churchill becoming PM, with a small number even suggesting that Gallipoli was a WW2 battle. Better responses saw some good examples of knowledge on the relevant military context, drawing on the Norway campaign and the Battle of Britain, whilst a few candidates were able to point out that elements of the French military were still fighting on after Dunkirk, and that France didn't surrender until later.

In terms of provenance most candidates were able to offer some comments. Many responses understood that this was an official document for government use, but others saw it as propaganda devices. Only the best answers were able to differentiate between Home Intelligence and Military Intelligence.

There was occasionally a lack of focus on 'military position' and instead the focus was on morale, which was the focus of question 2.

Question No 2

This was generally well-answered. Most candidates were able to use contextual knowledge and provenance to test the sources, although weaker responses failed to address the issue in the question. A significant number of responses failed to address the provenance of Source A having done so in Question 1 and candidates should be reminded to use the provenance of all the sources in question 2.

Candidates generally tackled Source A better than Sources B and C, finding it easier to use their own knowledge with A. Own knowledge tended to be quite general with reference to B and C, often being general observations about Churchill's motivational speech-making. There was also some misunderstanding of Source C where it stated that Churchill's actions 'made people behave as if they had been fifteen' being taken to mean that adults behaved in a childlike fashion.

In terms of provenance most candidates were able to discuss this, even if it was just the date or basic information, like the name. Analysis of provenance though was mixed. Stock comments on the veracity of a diary entry were common and there was some uncertainty of what the Ministry of Information Home Intelligence reports were. There was a tendency for students to describe Nicolson as a Conservative MP, when he was in fact National Labour. Many found Source B difficult and provenance tended to be rather stock, although a few answers were well informed about Nicholson and used the information well. Provenance was often evaluated better with Source C, many candidates picking up on positive comments from a left-wing critic and many responses recognising that Churchill had died by 1965.

Judgements, on the whole, tended to be on-topic rather than on the sources with only the best responses looking at the quality of the sources as well as their content.

Question 3

This was the most popular question and there were many good attempts to establish viable criteria by which to measure Thatcher's successes. There was some confusion about the meaning of the terms 'social and economic' and so there were several instances where the Falklands War was discussed irrelevantly. In general terms the analysis of economic issues was stronger than of social factors, where there tended to be more description.

In terms of the economic factors there was some confusion between direct and indirect taxes and some candidates did not understand why the Poll Tax caused so much unrest. However, for the most part candidates were able to discuss a range of issues, including privatisation and the deregulation of the financial sector. Most were successful in explaining how inflation was brought down and argued that privatisation improved performance and offered more choice.

Where social policies were discussed several students wrongly asserted that the NHS was privatised under Thatcher and that healthcare ceased to be free. Again though, many responses were able to note a range of issues including rising unemployment and the "right to buy" scheme. The social cost of Thatcher's policies and the impact on various communities was also a common thread in many answers.

Despite generally very good knowledge about Thatcher's policies there was some confusion as to how they interrelated and candidates would be wise to investigate this relationship. Another common issue was the lack of evidence in terms of facts and figures to substantiate otherwise good arguments.

Question 4

There were fewer responses to this question, but on the whole it was well-answered. Weaker responses struggled to maintain an international focus and instead drew on several domestic factors in their arguments, limiting their marks to the Levels 1 and 2.

Stronger responses had some good analysis about Britain's dependency on the USA during the period in question and analysed whether this undermined Britain's position as a world power. Others also considered a range of events including the Suez Crisis, the Falklands War and Britain's relationship with Europe. The best responses also examined the loss of the Empire and the Britain's relationship with other powers, including Russia.

Non-British period study:

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Y233 01 The Crusades and the Crusader States 1095–1192

Question No.1

The best responses stuck closely the command stem in the question ('Assess the reasons...'), comparing the relative importance of leadership against other factors (for example, lack of unified purpose, resources and logistics). There was often much detailed and relevant discussion of the role of Conrad and the German contingent, defeat in the Cadmus Mountains, Louis VII decision making and the lack of victuals especially during the siege of Damascus. Weaker answers tended to fall into two categories: those that simply listed and described factors and those that over-generalised. A minority were confused over the chronology of the Second Crusade and got events muddled with those of the First and Third Crusades.

Question No 2

Similarly to Question 1, the most effective responses were those that discussed the importance of the named factor in the question in the context of other influences on the degree of Arab successes in 1187. Most candidates quickly identified the significance of the stated date, although some were confused over this. Once this was established, the strongest answers covered a wide range of issues such as the achievements of Nur ad-Din and Saladin through to Crusader relations with Byzantium and the rather rash actions of some Crusader leaders. Where candidates focused on identifying and measuring 'successes' this invariably resulted in strong, well-developed judgements being made and, hence, marks being awarded in the top Levels. On occasion the key term in the question ('successes') was glossed over, resulting in responses drifting towards narratives about the lead up to 1187 and the outcome of the battle.

Question No 3

Most candidates made a sound attempt to evaluate both strengths and weaknesses of the interpretation using knowledge of other ways of analysing the outcome of the Third Crusade. The best responses analysed the aims of the Crusaders and then compared and contrasted these with what was achieved (in particular, access to Jerusalem for pilgrims, terms negotiated with Saladin, the capture of Acre, capture of coastline territory). This was then used to point out the perceived strengths of the Interpretation (that it acknowledges that the Third Crusade was not a total failure). Most then went on to point out that the Interpretation had obvious weaknesses in terms of what it omitted (for example, the permanent losses of a number of Crusader States and the failure to gain a grip on Ascalon). The strongest answers offered alternative Interpretations (such as the Barbarossa factor) and used this to measure the relative strengths and weaknesses of the viewpoint of Phillips. Some candidates referred to the provenance of the interpretation to make judgements about validity and reliability; this is not something that the task demands and is therefore an irrelevant approach. A few did not go much beyond the content of the interpretation, offering little more than generalised comment about why Phillips was either right or wrong or both.

Y235 01 Exploration, Encounters and Empire 1445–1570

There were no entries for this component

Y236 01 Spain 1469–1556

There were no entries for this component

Y237 01 The German Reformation and the rule of Charles V 1500–1559

General Comments

The number of entries for this Unit was not large and therefore general comments about the performance of candidates is somewhat restricted. However, in general candidates did not struggle with the questions and most displayed a sound factual knowledge which they were usually able to manipulate to the focus of the actual question.

Question 1

In general this question on Luther was much more popular than Question 2. All students were keen to outline the reasons for hatred of the Papacy but sometimes this led to an unbalanced answer as some failed to look at other reasons for Luther's appeal. There was a certain amount of confusion over the Peasants' War as most thought Luther supported them. Many were very confident on Luther's ideas on justification by faith alone but were less sure about political factors e.g. The Knights War. On the whole though the question was handled well.

Question 2

There were few students who were able to assess the relative importance of Charles V's successes and failures. Quite a few answers were descriptive of the wars and there were a number of responses which consisted of lists of battles and treaties without much analysis or evaluation.

Question 3

Most students were able to analyse and evaluate the interpretation and were able to assess whether or not Charles was prepared to compromise with the Protestants and most were able to outline his motivation for this. However, few students referred to other interpretations and, therefore, did not analyse or evaluate other interpretations or compare with the given interpretation.

Y238 01 Philip II 1556–1598

General Comments

There were a limited number of entries for this Unit and the overall performance was variable, with those who chose to do Question 2 often performing less well, not because they did not possess knowledge, but because they failed to answer the actual question set. The Interpretation was clearly understood, but some candidates imply produced an essay on Philip's foreign policy motives rather than evaluating the interpretation and therefore did not score well.

Question 1

This was the more popular question and many had a good knowledge of the financial difficulties that he inherited. However, the major problem was that when discussing other issues the focus was less on the problems he inherited and more on problems in general. Despite this, there were some who did focus on the start of his reign and weighed up the financial difficulties against religion, foreign policy, his empire and government. There were some who did not go beyond a list. But others did attempt to weigh up the relative importance.

Question 2

Although most candidates knew a great deal about the Dutch revolt, there were too many answers that started with the outbreak of the revolt, explaining the causes and believing that this explained why it lasted so long. Very few answers actually looked at the latter years of the revolt and considered issues such as Spanish finances and other demands, Dutch tactics and use of geography, or the leadership of both sides. In order to score well the focus had to be on why it lasted so long and not why it broke out, simply arguing that the nature of the causes led to its length was not convincing.

Question 3

There were a number of issues in the Interpretation that candidates were able to pick up on, notably 'primarily' and 'defence of dynastic inheritance', although there were some who had less understanding about the final point. Many were aware of the debate surrounding Philip's foreign policy and often drew on the ideas of Parker and the imperial strategy, whilst others considered whether his policy was defensive or aggressive. However, weaker answers almost completely ignored the interpretation and wrote an essay on the factors influencing Philip's foreign policy and did not score highly.

Y242 01 The American Revolution 1740–1796

General Comments

A significant number of responses did not focus on the precise wording of the questions and, as a result, produced answers that were only partial. With the Interpretation question and Question 2 many simply used the same information and failed to see that the focus of the questions was very different.

Question 1

Candidates struggled to focus on reasons why Britain was able to expand its territory in America, despite knowing a reasonable amount about the actual events. Many answers were descriptive of what happened, but were unable to link this knowledge to expansion, often unaware of the actual areas that were gained. Some did show some understanding of the role of war and the money paid by the British, but very few were aware of the gains made from Spain. Issues that were discussed in answers that showed a better focus included, war with France and the outcome of the 1763 Treaty, the role of the navy and the leadership of Pitt, with many also focusing on the role of Native Americans.

Question 2

Many candidates who attempted this question thought it was about why Revolution broke out and not why the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776. At best, this resulted in a partial answer. Many assumed that the colonists wanted independence from the very start of the period and were certainly unaware of the divisions amongst the colonists, with large numbers still loyal to Britain and simply wanted colonial rights and were unable to explain why and the extent to which this changed. Very few actually focused on the events of the war and wrote about the reasons for the outbreak of the revolution, which was the focus of Question 3.

Question 3

Too many responses saw this an opportunity to write a general essay about the reasons for the outbreak of the revolution and lost focus on, or even completely ignored the given Interpretation. There were many issues which could have been picked up on, such as whether the revolution opened in force with the Stamp Act, and whether it was political or constitutional issues that were the occasion of every outbreak of violence. Many were able to write about the issue of taxation or events at Boston, but again this knowledge needed to be linked closely to the Interpretation in order to evaluate its strengths and limitations and avoid just describing events.

Y243 01 The French Revolution and the rule of Napoleon 1774–1815

As with many of the options candidates had a good range of knowledge but were not always able to use it to focus on the precise demands of the questions. Both essays presented candidates with challenges as are explained below, whilst the Interpretation gave candidates an opportunity to display a considerable range of knowledge and engage in a well known debate as to whether Napoleon was the heir to the Revolution.

Question 1

This was the more popular question and those candidates who focused on the events of 1790 and afterwards were usually able to score well. However, there were a significant number who saw the question as an opportunity to write about the causes of the revolution and wrote about the pre-revolutionary situation in France and produced only a partial answer. Answers that addressed the question usually considered issues such as the War, the flight to Varennes, the failure of the constitutional monarchy and the growth of Republicanism, with many arguing that it was the actions of the king that ultimately led to his overthrow.

Question 2

Although many candidates had considerable knowledge about Napoleon's financial reforms but were often unable to link it to the actual question and whether the stability that they brought enabled him to remain in power. However, most were more able to discuss a good range of other reasons for him staying in power, ranging from his military skill and victories to the use of police and censorship and the reforms he introduced. Assessing their relative importance was a greater struggle and many answers did not go beyond a well explained list and thus remained either in Level 3 or Level 4.

Question 3

This was a further example of the importance of reading the question carefully, as although many answers were able to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the interpretation they often drifted from 'into government' and wrote about all the measures that Napoleon introduced and the extent to which they were associated with the ancien regime. Many answers however were wide ranging and covered issues such as the role of the Church, education, the nature of privilege and the structure of government, particularly Napoleon becoming Emperor and the extent to which these continued the ancient regime. Some did ignore the interpretation and focused more on the whether he should be seen as the heir of the revolution, with the revolution, with the interpretation receiving only cursory consideration.

Y244 01 France 1814–1870

There were insufficient entries for a meaningful report

Y245 01 Italy and Unification 1789–1896

General comments

Although most candidates answered Question 1 it was generally Question 2 that produced the stronger answers as most found it easier to focus on the precise demands of the question and consider a clear range of issues, whereas those who answered Question 1 often seemed unable to identify the problems that Italy faced and wanted to turn it into an essay about Unification and Austrian opposition. The Interpretation produced few problems, although there were a number of responses that produced a period study essay response on why the 1848 revolutions failed.

Question 1

The key to success was identifying the problems found in Italy in the period from 1815 to 1848. Some responses, as suggested above, saw this an opportunity to write about why Italy was not unified and then often used the same material in Question 3. Stronger answers identified issues such as the backwardness of many of the states and considered the political, social and economic structures and the extent to which Austria was to blame for the problems. Some considered how far Austria was to blame for the unrest found in the period, discussing the revolts of 1820, 1830 and 1848. Issues such as the north-south were considered as were issues such as the Papacy and support for reform.

Question 2

Most found this a more straightforward question and were able to discuss whether Italy was strengthened geographically, politically, economically and socially in this period. It provided an opportunity to assess issues such as the north-south divide, the extent to which Italians were made, whether the political problems were overcome and the extent to which the economy was strengthened. A number of responses also considered whether Italy was strengthened on the international stage, contrasting its alliances with its lack of success in obtaining 'a place in the sun'.

Question 3

Too many responses saw this an opportunity to explain why the revolutions of 1848-9 failed rather than focus on the Interpretation which put forward the view that nationalism never appealed to the masses. Those who did focus on the issues were able to look at the appeal of Italian nationalism and considered the extent to which movements such as the Carbonari were ever a popular movement or whether groups that did exist drew their support from the middle class. Stronger answers ranged across the whole period and looked at the extent to which Napoleon's rule created nationalism and whether that appealed to the masses, not just focusing on 1848.

Y246 01 The USA in the 19th Century: Westward expansion and Civil War 1803–c.1890

General comments

Most candidates answered question 1 and were usually able to explain a range of issues, even if the support was general or there was little judgement. In contrast a number of answers to Question 2 were less well supported. The Interpretation was often less well handled and candidates knowledge of the Compromise limited their ability to discuss the interpretation.

Question 1

Most factors covered by each candidate contained much detail, though narrative tendencies were strong in many so answers became simply an explanation of migration. The assumption seemed to be made that resources did not need analysis although a few tried to make progress through trying, not usually successfully, to make a distinction between economic benefits eg those migrating to mining towns for business and the original mines which had created the opportunity for them.

Also trying to assess the status of certain factors such as railroads as to whether they attracted people west because they would allow them to achieve their original motive to access resources and the railways were simply a facilitator for the journey or that the railways actually created the desire to seek a fortune out west. A similar issue was found with Land Acts and Manifest Destiny. Very few students navigated these issues confidently.

The relative importance between resources and other motives was not always done well. Some good answers distinguished between early settlers for fur and the later ones for gold or land while a few decided it was the longevity of the particular factor ie gold v farmers or the physical numbers involved, often without any statistical evidence. The status of Mormons was easy to do, but Manifest Destiny was more of a conundrum for both government and individuals.

Surprisingly few students used Push/Pull factors to try and categorise factors and thereby clarify their own evaluations. Most conclusions were simply a synopsis of previous paragraphs.

Question 2

A small number attempted this and seemed to capture the two extremes of quality. Some were outstandingly confident in their analysis while most found it hard to decide what line to take. An issue seemed to be that using compromise in the question confused some of them because of the 1850 compromise in Question 3 and the Missouri Compromise which some wrote about for the bulk of their answer. Indeed some answers would have made perfectly reasonable Question 3 responses, especially when discussing or describing more long term causes. Some clearly just wanted to do the causes of the Civil War and so went off track. Many resorted to using sectional tensions as a catch all explanation rather than covering some specific elements. Some answers relied on relating great detail about Lincoln, his views and how he was viewed by the South. As a result there were a number of weaker responses.

Question 3

Some were confused between the 1850 Compromise and the Missouri one so a number of answers contained irrelevant or obliquely linked material.

Most found it possible to identify pros for the South but some then found it more difficult to identify and evaluate the cons. Large numbers still revert to running through one side of the

argument and then give the reverse for the other side eg Fugitive Slave Act and popular sovereignty.

Some candidates either did not understand or simply overlooked the implicit message in the source about later in the 1850s and therefore failed to distinguish between factors or omitted them. Some seemed unclear where the start of the 1850s was and when it ended. Again some seemed to want to answer causes of the Civil War question so there were a number of general reviews of the importance of slavery to the South.

Very few tried to argue that the Compromise treated both sides equally, even though a number were at pains to stress that a compromise means that both sides give up something and then went on to prove otherwise.

Some clearly good candidates had much knowledge but because they failed to make sufficient reference to the interpretation they did not Achieve the higher levels.

Y247 01 Japan 1853–1937

There were no entries for this component

Y248 01 International Relations 1890–1941

General Comments:

All candidates attempted the specified number of questions and there were no blank scripts submitted. There was a significant number of candidates writing lengthy responses to both the essay question, Section A, and the interpretation question, Section B. Paragraphs were used effectively to divide different sections of the response. Spelling and correct capitalisation was adequate although there continues to be a general lack of specific language. For example, on the rare occasions a candidate mentioned the successes of the League of Nations with reference to the Commissions, key words like Mandates, or even Commissions were not applied. The general level of knowledge was consistent from most Centres, students had at least a general awareness of the topic areas, the causes of World War One, events surrounding the League of Nations and the backdrop to appeasement in the 1930s. However, the emphasis here would be on generalised, in part due to the lack of specific vocabulary previously alluded to.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No.

Q1) Most candidates attempted this part of Section A. Introductions were usually illustrative of the factors involved in causing the war and laid some part of the blame at the door of Austria-Hungary. Fewer candidates gave a decisive view of the cause of World War One, rather than attributing the event to most countries to a degree, and then went on to justify this view. Most frequently, blame was placed upon the aggressive actions of the German nation in the build up to war. The general level of knowledge was sound, most candidates were aware of at least some actions from numerous countries that contributed to the build-up of tension. Common reference was made to the 'blank cheque' issued by Germany, and the arms race, Weltpolitik, and existing plans for war. The Schlieffen Plan was almost universally accompanied by reference to the General von Moltke quote, 'war, the sooner the better', the Muller diary was referenced less widely. Austria-Hungary received some blame due to the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and its unfair ultimatum, deliberately engineered to force Serbia into war, the confidence of the nation bolstered by the 'blank cheque'. Some candidates blamed Russia for mobilising rapidly, others Serbia for their aggressive nationalism, the German roles played in the Moroccan crises were also commonly cited. Overall, responses that did not score highly were illustrative, the knowledge was imparted and not used to explain how it caused war or related to the role of Austria-Hungary. The best responses justified reasons for why some causes eclipsed others, this was done by linking factors in a chain of analysis, or more adeptly by genuinely exploring the significance of a specific action relative to others. The evaluation of such factors, with a relative assessment of significance was rare and often left the candidate unable to move beyond a partial, or at best general address of the question. Frequently, a response would outline several events and say that they caused tension between two countries without fully exploring why. Candidates exploring the alliances were often unable to go beyond a narrative of how countries fell into war, instead of why they fell into war. The best responses here explored German isolation and Pan-Slavism in more depth.

Q2)

This response was less common. Candidates often fell into two categories, those that described or explained the successes or failures of the League of Nations, and those that explained why it was, or was not doomed to failure. The latter scored more highly, generally Level 4 and above, as these candidates fully addressed the question. Such responses assessed the structural failings of the League, exploring elements like the absence of the USA and therefore effective sanctions and military support, the absence of an army, the discriminatory nature of the League and commonly the dominance by the four powers on the Council, particularly Britain and France. These responses tended to skilfully link such inherent weaknesses to the failing of the League in crises in Manchuria and Abyssinia. Some responses also discussed the structural weaknesses

conferred by the unanimous decisions needed, or the ability of countries to veto. Less developed responses were more narrative and did not address the element of being doomed to failure as explicitly, it was implied by an explanation of the League's successes and failures. However, when addressing these successes and failures candidates did skilfully argue that the successes only occurred when minnows were involved, essentially suggesting that the League was ineffective when eagles fell out! A most memorable response addressed the reasons for successes and failures during both the decades of the twenties and thirties, and argued how the Great Depression was the turning point, hence the League was not doomed to failure. Such responses were rare as candidates did not have the ability to identify and link patterns over the years. Hence, responses tended to compartmentalise the success and failures by event and this, in part, limited the scope for developing the argument relative to the League of Nations being 'doomed' to fail.

Q3)

Responses were very varied. Commonly, responses only partially addressed the interpretation by making few links to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the given interpretation. Candidates sometimes did this in parts of their response and then proceeded to discuss everything else about appeasement at that time, crucially without any reference to the interpretation. Hence, responses were illustrative of the context. Candidates often demonstrated a good awareness of the wider historical context via a discussion of other interpretations, but these were not linked to the strengths and weaknesses of the given interpretation. Consequently, it was very common to see a vast amount of knowledge dumped, with some candidates exceptionally detailed, others more generalised, failing to address the demands of the question throughout large parts, or even the whole of the answer. Another common error was to misconstrue the interpretation and begin to explain the successes and failures of appeasement, these responses sometimes drifted into relevance but generally did not address the given interpretation and were more on topic. Combined, responses did identify that appeasement was a policy of 'peace and conciliation – whatever the price' because of the huge concessions made after 1936, others discussed that these were reasonable demands given the harsh nature of Versailles. Candidates did also note that the 'whatever the price' was a limited aspect of the interpretation as appeasement was followed to buy the nation time to rearm, or to recover from the Great Depression. Higher responses commented on the Hoare-Laval Pact and the public rejection, clear evidence that there was a price. Surprisingly few discussed the Polish guarantee as the obvious evidence that there was a limit to appeasement. Overall, large commentaries on appeasement and various interpretations of the policy were frequent, specific evaluation of the given interpretation was limited and too often implied.

Y249 01 Russia 1894–1941

General Comments:

All candidates attempted the specified number of questions although some candidates wrote no more than six pages in total, quite a rarity at this level. These responses usually demonstrated a lack of specific knowledge and were limited in quantity and quality. However, there were also frequent responses where candidates had written a large amount and yet did not score highly. This was the result of weak, or generalised knowledge, or writing irrelevant information that did not respond to the specific demands of the question, i.e. on the topic only. The quality of written communication was poor, most candidates did not deploy specific, third-tier vocabulary and key terms were sometimes misspelt or confused, e.g. Kornilov and Kerensky. The most common essay question was question number 2, the November Revolution question. However, numerous candidates attempted the first essay question, too. The interpretations question clearly demonstrated a lack of contextual understanding surrounding the Russian Civil War and implementation of Nep to the point where responses commonly failed to exceed Level 3, a consequence of superficial contextual understanding.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No.

Q1)

The quality of responses to Question 1 was generally higher than candidate responses to Question 2. Strong candidates clearly outlined the aims of various reforms and proceeded to explain why these aims were, or were not met. The reforms considered were usually the October Manifesto, and Stolypin's Reforms, particularly focusing on the Duma. Some candidates wrote about Stolypin's necktie, not credited as a reform as the continued use of repression by the autocracy is not a reform. A minimal number discussed the economic reforms of Witte, again not credited, Witte's industrialisation drive preceded the 1905 Revolution, Witte being Minister of Finance until 1903. On rare occasions a candidate did successfully discuss post-1905 economic developments it was done so effectively, with specific reference to 8% economic growth rates. The question of assessing the reforms posed important questions for each candidate in terms of defining the aims of reform. Provided this was done accurately and clearly both approaches were successful, for example a candidate may define the main aims of the reforms as splitting opposition and achieving stability, such responses usually discussed the Fundamental Laws as a means of achieving this aim. Other candidates may argue that the aim of the October Manifesto was not to split opposition and restore order but to increase representation. Also credited and often argued effectively. Some responses assessed the impact of the reforms in terms of what was achieved for the liberals, peasants and the workers. Such responses gave the candidate the opportunity to classify ideas and apply Stolypin's Reforms, the Duma, October Manifesto freedoms, etc. in an accurate manner. However, these responses tended to lose sight of the aims of the reform and drift towards a focus on the revolutionary demands of these groups. This drift often culminated in a Level 3, partial response due to a lack of question focus. Candidates appeared to know the most details about the Duma, bicameral, Tsar could dissolve, veto decisions, etc. and surprisingly few specific details about Stolypin's Reforms. Most candidates did not produce a judgement to specifically address the extent to which the reforms were met and why.

Q2)

A surprising number of candidates scored very low with this response due to misinterpretation of the question. The question is not asking for an assessment of the degree of success, stating that the Bolshevik Revolution was a success and asking candidates to assess the reasons for the Bolshevik seizure of power. This multi-causal response should draw upon Provisional Government weakness, Bolshevik strengths and other opposition group weaknesses with

specific evidence relating to these headings. However, some responses focused on what the Bolsheviks did post-November 1917 and addressed the Bolshevik consolidation of power, the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, use of the Cheka, etc. Such responses did not address the question and could not go beyond Level 1. This question is not about Bolshevik successes and failures, Civil War, the period November 1917 - 1924. Essentially, the 1917 Revolution was a confirmed success, why? Few candidates confused the November uprising with the February Revolution. However, the candidates that addressed Provisional Government weaknesses and Bolshevik strengths did so in a weak manner. The general standard of knowledge applied was limited. Factors were identified, commonly the continuation of WWI, the failure on Land Reform, role of Lenin, role of Trotsky, and the Kornilov Affair. However, the explanation for why these events culminated in the Bolshevik seizure of power was often flaccid due to limited supporting evidence. The Kornilov Affair was usually narrated, there was confusion surrounding the 'July Days', and the role of Trotsky and the MRC was often confused with Trotsky's military prowess exhibited when in charge of the Red Army. When candidates had a sound base of knowledge and compared factors the response scored highly. The opportunities for a sustained judgement were commonly not taken, responses usually addressing a limited range of factors using inaccurate or limited knowledge.

Q3

Candidates struggled with this response. It was clear that most candidates had a limited knowledge of NEP and in these cases the interpretation was squeezed to provide lots of assertion about food shortages. A surprising number of candidates did not know the context of the interpretation, the end of War Communism and Civil War. Candidates that did recognise this contextual knowledge accessed a higher level because there was clearly more understanding of the given interpretation. Responses that accessed higher levels used a range of specific key terms to address at least one argument for and against the given interpretation regarding its strengths and limitations. Such arguments needed some accurate knowledge and an explanation of context surrounding the main reason identified. However, some of these responses were still implied, even when knowledge was improved there were often few explicit links to the given interpretation, or other interpretations were discussed which essentially provided drift from the demands of the question, analysing the given interpretation. To show a sound awareness of contextual knowledge candidates needed to develop responses in support of the given interpretation, accurately discussing some relevant knowledge of the impact of War Communism on the peasantry, the grain requisitioning and the famine, 5 million dead, etc. To outline the weaknesses of the given interpretation responses needed to explore events not covered by the given interpretation, the other reasons for the implementation of Nep, for example, the failure of War Communism to create consumer goods and boost industrial production, or the necessity to reform due to widespread political opposition, most notably the Kronstadt uprising and the Tambov rebellion. Candidates sometimes explored the semantics of 'urgent' in terms of the need for food, discussing how NEP was a compromise, small-scale capitalism and therefore another strength of the given interpretation. However, the general quality of response was severely limited by a lack of contextual knowledge, some candidates discussing the impact of WWI on food, or confusing NEP with collectivisation or War Communism, or an inaccurate understanding of chronology surrounding the period. Very few candidates evaluated the source for provenance, purpose, typicality, etc. so it seems clear that candidates were aware of what to do, albeit perhaps implicitly, but did not have the depth of knowledge to do this.

Y250 01 Italy 1896–1943

General Comments:

A very small number of Centres opted to take this unit as an AS in the summer series. Most candidates attempted the second essay question relating to Mussolini's foreign policy, only a few decided to address the first essay question. There were no mistakes regarding question selection and the interpretation question was dealt with effectively. The standard of essay writing

was also quite high with facts being retained and in most cases used to explain why Mussolini enjoyed successes and failures in foreign policy ventures. The quality of written communication was relatively high in comparison to some other units with larger entries.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No.

Very few candidates decided to address this essay question, the preference being Mussolini's foreign policy. The responses submitted showed a sound understanding of important long-term problems prior to Italian entry into World War One, commonly discussing the divide between the north and south of the country, poor relations with the Church and a limited foreign policy. In addition, the politics of Transformismo, the difficulties associated with unification, and socialist upheaval was also addressed. At times, the issues discussed were political and the links to social and economic problems were tenuous however, candidates did effectively judge the degree to which problems had been solved, usually drawing relevant contrasts between the north and the south of the country.

Q2) How successful was Mussolini's foreign policy during the years 1922 to 1943? (30m)

A far more popular choice of question among the candidates, the question provided a real scope for candidates due to the active nature of Mussolini's foreign policy and the obvious successes and failures. Knowledge was generally relevant and accurate, outlining a range of key events from the various decades. More limited responses tended to be descriptive at times, and impart facts about aspects of foreign policy without exploring the degree of success. More competent answers explained success relative to meeting aims, usually outlined in the introduction. Aims consisted of gaining land overseas and restoring the glory of the Roman Empire, or elevating the prestige of Il Duce, referring to the importance of propaganda. Thus, failings were usually defined in terms of poor military performance and the subsequent damage to Mussolini's prestige. At times, responses were limited in breadth. Weaker candidates only addressed a few issues, or specifically focused on one decade. Responses sometimes failed to address performance in the Second World War altogether, this suggests Centres had focused on the earlier decades in terms of foreign policy analysis. Stronger candidates made judgements based on events across all three decades and categorised successes and failures into themes, e.g. personal prestige, military gains; such candidates displayed an effective use of the evidence and made the best judgements as answers avoided a list-like narrative. Events from the 1920s commonly discussed were Fiume, the Corfu episode, and diplomatic developments like Locarno, Kellogg-Briand less so. Candidates usually addressed Abyssinia, but also Stresa and Albania, and the growing dominance of Germany with reference to the Pact of Steel and beyond.

Overall, candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the historical context surrounding the rise of Fascism in Italy. The social divisions caused by war were usually directly addressed with reference to high unemployment, inflation and the 'mutilated victory' causing consternation, hence the actions of D'Annunzio. The two red years, Biennio Rosso, were also cited as key reasons for social divisions post-war. In addition, other interpretations for the rise of the PNF were also explained with reference to Mussolini's skill as an orator, and the Fascist Party capitalising on Italian fears of socialism, particularly from the Catholic Church and King Victor Emmanuel III. The failure of liberal coalition politics was also discussed as an important reason for Mussolini's success in rising to power. Overall, a range of factors were commanded by the

candidates and used to outline the historical context. The key to ensuring a level 4/5 response was to explicitly evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the given interpretation with reference to this wider knowledge. Thus, at times it was not applied to address the question. Successful candidates directly used the wider contextual knowledge to stress the strengths of the interpretation by Reynolds, or criticise the interpretation for failing to address other key developments in the rise of fascism that were not solely a consequence of post-war, social divisions.

Y251 01 Democracy and Dictatorships in Germany 1919–1963

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No. 1

This was the most popular choice of question and it was generally answered to a higher standard than essay question two, although there was a range of responses. Weaker answers adopted a chronological approach covering the major uprisings. This veered into narrative at times, without a focus on whether Weimar was seriously threatened. Some students veered away from the question set and wrote about conditions in Germany post WW1 without linking this to threats or opposition and these answers were confined to Level 1 or 2. There were several examples of candidates selecting information from outside 1919-1923 in their answers.

Stronger responses focussed on the level of threat from the opposition and gauged this by the ability of Weimar to overcome the threat. The best answers were able to see beyond the specific threats of the various uprisings and note the inherent dangers of the growth of extremism, and the undermining of Weimar's credibility with the "Stab in the Back" myth. The best answers also examined internal opposition and the weakness of the regime as seen in the sentences imposed on Hitler and those involved in the Munich Putsch.

Question 2

Fewer responses were seen on this question and in general terms answers were less sound. There were a number of candidates who mistook the GDR for the FRG and wrote about the 'economic miracle'. Better candidates focussed on using contextual knowledge to test the validity of the premise in the question. However this was not a particularly well answered question, with few entrants really able to engage with the debate. Knowledge was limited with only the best responses able to discuss the benefits of collectivisation and the improvements to the efficiency of farming. Nationalisation of industry was occasionally noted but this was not uniformly mentioned by candidates. The most commonly used concepts were on the increase of women in the workforce and the impact of the Berlin Wall, although weaker candidates tended to describe why it was constructed rather than look at the economic benefits for the GDR.

In focusing on the lack of success there was some knowledge of the failures of the 5 Year Plans and the gap between East and West, culminating in the 1953 Berlin Uprising. However knowledge of these weaknesses was again limited and only the best responses were able to provide a balanced argument that was well-supported.

Question 3

The responses to this question were variable, with some candidates able to discuss the strengths and limitations of the given interpretation in relation to their own contextual knowledge. In general terms the most problematic area of this question for candidates was in directing their focus on 'undermining the Nazi war effort'. Most candidates engaged with a general discussion regarding threats but few engaged specifically with the war years. As a result it was often difficult to evaluate the extent to which answers focussed on the specifics of the title rather than the general opposition to the regime. Many answers therefore used evidence from outside the period 1939-1945. Responses also tended to either focus on morale OR opposition, rather than incorporating both aspects of the interpretation.

Candidates found it easier to test the limitations of the interpretation and were able to discuss the breakdown of morale following Allied bombing. They were also able to recount the various groups that opposed the regime during WW2, with many references to the White Rose group and the Von Stauffenberg Plot of 1944. Only the strongest answers were able to discuss the changes to living standards or the impact of defeats such as Stalingrad.

It was more difficult for candidates to test the strengths of the interpretation. Many answers used vague information such as 'the amount of terror and propaganda meant there was no collapse of morale.' Very few candidates discussed employment or the maintenance of wage levels at the start of the war. The best responses pointed out how the Gestapo dealt with the threats posed by various groups and how the regime was never under threat of being overthrown.

Surprisingly few candidates differentiated between the start and the end of the war, which proved to be a successful approach for those who chose that structure.

Y252 01 The Cold War in Asia 1945–1993

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No. 1

This was the less popular of the essay questions, and the knowledge of this topic proved to be less sound for a significant proportion of the answers seen. In a minority of answers candidates confused the Vietnam and Korean wars, meaning there was much irrelevance. Others adopted an unsuccessful narrative approach which failed to address the key aspect of whether the war was a failure for the United States.

The best responses looked at success and failure and were able to make a judgement on this issue. These candidates discussed the military, diplomatic and political impact of the war and weighed up the relative importance of these factors. In general terms many candidates were able to analyse the performance of the military and the damage caused by the retreat from the Yalu River and weigh that up against their earlier performance such as during the Inchon landings. Most were able to point out that the aim of containment had been achieved but also that North Korea remained communist after the 1953 truce. Only the best candidates were then able to examine the diplomatic and political factors including the relationship with China and Russia, or the various treaties signed, including the ANZUS Pact and SEATO.

Question 2

This was the most popular of the essay questions and it elicited a range of responses. Generally answers were sound and showed a good grasp of the subject matter. Weaker responses tended to describe guerrilla tactics and asserted why these were successful. Stronger responses were able to pin down the importance of the Ho Chi Minh trail and the role of guerrilla tactics in key engagements. Most were able to link the effects of guerrilla tactics and the demoralising effects on US morale.

Most candidates were able to balance this against a range of other factors including the strength of Vietnamese nationalism, the strength of domestic opposition in America and support for the VC from Russia and China. The best answers were able to show how American strategies in Vietnam created problems for the army and failed to win the hearts and minds of the population. Few candidates discussed Vietnamisation and the withdrawal of American troops and so there was some unevenness in terms of topic coverage.

Question 3

As advised last year, candidates need clear and explicit links throughout their answer alongside relevant knowledge to reach level 4 and above. The quality of knowledge used, and the awareness of the surrounding context was the crucial determinant in deciding the higher level responses. Some students are still producing essay style answers that do not relate to the given interpretation.

In general terms most candidates had some awareness of the causes of the Korean War and the responsibility of the various parties involved. Only a few responses could not correctly grasp the nature of Murphy and Cooper's interpretation. That being said, answers on the Interpretation element of this paper were rather mixed. Many candidates examined the causes of the Korean War but adopted a "bolt-on" approach in terms of contextual knowledge rather than specifically analysing the given interpretation.

Most candidates were able to discuss the strengths of the interpretation in terms of the North invading the South but only the best responses were able to discuss the capture of Seoul and the rest of the south. The ambitions of Kim Il Sung were largely known but the negotiations

between Russia and North Korea regarding the timing of the invasion were less securely understood.

Again most candidates were able to look at limitations including the border skirmishes and the role of Syngman Rhee. Better responses were also able to discuss the role of the USA and either its removal of troops after 1948, leaving the South vulnerable or the view that Truman needed a war to persuade the American public of increased military expenditure.

Y253 01 The Cold War in Europe 1941–1995

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No. 1

This question was generally more popular than question 2. The essay elicited a good range of responses and most candidates were clear and addressed the requirements of the question title. The vast majority of candidates stayed within the timescale given in the question although a few responses chose to stray beyond these limits into tangential material.

Weaker responses provided a list type response, describing the impact on Eastern Europe of the Soviet control in the years 1946-1955. At times these responses had a limited use of evidence and support. In addition those that adopted a chronological approach tended to be less successful.

More successful candidates tended to adopt a more thematic approach, examining the socio-cultural, economic and political impact of Soviet control. They provided detailed support and evidence of impact and referred to a range of examples and events including the Czech coup, Berlin Blockade, East German uprising 1953, Warsaw Pact, Comecon, Cominform and the role of Tito etc. At the higher level, candidates offered detailed knowledge and clear analysis and evaluation with persistent support and use of evidence.

At the highest level there was judgement on the extent of the impact of Soviet control and this was based securely on contextual knowledge.

Question 2

This was the less popular of the two essay questions, although the quality of the answers provided was good. Most candidates fully addressed the question and examined Reagan's role in the new Cold War 1979-1984 and then compared this to other factors.

The more successful answers assessed a range of global factors that determined the course of the new Cold War. The most successful responses examined a range of issues including the impact of Thatcher, an ageing Soviet leadership, Soviet foreign policy, the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, Carter and the Olympic boycotts plus the significance of Solidarity and other conflicts in Africa. The Star Wars initiative and defence spending were also examined with Reagan and his evil empire approach.

Better responses weighed up responsibility and made informed and well supported judgements with detailed knowledge used to analyse the issues in the question. These answers were generally confident and assured in their approach and well-structured with a persistent line of reasoning and a wealth of support and evidence. Weaker responses provided descriptive and narrative accounts of 1979-1984. Less successful candidates strayed outside the given dates in the question, examining the beginning of the Cold War or events relating to the fall of communism. Candidates should be reminded of the importance of working within the dates given in the title.

Equally some candidates offered a general response with limited evidence and evaluation and adopted a list type approach with limited relevant knowledge and support.

Question 3

The best answers ensured that the interpretation was clearly understood before writing commenced. This meant that these responses broke the interpretation into key sections so that each of the issues raised could be evaluated carefully, using contextual knowledge.

Most candidates were able to understand the basic premise of the given interpretation as being Stalin's motivations for his actions at the end of the Second World War. Most were able to produce an analytical response which examined the strengths and weaknesses of the interpretation, although only the best responses examined all nuances of McCauley's argument.

At the higher level, candidates analysed different interpretations and assessed strengths and limitations with a secure contextual knowledge. The strongest responses were balanced, analytical and well supported with a good range of events to support and justify the interpretations. Strengths of the interpretation were connected to America's race to develop and use a nuclear weapon and Stalin's reaction to that. These answers explored the Atomic bomb in the context of the conclusion of WW2 and the outbreak of the Cold War. In addition, they offered detailed and mostly assured knowledge to provide a balanced assessment of the interpretation. This analysis was compared to the ideological need for Stalin to create a buffer zone between Russia and the West as well as the growing difficulty of dealing with his paranoid nature, with the very best responses examining the alienation of Stalin at the end of WW2 by the actions of America and Britain.

In weaker responses there was a tendency to provide a list of causes of the Cold War with little use of views and theories. These weaker answers provided generalised comments with limited support and evidence and offered limited evaluation of the interpretation. There were very descriptive and general comments made and these were limited to Level 1 or 2.

Y254 01 Apartheid and Reconciliation: South African Politics 1948–1999

Answers were, in general, of variable quality. Weak chronological understanding was a problem for many candidates which meant they were not always clear which events/developments to include in questions. In some cases it led to a tendency to try and manipulate the question into something they felt more confident on. There was a tendency in many cases to know a lot more about opposition/resistance than about government policy, it is important that both can be included where relevant and the inter-relationship between them is understood. Some candidates struggled to recognise and/or use key terminology correctly, and it is important they understand the specific meaning of terms related to content in the specification

Question 1

The best answers to this question were aware of a range of types of opposition; less stronger answers tended to focus on just one type/example of opposition, which made the answer partial. It should be noted that it was necessary not just to describe the opposition or explain what they did, but to actually evaluate successes/failures and come to a judgment. The word 'entirely' was included in the wording of the question to help candidates come to a clear judgment.

Question 2

Better answers to this question were clear on what Botha's aims were and/or identified some success criteria, thus making it easier to focus on the question and evaluate success/failure. At the higher end, answers were able to consider a range of policies, and were aware of how these linked to increased resistance and disorder.

Question 3

There were a range of valid responses to this question, and any response which sought to appropriately apply historical knowledge to evaluate the interpretation was credited. The argument that Grand Apartheid was introduced as the government was "[looking] for new ways to undermine resistance," provided candidates with perhaps the best range of arguments to draw on, however some candidates chose to focus on whether Grand Apartheid was implemented "quickly" which was also valid. The interpretation did not focus on the effectiveness of Verwoerd's policies and therefore candidates who chose to move their answer in this direction were not focusing on the question set and were awarded marks accordingly. Candidates do not need to formulate an alternative interpretation of their own, but to come to a supported judgment on the interpretation provided.

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
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