

GCE

History A

Advanced GCE **A2 H505**

OCR Report to Centres June 2017

About this Examiner Report to Centres

This report on the 2017 Summer assessments aims to highlight:

- areas where students were more successful
- main areas where students may need additional support and some reflection
- points of advice for future examinations

It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

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

The report also includes:

- An invitation to get involved in Cambridge Assessment's research into **how current reforms are affecting schools and colleges**
- Links to important documents such as **grade boundaries**
- A reminder of our **post-results services** including Enquiries About Results
- **Further support that you can expect from OCR**, such as our Active Results service and CPD programme
- A link to our handy Teacher Guide on **Supporting the move to linear assessment** to support you with the ongoing transition

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Y100 Topic Based Essay

General Comments:

This was the first year of this unit. The assessment objectives clearly differentiated between the skills required. AO1 concerned historical understanding and knowledge and tested candidates' ability to respond to their own questions, construct and evaluate arguments and to offer reasoned conclusions supported by appropriate knowledge. This accounted for half the marks and equated to traditional essay skills. AO2 related to the use and evaluation of primary evidence. There was a specific requirement that evidence should be evaluated and not merely analysed or used to support arguments assessed in AO1. AO3 related to the analysis and evaluation of historical interpretations. The expectation was that these interpretations should be from identified secondary sources and not merely unattributed possible explanations. It was an OCR requirement that all questions should have been submitted in advance in order to be approved and that centres should mark the work according to the criteria in the mark scheme, showing why marks had been awarded. OCR was responsible for moderating the work to ensure that all centre assessment fell within nationally agreed standards

Moderators reported that most centres used the mark scheme effectively and indicated where marks had been awarded. There was little to show a widespread misunderstanding of the marking. There was widespread use of the terminology of the mark scheme rather than general comments and there was a considerable measure of agreement between the centre marks and the moderated marks. The wide spread of marks awarded indicated that there was a great deal of realistic marking which did show centres appreciated variations in the level of achievement shown by the work. In general, the marking of AO1 was more closely linked to the requirements of the mark scheme than the marking of AO2 and AO3 and the comments below will explain why

In terms of the quality of the work seen, what was striking was the quality of many answers in the higher bands. Many candidates had obviously relished the opportunity to research in depth and there were many scholarly and critical answers which showed what was obviously genuinely wide reading and not merely 'name dropping' of authorities or digests of historiographical surveys. Many answers were thoughtful and considered and showed developed judgements showing higher level skills of analysis and synthesis. Standards of referencing and the presentation of bibliographies were often high and showed the value of the coursework in promoting good academic habits. Most answers offered analysis and relative few were content with say narrative accounts with little or no reference to evidence. Even when discussion was limited and sources tended to illustrate rather than being evaluated, there were clear signs of research, organisation and knowledge, so that at different levels, candidates obviously gained benefit from independent study.

It is important to see critical comments below in this context and overall the following positive comments should be remembered

- Most answers showed independent research and used some evidence
- Most candidates and centres were aware of the demands of some key elements in the mark scheme
- Centres mostly used the mark scheme and were aware of achievement at different levels
- There was work of very high quality in A level terms offered
- Even answers which gained lower marks showed that the unit had benefited candidates educationally.

Individual assessment objectives

2.1 AO1 There was more agreement between centres and moderators on this AO than on AO2 and AO3. The standards of relevance were higher than anticipated with most candidates answering the questions directly. The vetting by OCR of all questions was undoubtedly helpful here. Where there was a chance for a genuine debate, candidates did better. Where there was the requirement to assess a given factor, the results were sometimes less strong as the temptation to offer a list of factors was too strong for many. This was recognised generally by centre marking. The failure to indicate passages of description or to acknowledge ‘one way’ arguments which demonstrated a viewpoint without considering alternatives led to most disagreement. Inevitably, there was some disagreement about what constituted strong argument and detailed and sustained support.

It would be helpful if comments focused on some key points rather more consistently

- Does the answer focus on explanation or does it offer description?
- When explanation is offered, is there appropriate support?
- Is there really an alternative view offered or merely different factors?
- How strong is the judgement offered?

It might be helpful to give an example.

‘How important was the Peninsular War in the downfall of Napoleon?’

The possible interpretations here concern the relative importance of the war. It could be seen as the key factor in that it was a prolonged and costly conflict which damaged French military reputation, allowed Britain to sustain a land campaign, giving it the credibility among European allies in its efforts to sustain coalitions, giving Wellington the chance to refine his skills in a way that proved fatal to Napoleon at Waterloo and depriving Napoleon of good quality troops which might have been used in later campaigns. It might also have provoked discontent in France and national feelings in Europe. On the other hand though unsuccessful and a distraction the losses were not as great as those incurred in Russia; Napoleon’s personal reputation was not tarnished; it did not prevent victory over Austria in 1809 and British successes were intermittent. Coalitions were still relatively unstable and Napoleon may have deliberately overstated Spain’s importance, as he himself was not personally responsible for the defeats in comparison with Russia and the campaigns in Germany in 1813.

Thus the question is suitable and a discussion could be sustained. However, if research is not well focused then the danger is that the answer may proceed on these lines

The Peninsular War was important because Napoleon faced guerrilla tactics and strong leadership from Wellington. But Russia was more important. Here Napoleon suffered from a long retreat and heavy losses. But another factor which explains Napoleon’s downfall is discontent at home. Another factor....

These sorts of answers were common and were accompanied often by reference to evidence found which showed the elements of, say, the war in Spain, or the hardships of Russia, or the events of the battle of Waterloo. However, there was limited reference to their overall argument for the relative importance. In many such responses, once Spain had been dealt with, it was not referred to again until the conclusion. The other ‘factors in the fall of Napoleon’ were described and then in the end, perhaps the conclusion was reached along these lines.

‘Napoleon’s downfall was caused by many factors, including the Peninsular War, but the main one was the decision to invade Russia. Here Napoleon faced the problems of bad weather and a long retreat after Moscow had been destroyed by fire. He was harassed by Cossacks and guerrilla warfare and lost many thousands of men. After Russia Napoleon was never the same again and it led to his downfall.

Thus the choice of question, while being suitable in itself, was not suitable for the approach that the candidate had taken which was to be dominated by the research done rather than actively focusing the research on the issue of the relative importance of the Peninsular.

Many answers suffered from this approach, in particular, those which asked about a particular aspect of the war in Vietnam, or one element in the Civil Rights campaigns, such as the leadership of Martin Luther King.

This is an element where help and advice from centres at the stage when questions are being devised could possibly be extended.

Some answers were much more aware of different possible interpretations rather than different possible factors which might explain cause or consequence. However, interpretations do need to be explained by relevant knowledge. It is right that Germany is considered by some to be responsible for the First World War. It is also right that a key work which challenged the view that the war was a catastrophe resulting from general responsibility was that of the German historian Fischer. However, the basis of his view does have to be considered and answers which simply rely on quoting him or referring to his overall interpretation will not be fulfilling the requirements for sustained supported analysis and discussion. Thus “Assess the view that Germany was mostly responsible for the First World War” is a good question but it does need the different interpretations to be supported by factual content and not just to be a description of views.

It would be helpful to centres if the annotation were consistently focused on commenting on the development of arguments and the quality of supporting knowledge. When this was the case, the assessment was more accurate and the comments more useful for the moderator. When this was neglected, then it became more difficult to see why marks had been awarded. Thus simply writing ‘AO1’ was generally unhelpful. Comments on the support offered were much more helpful and generally offered by most centres. However, if ‘good knowledge’ or ‘excellent’ support is written, then this really should be justified and not applied to general points. For example ‘this can be seen throughout the 1930s’ by itself in relation to a comment on the failings of British foreign policy cannot justify the comment ‘good knowledge’. Also comments on different interpretations do need to be related to distinctly different ways in which the past has been interpreted. An essay on the rise of Hitler in which one paragraph blames the Wall Street Crash and another blames the onset of economic problems in Germany cannot be meaningfully annotated as ‘considers different interpretations’.

To sum up, assessment would benefit from

- greater annotation of purely descriptive passages which do not relate to the support of a particular point being made
- explanation as to why a particular argument is strong and the support offered
- more consideration as to why knowledge might be seen as ‘good’ ‘very good’ or excellent as opposed to ‘some knowledge to support’

In case the impression is given that the tendency was to always to generosity, at the lower end, annotations which suggested that there was relevant argument or analysis being offered even if alternatives were not strongly suggested or the support was limited should sometimes have led centres to a higher mark. Relevant explanation related to the question was sometimes noted but only a low mark given. The advice must be that the annotations must guide the overall mark both in terms of the lower as well as the higher bands.

However, annotations on AO1 were generally helpful and convincing. Most teachers recognised relevant and supported argument, as is, of course, to be hoped. Some rather penalised more modest essays, which nevertheless offered a view, and centres need to be careful that they are not assessing against their own candidates but in terms of the mark scheme.

Finally, a general point. The marking must be firmly based on the marking criteria. There is likely to be a range of marks in most centres as a result. Marking is not however based on the ability range within the centre but on applying national standards. Thus the top answers within a centre should not be assessed in terms of the standards of the centre but in terms of national standards. This is true of centres where the ability range is high – the lowest mark in terms of national standards may be high. Where the ability range is more spread, then the best work should not automatically be seen as level 6 unless there is firm objective evidence that it has met level 6 standards.

2.2 AO2 The marking in general for this assessment objective was less accurate than for AO1. The requirement was not that every primary source be evaluated but that there should be evidence of sustained evaluation and that the evaluation should be appropriately supported for higher-level marks. The tendency in some centres was to assume that some use of primary material in a generally competent essay should mean that AO2 should be given the same level as AO1 and AO3. However the mark scheme is explicit in requiring evaluation. The evaluation for very high marks should have been developed and supported and marginal annotation was a lot less convincing with regard to this. The biggest difference between moderators and teachers lay in the term ‘evaluation’ itself, which was too often applied to explanation of evidence or using it to support or contradict secondary sources and, thus was creditable in AO3 not AO2. Having said that, where the topic lent itself to the evaluation of evidence, the results were often strong and there was some impressive assessment of evidence well integrated into the overall argument.

Again annotation is the key to successful assessment. While it is useful to see where a source is being used, greater distinction between this and where a source is being assessed would be helpful. Also more distinction between critical comments would be helpful. ‘This is a good source as the writer was living at the time’ is simple evaluation. ‘Hitler made the speech and he was the leader and would know’ is again very basic and simple evaluation. ‘Hitler was making the speech at a time when war was imminent and emotions were high, but it may not reflect his true intentions, because the policy was still to force Jews to emigrate’ is rather different evaluation. Comments, which draw attention to the quality and support of evaluative comments, are useful both to the original marker and also to the moderator.

When making a final judgement, centres should look back at the essay to see where evaluation of primary sources has been made. It was not unusual for essays with no reference to primary evidence still to be given high marks. It was also relatively common for essays which used sources to confirm arguments made to be given high marks. (Napoleon’s sufferings in Russia are shown by the memoirs of one of his soldiers ‘We suffered bitterly from the cold and sometimes had to boil our own shoes to get some nourishment’) Though vivid and interesting this evidence is not assessed for its typicality or reliability and cannot merit high marks for AO2. It is quite possible in the assessment pattern for answers to get different levels for the three assessment objectives and it is important for centres not to assume that a strong essay which uses a good number of secondary sources critically deserves a strong mark in AO2 if primary evidenced is not used and evaluated appropriately.

A minority of candidates chose a selection of primary sources and in fact constructed their own mini-source exercise, appending the sources or in some cases, not appending them. Thus the sort of analysis was produced which read ‘Source B is not as reliable as Source F’. This is a topic based ‘essay’ and this approach is not recommended. When the sources are not included, the result is somewhat incomprehensible.

2.3 AO3 The supported analysis and evaluation of a range of historians can be demanding, but it was often done well. There was not over reliance in many centres on ad hominem historiography and there was plenty of assessment of views using knowledge. Having said that, there were lists of sources and juxtapositions rather than real evaluation and still some determination to consider historians’ biographies or membership of schools of history. However, the centres, though more generous in assessing this were not overall unrealistic. The range of

historians considered was often impressive and included wider consideration of more recent work than has sometimes been true in the past in similar coursework.

Referencing historians without much explanation of the basis of their arguments should not be over credited in terms of analysis and once again, annotation should draw attention to this. Essays which offer short quotations from a range of historians to link together views are to be discouraged. Showing assiduous attention to detail, such answers are, nevertheless, often hard to follow, and show little in the way of strong supported argument or assessment. A *reductio ad absurdum* is this sort of writing which is not uncommon:

“Scarbrick finds the reformation ‘widely supported’ but Randell questions ‘the support’ while Smith argues that ‘regional differences’ should be taken into account in what Dickens calls ‘varied’ regional responses in Barnard's King’s Reformation”

However, much more common is a reliance on the general consideration of the writer rather than the actual evidence.

‘Neale was writing before much research had been done so his views are no longer acceptable’

‘More was a Tudor propagandist so must be discounted’

‘Kolko is a well known revisionist so is unreliable’

‘Sources written in the USA during the Cold War will be influenced by anti Communism and the threat of nuclear war’

‘Hill is a Marxist and will be biased’

These considerations could be starting points and they do show some evaluation, but it is by itself limited and if centre annotation indicated more about the support offered for critical comments and how developed they were, then this would be helpful both for initial marking and moderation.

In general evaluation of evidence both in AO2 and AO3 should be seen as ‘appropriate’ or not in terms of A level expectations and the progression from the type of evaluation expected. Cross-referencing interpretations in itself is not a strong form of evaluation of secondary sources as opposed to primary sources. Sometimes this can be somewhat simplistic : ‘ Wells and Fellows agree with Badger’ for instance – one is a text book, one the result of specialised research. Also without further explanation this is simply comparison rather than evaluation. This is different from correlating mediaeval sources. The most effective form of evaluation is that based on contextual evidence and where that is sustained centres should note it in marginal comment; where it is absent or limited, then that, too, should be annotated in order to guide the marker to a correct final mark.

In terms of administration, centres are to be thanked for their cooperation and efficiency. However, moderators would like to make some requests:

- Please do not use plastic covers
- Please make sure that the centre number and candidate number is on all the work
- Please be very careful not to make arithmetical or transcription errors
- Please do not include loose sheets or rely on paper clips. Work should be firmly stapled, please
- Please make sure that all work has marginal and terminal comments to show initial marking

The danger is that critical comments or suggestion for improvement give the impression that the unit has been approached poorly. This is far from the case. Centres and candidates rose to the challenge of a new task and a new set of assessment criteria with a very high level of success. There was much worthwhile work which was often a pleasure to read and showed good standards of scholarship and thought – some of it beyond what might be expected at A level. The moderating team would like to extend thanks to centres for the care and attention given to marking. There will be more examples available for future guidance and it is to be hoped that the suggestions made in this report will reinforce much good practice,

Y101 Alfred and the Making of England 871-1016

- 1 Using these four sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that King Alfred's reforms in religion and learning depended on help from continental Europe.**

The average mark for this question was lower than for the essays. This was not because it proved more difficult, but because a significant proportion of the candidates were uncertain how to address it. A proportion failed to address historical context at all. Of those who did too many went on to an attempted judgement on what Alfred's reforms owed to continental Europe and not on whether the sources supported the view. Better answers showed knowledge both to interpret the points made in the sources and to justify comments on provenance. There were various opportunities to display knowledge, commonly comments on Alfred as an author and translator, the importance of Athelney and the effects of Viking attacks. Some of the most effective was linked to the provenance of the sources. A small minority impressed by knowing about the relationship between Fulco and England, and about the possible editing of his correspondence. Many had good things to say about Alfred and Asser as sources, though it was disappointing when their comments were dismissed without any supporting justification as biased or propaganda. Some made good points about the later source, both as an authority and its context. Again the "stock" comment that being later it was by definition less reliable was disappointing.

- 2 How effectively did Athelstan deal with challenges to his rule?**

This was the more popular of the two answers, and slightly better answered by those who attempted it. As long as the candidate kept a clear focus on the word "effectively", the answers proved relatively straightforward. Those candidates with reasonable knowledge or better were able to address several aspects of Athelstan's rule. Most produced sections on York, Brunanburh, dynastic alliances and so on. The better answers assessed the effectiveness of each, with supported awareness of limitations. Weaker answers either asserted that all was effective or went no further than describing aspects of his rule. A few answers were supported with excellent knowledge, but there was a degree to which those with more modest knowledge could apply it in a focused way. A minority of candidates confused Aethelstan with Edgar, Eadred or Edward in terms of fighting with the Vikings. Seeing how important this challenge was it did severely hold back the arguments as their points didn't match and became unclear.

- 3 'Eadred's main achievement was to force the submission of the Danes.' Assess this view.**

This question clearly suited some candidates, and there were some excellent responses, with support which showed there was no lack of relevant material to bring to bear. However, this question did prove more challenging for some of the candidates. While it is an axiom that an individual piece of knowledge is required for an answer to succeed, where the question contains a named factor that factor must be addressed clearly and in detail, even if it is rejected. This was occasionally an issue, but most had no difficulty writing about the Danes and, equally importantly, other factors. Most agreed with the view. There was some good comparison with the Northumbrians and Eadred's dealings with Bloodaxe and other individuals. Weaker candidates struggled with the comparison. Some could go no further than describing Eadred's achievements. What candidates found hard was to support comments on the relative importance of the achievements. Too often this was merely asserted. Sometimes in an effort to discuss, weaker candidates would assert one view and then another, leaving a contradiction rather than an argument.

Most candidates answered Question 1 first. There was a small but significant minority who appeared to mis-time their script, producing only a rushed, foreshortened or unfinished second question, to the detriment of their overall mark.

Y102 Anglo-Saxon England and the Norman Conquest 1035-1107

- 1 Using these four sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that the main issue between William II ‘Rufus’ and archbishop Anselm was money.**

The average mark for this question was lower than for the essays. This was not because it proved more difficult, but because a significant proportion of the candidates were uncertain how to address it. A proportion failed to address historical context at all. Of those who did too many went on to an attempted judgement on whether the main issue between the two was money and not whether the sources supported the view. Better answers showed knowledge both to interpret the points made in the sources and to justify comments on provenance. There were frequent supporting references to Flambard, and to specific cases of bishoprics being kept vacant, and to Rufus’ character and lifestyle as a reason for the hostility of churchmen in addition to his actions towards the church. In short candidates who knew what to do found it easy to support evaluation of the sources with external examples. There was some innocence about churchmen. References to actions taken against Odo and William of St. Calais were used by some to show Rufus as a persecutor of the Church, for example. Knowledge of provenance varied widely, the best being excellent, but too often “stock” comments on monks and Rufus was all the candidates could manage. A significant minority had clearly studied the available sources, and it made a huge difference to the effectiveness of their answers.

- 2 ‘How far was Edward the Confessor’s lack of leadership qualities responsible for the difficulties he faced?’**

Perhaps one candidate in ten attempted this question. Those who did clearly knew their topic, and good responses ensued. There was a fairly clear line available: balancing Edward’s limitations against issues such as the complications of his Norman connections and the power of the Godwins. It was necessary to address the named factor and candidates did this. One error was to dwell exclusively on Edward. The other was the difficulty some faced comparing the issues. Candidates of modest ability tended to write a series of factor-paragraphs, often with solid knowledge to support them, and struggle to link them together. At the lower level the factors were simply described, but too often the evaluation of importance was asserted, or even contradictory resulting in a failure to proceed to supported judgement.

- 3 ‘William of Normandy’s successful preparations for his invasion of England were the main reason for his victory at Hastings.’ How far do you agree?’**

The majority went for this question, and as a result there was a wider range of quality of response. The question is clear and fair, although a number of candidates struggled. The best responses identified several factors, displayed an impressive depth and range of knowledge, and then proceeded to rank them and to explore their inter-dependence. There was plenty to say, and several factors to explore – luck, William’s and Harold’s tactics, Harold’s difficulties and arguable errors. Individuals argued for several of these as the key, with equal success. Clearly there is no set answer to this question!

That said, there is a requirement to address the named factor sufficiently even if it is rejected. A significant minority simply did not know enough about William’s preparations

and brushed past them, making a balanced, high level, response to the question set impossible. A proportion of answers conflated preparation and tactics on the day, which was very unhelpful. More common, however, was the tendency of less strong candidates to describe factors with little or no ability to link and rank them. Even with strong knowledge, this was not enough to access the high levels.

Most candidates answered Question 1 first. There was a small but significant minority who appeared to mis-time their script, producing only a rushed, foreshortened or unfinished second question, to the detriment of their overall mark.

Y103 British period study and enquiry: England 1199-1272

1 Using these four sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that the barons rebelled because John disregarded accepted customs.

The average mark for this question was lower than for the essays. This was not because it proved more difficult, but because a significant proportion of the candidates were uncertain how to address it. A proportion failed to address historical context at all. Of those who did too many went on to an attempted judgement on whether it was John's disregard for accepted customs and not on whether the sources supported the view. Better answers showed knowledge both to interpret the points made in the sources and to justify comments on provenance.

There were some frequent references to Scutage which were helpful and de Braose featured regularly, sometimes linked effectively to the question but sometimes only to illustrate John's character more generally and with less focus. Stock comments on provenance were too common, and at times unhelpful. To write that Source A is anonymous and therefore not to be trusted is merely to demonstrate unfamiliarity with the Barnwell Chronicle and its good reputation as a source. Treatment of Magna Carta was often disappointing. To see it as neutral to the question was to miss an opportunity. Worse, some candidates said that it was written by John and saw it as evidence that he really did care about the rights of the barons. Where genuine knowledge of the authors was applied to comments on the authority, reliability or standpoint of the source it was very helpful, and supported high level responses

2 How significant were the French wars in leading to discontent with Henry III's rule up to 1232?

This was attempted by fewer than half the candidates, and on average was less well handled than Question Three. Most candidates saw the need to assess the French Wars against one or more other factors, and attempted to do this, achieving at least a fairly focused response. Too many, however, did not know enough about the wars themselves to assess their effects in sufficient depth. There were a number of very generalised responses, and for most scripts there were two discriminators: the depth and width of knowledge displayed and the ability to evaluate it. The strong scripts, whether arguing for or against the relative importance of the wars showed an ability to compare and evaluate factors to a supported conclusion. Of the various factors, the role of foreigners was often the least convincing, being generalised and lacking differentiation between individuals. A minority of scripts contained a significant flaw: they continued their treatment well beyond 1232. As a result they contained significant irrelevance, which could not gain credit and, if used as the basis of judgements, actually undermined the answer by rendering those judgements less relevant to the question set.

3 How far was Simon de Montfort responsible for his failure to hold on to power between 1263 and 1265?

This tended to be handled more successfully. It was clear to nearly every candidate that the task was to measure de Montfort's responsibility against factors beyond his control. Most did this. The dates tended to help, steering nearly every answer towards the consideration of directly relevant factors and material. Supporting knowledge tended to be

at least fair and in some cases excellent. At the lower end there were a good number that simply described Edward and his many 'wonderful' qualities. Again there was much generic comment about foreigners. Some were so damning of de Montfort that they virtually ignored other factors, leading to unbalanced and unconvincing attempts at analysis. Generally however there was an awareness of a range of factors that lead to Simon's downfall, and the significant majority of candidates did full justice to their ability and knowledge in their attempt at the question.

Most candidates answered Question 1 first. There was a small but significant minority who appeared to mis-time their script, producing only a rushed, foreshortened or unfinished second question, to the detriment of their overall mark.

Y104 British period study and enquiry: England 1377-1455

- 1 Using these four sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that the House of Commons was satisfied with the government of the early years of Richard II's minority.**

The average mark for this question was lower than for the essays. This was not because it proved more difficult, but because a significant proportion of the candidates were uncertain how to address it. A proportion failed to address historical context at all. Of those who did too many went on to an attempted judgement on the level of satisfaction of the Commons with the government and not on whether the sources supported the view that the Commons were satisfied. Better answers showed knowledge both to interpret the points made in the sources and to justify comments on provenance. In terms of external knowledge the costs of war featured regularly, as did John of Gaunt, and some candidates attempted to use their knowledge of the Peasants' Revolt, though this was usually less successful. The candidates had a tendency to take the sources at face value as regards satisfaction. It was a minority that dug beneath the surface and sought to explain why the commons might not have been satisfied, using relevant knowledge. There was little knowledge displayed about the make-up of the councils, though a few answers had more detail.

In dealing with provenance, those making generic comments about scribes sometimes exposed a lack of knowledge. It was, for example, a minority who realised that Parliament actually met at Gloucester. A small minority recognised that the Parliament Rolls are not unsullied sources and there was some recognition that they might have been adjusted after Richard's downfall.

- 2 'Lollardy arose from discontent with the Church.' Assess this view.**

Despite the phrasing of the question few candidates explored in depth the Lollards' problems with the Church, this part of the question was very seldom developed. Candidates who did focused on issues of wealth rather than for example ideas about the Eucharist or the Bible in English. There was more eagerness to get onto Wycliffe's career, the attitude and importance of John of Gaunt, and Oldcastle than to address the basic theology of Lollardy. Most candidates saw it mostly as a political and not a religious question. This led to some narrow answers. That said, the width of the question allowed candidates with a broader understanding to make full use of it. The average response for this question may have been slightly lower than for Question 3, but there were some full answers of high quality.

- 3 Assess the reasons why the English found it hard to defeat the French in the Hundred Years' War after 1429.**

This type of question should be straightforward as it requires a balance or reasons rather than a specific focus on a named factor. Too many candidates struggled to think of more than 2 reasons (Joan of Arc and Henry's weakness). It was rarer to see detailed knowledge displayed about the role of Burgundy and more than a very general treatment of French resurgence. There were some sound assessments of the English leaders, and a variety of choices made about the most important factor. There were no patterns of failure, or common errors. The differentiators were candidates' knowledge and the extent of their

ability to move beyond description of two or three factors to an evaluation of the links and relative importance of several and a supported judgement. The best of the responses proved how well this would be done.

Most candidates answered Question 1 first. There was a small but significant minority who appeared to mis-time their script, producing only a rushed, foreshortened or unfinished second question, to the detriment of their overall mark.

Y105 British period study and enquiry: England 1445-1509: Lancastrians, Yorkists and Henry VII

Overall Comment

Responses displayed a great variety in terms of quality, but at the lower end a number failed to get to grips with the view of the sources about the issue in the question, whilst in answering the essay question the depth of knowledge and ability to use that material to answer the precise question set was also disappointing. However, at the higher end of the mark range candidates were able to focus on the precise wording of the questions and use their knowledge in an appropriate way.

Question 1

The question saw a wide range of responses, with most answers able to explain most of the Sources in relation to the actual question. However, many candidates were unable to see the value of Source D and either dismissed it or were unable to link it to the actual question. At the higher end of the mark range candidates were able to use it to show that Edward, Earl of March, despite being young and inexperienced had the military ability to seize the throne soon after the death of his father and use this to argue that it suggests York was responsible for his own downfall as he had been unable to take the throne. Some argued that Edward's victory also suggested that his father had left the Yorkist position strong so that his son was able to build on this or that the presence of three suns suggest that his victory was divinely ordained. Most were better able to discuss the other sources, although Source B would have benefited from being placed more clearly and accurately in its historical context to explain how it led to Margaret's determination to seek revenge and restore her son to the succession. Although candidates were often able to test the sources using knowledge, the comments made about the provenance of the sources were often limited to 'stock' comments about the reliability of chroniclers, rather than looking in the case of C and D when they were written. Similarly, when handling B many simply stated that it was reliable because it was an Act of Parliament, rather than considering the political circumstances in which it was produced. At the lower end comments that primary sources are reliable gained little credit. Candidates should be aware that to go beyond Level 3 they do need to consider both the provenance of the sources and the historical context.

Question 2

This was the more popular question and most were able to explain why Richard lost the throne, but fewer were able to link this to the focus of 'his own mistakes' and instead simply produced a list of reasons for his loss. However, at the higher end of the mark range candidates were able to consider a good range of reasons before making a supported judgement, with most considering that Richard was at fault because of the nature of his seizure of the throne, his policies at home and abroad which led to a loss of support and his actions at Bosworth. However, others argued that it was the skill of Henry Tudor and his ability to exploit the situation which was the most important reason. Either line of argument was acceptable provided the judgement was supported.

Question 3

Although many candidates had a reasonable knowledge of Henry VII's policy towards the nobility there were fewer answers that were able to use this to address whether these policies were successful. Many simply described what he did and assumed that they were successful without any evidence to support the claims. There were some who did produce a balanced account and assessed the noble threat and whether Henry managed it successfully, often considering whether the position at the end of his reign suggests that he was successful by handing on the throne to his son, or was not successful because of the potential for war or unrest to erupt because of the harshness of his measures. Some responses did not focus on the

actual issue of the nobility and instead considered the issue of rebellion, drifting into discussions of taxation rebellions or even into foreign policy. Candidates do need to focus on the precise wording of the question and ensure that is addressed and that a supported judgement is reached if they want to access the higher levels.

Y106 British period study and enquiry: England 1485-1558: the Early Tudors

General comments

The source section on both this Unit and Y107 provided clear examples of how important it is for candidates to read the question carefully and focus on the actual wording of the question and not produce an answer to a different question. Similarly, with the essay section there were answers to Question 2 that drifted into domestic affairs and answers to Question 3 that wrote almost exclusively on foreign policy or limited themselves to the issue of the divorce. These responses, no matter how good they are will inevitably be placed in the lower bands.

Question 1

Although most candidates understood the sources there were a considerable number who failed to read the question carefully. As a result, they answered a slightly different question and considered whether the events of 1553 were a serious threat to stability, not whether they were a serious threat to the Tudor dynasty. As a result many argued that the attempt to exclude Mary was not a serious threat because it had the support of Edward and the privy council. As a result many of these responses were no more than partial answers and were placed in Level 3. There were also a considerable number who did not read Source B carefully and thought it was written by Foxe. However, at the higher end of the mark range responses used contextual knowledge about the popular support for Mary, shown in the reaction to her entry to London and in the saying of masses before it was legal, suggesting that the attempt to replace her was not serious. There was some confusion over the religious situation in Suffolk, considered in Source D, with candidates thinking that those who supported 'the proceedings of the gospel' were catholic and therefore bound to support Mary, whilst others also thought that Foxe was a Catholic. Comments about the provenance were often well developed, but in many instances this was at the expense of using contextual knowledge and candidates would be well served in remembering that there needs to be a balance between contextual knowledge and provenance. In dealing with Source C some were confused about who Nicholas Throckmorton was and linked him to the Catholic plot of the same name in Elizabeth's reign, whilst stronger answers commented on the fact it was the view of a Protestant who did not approve of the plot, suggesting again that it was not a serious threat to the Tudor dynasty. Many were able to comment on the views of the Privy Council and used this to challenge the view of Source A, noting that once Northumberland left London many changed their mind and gave their backing to Mary, further arguing that the plot was not a threat to the dynasty.

Question 2

Although most candidates knew a significant amount about Henry's foreign policy, they found it more difficult to focus on the issue of his aims and often resorted to a descriptive approach with only minimal analysis of his aims. Some argued that his aims changed during his rule, whilst others argued that avoiding war was a major concern as it could lead to the loss of his throne and linked this to his concern for national security. Others argued that avoiding war was paramount as the country was financially weak and tired of war. Responses often considered whether the response to the Breton crisis and the invasion of France was evidence to support or challenge the question, with either approach acceptable. However, drift to focus on the rebellions Henry faced was not and produced, at best, a partial answer, if they were linked to foreign concerns. Many also drifted towards whether his foreign policy was successful, which again could not be credited.

Question 3

This was the less popular question and was often reflected in the lack of detailed knowledge about Wolsey's domestic policies, particularly with regards to the legal reforms and even taxation. When taxation was discussed knowledge of the subsidy was often lacking and sometimes led to lengthy discussions of foreign policy. The inability to sustain Henry's overseas wars was relevant but that needed to be the focus, not the events of the wars. Few answers offered a balanced discussion of the legal reforms, with most simply seeing them a failure and not considering whether they brought justice to the poor. Stronger answers considered whether the achievements were limited for Wolsey and some argued that they were successful enough to help sustain him in power until the issue of the annulment dominated. There were answers that considered Wolsey's social policy, but often they did not link the abandonment of the enclosure policy to 'limited achievement' and instead argued that it was a success.

Y107 British period study and enquiry: England 1547-1603: the Later Tudors

General comments

The source section on both this Unit and Y106 provided clear examples of how important it is for candidates to read the question carefully and focus on the actual wording of the question and not produce an answer to a different question. The essay questions were particularly disappointing as once again many did not read the question carefully and often wrote more about the topics under consideration rather than focusing on the actual question, resulting in many responses where the focus was partial at best.

Question 1

The same sources are set for this Unit as for Y106 and unsurprisingly the same issues arose on this Unit as on Y106. Although most candidates understood the sources there were a considerable number who failed to read the question carefully. As a result, they answered a slightly different question and considered whether the events of 1553 were a serious threat to stability, not whether they were a serious threat to the Tudor dynasty. As a result many argued that the attempt to exclude Mary was not a serious threat because it had the support of Edward and the privy council. As a result many of these responses were no more than partial answers and were placed in Level 3. There were also a considerable number who did not read Source B carefully and thought it was written by Foxe. However, at the higher end of the mark range responses used contextual knowledge about the popular support for Mary, shown in the reaction to her entry to London and in the saying of masses before it was legal, suggesting that the attempt to replace her was not serious. There was some confusion over the religious situation in Suffolk, considered in Source D, with candidates thinking that those who supported 'the proceedings of the gospel' were catholic and therefore bound to support Mary, whilst others also thought that Foxe was a Catholic. Comments about the provenance were often well developed, but in many instances this was at the expense of using contextual knowledge and candidates would be well served in remembering that there needs to be a balance between contextual knowledge and provenance. In dealing with Source C some were confused about who Nicholas Throckmorton was and linked him to the Catholic plot of the same name in Elizabeth's reign, whilst stronger answers commented on the fact it was the view of a Protestant who did not approve of the plot, suggesting again that it was not a serious threat to the Tudor dynasty. Many were able to comment on the views of the Privy Council and used this to challenge the view of Source A, noting that once Northumberland left London many changed their mind and gave their backing to Mary, further arguing that the plot was not a threat to the dynasty.

Question 2

This was less popular than Question 3 and although some found it difficult to use their knowledge of the marriage and succession issues to assess their impact on domestic affairs there were other responses that were well focused and did address the issue. Stronger answers looked at their impact on faction and discussed the extent to which it caused problems in government and for the Privy Council, or whether it was well managed. Similarly, the impact of the issues on parliamentary business was discussed and whether it challenged Elizabeth's authority, with many making reference to the Wentworth brothers and the issues of royal prerogative. Some responses considered the extent to which parliamentary or government business was disrupted by the issues or whether Elizabeth was able to manage it effectively. Answers also considered the issue of Mary Queen of Scots and the Northern Rebellion, suggesting that her presence did create difficulties until her execution. However, there were weaker responses which focused more on why there were concerns and why Elizabeth did not marry or name a successor. Other candidates allowed their responses to drift to foreign affairs and consider who Elizabeth's suitors were and the problems associated with each.

Question 3

Although most were able to write quite knowledgeably about the cost of war, many answers drifted from financial problems to social and looked at issues of poverty and vagrancy which were, at best, of limited relevance. There were some strong comments about the cost of war, with many discussing the debt that Elizabeth inherited from Mary's war, but argued that it was not serious as she was able to turn debt into a surplus. However, stronger answers then argued that it was the later conflicts against Spain, in France and the Netherlands and Ireland that caused the major financial problems. Some argued that inflation was more serious, but were often unable to explain why and tended to drift to it causing social issues which were not a financial problem for Elizabeth. There were few answers that showed a clear understanding of the machinery of finance and the outdated nature of assessments, but instead wrote at considerable length on monopolies, which were really only a limited financial issue at the end of the reign. There were many factors that could be considered and examiners did not expect detailed coverage of everything, but the cost of war, as the named factor, must be discussed.

Y108 British period study and enquiry: The Early Stuarts and the origins of the Civil War 1603-1660

General Comments

The questions worked well, candidates displayed a good understanding of the sources, even if the provenance of some provided a challenge. Similarly with the essays, most were able to produce material that was relevant and accurate, although there were some answers to Question 3 that drifted into long-term discussions, with much of the answer on personal rule, rather than focusing on events of 1640-2.

Question 1

Candidates understood the sources and were usually able to relate the material to the actual question, with even weaker answers being able to explain the view of the sources about the issue in the question. Most were able to write well about Sources A and D, but found B and C more challenging. Perhaps the most disappointing aspect of responses was the lack of precise knowledge that was used to test the view of the sources, but provenance was generally much stronger. However, a considerable number assumed that Source B, like A, because it was a letter would be reliable in its view and did not really consider its purpose and this was often repeated when dealing with Source C. Candidates who had knowledge of the negotiations and attempt to arrive at a settlement were able to use that information well and place the sources in their historical context of the role of the army, radicalism, the Second Civil war and the role of the Scots. Consideration of A was usually detailed and most argued that it gave a reliable view of events as Charles was writing a private letter to his wife. Similarly, in dealing with D candidates noted that as it was written after the Restoration it might be expected to have a pro-royalist slant and that the comment made in the final sentence adds to the value of the source in assessing whether the failure to achieve a settlement was the fault of Charles. There were some candidates who adopted a more thematic approach and considered the role of Charles, the army, the Scots and radicals in the failure and this approach was less successful as the overall view of each source was often not evident. Candidates should also be reminded that as is this is the source element of the paper it is the sources that should drive the answer and that the conclusion or judgement should be focused on whether the sources support the view in the question.

Question 2

Although candidates knew a considerable amount the causes of the disputes between James and his parliaments, they were less secure in linking the information about foreign policy to causing disputes. As a result, there were often large accounts of foreign policy and a simple comment that parliament was unhappy or supported the policy. Most answers were much stronger when discussing issues such as finance or prerogative powers, where detailed knowledge was evident, although the Great Contract was often limited in its consideration. The strongest answers were able to link the issues and often argued that prerogative powers, finance and foreign policy were linked and that together they were the major cause of the problems. Some answers adopted a chronological approach and looked at what the most important cause of conflict in each parliament, but this approach was less successful. Judgements were often well thought through and supported, with many arguing that foreign policy on its own was not the most important cause, but rather a symptom of other underlying issues, usually surrounding trust and prerogative powers.

Question 3

Many responses simply saw this as a chance to list all the causes of the Civil war, and for some this took them back even to the reign of James, with little focus on the extent to which Charles was to blame. However, that said, there were many well balanced answers that compared the role of Charles and parliament, with some even distinguishing the role of particular individuals within parliament, such as Pym. The stronger answers were able to use detailed knowledge of events and legislation, usually from 1640 onwards, to support their argument and avoided lengthy discussions of personal rule, during which some candidates still seemed to assume that parliament was present! Many identified particular events which made war more likely and considered who was responsible, focusing on religious legislation, limits to the power of the monarchy, the treatment of Strafford and the case of the Five Members. Answers often assessed whether parliament was limiting his power so that he was little more than a figurehead and therefore had no choice but to reject the proposals or whether it was his desire to protect his prerogative was unreasonable. Weaker answers tended to be more narrative in their approach with limited explanation or analysis, which was often just tacked on to the end of a paragraph.

Y109 British period study and enquiry: The making of Georgian Britain 1678-c.1760

General Comments

The entry for this unit is small and therefore generalisations about performance are harder to make. However, that said, there were a range of responses on both Section A and B, although in the essay section the number of responses to Question 3 was limited. As with many other of the Units candidates do need to focus on the exact wording of the question, whether it is the Source question or the essay as failure to do so will limit the level that can be achieved and, at best, usually lead to a partial answer.

Question 1

Candidates were not always clear in the understanding of the Sources, and this was particularly the case with Sources A and C. In dealing with Source A candidates appeared uncertain as to whether it Charles who was suggesting or manipulating events and claiming that Bristol had broken their charter or whether the view offered was genuine. Stronger answers did put this into the wider context of boroughs having to renew their charters and quo warranto proceedings, linking this with Source D. In discussing Source C many were unaware of what a conventicle was, whilst stronger answers did appear aware of the issue and could relate it to religious developments earlier in Charles' reign. Sources B and D were more straightforward and most were able to explain them. However, the biggest challenge for many was in linking the sources to the idea of an absolute monarch. The strongest answers often brought in knowledge of Louis XIV and contrasted him with Charles, whilst others used knowledge of Charles' treaty with Louis to explain why he did not need parliament as, along with the boom in trade, he now had financial independence. Comments about the provenance of Sources B and D was much stronger than A and C, with candidates commenting that it might be considered a surprise that a Tory was concerned about the failure to call parliament and go against the Triennial Act. However, this was often developed and noted that they comments in his memoirs that might not have been intended for publication. Most were also able to comment about Burnet, with some having considerable knowledge about his exile and using that to question his reliability as a commentator on events. Comments about the provenance of A and C were less developed with most simply saying they represent the government view or, in the case of A, was an attempt to hold on to his position as sheriff and was therefore promoting what the government wanted to hear. The strongest answers drew a distinction between absolute and the exploitation of traditional powers, arguing that the monarchy took on no new powers, but simply exploited powers it already had.

Question 2

This was the most popular question in the essay section and most knew enough about the South Sea Bubble crisis to write a good paragraph before considering a range of issues. Many commented on Walpole's political skill and argued that the crisis was just another opportunity for him to display his skills. Candidates also wrote convincingly about his relationship at court and the issue of the Tories and support for the Hanoverians. Most were aware of the importance of Walpole's management of the crisis and his ability to ensure the king was not embarrassed by it. However, weaker answers either wrote in general terms about why he was able to rise to power or wrote at length about what happened in the crisis without showing how it aided Walpole.

Question 3

There were a limited number of answers to this question. The strongest answers began by identifying the aims of Britain in the war in their opening paragraph and then discussing the extent to which each aim was achieved. Most answers knew some details about the Treaty of Utrecht, but in weaker answers this was described rather than linked back to the question, similarly with the victories of Marlborough they were often described rather than analysed in terms of the question. Answers usually discussed issues such as trade and naval supremacy, the question of French power and influence and the protection and development of the empire. Some responses drew a distinction between the aims of the Tories and Whigs and where this was done it provided a useful point of discussion in terms of whether their aims were achieved.

Y110 British period study and enquiry: From Pitt to Peel: Britain 1783-1853

Comments on Individual Questions

Question 1

This question was largely well-answered and the sources were generally accessible to most candidates. Most candidates used all four of the given sources and it was pleasing to note how many candidates evaluated the sources using both contextual knowledge and provenance, providing a balanced analysis and argument. The better responses ensured that the focus of their answers was the issue given in the question, notably whether O'Connor inspired his fellow Chartists rather than merely provide a general analysis of the sources. Only the best responses provided a valid judgement though, and candidates should be reminded that to reach the higher levels this judgement should be based on the sources and not on the topic.

In terms of content most candidates pointed out how sources A and B largely disagreed with the premise of the question, whilst C and D mostly supported it. Mid-level answers tended to rely heavily on the source content with some valid discussion of either context or provenance. Better answers pointed out for Source A that Bradford was an area likely to support a Chartist due to the poor living and working conditions there. Fewer candidates were able to use detailed knowledge to support B, although the best responses were able to discuss the reference to the Northern Star and also examine the qualities of other Chartist leaders. A number of candidates were also able to demonstrate how the praise for O'Connor was tempered in this source, showing good balance to their answers. C and D caused few problems in terms of content, with most candidates noting that these two sources supported the argument in the question. A surprising number of candidates failed to discuss the problems of the Land Society as mentioned in C but the majority understood the distinction between the "moral force" and "physical force" to ensure D was treated well.

Most answers contained an attempt to consider provenance, for at least some of the sources. Candidates should be reminded that it is an essential aspect of evaluating all four sources though and to access the higher levels of the mark scheme both context and provenance should be treated equally. Valid comments were seen on all four sources, with good analysis of the radical nature of sources A and B. Several candidates interpreted 'journal' in the descriptor for C as a private diary, an error that undermined discussion of its provenance. Few candidates pointed out that O'Brien, as a National Reformer, was committed to measures that did not expose Chartists to undue risk. However in D most were able to see that Lovett's comments were down to a personal grievance with O'Connor and perhaps stemmed from resentment surrounding his prominence in the movement.

Question 2

A smaller number of students chose to answer this question. In the best answers there was a consistent focus on the question, and analysis and evaluation was in evidence to support any judgements made. The best responses established criteria based on what British interests were and then argued for and against these. Unfortunately several answers contained only a narrative of British foreign policy, with only scant reference to British interests. Such answers were restricted to the lower levels. A few candidates (perhaps expecting a different question) decided to answer the question by comparing Castlereagh's activities with those of Canning or Pitt. Such an approach led to partial answers with skewed interpretations.

Question 3

This was the most popular of the essay questions. Answers covered a range of valid factors, but the most successful were those that argued for middle class discontent as the driving force behind the act, linked to the violence associated with popular protests as an expression of this more widespread dissatisfaction. Several candidates discussed violence from outside the specified period with only the best responses able to link this to the question by arguing that this showed that violence was not the main reason for the passage of the Reform Act. The best responses also paid heed to the command term “How Far”, with others merely listing the factors, limiting their mark to Level 4 and below.

In terms of content, the violence of 1830-32 was generally well-known, but better responses were able to discuss the work of Attwood and the Birmingham Political Union and the commitment of the Whigs to reform. The role of William IV was often overlooked. Weaker responses tended to list the problems with the political system before 1832, and were more descriptive in focus.

Y111 British period study and enquiry: Liberals, Conservatives and the rise of Labour 1846-1918

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question 1

This question generally produced sound answers. The word 'cordial' caused confusion for some candidates, but the impact of this confusion was limited since most candidates were largely able to discuss the sources by looking at how relations between the workforce and government were positive.

Although grouping is not required in this question many candidates were able to easily group the sources into those in support of the view in the question and those against: the only source that caused some slight confusion was D, which better answers were able to assess in light of its provenance since the author, as a Tory, was being critical of the Liberals. Most candidates didn't necessarily know much about Bridgeman himself though.

The provenance for A and B were particularly well known – knowledge of David Lloyd George's career was strong, and many candidates not only knew something about A. J. Cook but were able to argue that his views might not have been representative of all trade unions. Furthermore, Cook's use of the word 'comrade' was picked up on by some candidates as evidence of his extremist views; an accompanying reference to Russia was often made as well. Many candidates identified the likely neutrality of C, as the report of a 'Commission of Enquiry' and produced reasoned responses as a result.

Contextually there was good knowledge of labour relations and the 1915 agreement between the Government and the workforce, with many able to show how this was tested with the Munitions Crisis, conscription and later unrest.

Question 2

Fewer candidates attempted this question, which drew a range of responses in term of quality. The problems of leadership were largely bypassed in favour of other factors. The best responses pointed out Derby's role in the House of Lords and his reluctance to take a lead. They could also discuss Disraeli's role but few mentioned the 1852 or 1859 administrations. A larger number of candidates were able to discuss the alternative viewpoints and there was some excellent discussion of the Peelite split, trade policy and the popularity of Palmerston. Better responses also highlighted the economic prosperity of the period although this factor was omitted in most essays. Judgements needed to be clear and examine the relative importance of the factors discussed but more often candidates simply listed the reasons and this restricted them to Level 4 and below.

Question 3

This was the more popular essay question. Many candidates had a sound knowledge of Gladstone's Second Ministry, although a minority mistakenly wrote about his First period in office and therefore failed to address the period in the question. The best candidates defined "troubles" at the outset and were able to produce considered responses that could examine both viewpoints. Most highlighted that Ireland and Foreign Policy caused Gladstone more difficulties, focusing on various flashpoints including General Gordon in the Sudan, the Phoenix Park murders and the defeat at Majuba Hill. Triumphs were dealt with less well, with better responses looking at domestic policy as examples of this. Most looked at the Second Irish Land Act and his electoral victory in 1885 as a counter to his troubles but few went beyond this.

Y112 British period study and enquiry: Britain 1900-1951

Comments on Individual Questions

Question 1

This question generally produced sound answers. The word 'cordial' caused confusion for some candidates, but the impact of this confusion was limited since most candidates were largely able to discuss the sources by looking at how relations between the workforce and government were positive.

Although grouping is not required in this question many candidates were able to easily group the sources into those in support of the view in the question and those against: the only source that caused some slight confusion was D, which better answers were able to assess in light of its provenance since the author, as a Tory, was being critical of the Liberals. Most candidates didn't necessarily know much about Bridgeman himself though.

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Contextually there was good knowledge of labour relations and the 1915 agreement between the Government and the workforce, with many able to show how this was tested with the Munitions Crisis, conscription and later unrest.

Question 2

This was a popular question which had some excellent responses. Where candidates were successful they focused clearly on the achievements of MacDonald's First Ministry. Candidates were generally able to pick some successes despite the ministry's short life-span, notably in foreign policy and in social reform. There was some impressive knowledge of Wheatley's Housing Act and the extensions to unemployment provision and child allowance. The majority of candidates focused on achievements in Foreign Policy and were able to examine MacDonald's role in helping to draft the Geneva Protocol and his commitment to the League of Nations and associated reforms. Where candidates were less successful, they tended to misinterpret the question by deciding to focus on the reasons for MacDonald's ministry being so short-lived. Narratives of the Zinoviev letter did not prove to be fruitful.

It was often noted that MacDonald's greatest success was in demonstrating Labour's credibility as a viable political alternative to the Conservative and Liberal parties; better answers were able to evidence this by showing how MacDonald's initiatives laid the groundwork for future policy successes.

Question 3

This question was answered less well on the whole in comparison to question 2. There was a tendency with this question for candidates to talk more broadly about the topic, particularly in relation to the causes of the economic problems of the 1930s. Fewer candidates were able to focus on how successfully government policies dealt with these economic issues. Better answers were able to look at the growth of service industries, the effectiveness of the special regions and the reductions in unemployment, although a number of candidates wrote rather

generally on this, without specific details. Surprisingly few candidates referred to the economic impact of rearmament which would have been a fruitful path to follow.

Most candidates were able to discuss the North-South divide, and there was some excellent knowledge on the variation in standards between the Home Counties and Jarrow, for example. However weaker responses tended to describe the problems of these areas rather than link the analysis back to the question. Only the best responses set out criteria at the beginning to help them assess how successfully government policies dealt with these economic problems.

Y113 British period study and enquiry: Britain 1930-1997

Question 1

Responses to the question on the sources were generally sound. Overall knowledge and provenance were used well, with only weaker scripts failing to use both. Mid-level scripts tended to develop one much more strongly than the other. At the higher end, evaluation of provenance was good, although rarely sustained and incorporated into conclusions. Where candidates were less successful their responses simply explained some of the main points of each source. Some spent too long on this question and consequently didn't finish the essay question. A variety of approaches were seen, but the most successful tended to be when content, context and provenance were integrated in a source by source approach.

Source A was largely treated well. Most answers were able to point out how the journalist reflected national feeling and brought in some specific knowledge about evacuation and the pressures of the Home Front. Better answers managed to show how the source could be relevant to the election 5 years later and used government actions during wartime to show collective action. A significant number of candidates were also able to discuss J B Priestley and highlight his own political views and were duly credited. Source B was also handled well, although weaker candidates expected Colville to side with Churchill, and had not read the text fully. Some students misinterpreted the reference to the Gestapo speech in source 2.

Provenance discussion tended to be fairly simplistic although a significant number of students were able to bring in a good range of relevant own knowledge. Good answers recognised that the negative comments from a source close to Churchill made the source useful. Fewer candidates were able to link the Labour Manifesto to Source C and a sizeable number of students did not think this showed that social changes were important in beating the Tories. Most candidates recognised this as propaganda with the best responses using Churchill's aristocratic background as evidence of Conservatives being a class party.

In Source D most answers referred to Churchill's tone and bitter language. A few saw "Conscientious Objectors" as being literal but students generally found this easier to evaluate because of the personal undertones. Many answers commented on the unfairness of Churchill's comments about Labour in the war and evaluated this with some good contextual support.

Question 2

Although this was the most popular of the essay choices, many students struggled to come up with enough factors for a fruitful discussion limiting their arguments by examining only Thatcher from the 1979-1997 period, and thus tried to make the essay about her governments, rather than focusing on Major's Conservative government. This often led to some irrelevant discussion.

A significant minority struggled with the dates in the question with many thinking Thatcher was still in power in 1997. Better responses structured a response in an organised manner producing intelligent thematic essays. A number of answers displayed detailed and accurate knowledge but some were often weak on the named factor. Most students were able to establish some comparison to the impact of New Labour. The best answers looked at divisions over Europe, financial problems, Labour's appeal to the middle class after Clause 4 was dropped, and the role of Tony Blair whilst the best responses recognised that the contrast between Blair and Major's performances exacerbated Major's issues

Question 3

This was the less popular of the essay choices and elicited a wide range of responses. Weaker responses tended to list events chronologically which either demonstrated a close relationship or not, without analysing the events. Few students were able to critically analyse and evaluate their examples in relation to the issue of the question. Many conclusions in weaker and mid-level scripts (on both essay questions) failed to add anything of value and merely restated previous assertions. Judgements must be based on factual material if a candidate is to achieve the highest levels.

The best scripts used events to illustrate larger themes, with interim evaluation rather than trying to leave this until the conclusion. These focused on key themes e.g. military aid, empire, economy and relationships between leaders. Most answers were in favour of a special relationship but few examined the nuances of Anglo-American relations. For example, in respect of the Thatcher/Reagan relationship it was often just said that their personal chemistry made relations close. The Cold War, Suez and the Thatcher-Reagan relationship were predominant features in most responses.

Y201 Non-British period study: The Rise of Islam c.500-750

General Comments

The candidates that took this paper were very well prepared, in the main. They were able to use quite extensive, detailed and accurate knowledge to fulfil the exact demands of the questions. The general impression is that candidates had risen to the intellectual demands of the paper and produced sets of answers that were among the best produced on any of the Y200 A Level papers

Comments on Individual Questions

Question No.1a

Most who tackled this question were able to give a clear, coherent and well-informed definition of 'structure of Arabia' before continuing to deal with the named factors of influence. Arab military strength was discussed appropriately and sensibly by referencing the skills of Arabs with respect to strategies, tactics (especially mounted warfare), leadership and logistics. The very best responses gave examples of where and when such military skills had been evident (as, for instance, in the defeat of Persian forces). Tribalism was discussed just as well, with solid comment on issues of solidarity, unification, contributions to the maintenance of law and order and the consolidation of governmental structures. Nearly all answers ended with a well-balanced, logical and congruent judgement about the relative importance of the two issues concerned.

Question No. 1b

The best answers, of which there were many, provided a balanced, thorough and detailed account of the extent of success gained by 'Abd al-Malik in expanding the Umayyad Empire. Candidates were clearly aware of the need to focus on 'how successfully' and 'expansion' which most did with commensurate skill. Issues such as the exploitation of the internal disputes amongst enemies, expansion of settlements (especially in Syria) and centralisation of administration were compared and contrasted with others such as resentment from Iraq and the legacy of 'Abd al-Malik before drawing a conclusion. Overall, the quality of answers was impressive.

Question No.2 a

This was a more popular question than 1a. Candidates clearly understood why Umar ibn al-Khattab was of significance and how he had reached a position of authority. Comments on the treatment of non-Muslims invariably involved the charting of the plight of Jews and Christians. In particular, there was some very well-developed analysis and evaluation of issues surrounding land allocation and the freedom of transit. Equally, there was much thorough exposition on the fall of Jerusalem and Damascus. As with question 1a, nearly all responses here were able to score high marks as they revealed a very good understanding of the task objectives

Question No 2b

Nearly all responses stuck closely to the command stem ('assess the reasons why') and subsequently arrived at answers that were well-argued and carefully supported. Most considered the receptiveness of pre-Islamic Arabia to Islam by referencing a range of political, economic, social, cultural and religious factors. The most effective answers showed how such factors might have been linked and interwoven. All finished with judgements about the relative importance of the issues that had been dealt with

Y202 Non-British period study: Charlemagne 768-814

General Comments:

This Topic was tackled by very few Centres but those that did so had quite obviously prepared candidates thoroughly. Some of the responses to questions were quite exceptional and there were very few, if any, papers that could be classified as weak

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No.1a

Nearly all of the answers gave balanced and fair analysis of each factor before arriving at well-developed judgements. The very best argued that the two issues could not really be separated and that without the Capitularies the *missi dominici* would not have existed. Most impressive was the wide range of knowledge and understanding displayed of the two factors; nearly all responses were detailed, thorough and very well-developed.

Question No 1b

Candidates as a whole were obviously aware of the need to stick closely to the command stem (how significant) and to create criteria by which the importance of Charlemagne's coronation could be judged. Some used, very effectively, a 'before and after' structure. Others constructed responses using 'positive and negative/was and was not' frameworks. Common and relevant areas of consideration were Charlemagne's attitude towards the pope and papal territories, the Byzantine reaction to the coronation and the significance of the imperial title to those living in the Frankish empire. All responses showed skilful manipulation of material to arrive at a balanced conclusion.

Question No.2a

This was less popular than question 1a but was tackled with as much skill and aptitude. All stuck to analysing the impact of the factors on the expansion of Charlemagne's empire. The implications and importance of Irminsul was well understood; knowledge of the pagan idol was applied to assessment of how well Charlemagne used its destruction to be successful when at war. Equally, material on the Avar ring was utilised to show how the Holy Roman Emperor was able to combat the threat of the Saxon. There was much detailed explanation of how the ring had symbolised the political and religious authority of the Saxons and, thus, how its demise reflected Charlemagne's ability to expand his sphere of influence. All responses used knowledge of both factors to analyse and evaluate the significance of the factors concerned before arriving at balanced judgements.

Question No 2b

Those who answered this question did so with a great deal of aptitude. 'Success' was mostly measured in terms of: the revival of Latin learning; the establishment of Church Councils (and control of bishops); the importance of Alcuin; the forcible Christianisation of subjects; discontinuity of policies. Pretty much every candidate stuck closely on the command stem ('how successfully') throughout and subsequently produced answers that were awarded marks in the higher Levels of the mark scheme.

Y203 Non-British period study: The Crusades and the Crusader States 1095-1192

General Comments

Many Candidates performed well on this paper simply by paying careful attention to the exact demands of the questions. Those that struggled did so mainly as a result of glossing over key terms and/or words (in particular, 'failure' in question 1a; 'how important' in question 1b; 'outcome' in question 2a; 'capture of Jerusalem' in question 2b. Candidates are well advised to take sufficient time reading and reflecting on every word in the question before taking the plunge to start their answers.

A general stylistic remark: Candidates understandably seemed very tentative when writing to avoid making assertions. It appeared that the direct expression of a viewpoint was to be guarded against. Many attempted judgements were qualified with statements such as 'important to a moderate extent', 'to a certain extent it could be argued that', 'it may contribute to' or 'some argue that'. Such generalising and indeterminate phrases made it challenging to recognise and award judgements. Candidates should be aware that a judgement is a viewpoint supported by evidence and that this can be expressed confidently, without reservation, if the support material is accurate and relevant. There is no need to make vague comments about 'extent' and 'could be' when developing an argument.

On the whole question 2 was the more popular choice but not necessarily the one that was answered more effectively.

Comments on Individual Questions

Question No.1a

The best responses dealt with all aspects of the named factors in the question. Some Candidates struggled with this question as many failed to engage with all the components with some responses only considering one of the three places in factor (i) (Anatolia, Antioch and Acre). This often limited responses to a level 3 or 4 (a 'partial' or 'uneven response'). Many responses demonstrated only a generalised knowledge of factor (i) but were more familiar with the siege of Damascus. The question referenced the 'failure' of the Second Crusade and some responses focused on a general analysis of all contributing influences without determining which of the two stated factors was of greater significance. Some, a minority, failed to appreciate that the Second Crusade was a failure.

Question No 1 b

Candidates tended to do better on the essay element of question 1. Many had a detailed knowledge of the rivalries surrounding the death of Baldwin IV but some produced descriptive responses which followed a chronological approach to succession crises. There was also some confusion regarding the definition of 'internal rivalries' with some students discussing internal rivalries of the Muslims as a contributing problem for the crusader states. This was tentative and often produced a confused the line of reasoning.

Question No.2a

The question referred to the 'outcome' of the Third Crusade and many responses focused on determining whether the outcome was positive or negative without a focused evaluation of the two given factors. Clearly candidates were well versed in this debate and attempted to tailor the question to suit their knowledge, thus limiting their evaluation and quality of judgement. The best responses often started by giving a clear indication of what the outcome of the Crusade was before considering the relative contributions of the individuals concerned. Also, of all the questions on the paper, this one was more likely to produce narrative and chronologically based answers based answers that drifted from the main requirements of the task.

Question No.2b

Again many candidates attempted to tailor the question to knowledge they possessed about another issue relating to the topic, namely a discussion of motivations for the first crusade. Whilst some were able to relate issues of religious and personal motivation to the capture of Jerusalem many provided illustrative accounts of papal bulls and religiosity of the period. The question was focused on the capture of Jerusalem and while the successes of the First Crusade leading up to the event were of relevance, candidates needed to make this explicit in their analysis, particularly when relating the prior military successes to the capture of the city. On the whole candidates displayed very good knowledge of religious piety and the divisions within the Muslim forces and some and often produced very nuanced responses relating these factors to the specific capture of Jerusalem.

Y204 Non-British period study: Genghis Khan and the Explosion from the Steppes c.1167-1405

General Comments

Very few centres entered candidates for this option. Of those that did, the responses were generally of a high quality and revealed that candidates had been very well-prepared. However, there were some extremely well-informed and articulate candidates who did not achieve at the highest levels due to not unpacking questions and maintaining relevance.

The different questions were attempted in roughly equal numbers.

Comments on Individual Questions

Question No.1a

Most candidates attempted to measure 'impact' by consideration of themes such as the economy, trade, finance, politics, society, art, culture and religion. The very best answers adopted a compare and contrast approach although there were many sophisticated responses that considered each factor in turn. The majority of candidates were able to produce focused, well-supported comments that developed into an overall judgement. A minority of candidates were confused over what constituted Persia but were more secure on China.

Question No.1b

Most answers focused on 'reasons why' but some drifted towards describing events before 1264 (and in a few instances, beyond that time). The very best started by discussing the relevance of the death of Mongke Khan and then proceeded to measure this event against other influences especially the personalities and power of other rulers especially Genghis Khan. More astute candidates differentiated between disunity in general and civil war more specifically. Some used a long-term, short-term and trigger approach to assess reasons and a few answers combined this very successfully with a thematic approach (political, economic, military and religious influences over time). No set answer was expected although it was not surprising to find that some candidates reverted to the listing of factors (often signposted by 'one reason was...; another reason was...') without offering any semblance of assessment of relative importance.

Question No.2a

The most impressive answers were very well-informed about both invasions of Japan. There was a good amount of knowledge and understanding shown concerning leadership skills, strategies, tactics, resources (especially with respect those of a maritime nature), logistics and luck (particularly the weather). On balance, most candidates opted to argue for (ii) having the greater impact as it clearly showed that the Mongols were not invincible. However, there were some who argued strongly in favour of (i) as it resulted in the development of maritime resources. The responses of candidates clearly indicated that it is possible, with such a question, to argue equally effectively for one factor being more important than the other.

Question No.2b

This was another question that either produced responses that listed factors or that made a good attempt to assess them. The stand-out answers were those that started with the most important reasons (this often being Tamerlane's personal skill as a military leader and practitioner) before moving on to less strong influences (such as his supposed exploitation of Islam). An effective approach adopted by many was to consider Tamerlane's strengths against the weaknesses of his enemies before concluding with a judgement. Overall, answers to the question could be placed in to two categories: those that reached Level 5 and above as a result of offering well-developed assessment and those placed at Level 4 or below that simply listed developments.

Y205 Non-British period study: Exploration, Encounters and Empire 1445-1570

There was no pronounced pattern of imbalance between candidates' levels of success in the two parts of their chosen question. Candidates understood the instructions. There were hardly any cases of rubric infringement or significant mis-timing. There were some strong responses to both questions, but a significant number of candidates who simply did not display enough knowledge. Gaps in knowledge are easier to gloss over in essays, though here too there were too many candidates without specific supporting knowledge at their fingertips.

Question 1a

The comparison question did not require particularly long answers, though some candidates wrote very extensively. What was needed was good explanation of both to support a developed judgement. Limitations of technique included shallow treatment of the factor the candidate assessed as less important, or a failure to develop the comparison and judgement. At the lower levels knowledge tended to be thin and comments assertive. There were several approaches taken to this question. The two which were most successful and credited were either to assess importance with regard benefits to Spain and her empire of each explorer's conquests or to consider the relative successes of each with regards to success being related to importance. However, the more successful candidates linked their analysis back to the idea of importance, whereas those with less success merely described the missions of both explorers. A useful tack considered the role of wealth discovered or the prestige brought to Spain, and another was to think about the role of the influence which Cortes had in inspiring Pizarro. Where candidates managed to avoid description this was a well answered question.

Question 1b

This question was not always well answered. The problem lay in the focus on "administration". Only the stronger candidates were able to evaluate the extent of control over administration, while the weaker were more generally about the strengths and weaknesses of the empire. Very often there was plenty of general and tangential knowledge but not the specific mastery needed of the precise aspect required. Candidates who did well considered various methods of local administration and how well they were controlled by Lisbon, dealing typically with the problems of distance and the role of the nobility. However, several candidates forgot the claim of the question, that Lisbon had little control, and thus some scripts became a description of how Portugal controlled its empires, without assessment of how well this was achieved.

Question 2a

This was generally well answered. In the main, most candidates did well to assess the successes for the Catholic Church in the conversion of indigenous peoples, although some needed to be careful that they did not give way to description of the treatment of these peoples. Having said this there was still useful evaluation of the “success” of conversion. There were some good comments about the relationship between the Church and both the national and colonial rulers. Most struggled in their response to the idea of success to European politics- candidates needed to consider either how exploration affected the overall standing of exploring nations and their relationships with other nations, or, alternatively, the internal political effects, such as opportunities for restless nobles for example, on the nations. Some weaker answers glossed over this factor with the result that effective comparison was not possible.

Question 2b

This question led to some good responses, although there were some cases where it was misunderstood. The question required the evaluation of the named factor and therefore points referring to the Renaissance and the development of maps and navigation were not directly relevant to the question unless compared explicitly with geography. Therefore, many failed to get higher marks, as the question was only partially addressed. However, there were some interesting responses, with a good level of knowledge present throughout most answers. Again, the biggest pitfall was in answering the question as a list of reasons for exploration, rather than considering the relative importance of geography. The discriminators therefore were knowledge, as ever, but more significantly the level of focus on the named factor and the ability to develop a supported judgement.

Y206 Non-British period study: Spain 1469-1556

There was no pronounced pattern of imbalance between candidates' levels of success in the two parts of their chosen question. Candidates understood the instructions. There were hardly any cases of rubric infringement or significant mis-timing. There were some excellent responses to both questions, but a significant number of candidates who simply did not display enough knowledge. Gaps in knowledge are easier to gloss over in essays, though here too there were too many candidates without specific supporting knowledge at their fingertips. There was a huge disparity in terms of popularity between the questions. About 90% opted for Question One. Those who did attempt Question Two, however, produced some strong responses.

Question 1a

Most responses showed a fair level of knowledge, particularly on the strengths of the Aragonese and Castilian armies. Some linked in Ferdinand's military skill as a military strengthening factor. However, many scripts failed to score highly since they did not focus on a comparison linked to the direct cause for victory. This was especially so in the sections on the role of church. While most scripts were able to discuss the Cruzada tax, very many talked about the church as being a cause of the conflict, but little else, which does not answer the question. Many scripts made judgements asserting the importance of the church as a reason for victory without discussing its role in the conflict beyond Isabella's own personal piety. This failure to address the factor led to a failure to develop the comparison and judgement. At the lower levels knowledge tended to be thin and comments assertive.

Question 1b

This essay saw some good responses. Those who attempted it were able to address several factors in a way that was at least implicitly relevant. Weaker candidates relied on description, unable to assess their relative importance and come to an overall explained judgement. The most successful candidates discussed the economy and foreign policy as two factors, and there was also interesting discussion of both the marriage contract and the will of Isabella, as well as Ferdinand's second marriage. Religion was handled very well by the strongest candidates, but was the factor most likely to confuse the weaker. The mark of the strong response was that each factor evaluated was linked back to the issue of unification to build an uneven picture and lay the foundations for a supported judgement. Candidates who created an essay composed of five or six relatively short factors tended not to do as well as those who created an essay of three well explained and analysed factors, though of course the most successful responses combined width with depth.

Question 2a

The comparison question does not require particularly long answers, though some candidates wrote very extensively. What was needed was good explanation of both to support a developed judgement. The question was well answered overall, with most points of analysis tending to consider that the wars were the biggest problem as they exacerbated the problems already present in the financial systems. Limitations of technique included shallow treatment of the factor the candidate assessed as less important, or a failure to develop the comparison and judgement. At the lower levels knowledge tended to be thin and comments assertive. The problem some candidates faced was that they were not able to say precisely what the problems were with the financial systems in Spain and relied on generalisation. It also might have been good to see more explicit reference to the foreign policy commitments Charles was facing.

Question 2b

This essay was well answered. Candidates were able to set silver against other factors in a way that led naturally to a relevant response. No candidate ignored the named factor, or failed to at least mention others. The prime differentiators therefore were level of knowledge and ability to evaluate the relative importance of factors, which the best were able to do to supported conclusions. No set answer was expected, and most candidates rejected the proposition. Most looked negatively upon on the impact of silver in Spain, and looked to argue trade was more important, as well as the religious and/ or reputational impact for Spain. Again, the most successful managed to compare these to the importance of the discovery of silver. This led to some strong interim judgements. Also, candidates should be aware of the dates in the question- the answers needed to relate to the reign of Charles I, and so responses which considered the gains for Ferdinand and Isabella were not relevant. This was not a common mistake, however.

Y207 Non-British period study: The German reformation and the rule of Charles V 1500-1559

There was no pronounced pattern of imbalance between candidates' levels of success in the two parts of their chosen question. Candidates understood the instructions. There were hardly any cases of rubric infringement or significant mis-timing. There were some excellent responses to both questions, but a significant number of candidates who simply did not display enough knowledge. Gaps in knowledge are easier to gloss over in essays, though here too there were too many candidates without specific supporting knowledge at their fingertips. All four questions elicited some top-level responses, but there was a significant proportion of weak answers. Failure to note the dates in questions led to some irrelevance and distorted understanding.

Question 1a

The comparison question did not require particularly long answers, though some candidates wrote very extensively. What was needed was good explanation of both to support a developed judgement. Limitations of technique included shallow treatment of the factor the candidate assessed as less important, or a failure to develop the comparison and judgement. At the lower levels knowledge tended to be thin and comments assertive. The best answers were able to interweave the two factors and evaluate which drove events. This tended to work better than isolated treatment of each, which tended to lead to repetition. The time span of 1544-59 brought out some excellent and detailed arguments tracing patterns of change in the relationship between Henri II and Charles V and between Charles and the Princes in the light of events. Henri II was usually better evaluated than the Protestants as a reason for renewed war. The majority did not link factors to specific events, but wrote generally about causes of war. There were many very generalised responses.

Question 1b

The strongest candidates were able to assess the reasons, evaluating them against each other to a supported judgement. More moderate answers could only explain the reasons and assert the relationship between them, while at the bottom came the more descriptive approaches. The level reached often depended upon how much the candidate knew about Ottoman expansion in each area and the extent to which they could differentiate between them. The best answers dealt with the Balkans and the Mediterranean as separate sections and then brought them together as a synthesis in evaluation and judgement.

Weaker answers tended to confuse or conflate the Barbary pirates with the Ottomans. Even the weakest knew about Lepanto. Some, however, were very vague about where Habsburg power ended and Ottoman began in the Balkans. Some were quite condemning of Charles V, suggesting he was not interested in the Balkans and left Ferdinand in the lurch fearing he might become strengthened if he helped him.

Question 2a

Again, the requirement was not for length but for focused, balanced comparison leading to a supported judgement on the specific question. While projecting to the future from the named date was allowed, taking the treatment right through the reign, and even in one case as far as Lepanto, could only be considered irrelevant. Higher Level responses showed knowledge of all the details of both topics and kept them separate until judgement, but fewer developed the significance of North Africa regarding Italy or mentioned the Spanish Road. At lower levels few knew much about the Ottomans, many thought the Ottomans were always allied with the French from 1520. Some confused the two groups, so found it difficult to compare.

Judgement was about equal between the two, as to which was a greater threat, – often ‘to what’ was not considered by the less well focused responses and some saw only Spain as the ‘empire’.

Question 2b

This question drew some excellent responses, and was on balance better answered than 1b). At the higher levels candidates were successful in seeing the full significance of Frederick, including an awareness of the gap between the date of his death and the scope of the question. A good proportion noted that he remained a Catholic, and behind their assessment of his actions was an appreciation of his motives. They compared him with other princes and carried him through the argument when evaluating other factors. Some of the stronger answers included an appreciation of the relationship between Frederick and both Charles V and the Pope. The standard factors were dealt with: the printing press, Luther’s character and abilities, the appeal of his writings, often with a clear differentiation between the target audiences of the three pamphlets. The best answers, whatever their conclusion, came to a supported judgement. At the lower levels Charles’s distractions were less well handled, or ignored, and the answers tended to focus exclusively on the Empire, or even Saxony. Some differentiated between survival of Luther and Lutheranism, and the weakest ones conflated ‘spread’ with ‘survival’.

Y208 Non-British period study: Philip II 1556-1598

There was no pronounced pattern of imbalance between candidates' levels of success in the two parts of their chosen question. Candidates understood the instructions. There were hardly any cases of rubric infringement or significant mis-timing. There were some excellent responses to both questions, but a significant number of candidates who simply did not display enough knowledge. Gaps in knowledge are easier to gloss over in essays, though here too there were too many candidates without specific supporting knowledge at their fingertips.

There was a significant range in approaches to Philip, with some candidates aware of and favouring the new interpretations and some 'old school', and not very flattering. The Black Legend appeared occasionally.

Question 1a

The comparison question does not require particularly long answers, though some candidates wrote very extensively. What was needed was good explanation of both to support a developed judgement. Limitations of technique included shallow treatment of the factor the candidate assessed as less important, nearly always France, or a failure to develop the comparison and judgement. The specific date (1556) in the question was interpreted flexibly, which allowed candidates to relevantly discuss events in the early part of the reign. In the higher Levels, many even managed to make a case for looking further ahead without losing track of the question. The Ottomans were more successfully analysed than the French, and surprisingly few knew of St Quentin and the marriage to Elisabeth de Valois, though many remembered Cateau-Cambrésis. At the lower levels knowledge tended to be thin and comments assertive. Some knew very little that was date-specific about France, assuming that Philip was making peace in 1556 and that therefore France could not be a threat.

Question 1b)

This question tended to elicit stronger responses than 2 b). Higher Level answers had an impressive command of an excellent range of knowledge and were able to address the question from a standpoint of appreciating where Philip would not have wanted to see change as well as where a lack of change was a failure. Some produced very thorough and wide-ranging evaluative arguments. Most candidates wrote about the Tridentine decrees. They tended to see the Index rather uncritically as a success, but there was some strong and balanced evaluation of the Inquisition, though it was a little surprising to see it described by some candidates as 'the Black Death'. There were some patterns of under-achievement. Some candidates displayed their knowledge of historians' views descriptively, which didn't progress their own argument. A common error was to write a lot about Philip's quarrels with the Pope, which were foreign not ecclesiastical policy. At the bottom end there were general and descriptive answers.

Question 2a)

Again the question did not require huge length, but specific comparison leading to developed judgement. Nearly all candidates considered the Morisco Revolt the more serious threat, and indeed some appeared to dismiss the Revolt of Aragon as trivial. Here again, too many demonstrated the characteristic of shallow treatment of one of the factors. At the lower levels knowledge tended to be thin and comments assertive. At the higher Levels candidates knew

significant detail of both topics, but few mentioned the tensions between provincialism and centralisation. Most knew about Perez but fewer about Escobedo. Most candidates appeared to know more about the Moriscos. At the lower levels there were some very thin answers, and some significant misunderstandings, typically being vague on what actually happened and in some cases making very generalised and semi-accurate comments about religion.

Question 2b

The scope of any answer to this question has to be big. This suited the stronger candidates, who were able to appreciate this. They successfully saw 1580s as a turning point and structured responses effectively, with wide-ranging evaluative comments. At lower Levels candidates tended to get in a muddle trying to decide what his aims were, as they had learned his overall aims, which they tried to fit to France. It didn't work. A significant minority of candidates with a weak grasp of dates extended Philip's concern about Henri of Navarre, who was in some essays the heir to the throne in 1556 and in more a Protestant after he had come to the Throne. A few candidates talked about Philip's 'empire', or the New World, conflating Imperial and foreign policies. The weakest responses tended to be general description of foreign policy, usually with only vague supporting knowledge. In short the discriminators were knowledge and the ability to focus on policy towards France, and at the higher end, address meaningfully the words "how far".

Y212 Non-British period study: The American Revolution 1740-1796

General comments

Question1 was not as popular as Question2. Candidates do need to be aware that with the (a) questions writing all they know about the people or issues stated will not score highly, it is the analysis and judgement of the issue, people or factors in relation to the actual question that takes responses into the higher levels.

Question1a

Only a minority knew much about Locke and this seriously limited the level that could be achieved as many produced imbalanced responses. There were also a significant number that were simply confused, with the misconceptions that he was alive in 1770s or was Thomas Paine or American. Adams was handled better but it's not a given he led raids. Most missed his real significance.

Question1b

Some answers argued that George Washington is not important which showed a lack of understanding: 'If he'd been the most important he would not have needed the French'. As a result responses were often unbalanced because the British got the most blame for their defeat. In many instances Washington was handled less well than other factors, but many were still able to make a supported judgement and reach Level 5.

Question 2a

The main issue with this question was that very few knew what a policy affecting victory was and even fewer could name one. Many candidates wrote about British policies before the outbreak of the war and were unable to explain how they led the American victory. Where candidates did try and address British policies they usually wrote about strategy and tactics. Answers were much stronger when dealing with the entry of France and many offered a balanced and well supported view.

Question 2b

Most candidates spotted the significance of 1763 but few knew about 'in' 1763. So many turned to themes and just wrote about the 150 years preceding 1763. In discussing the relationship many looked at the impact of the Seven Years War and the results, the nature of the colonies and the economic relationship. Some discussed how these relationships were changing and used this to argue the extent to which relations were strong. Others went for what they wanted i.e. the causes of the American Revolution, and said if they were taxed in 1774 they must have been unhappy in 1763. Strong was interpreted in a variety of ways i.e. they got on well. However, there were too many responses where the focus was on the period after 1763.

Y213 Non-British period study: The French Revolution and the rise of Napoleon 1774-1815

General Comments

The level of knowledge was usually commendable, but the ability to use this to answer the exact question was less strong and candidates would be advised to read questions carefully and think about their implications before starting to write. In answering Question (a)'s responses must not simply describe or explain the named people, issues or events but ensure they use this knowledge to address the precise issue. Question two was more popular than Question 1.

Question 1a

Many candidates struggled to focus on the exact question focusing on the causes of the 1789 revolution instead of ideological developments. Some candidates did manage to make links to ideological developments and some were able to judge the extent of the importance of the Enlightenment as opposed to the American War of Independence. Most candidates found it easier to assess the role of the American War of Independence rather than the Enlightenment in influencing ideological developments. However, many focused too much on the troops' experiences in America. Some answers were very generalised.

Question 1b

Most candidates were able to identify a range of reasons for Napoleon's military successes in the years up to 1807. Some answers however lacked detail and range and some actually managed to try and attempt the answer without reference to any of the battles. Most candidates were able to point to the weaknesses of his opponents although some were too general and failed to substantiate their arguments. Although most were able to identify strengths of Napoleon, some wrote generally about his military strategy, stronger answers tended to link Napoleons' strategy to key victories. Some candidates were able to evaluate the relative strength of different factors and come to a developed and substantiated judgment.

Question 2a

Most candidates were able to explain the importance of both factors in the downfall of Napoleon. Many were able to make a judgment about the relative importance of each factor. Often the invasion of Russia was much more strongly and confidently handled (at times too much description and not always well linked to his fall). Some candidates were confused over the exact nature of the Continental Blockade, with some answers becoming overly focused on the 'Spanish Ulcer' dimensions. There were a number of generalised answers which focused simply on how each weakened Napoleon. Stronger answers linked the two events to direct causes of his downfall.

Question2b

Most candidates were able to identify a range of causal factors and to explain how each contributed to the fall of the Ancien Regime. Some were able to go further and judge the extent of the significance of each factor (Louis himself, economic and social problems, financial, ministerial, the rise of popular unrest via the sans-culottes and the effects of the Enlightenment, linked to political clubs and salons, featured well). Most were able to point to the mistakes of Louis XVI although some wrote generalised answers which failed to link Louis' actions to actual events and instead focused more generally on public opinion.

Y214 Non-British period study: France 1814-1870

General comments

Most candidates attempted Question 1, with those who did Question 2 finding (a) rather challenging, lacking sufficient knowledge of either one or both of the issues. The essays were less problematic, although Question 2 did result in a number answering a slightly different question.

Question 1a

Knowledge was often imparted, particularly of the Mexican adventure, with few able to link it to greater failure and providing a simple description from the start to the end of the affair. Responses were more analytical when dealing with events in Italy, although there were a number where there was only partial consideration, focusing on the early period, rather than seeking to take an overall view. That said, some that did cover the whole period became long descriptive answers about French involvement.

Question 1b

Most were able to explain a number of reasons, but the exact focus tended to be on Louis' fall rather than 'so much opposition'. A wide range of issues were discussed ranging from his accession and the problem of opposition groups to monarchy, through foreign and domestic policies, economic problems and the last years of his rule. A chronological approach was most common structure, but this did not prevent attempts at judgements, though very few responses actually addressed the issue of 'so much' opposition.

Question 2a

There were few answers to this question. Those who did tackle it often produced quite general comments, with some knowing very little about the banking reforms, whilst stronger answers were able to link them to the availability of money to enable the construction of railways. Few answers knew how great the railway development was and limited themselves to more general comments about it allowing goods to be transported more quickly.

Question 2b

Most knew a great deal about Napoleon III's foreign policy, but did not link this strongly to 'nothing more than a series of disasters'. Some did argue that as the period progressed it did become a series of disasters, but many answers simply discussed whether his foreign policy was a failure and often concluded that because it led to his downfall it must have been, rather than addressing the precise demands of the question.

Y215 Non-British period study: Italy and unification 1789-1896

General Comments

Most candidates did Question (a) then (b), but the minority who did (b) then (a), often produced very short answers to the second question tackled. The (a) answers had varied outcomes: some were too short, some too long; quite a number entered into overly descriptive answers with little strong explanation or evaluation leading to judgement. The best had sharp focus, were often quite compact, used knowledge to support views, did offer clear explanation and exposition, offered evaluative views on each factor and drew all together in a sound summative judgement. The (b) answers suffered at times because of too much time spent on (a). The named factors were usually covered well but often lists emerged without links or real evaluative content. Descriptive answers were seen whereby too much knowledge was deployed but without enough linkage to explanation. The best answers used knowledge tellingly to support arguments and enhance explanation and analysis. They linked each paragraph to the question and offered evaluation with directed judgement.

Question 1a

Both Napoleon and Pius IX were covered well enough, with the former often receiving more attention though some points were made about Pius IX. Links to nationalism were not always strong enough and some overly descriptive answers were seen. Better ones did offer explanatory views to leading to judgements, generally favouring Napoleon's role, impact and legacy. Short and longer term reactions to Napoleon's measures inside Italy (more unity, legal and economic measures) as well as encouragements to forms of nationalism, Pius' initial appearance as a tolerant liberal, often were featured. The best answers usually outlined an argument with their explanation.

Question 1b

There were some strong answers but quite a number did not range enough across the period 1861-96 preferring to keep to the 1860s. Those that had good coverage drew in a suitable range of examples to support their argument. The best argued and counter-argued as to degrees and depths of success. Themes that emerged were: the territorial additions and the extent of territorial unity, North-South differences and tensions, unrest levels allied to law and order, economic and commercial developments, social problems (education, migration, employment), political developments and the overall levels of stability, foreign and colonial policies and outcomes.

Question 2a

Potentially this was a big question area and some answers were excessively long with too much knowledge adduced. However many were compact enough and highlighted key aspects of both men, with judgements evenly divided as to the greater importance. Cavour's modernising of Piedmont, his diplomacy with Napoleon III, his role in 1859 and 1860 key events (including plebiscites) featured as did Garibaldi's status after the 1849 Roman Republic venture, his arrival in Sicily and thence the mainland, Naples and Teano. Good points were made about the contrasting contemporary (or later) views of both men and how far they actively manufactured reactions to their roles. Well supported argument often accompanied explanation.

Question 2b

Some answers merely rehearsed the reasons for the failure of Revolutions in 1848-49 or across the years 1820 to 1849. At times there was too much pure description of events. That said, many good answers were seen, some successfully inventive in their approaches. Some kept within the confines of 1848-49 but others ranged ahead into the 1850s and even the 1860s to draw in relevant material. Identifiable themes were: the lessons of failure, the power of Austria, the need of external help, the defeat of republicanism, the heightened importance of Piedmont and its constitution as well as a safe area for political exiles, the need for strong and determined leadership, the revisiting of nationalism in its various forms, the reflective attitudes of Cavour and Garibaldi. Good answers offered cogent argument and counter-argument.

Y216 Non-British period study: The USA in the 19th century: Westward expansion and Civil War 1803-c.1890

General Comments

Most candidates did (a) then (b), a minority did (b) then (a), often leading to very short answers. The (a) answers had varied outcomes: some were too short, some too long; quite a number entered into overly descriptive answers with little strong explanation or evaluation leading to judgement. The best had sharp focus, were often quite compact, used knowledge to support views, did offer clear explanation and exposition, offered evaluative views on each factor and drew all together in a sound summative judgement. The (b) answers suffered at times because of too much time spent on (a). Descriptive answers were seen whereby too much knowledge was deployed but without enough linkage to explanation. The best answers used knowledge tellingly to support arguments and enhance explanation and analysis. They linked each paragraph to the question and offered evaluation there and strongly evaluative endings with a sense of directed judgement.

Question 1a

Both Acts were discussed well enough with knowledge to support explanation and evaluation. Details were clear and assessments sound with links made between the two in the context of westward expansion and settlements. In the main, the Homestead Act was regarded as the more significant. Argument featured alongside explanation in good answers. However, there were a number where knowledge of the Morrill Act was very limited or confused and attempts at analysis were strewn with errors, leading to weak attempts at a judgement.

Question 1b

Some answers ignored the title and wrote about either the causes of the Civil War, with passing mentions of Lincoln, or about how Lincoln led the Union to win the Civil War. Some good answers were seen and these placed Lincoln firmly in context and ranged across key factors including Lincoln's personal qualities and skills, the revived Republican Party, the collapse of other parties, the problems of the Democratic Party, the big issues of land and slavery as well as shifting political ideas and growing sectional tensions.

Question 2a

Both measures received much detailed attention and answers were often impressive in knowledge. The determinants were the linkage to the actual question and so the extent of evaluative judgements made. A good contextual sense helped: overall, the Dred Scott case was seen as the more important but good candidates linked this well to the Fugitive Slave Law and the prevailing issues over slavery. Some spent too long adding in events from the 1850s. In good responses a sense of argument accompanied explanation.

Question 2b

Many good answers were read with range across the period, identifiable themes and good supporting knowledge. The best embraced both positive and negative features, often allied to strong and secure arguments. Common themes were: territorial expansion, adventure, travel, transport and communications, resources, the spirit of Manifest Destiny, conflicts with Native Americans, the impact of the Civil War on all this and its consequences. On balance, more positives than negatives emerged and some good arguments were made about the very make-up and character of the United States.

Y217 Non-British period study: Japan 1853-1937

General Comments

This unit has a small entry and nearly all candidates who answered questions did Question 1. As with other units, knowledge was often of a high level but it was not used to address the actual question set. This was particularly the case with (a), but even (b) produced responses that were heavily descriptive.

Question 1a

Although most responses showed a good knowledge of industrial growth candidates were not able to link this to Japan's emergence as a major power, often confining such comments to the final sentence of their response and instead describing the scale of the industrial growth. A similar approach was seen with naval development, but here knowledge was less well developed and arguments and explanations were often thinner leading to imbalance.

Question 1b

Rather than focusing on the aims of Japanese overseas expansion, a number of answers simply described Japan's overseas policy, narrating how attempts were made to gain land, with limited links back to the actual question. Some answers dealt almost exclusively with the policy towards Korea and therefore failed to produce a balanced response. There were some where attempts were made to weigh up the relative importance of Korea with other concerns, but these were the exception, yet are essential if the higher levels are to be reached.

Question 2

There were insufficient answers to this question to be able to make any comments.

Y218 Non-British period study: International relations 1890-1941

General Comments

Most candidates opted to answer Question 1. There were no cases of incomplete sections, i.e. both a) and b) responses were evident and no evidence of rubric errors in a large sample. Students commonly wrote six to seven pages and usually opted to answer the a) question first. In a few cases the a) question was very long and this suggested an improper use of time given the mark allocation for the b) question. Paragraphs were effectively used to communicate different arguments. The ten-mark response usually consisting of two arguments and a conclusion. Introductions were usually briefly illustrative and did not add anything to the response in terms of quality. Introductions were more useful with regards to the twenty-mark essay question, outlining factors and commonly providing a view on the most important factor. The introductions were commonly focused and relevant. Plans were infrequent and usually brief, possibly due to the time constraints.

Comments on Individual Questions

Question 1a

Most candidates opted for this question and the factors were dealt with in numerical order. Appeasement was dealt with better than the second factor and most commonly there was at least some analysis of how appeasement resulted in war. The most important facet of this question was to make the link between the factor and the question, in this case clearly explaining how appeasement could make war more likely. Occasionally, candidates misinterpreted the question and wrote about the reasons for appeasement, thus illustrating the topic area rather than meeting the specific demands of the question. Candidates were awarded for analysis when the explanation for how appeasement caused war was supported by some knowledge. This was usually related to the actions of Chamberlain giving into the demands of Hitler, most commonly the remilitarisation of the Rhineland, and Anschluss. The Sudetenland question also featured although surprisingly Munich and the subsequent invasion of Czechoslovakia was less common. Candidates frequently recognised that the actions of Britain and France emboldened Hitler and allowed him to grow in confidence, essentially until he went too far. It was much less common to see candidates discuss the actions of Italy in Abyssinia, or even the timid response to Japan in Manchuria as failures of appeasement. When these events did figure the response was usually sophisticated and heightened the sense of Nazi opportunism.

The second factor, relations between Russia and the rest of Europe, was not developed as effectively, the knowledge surrounding these developments was occasionally so limited that no credit could be given. However, numerous responses did recognise the worsening relationship between the appeasers and Stalin due to the fear of communism. The better responses specifically discussed how Britain and France wished to use Germany as a buffer against Communism and pushed the Nazis into Stalin's embrace, frustrating Stalin and making the Nazi-Soviet Pact a reality. To complete the argument, the candidate had to relay how this made war more likely and the crucial point was either conveyed as Hitler avoiding a two-front war, or being able to confidently attack Poland without fear of soviet reprisals.

Judgements were usually in favour of appeasement being the dominant factor due to cause and effect, appeasement pushed Hitler eastwards and enabled the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Alternatively, a

few candidates clearly conveyed how Russian relations with Europe were key as the Nazi-Soviet Pact guaranteed the invasion of Poland.

Question 1b

Candidates often outlined a clear view in the introduction, commonly the role of the alliances or German aggression. The weaker introductions were indecisive in stating significance. Responses usually dealt with the named factor first. The alliances were described, sometimes inaccurately, although a sound response explained their significance by turning a localised conflict into an international war. Students were sometimes confused over the order in which the countries of Europe descended into war. There was frequently a link between conflict in the Balkans and the alliances, usually due to Germany's 'blank cheque' but more impressively also citing pan-Slavism as a linked factor. Other factors beyond the alliances mentioned German aggression; usually the arms race or competition for steel markets, or the German desire for colonial gains. This was often supported by the Moroccan Crises. The Balkans episode frequently relayed the events of 28th June and candidates laid the blame at the door of Austria-Hungary due to the terms of its ultimatum. The Bosnian Crisis was also linked to tension in the Balkans. Responses might divide the answer up into sections on militarism, imperialism and nationalism. Britain was apportioned blame by some candidates, due to its role in the arms race, or via a link to alliances, due to honouring their terms on the 'scrap of paper.' Overall, the essays outlined a range of factors. However, what was disappointing was the quality of analysis from some. The list-like response was common, with little developed explanation as to why particular factors really caused the outbreak of war; even rarer was an argument that assessed its significance relative to other factors. When these judgements did arise, they were well-stated. The best responses linked cause and effect to really convince the examiner why the event or factor was more important than others.

Question 2a

This question was much less popular as a choice. Candidates were stronger on the first factor. There were references to the invasion of Manchuria in 1931 although the date was often wrongly cited. Other candidates wrote about Pearl Harbour and the impact of the Great Depression on the Japanese. These events were almost always related to problems in the Far East, and explained with a degree of relevance. The second factor was limited. The most accurate response related to the US oil embargo and how the embargo affected relations in the run-up to the attack on Pearl Harbour. Students found it relatively straight-forward in making the link to the question, the real issue for the second factor was in providing relative support to any attempt at analysis. Manchuria, and Lytton Inquiry also featured heavily as a policy that angered the Japanese hence the exit from the League of Nations in 1933.

Candidates usually made a judgement by linking the factors, usually explaining how the growth of Japanese nationalism caused more severe policies from Britain and the USA.

Question 2b

Most candidates explained a few factors relatively well. Common factors discussed were those relating to the flawed nature of appeasement, too weak in the face of an aggressive, unreasonable dictator. In addition, responses usually outlined the Great Depression as a factor and how this made Britain and France turn inwards, preferring to concentrate on their own problems rather than police Europe. Some responses did not address the question and wrote about the causes for the implementation of appeasement, i.e. impact of World War I, Hitler's demands relative to Versailles, etc. Such responses could not go beyond Level 1. It was surprising to see so little written about the League of Nations in such essays, the failure of the

League being a key factor linked to the effects of the Great Depression, and a stage on which many of the dramas of the decade were played out. This was also a surprise given the focus of the specification on the League and the role it plays in both the twenties and thirties. To write a substantiated judgement, candidates needed to explain why one factor caused appeasement to fail more than others. This proved slightly difficult in that candidates sometimes struggled to find three or more clear reasons for the failure.

Y219 Non-British period study: Russia 1894-1941

General Comments

There was an even split between questions chosen, with slightly more candidates opting for Question 1. Candidates understood the demands of the paper although timings were occasionally disproportionately applied, with candidates seemingly spending too long on the ten-mark question. Overall, a general observation was the lack of precise knowledge used. At times, answers were generalised, with very little use of key terms. Candidates sometimes struggled to accurately identify the factors in Question (a), possibly choosing the question with the longer essay in mind. Good responses clearly understood the two factors and their relative significance, sometimes judgements were only slightly developed but this would accompany at least one factor explained well. Successful candidates covered a range of factors in Questions 1 (b) or 2 (b), the essay contained relevant and accurate knowledge and there was a clear judgement to justify the importance of the overriding factor. However, most commonly the essay responses were limited by a lack of precise, relevant knowledge.

Comments on Individual Questions

Question 1a.

Candidates that selected this ten-mark option were more successful in dealing with the famine than the Kronstadt Uprising. Candidates could relate the implementation of NEP more clearly to the grain requisitioning measures of War Communism, and the starvation in the countryside. Candidates did sometimes exhibit some relevant knowledge relating to Kronstadt, the issuing of the manifesto, the fact that the sailors were revolutionary, or socialist stalwarts. In most cases, the disaffection by the sailors was attributed to War Communism, in some respects this is true but it would be encouraging to see more candidates refer to the Red Terror, suppression of workers' rights, and the unsightly emergence of a new ruling elite, etc. as key factors inspiring the uprising. The most successful candidates explained how NEP quelled the unrest. Good judgements were based on the scale of the famine, or alternatively pointed to the impact of Kronstadt as significant due to the armed nature of the insurrection and the former loyalties of the sailors. The well-developed judgements linked the factor to the size and scale of its impact.

Question 1b

This question demonstrated a surprising lack of scope in terms of factors considered. Candidates always referred to World War One, the named factor. This was often done effectively, via reference to the Tsar becoming Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, or the impact of inflation on the urban masses. Students commonly mentioned the millions killed and wounded, more sophisticated responses were discernible from a mention of specific battles, Tannenberg, Masurian Lakes, etc. However, some candidates did not discuss much else, other than the role of Rasputin and the Tsarina also linked to war, a ruling partnership that caused much consternation among the ruling classes and revolutionary groups. More successful candidates widened their scope of analysis, considering factors such as the outdated nature of autocracy and the growth of revolutionary opposition prior to World War One. However, this was rare. Most candidates focused on post-1914 and beyond, thus neglecting long-term reasons for autocratic decay. It is not essential to discuss any specific factor other than the one named but given the demands of the question a range of causes for the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II are required. Sometimes 1905 was discussed, but in an illustrative manner. When discussing long-

term causes, clear explanatory links need to be made. Due to the limited coverage from most responses judgements were limited and there were few comparative, focused assessments of significance.

Question 2a

Most candidates understood that Kerensky armed the Bolsheviks, and this essentially backfired as the Bolsheviks had the means to stage a coup but also the newfound reputation as saviours of Petrograd. More successful candidates explained the significance of the coup in more depth, how the affair permitted the recovery from the abortive 'July Days', this argument was sometimes used to assess the impact of the Kornilov Revolt. Weak responses made mistakes by getting Kerensky and Kornilov mixed up, a few cases demonstrated no understanding of the factor at all. The actions of Lenin were analysed less convincingly. The most successful candidates outlined his oratory skill, capitalising on the failures of the Provisional Government with his April Theses. Good responses explained the significance of 'Peace, Land and Bread' in the prevailing climate. Fewer candidates discussed Lenin's skill in manipulating Bolshevik control of the soviet, and the crucial decision to end cooperation with the Provisional Government on his return. Weaker responses attributed all the last-minute planning to Lenin, some did discuss Trotsky. The key problem with the weaker responses is a lack of specific knowledge that could then be clearly linked to explaining Lenin's role in October 1917. At times, candidates suggested Lenin's role was limited and discussed his absence from the capital for large parts of the year. Overall, it was common to see a more limited appraisal of Lenin's role.

Question 2b.

Some candidates focused solely on the purges and therefore provided a partial address of the question. Even a two-sided, developed analysis of the purges, i.e. they were and were not important, would still warrant another factor to explain why they had limited importance in some regards. Most candidates did discuss propaganda and a number chose to discuss Stalin's successes in economic policy. When discussing economic policies, collectivisation and the Five-Year Plans, responses commonly failed to directly link these successes to Stalin maintaining control. Well-developed responses gave more specific details of the purges, discussing the role of Kirov's murder and 'Yezhovschina', or the cult of personality and the role of the Komsomol when analysing propaganda. Generalised, or more limited responses were still common with regards to knowledge.. Successful candidates made insightful judgements, linking cause and effect, sometimes arguing that propaganda was most crucial factor in the maintenance of control, without the show trials and cult of personality, Stalin would not have been able to enact the purges and get away with such excessive repression of his own people.

Y220 Non-British period study: Italy 1896-1943

General Comments

Candidates had a sound, or even better knowledge of the period. A weaker response may be illustrative or on the topic, failing to meet the demands of the specific question. However, few responses failed to address at least some aspects, even if this was through relevant illustration. The quality of written communication was usually good although there were still some scripts containing factual errors, a surprising number identifying incorrect dates for key events, e.g. the March on Rome. The most popular question choice was question 2a) and b). This was perhaps, in part, due to the essay question focusing on Mussolini's rise to power, often a popular choice on the legacy paper (F962). There were numerous good scripts, these scored highly on the ten-mark question due to a good understanding of both factors, using relevant knowledge and/or providing a clear final judgement. Equally, the twenty-mark essay question analysed a range of factors and assessed significance as the response unfolded. Candidates often demonstrated the ability to select a range of relevant factors and provide detailed explanations, failing to discriminate between the factors to reach a substantiated judgement. These responses scored Level 4 or low Level 5 and did demonstrate a degree of skill, failing to focus on relative significance when assessing factors.

Comments on Individual Questions

Question 1a

Candidates often gave partial responses, Socialism was usually better addressed than Fascism as a cause of instability. Candidates understood how post-war Socialism was an issue in Italy and this was accurately linked to causing instability. The 'Biennio Rosso' of 1919-1920, actions of the PSI and industrial unrest were commonly linked to causing unrest. With regards to factor two, the threat of Fascism was usually dealt with by discussing the violent actions of the squadristi, or the threat to Italian democracy. The Matteotti murder was also cited. However, some responses made a judgement that convincingly argued Fascism was a lesser threat as Mussolini's dictatorship brought greater stability via the repressive nature of the regime expunging the weak, liberal, coalition politics of previous governments. Other judgements used cause and effect to illuminate Socialism as the key factor, stating how Fascism was the antidote to Socialism and therefore owing its existence to the left. Weak responses did not explicitly link Fascism to stability.

Question 1b

This question provided a good example of how a concise introduction can really set up a good response. There is no set recipe for success but successful candidates almost always outlined the criteria for a great power at the outset. Thus, a great power was commonly defined as a nation that had a strong and respected leader, an impressive foreign policy and a strong economy. Ultimately, the question of great power deals with prestige and imagery, perceptions from the outside. However, where candidates clearly linked domestic factors to great power status, reward was given. One response of note skilfully defined a great power as a nation operating a successful foreign policy and then sub-divided Italian foreign policy into three categories for analysis; firstly, the need to provide living space, 'spazio vitale', essentially imperialism, secondly, prestige in the eyes of the great powers, and finally, domestic popularity, a secondary effect of international success. The question clearly demanded a strong understanding of foreign affairs. Candidates did not answer this question effectively when the

notion of a great power was not understood, or clearly defined. In some cases, there was drift, limited responses tended to address domestic and foreign issues in terms of success, rather than great power status. In some cases, there was no reference to great power perceptions at all, this was implied when looking at social and economic policy successes within Italy itself. Overall, the question demanded a clear understanding of what it means to be a great power and a significant, although not exclusive degree of focus on foreign policy.

Question 2a

Responses tended to show a better understanding of the impact on the Italian governments from foreign policy rather than economic policy. Successful candidates made clear links between problems within foreign policy and the economy, and the government. Weaker responses did not make the bridge between problems and failures and how these impacted upon the government. Foreign policy failures always highlighted the failure at Adowa in 1896. More developed responses linked this to the rise in nationalism and the strains this placed upon the government. The other common discussion point centred upon Libya, from 1910 onwards and how Italian colonial ambitions brought few benefits despite success. The other key discussion point was the entry into World War One. Occasionally candidates went beyond 1915 and this was not credited, good responses outlined how the entry into the war was controversial and fractured relationships within the government, e.g. Giolitti's opposition, Salandra's support. In terms of economic policy, the division between north and south was discussed but it was less common for candidates to outline policies and link these to the effects on government. Strong responses made the link between Giolitti's successes in the north causing further divide, industrial unrest and the growth of the PSI.

Question 2b

Students wrote a significant amount for this question and outlined a range of factors for the rise of Mussolini; Mussolini's personal abilities as a politician, the weaknesses of the liberal opposition and the king, and the wave of nationalism post-World War I, in the wake of the mutilated victory. Overall, candidates showed an impressive array of knowledge relating to the left-wing of Italian politics. However, candidates did not always relate the rise of the left to why this helped Mussolini rise to power. It was important for candidates to explain the fear of the left emanating from big business, the landed elites, the Church, and the king, especially in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, and how Mussolini capitalised on these fears. Most other factors were explained to a high standard although occasionally candidates went beyond the demands of the question and spoke about economic battles post-1925, facilitating Mussolini's success. Candidates often went beyond the March on Rome and looked at Mussolini's 'increasing power' up until 1925. Such responses discussed the implications of the Acerbo Law, the Matteotti murder and the Aventine Secession. The Aventine Secession was argued either as a socialist weakness or Mussolini's skill depending on the judgement formed. More limited responses tended to drift and change sides during an argument, for example, when arguing the weakness of the king as a factor, then shifting to how this made Mussolini popular due to the fear of Socialism. This is fundamentally sound. However, less successful candidates failed to marshal and communicate responses effectively, initially stating the response as another factor, rather than the fear of Socialism. Ultimately, it was clear that students had grasped the context of the question and the main discriminating factor related to the quality of analysis and if substantiated judgements were made relative to the fear of Socialism.

Y221 Non-British period study: Democracy and dictatorships in Germany 1919-1963

Question No. 1a.

Generally this question produced some good answers. The best answers often followed a simple structure, taking each point systematically, with judgement woven in. Some candidates were less sure of Stresemann's role, or focused too much on his involvement with the Dawes Plan, leaving them without enough knowledge to support their USA arguments. Fewer candidates were able to cover both the domestic and foreign policies of Stresemann which was a pity, as Stresemann's role in bringing political stability to Weimar was important, but many were able to recognise his role in the Ruhr crisis and later as Foreign Minister negotiating treaties. There were also some inaccuracies about the sequence of events with some stating the Rentenmark was introduced after the Dawes Plan, for example. Occasionally the Dawes Plan was confused with the Young Plan, which was sometimes even overlooked as was the Kellogg-Briand Pact.

Many Level 6 responses were able to argue that while the USA through the Dawes and Young Plans provided financial backing, it was Stresemann's leadership that provided the recovery. Better responses also pointed out that when American loans dried up in 1929 Germany was once again plunged into recession. Other candidates were able to successfully argue that without American loans the economic recovery would not have been possible.

Question No. 1b.

In general, the question on West German foreign policy was answered more effectively than this essay on Hitler's Economic Policies. Too often students were lacking specific depth of knowledge to be awarded with the highest marks. Students that had very good specific knowledge were more able to successfully analyse and evaluate the success of the policies. Most candidates tried to identify various factors to analyse. The most usual format was to discuss Schacht's New Plan, Goering's Four Year Plan, unemployment levels and controls of the work force. To that extent, there was structure to many answers. Better answers provided sound supporting knowledge and interim judgements. Several stretched the scope of their answer to include the war years after 1939 which in some cases was made to fit the question but was often irrelevant. These responses argued that economic policy failed because Total War was not a success. The point that Germany was not ready for war in 1939 is perfectly valid but many then went on to discuss how Germany could not match the production figures of the UK or the USA. Speer also made regular appearances but he did not become armaments minister until 1942.

Better responses were able to break down economic policy into several stages – employment, autarky and re-armament, and then judge success. However, very few were able to give an overall judgement. On unemployment many responses recognised the apparent success of reducing the number out of work but also argued that the figures were misleading due to the removal of women and Jews from the statistics. Most candidates had a good knowledge of this aspect but many just listed what the policies were. Very few candidates discussed agriculture or laws to protect the middle classes and there tended to be quite a lot of tangential discussion of the boycotting of Jewish business and policies towards women.

Question No. 2a.

In the Nazi question, successful students focused on not simply delivering knowledge but - in both cases - proving why, or why not, the Nazis were successful. Views varied on this with some judging the Nazis to have had greater success with youth whilst others thought they were more successful with women. A minority merely regurgitated facts about Nazi policy with regard to both but most tried to measure the effectiveness of the Nazis in imposing their ideals. With the youth most did so by highlighting the adverse effect of making the Hitler Youth compulsory and the emergence of dissident groups (though several referred to White Rose which was not strictly relevant given the dates of the question). Yet some argued that the suppression of, say, the Edelweiss Pirates, confirms that the Nazis were successful. With women, the emphasis in assessing the success of the Nazis was often based on the employment of women in the late 1930s and the increase in the divorce rate. With both youth and women, many argued that compliance with did not mean acceptance of Nazi ideals. Weaker answers often focused on the Hitler Youth or education rather than both and/or when dealing with women explained the ideals of the Nazis without explaining how this was attempted. A few candidates were able to recognise the fact that making the HJ compulsory in 1936 was perhaps a sign of failure on the part of the Nazis.

Treatment of women was less effective with some simplistic responses stating that it must have been more effective because there was no opposition. Better answers recognised that different groups of women reacted in differing ways. Some were quite happy to take on the traditional role of housewife, particularly in rural areas where society was more traditional. Women who had enjoyed the freedoms of Weimar were less enthusiastic.

Not many discussed the idea of removal from the workforce. Many candidates had some knowledge of the 3 Ks policy and often asserted that the policy of medal giving encouraged women to have children. Better answers were able to cite evidence of birth rates to justify their points. A significant number of students mentioned the Lebensborn programme, a relatively minor part of overall policy. This was in its infancy before 1939 and affected a few thousand women but weaker responses cited it as evidence of success. Most candidates were able to recognise that policy towards women was a contradiction as female employment rose as rearmament took priority. Surprisingly, the role of Gertrud Scholtz-Klink and the National Socialist Women's League barely warranted a mention.

Question No. 2b.

Better answers analysed the successes and limitations of the foreign policy of the FRG and also assessed the economic, social and political successes of the period in question. The quality and consistency of the analysis varied but this structure proved to be a good discriminator. Many candidates were very well informed and the structure of their answers was good. At the lower end, candidates often struggled to identify or, if they did, examine the events of the period. Sadly, the reason why some scored very low marks was because they confused the FRG with the GDR. Even in some moderate answers there was a tendency to write about events between 1945 and 1949 which was irrelevant though references to Marshall Aid were admissible if it was made clear that US financial help underpinned the economy after 1949.

Many candidates fell into the trap of writing a list on this question, limiting themselves to Level 4. Most had a good knowledge of the period and were able to discuss what made the FRG a success. However, often this came in the form of several paragraphs explaining why each policy succeeded or failed.

Better responses gave an overall judgement arguing that Foreign policy underpinned everything else the FRG was able to achieve, for example, admission to the ECSC and the EEC allowed trade to grow. Others were able to convincingly argue that economic policy was more of a success and the strength of the economy led to the FRG becoming powerful on the world stage. Most candidates had a sound knowledge of the FRG's relations with the Western allies but there was relatively little on relations with the USSR and DDR.

Weaker responses often simply dismissed Foreign Policy and instead wrote what appeared to be a prepared answer on what made the FRG successful. Again, candidates would do well to answer the question they are set, not one they have already practised.

Y222 Non-British period study: The Cold War in Asia 1945-1993

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No.

Q1(a)

This was the more popular of the two questions, and candidates produced a good variety of responses. Most students were able to write about both factors and the better answers produced interesting judgments in favour of either factor. Some responses covered both factors in an uneven manner limiting their answer to L4 and below. The best answers usually started with a point of view from the outset and picked one of the factors as being the most important. Better responses argued that the Ho Chi Minh trail maintained and supplied the Vietcong resistance, whilst Vietnamese nationalism ensured that resistance continued in the face of the American hostility. There was some excellent knowledge of both factors displayed, with the best responses discussing the origins of Vietnamese nationalism and demonstrating how resistance to US aggression was a continuation of earlier efforts against the Japanese and the French.

Q1(b)

This question saw a variety of responses and was well-handled by the majority of candidates. At mid-level most responses saw candidates listing a number of factors for the communist takeover of China without judgment. The best responses were able to judge the relative importance of Mao's leadership against a range of other factors, including the weaknesses of Jiang Jieshi, the attraction of communist ideology to Chinese peasants and the support offered by the USSR. Only at the highest levels were candidates focusing on how far Mao's leadership was the most important factor. Many concluded that in fact Jiang's weaknesses were more significant and that Mao simply took advantage of these. Supporting knowledge varied with many assertions such as peasant support for Mao unsupported. Better answers provided evidence including peasant support at the Battle of Huai-Hai.

Q2(a)

This was the less popular of the two questions. Some candidates misinterpreted the question to examine American support domestically rather than examining American support in Vietnam and produced uneven responses as a result. The date range also caused some issues, with candidates writing about events that occurred in 1968. However the majority of candidates did produce well-reasoned responses that examined both factors with a range of supporting information. The best responses were able to compare the American bombing campaigns and the use of chemical weapons and demonstrate how this lost support from Vietnamese citizens. The actions of American troops were also well-covered and most candidates were able to reach a judgement based on some knowledge of both factors.

This question elicited a number of weak responses and it appeared that knowledge of MacArthur was patchy in a significant number of answers. Many candidates struggled with the concept of 'political reasons' and tried to include everything in terms of military factors. A significant number of weak responses confused the Korean and Vietnamese wars meaning that answers were restricted to Level 1. Others had only a very basic grasp of the Korean War and MacArthur's role. The best responses could point to MacArthur's insubordination towards Truman and his public criticisms of the President whilst also examining his role in the conflict itself and the retreat from North Korea. They were also able to point out the emergence of Ridgway and his role in

Korea and the problems he faced with MacArthur. Surprisingly few though knew of MacArthur conducting affairs from Japan and missed a key alternative viewpoint.

Y223 Non-British period study: The Cold War in Europe 1941-1995

Comments on Individual Questions

Question No. 1 (a)

This was the more popular question on the paper and elicited a good range of responses. The best answers usually started with a point of view from the outset and picked one of the factors as having the greater impact on the development of the Cold War. Many Level 6 responses were able to argue that the Arms Race had a far more significant role to play in the development of the Cold War. Indeed, the more sophisticated clearly understood the idea of development with weaker answers sticking to the early years of the conflict.

Better responses argued that the arms race almost led to nuclear war on several occasions but also moved the superpowers down the road of détente in the 1970s until the advent of Reagan's SDI programme in the early 1980s. Most candidates had a reasonable knowledge of the arms race although there was a lot of tangential discussion of developments in the 1940s.

Knowledge of the Space Race was less secure with many responses limited either to Sputnik or the Moon landings. Better responses recognised the role propaganda played in the Space Race, and that it also differed from the Arms Race because to begin with the USSR were more advanced. This embarrassed the US into pouring billions of dollars into the Space Race to close the gap. Some were able to argue that the Race was effectively over with the Moon landings and also that Space was a rare example of co-operation with the joint missions in the 1970s.

Question No. 1 (b)

Many candidates fell into the trap of writing a list on this question, limiting themselves to Level 4. Most had a good knowledge of the period and were able to discuss why there was no reconciliation. However, often this came in the form of several paragraphs explaining individual events.

Better candidates were able to give an overall judgement focusing on the ideological differences that had been on pause during the war but were bound to resurface once the common enemy of Nazi Germany had been vanquished. Others were able to successfully draw events together under the theme of misunderstandings as the West did not realise that Stalin craved security after the war and also underestimated the lengths he would go to.

Many responses focused on Germany and how the allies failed to agree on nearly everything after 1946 with the Berlin blockade often seen as the time when relations finally broke down. However, a lot of responses then went on to discuss the Berlin Wall which was not erected until 1961. The confusing of the blockade and the wall was widespread.

The main criticism on this question was the absence of assessment from a lot of responses. Candidates clearly had a great deal of knowledge but often just recanted it without using it to assess importance. Candidates should be reminded that writing 'In conclusion' or 'conclusively' is not assessment. Often conclusions were a summarising paragraph of what had just been written.

Question No. 2 (a)

This question was not dealt with very effectively by many of the candidates who attempted it. Most had a good understanding of the Marshall Plan but only fleeting knowledge of Comecon. The same was true with NATO and the Warsaw Pact. A minority of responses remembered that the Warsaw Pact was a response to the FRG joining NATO in 1955. Better answers usually argued that the Economic policies probably had the greatest impact as these brought about division. Stalin forbade his satellites from applying for aid and started Comecon as a result. A few responses recognised that this led to division in the Eastern bloc as Yugoslavia under Tito followed his own path, accepted US money and was denounced by the USSR. By the time NATO and particularly the Warsaw Pact began, division was well and truly in place. A minority argued that military alliances had a greater impact because they might well have led to war which was also perfectly valid.

Question No. 2 (b)

These responses tended to fall into two camps. Many dismissed the idea that opposition was divided and weak and then gave a long commentary on the various uprisings and how they threatened the USSR. Again, this seemed to be reminiscent of candidates producing an answer to a practice question or perhaps misreading it. This ignoring of the focus factor tended to limit them to Level 3. Other answers saw 'divided and weak' as one of a number of factors why there was no effective opposition.

Better responses tended to deal with the main factor first even if they disagreed with the premise. More sophisticated answers saw 'divided' and 'weak' as two separate things. Divided because the uprisings were in different countries or the aims were not the same. The Poles in 1956 were really pushing for better working conditions whereas the Hungarians wanted to leave Soviet control. Surprisingly few responses picked upon the weak aspect – resistance movements had almost no chance against the might of the Red army. Some were able to argue convincingly that it wasn't weakness rather Soviet strength coupled with a lack of Western intervention.

Weaker responses were often limited to the Hungarian and Czech crises, only a few discussed Poland in 1956 and Solidarity later on. There was also quite a lot of tangential and even irrelevant discussion of the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1989.

Y303 Thematic study and historical interpretations: English Government and the Church 1066-1216

Many candidates seized on the subject matter of the premise and described the relevant causes and effects, leaving the kind of comparison demanded by the question to a few lines in the final paragraph.

1. Many had a very good knowledge and understanding of Anglo-Norman government and were able to use this to good effect. Particularly useful was knowledge of the origins of the office of chief justiciar in the work of Ranulf Flambard and Roger of Salisbury, the development of the Exchequer and the use of itinerant justices. Most understood the main interpretations of both passages and the contrast between them, although a few seemed to find Passage B easier to understand than Passage A, misunderstanding the reference to new men and their careers. Some took one or both passages at face value and used their own knowledge to illustrate or explain the passage rather than to evaluate it. Less often own knowledge was used to contradict an interpretation but in the form of description rather than explicit evaluation. Many, however, made good use of own knowledge to evaluate both interpretations and reach a supported judgement.
2. Many responses were thematic, producing a judgement with at least some support. The best answers combined synthesis across the period with a sustained line of reasoning. But some responses were only partially focused on the question, limited for example to the rebellions of Stephen and John or looking only at the ways in which reasons for rebellion remained the same so lacking any evaluation of 'how far'. Some treated every incident of disorder as a rebellion and a few essays consisted of chronological descriptions of rebellions.
3. This was the least well-done of the questions in this unit. Some candidates thought the question was about the primacy dispute and failed to focus on the relations between the archbishops of Canterbury and York. Some described the primacy dispute with weak attempts at analysis. Some included potentially relevant information on the strength or weakness of Canterbury's position but did not use it to answer the question. A number of responses failed to offer any other reasons for the changing relations of Canterbury and York such as royal or papal intervention so that there could be no comparative evaluation. However, the best responses were able to compare and to synthesise across the period.
4. The question aimed at a comparison between the increasing freedom from royal control and other effects of the Papal Reform Movement. Weaker responses described the papal reform movement in England under Lanfranc and Anselm and then offered a limited description of developments under Henry II and John. A few concentrated only on freedom from royal control so failing to make any comparative evaluation. By contrast, many candidates had very good knowledge and understanding of the impact of the papal reform movement on the English church. The best responses adopted a thematic approach, used detailed knowledge to analyse the impact of the reform movement in a variety of aspects, analysed change and continuity and produced synthesis across the period leading to a substantiated judgement. These answers also demonstrated a sustained line of reasoning.

Y305 Thematic study and historical interpretations: The Renaissance c.1400-c.1600

General comments

Candidates were able to access the Interpretations, although directly linking knowledge of Venice to evaluate them was a challenge for some, with explanation or description dominating. The essays showed a sound knowledge of developments during the Renaissance with candidates able to explain a good range of reasons. However, although many were able to show some evidence of continuity and change across the period there was little evidence of synthesis in many answers as a significant number seem unaware of the need to explain in what ways events or developments are either similar or different.

Question 1

Candidates were able to explain the views of the two interpretations, however many responses did not focus on why the Renaissance in Venice lasted so long and instead simply considered why it developed. Although many responses did apply knowledge and link it to the Interpretations there was often imbalance in the coverage of the two Interpretations, with Passage B treated somewhat superficially in a number of responses, leading to a judgement that was less well supported. In a number of answers relevant knowledge was present but it was not well linked to the actual Interpretations and candidates should be encouraged to ensure that they use a good range of evaluative words in order to ensure that often quite detailed knowledge does not appear to be simply described but is used to give a value to the Interpretation under discussion. It is also important that candidates focus on the question as there were a number of responses where answers drifted into essays about the development of the Renaissance in other states. Most were able to comment on the impact of the fall of Constantinople and the influence from the East and the ability of Venice to avoid the impact of foreign domination, as well as the role of Venice's own artists. However, there were fewer answers that showed a good grasp of the nature of the government and how that may have played a role in the longevity of the Venetian Renaissance. At the higher levels candidates did focus on why it lasted so long, but this was the exception with most answers simply focusing on why it developed and therefore not reaching the higher levels.

Question 2

There were a number of good answers to this question. Most candidates found it easier to argue that warfare had a greater impact on the development of the Renaissance than the other way. Answers often focused on the impact of the Italian wars of the 1490s and how ideas were then taken to other parts of Europe. Stronger answers developed this theme and looked at the impact of the wars across the first half of the sixteenth century and assessed how these wars influenced the development of the Renaissance in France, whilst stronger answers compared this with the impact of the Sack of Rome. A number found it harder to analyse the impact of the Renaissance on warfare, although there was some discussion of how some of the humanist views and ideals of man were challenged and the impact of writing on warfare.

Question 3

The responses to this question were usually well balanced with candidates able to consider both sides of the argument. Many looked at the extent to which the ideas of humanism were a challenge to the Catholic church, whilst others considered the developments in art and whether they were a challenge. Responses that argued that it had the potential to challenge the Church however also noted that religious art still dominated, even if it was placed in a classical background. Furthermore many also argued that the Catholic Church, most notable the Papacy was one of the greatest patrons, pointing to its support of Michelangelo, further suggesting that it

was able to adapt to the ideas. Some of the stronger answers broadened out their discussion to consider the work of humanist writers and discussion of Erasmus often brought a useful perspective to the question.

Question 4

This was the most popular of the questions, but many answers were often just a list of well explained and supported factors. Knowledge was often extensive, but candidates often failed to go beyond a list of reasons, sometimes with no assessment of the relative importance of the factors discussed and with no real evidence of synthesis, with the result that for many.. Stronger answers displayed synthesis by analysing how the importance of factors changed either across the period or between regions both in and outside Italy. Candidates should also ensure that they read the question carefully and with a question like this do not try and turn it into a list of reasons for the Renaissance, instead of the actual focus which should have been on artistic developments. There were some responses which did not really understand the concept of humanism and this had a serious impact on the quality of the responses.

Y306 Thematic study and historical interpretations: Rebellion and disorder under the Tudors 1485-1603

General Comments

As with all the Interpretations, candidates were mostly able to understand the views put forward in the passages, and were able to explain them and therefore reach at least Level 3. However, as with the comments made about Y305 there were a number of responses where knowledge was not directly linked to the Interpretations. In tackling the essay section many were able to produce well explained lists, although not always well focused on the precise demands of the question, and synthesis was often absent.

Question 1

Candidates were able to access the two Interpretations and usually able to explain the views offered, although there were a number who did not see the importance of religion in one or both of the Passages and seemed to think that both were suggesting that the unrest was caused by just economic factors. Although there is an obvious link between economic and social issues a number were unable to make the distinction and therefore suggested that the two passages were putting forward the same view. However, there were many who were able to apply a good depth of knowledge directly to the Interpretations, showing a strong sense of evaluation. There was a good depth of knowledge in these answers about the potential hijacking of economic concerns by the clergy and of the religious demands of the grievances. Similarly, many candidates were able to use their knowledge of social disturbance, be it the murder of Helyons or events at Trematon or Crediton to evaluate Passage B. Answers were also often able to place the developments in the West country in the wider context of unrest in 1548-9 and the other problems that Somerset faced and this was often well used to evaluate Passage A. Most argued that Passage B was more convincing, but at times this was justified because it considered more reasons, which made their argument less convincing. Those that argued it was more convincing because of what they knew, and had demonstrated that, were more convincing.

Question 2

Many responses became simply a list of reasons for the unrest with, at best an attempt in the conclusion to consider the key word in the question, 'frequent'. The key to success is an ability to be flexible and use, what was evidently a good depth of knowledge, to address the question set. Disputes over the succession did cause some difficulty as a number confined that to the reign of Henry VII and did not see events in 1553, 1554 or 1569 as also fitting the criteria. Where this was recognised it was much easier for responses to show synthesis across the period. Faction was a problematic issue for some who did not see either the Yorkists as a faction or the Essex rebellion and this had an impact on their conclusions. Some attempted to argue that religion was the most frequent cause, but this was less convincing as often rebellions considered were limited to 1536 and 1549. Other responses drifted to whether the rebellions were serious and did not focus on 'most frequent cause.' However, the strongest answers showed high levels of synthesis as a good range of examples from across the period were compared to reach a supported judgment.

Question 3

Many of the candidates who answered this question focused more on why support for rebellions declined rather than considering the extent to which support declined. The stronger answers assessed whether support did decline and particularly used the situation in Ireland to challenge the pattern of decline which seemed evident in England in the period after 1549. Other successful approaches took a thematic line and often argued that both dynastic and factional rebellions did not really decline in support as they were never able to attract large numbers, whilst taxation rebellions were able to maintain large levels of support during the period and that it was the economic and social rebellions that peaked in 1549 and then declined with the Oxfordshire rising of 1596. Answers that drifted from considering whether support declined to explaining why were often only partial answers and this limited the level they could reach.

Question 4

The quality of the responses to this question often depended on the criteria used to assess 'greater threat to Tudor governments.' Issues such as location, aims, leadership and numbers were frequently discussed. Although there were other factors that could be discussed examiners were aware that in forty five minutes only a limited number of factors could be discussed in any depth and therefore did not expect every issue to be considered. Stronger answers often argued that it was the aims that made a rebellion a more serious threat, with those that not wanted to remove the dynasty but had an alternative claimant the greatest threat. However, some also argued that much depended on the context and compared the situation facing Henry VII and Edward VI with the perceived strength of both Henry VIII and Elizabeth I. Some did argue that the length of the rising suggested a greater threat as did the location in Ireland, whilst others countered this by saying its distance away from London meant it was not a threat and that once Elizabeth sent Mountjoy it was crushed easily and was therefore less of a threat than, for example Simnel, that forced a weak and new dynasty into a battle that could have had similar results to Bosworth.

Y307 Thematic study and historical interpretations: Tudor foreign policy 1485-1603

General Comments

Candidates were able to access the two Interpretations and had little difficulty in explaining the different views offered by each of them. As with other Interpretation questions, candidates need to ensure that knowledge is used and directly linked to the Interpretations in order to ensure that a value is given to the views offered, rather than simply treating the Interpretations as gobbets or stimulus material and then writing all they know about the issues in the Interpretations. With the essay questions candidates must focus on the actual question set. Foreign policy topics tend to attract chronological responses which can make synthesis more difficult to achieve. Most candidates tackled questions 2 and 3, but with question 3 there was a tendency for a descriptive approach with limited explanation. Candidates should also take care to refer to England and not Britain in their answers.

Question 1

The differing views of the two Interpretations was clearly understood by candidates. Most responses contained a considerable amount of knowledge, but it was the ability of candidates to link that material to the Interpretations that determined the level achieved. Strong answers were able to place the events in their broader context about England's possessions in France. However, there were some who thought that Calais was a recent acquisition either under Henry VIII and this undermined their argument. Knowledge about the cost of maintaining the garrison varied considerably, but many were aware of the neglect and the lack of English forces present. A number of answers relied on information contained in the other Interpretation to evaluate the other Passage and again this limits the level that can be achieved. Knowledge about trade and the role of Calais and the development of the English navy was often used well. A few used the story of Calais engraved on Mary's heart to show her sadness at its loss, but there were few who were able to provide any evidence of the regime being doomed following its loss, although some did argue that it added to the gloom created by disease and poor harvests.

Question 2

This was the most popular of the essay questions, but at the lower level answers either failed to cover the whole period, often neglecting the reign of Henry VII, perhaps because religion was not a factor, or wrote chronological and descriptive accounts with little explanation or analysis of the factors. One noticeable trend in thematic essays was the use of examples from across the period, but a lack of comparison so that synthesis, crucial for the higher levels, was not shown. Instead many answers piled up a list of examples from across the period without making links between them. Whilst some argued that religion was important, pointing to Henry VIII alliance with German princes, Mary's religiously driven marriage and support for Philip and Elizabeth's intervention in Scotland, the Netherlands, France and against Spain, more suggested that national security was the most important reason and that this remained a priority from Henry VII through to Elizabeth.

Question 3

Although this was attempted by a number of candidates there were many who did not focus on the actual question and instead wrote about how they changed, providing a chronological run through. There were some answers that did not cover the whole of the period, focusing either on Elizabeth's reign or almost completely ignoring Elizabeth's reign and focusing instead on how Henry VIII's policy towards France fluctuated. The stronger answers compared the earlier and later periods and this enabled the higher levels to be accessed as synthesis was clearly present. Issues, such as Spain and Scotland, played a prominent part in many of these responses, as did

the personality of monarchs. Some answers did note that the improvement in relations, although evident in the period after 1572 also saw some short term improvements under Henry VII and Henry VIII because of particular short-term circumstances even if France and Scotland were still the national enemy.

Question 4

This question attracted the fewest responses in this Unit and a number of weak ones as many saw English trade and answered a different question on whether English monarchs prioritized it and not whether foreign policy damaged it. Where candidates did focus on the demands of the question, many tackled this monarch by monarch, writing paragraphs about each, with for example Henry VII's concern about Burgundy and its support for Yorkists leading to the suspension of trade, whilst Henry VIII showed little interest. There was some comment about Elizabeth and Spain with many suggesting that despite a deteriorating relationship trade was maintained. Many answers looked to describe or explain the search for new markets, particularly with the loss of Calais and decline of Antwerp, but the essay was often more focused on trade as a factor rather than whether foreign policy damaged it. However, some stronger answers were able to argue that foreign policy, if it damaged traditional trade routes, encouraged the search for new ones, particularly in the second half of the period.

Y308 Thematic study and historical interpretations: The Catholic Reformation 1492-1610

General Comments

The Interpretations were accessible to the candidates and most were able to at least explain the views, even if they had difficulty in applying knowledge to them. Some answers did focus on the issue of provenance, writing either about the dates or the nature of the texts, which is not required on this paper and does not gain credit. Candidates should be aware that the focus must be on applying knowledge to the views in order to reach a judgement as to which is more valid. The essays drew a good range of responses with many candidates able to make comparisons across the period and therefore reach the higher levels.

Question 1

Although most responses suggested that candidates had a sound grasp of the views put forward by the Interpretations, some found it much harder to apply relevant and accurate knowledge to them. Few responses were able to place the Interpretations in their wider context of the origins of the Wars of Religion, with only the strongest answers looking back to developments of the 1560s. Some answers displayed some knowledge about the views and aims of Catherine de Medici and used this to question her role in the massacre. There was some discussion of the extent to which a general massacre was desired and the numbers who were killed both in Paris and the regions. Answers also considered the aims of both Coligny and the Guise in the period leading up to the massacre, with some also discussing the foreign situation, particularly relations with Spain. There was some awareness of the growing challenge from the Huguenots and its appeal among some of the nobility, whilst others used the weakness of royal authority to evaluate.

Question 2

This question provided the opportunity for many to compare the impact of the Catholic Reformation between states and across the period, and this was often done quite successfully. Many responses showed a good range of examples, drawing particularly on evidence from Spain, the Empire and Italy. Answers often argued that the impact depended heavily on the views of the rulers and particularly used the example of Spain to show how this could impact. The strongest answers adopted a thematic approach considering issues such as clerical standards, monastic reform and education, all of which allowed contrasts and comparisons to be made and, most importantly, explained. Contrasts were sometimes made with England and France, whilst others used the New Orders and particularly the Jesuits to show how the impact varied across the continent. A few responses looked at each country in turn, but this made it more difficult to draw comparisons.

Question 3

Many started from the premise that as the Head of the Catholic Church they were the most important factor in its leadership of the Catholic Reformation. However, some argued that in leading the Catholic reformation the importance of Popes varied, with them really only taking a lead in the period after the sack of Rome and pointing to the importance of the calling of Trent. Others argued that although the Popes were important, it was the secular rulers who were more important as they determined whether the reforms would be implemented. Individuals such as Isabella were contrasted with Renaissance Popes and it was often argued that in this period it was the monarchy that was more important. Similarly, some argued that even later rulers, such as Philip II, were more important as they had the power to enforce the Catholic Reformation.

Answers also often considered the role of individuals, such as Erasmus and even Luther, in their calls for reform and argued that it was this that ultimately forced the Popes to act.

Question 4

The nature of the question allowed candidates to consider a wide range of issues that helped to strengthen the Catholic Church. Knowledge of the Inquisition was variable and a number were unable to write in sufficient depth about it to ensure that their judgments were convincing. There were also some answers that argued that the impact of the Inquisition varied and that with the Roman developed only in the second half of the century it played a limited role. Many argued that it was the Council of Trent that was the most important factor, tackling as it did a wide range of issues and providing a clear set of statements that had been previously lacking. Some answers considered the roles of individuals, be it Popes or bishops, such as Borromeo, whilst others argued that secular rulers were the crucial factor.

Y312 Thematic study and historical interpretations: Popular culture and the witchcraze of the 16th and 17th centuries

General Comments

Candidates had little difficulty in understanding the views of the two Interpretations and most were able to at least explain the views offered, even if in some responses the explanation was limited in the number of issues covered. Surprisingly, many essay responses often produced just a list of factors and were unable to show evidence of synthesis, although Question 3 did draw greater evidence of comparison between regions. There was also a tendency for some candidates to become distracted by historiography and describe the views of different historians, rather than using them to support their argument.

Question 1

There were a surprising number of responses that either did not go beyond explaining the views of the Interpretations or did not consider some of the issues raised, particularly when evaluating Passage A, which offered a wide range of factors. However, at the higher level there were a number who were able to evaluate using a considerable depth of knowledge about the destruction of images preceding Hopkins and Stearne and the role of individuals such as Harbottle and Warwick. On the other hand, there were responses where the amount of knowledge detracted from the evaluation and the response became more of an essay about witch trials in England as the Pendle cases were brought in, and sometimes Scottish events. The Interpretations are not provided as stimulus material to encourage candidates to write all they know, but for them to apply knowledge which is directly relevant in order to judge the validity of the views they offer. There was some comment about A being more valid because it considered more issues, or that it was less valid as it focused on the whole of East Anglia, neither of which were very convincing. Some responses relied on assertion and candidates simply stated that the view offered was valid because it agreed with their knowledge, without providing any knowledge to support the claim. There was also a tendency for imbalance in the evaluation, with greater focus on A, perhaps because it did contain a greater range of reasons.

Question 2

This was the most popular of the questions, but numerous candidates would have benefited from reading the wording of the question carefully as it referred to religious attitudes and not simply religion. Many answers simply provided a well explained list of reasons for the persecution, with few attempting to argue that the importance of factors may have changed over time or comparing the relative importance of the factors they discussed. The stronger answers did attempt to compare different regions or states, but the synthesis was rarely well developed and did not reach Level 6. This was a wide ranging question and examiners did not expect all the possible explanations to be considered, but a number of candidates spent too long discussing religion at the expense of other factors so that comparative evaluation was absent. Many who did write about a range considered the social and economic situation, as well as the role of individuals, but some drifted into who was persecuted rather than focusing on why.

Question 3

This question drew the strongest responses as candidates were able to compare and explain the regions where persecution was at its greatest with regions where there was much less persecution and offer substantiated and supported reasons. However, some simply explained reasons for the persecution often virtually repeating what they had written in response to Question 2. The strongest answers often compared the power of the state and the nature of the judicial system and this allowed them to compare different parts of the Holy Roman Empire and

France or England. Others considered the religious situations in areas and compared the Empire with Spain, Italy or the United Provinces. England also provided a useful contrast here and was often well used as an example. Answers also looked at issues such as social and economic issues and often argued that as a general factor they did not explain the variations either because not all areas that saw persecutions suffered or that all areas suffered and only some saw persecution. However, some balanced this by arguing that these issues might explain particular peaks and troughs in the level, pointing to events such as the Thirty Years War or the English Civil War. Most responses were analytical and the judgements made were often well supported.

Question 4

The responses to this question were the most disappointing for this paper. Many failed to focus on the actual wording of the question and instead explained why there were large-scale persecutions in particular areas, again often using material that they had used in their previous response. The question required candidates to consider whether large scale trials and persecutions was the way in which the authorities responded to witchcraft. Those who did directly address the question were able to compare some of the large-scale trials, particularly in south Germany, with smaller incidents or argue that in some places the authorities were sceptical about the claims or, as the period progressed, their attitude changed and they prevented large scale trials and persecution, using a good range of examples to support the claim. Some stronger answers also contrasted the response of central and local authorities and this also provided a valid approach.

Y313 Thematic study and historical interpretations: The Ascendancy of France 1610-1715

Comments on Individual Questions

Question No.1

There were some very solid responses that drew on a good range of contextual knowledge to evaluate the interpretations. Most candidates dealt with the interpretations in turn, which was a perfectly acceptable approach. Others adopted a compare and contrast approach to good effect. Answers tended to focus on the different emphasis given in each interpretation (social and economic importance in Passage A whereas in Passage B the political impact is stressed) and how this could be viewed as both a strength and/or weakness depending on how accurately it is portrayed. Most candidates tended to look for confirmation of the validity and reliability of the interpretations by comparing the content with 'own knowledge'. The biggest challenge for a core of respondents was not to rely too heavily on the content of the Passages and to disguise this material as evidence used for analysis

Question No.2

Most were able to talk confidently about religious developments and the extent to which they impinged on the authority of the monarchy. The best responses focused just on such developments, broke them down into components (for example, threats from particular groups) and then assessed patterns of change and continuity in the degree of help/hindrane from each development across the whole period). Weaker responses tended to take a narrow view of religious developments, discussed other factors that helped/hindered the power of monarchs and/or adopted a chronological, reign-by-reign approach. This made it very difficult for some to achieve synthesis, which, of course, is a main requirement for responses to be awarded marks in the higher Levels.

Question No. 3

There were some very competent responses to this question that involved looking at different types of unrest before using clearly defined criteria to measure the relative importance of it over the whole period. Some candidates were rather vague over what constituted unrest and also over timing. A minority struggled with 'not serious' and produced one-sided, unbalanced accounts

Question No. 4

This was the least popular of the three essay questions. Some candidates proved to be very well-informed about France's status as an international power throughout the period. There tended to be an over-concentration on the comparison of treaties although these were treated in some detail. Better candidates took a broad view of turning point and used clearly specified criteria for comparison. A minority drifted from 'international power' to consider the impact of foreign relations on domestic affairs.

Y314 Thematic study and historical interpretations: The challenge of German nationalism 1789-1919

Question No. 1

Almost all candidates attempted an evaluation of both passages and the vast majority used at least some contextual knowledge, though in many weaker responses this was rather vague. A lot of candidates seemed unduly impressed by the fact that one passage was longer than the other, arguing this indicated a more comprehensive interpretation. Many had difficulty directly connecting their contextual knowledge to evaluation, in particular, using it to evaluate the arguments made, rather than to demonstrate their knowledge of points not raised in either interpretation. A substantial minority of candidates fastened on one point in one or each interpretation as “what the interpretation is really about” and neglected the rest of it, or any nuance.

Question No. 2

This was by far the most popular essay question, producing a wide range of responses. Thematic approaches were more likely to secure higher marks; most candidates who scored Level 4 or above organised their work into distinct aspects (for example, political or cultural) and were able to cover the period intelligently, although how to define the very end of the period in terms of political nationalism caused some problems. There were also a great many responses which considered “the fate of nationalism” as a theme – few responses made clear what this meant and most struggled with its connection to “aims”. Some wrote about the nature of German nationalism rather than the aims, and penalised themselves as a result. Weaker answers tended not to attempt any sort of definition of the various aspects of nationalism before writing about them – they would probably have benefited from early definitions. The early part of the period tended not to be well done by many candidates - ‘German nationalism did not exist before 1813’ appeared more than once, which was disappointing. Political aims were also assumed by some candidates to have changed automatically once unification was achieved in 1871 without the need to explain what the new political aims were and how they differed from what went before.

Question No. 3

This question was also a popular choice: many candidates recognised the point of the question through reading it carefully and considered the ways industrialisation both helped and hindered the development of German nationalism – helping through the *Zollverein* promoting co-operation between the States, railways promoting trade and mutual benefits, Prussian heavy industry in the Rhineland providing jobs and also the weaponry which enabled the wars of unification to be won; hindering through the attractions of socialism for the working class in the poor conditions in the growing cities. Some candidates had little that was meaningful to say about economic matters prior to the formation of the *Zollverein* and a large minority made almost no reference to events prior to 1861. A more limited range of evidence appeared, compared to the other questions. Most candidates attempted a thematic approach and the success of this depended mainly on how clearly they had identified distinct themes within “industrialisation” and had sufficient evidence to discuss them without gross repetition. A large minority of candidates wrote about the relative significance of industrialisation compared with other influences on nationalism, which was not the question set.

Question No. 4

This was the least popular question but produced a very wide range of answers. The best responses tended to recognise that there are several ways in which Germany could be

described as not truly united, whether as in the sheer number of States in the early part of the period, the north-south split in the 1860s, the growth of socialism, the ethnic minorities in Alsace-Lorraine or Posen, the status German Jews. The strongest responses engaged with Austria's influence and significance, without which it is impossible to understand the role of Prussia in the years to 1870. Many candidates wrote about tension between Austria and Prussia – Bismarck tended to be blamed rather more than Metternich for this state of affairs, which was perhaps slightly surprising – after all, in the *Vormarz* period, Austria steadfastly set out to prevent unification. Many picked up on the comparative element in the question; the most popular alternative cause of disunity by some distance was the role of individual leaders, especially Metternich and Bismarck, though Kaiser Wilhelm II was also much discussed. Most candidates covered the whole period but a large minority concentrated only on the period from 1860 to 1890. Throughout this paper the majority of candidates seem to have considered Austria as something outside “Germany”, even when explicitly writing about the idea of a *Grossdeutschland*; this was very evident in responses to this question. Weaker answers simply set out to prove, rather than to analyse, the hypothesis in the question. This question produced a much wider range of answer structures than the previous two, which was on the whole a positive development with answers more directly addressing the question rather than trying to answer a similar question they may have come across on their course of study.

Y315 Thematic study and historical interpretations: The changing nature of warfare 1792-1945

Comments on Individual Questions

Question No.1

In general, the interpretations were well understood by candidates and nearly all made at least a satisfactory attempt to evaluate them. Some simply described or paraphrased each interpretation while others went beyond this to explain the views of the authors. However, such approaches were unlikely to be given marks beyond Level 3. There were a good number of answers that carefully utilised a range of contextual knowledge to assess the strengths and limitations of the interpretations. There were a significant number of others that used more generalised knowledge and/or that failed to stick to the exact demands of the question. Thus, some candidates failed to focus consistently on reasons for success (considering more the extent of success) while others did not give indication that they knew about developments across the whole of the period. There were a minority who commented on the difference in length of the Passages and turned this into, rather unsuccessfully, a critique of the validity and reliability of each one.

Question No.2

Candidates appeared to like this question. Most quickly picked up on the fact that transport developments could be easily broken down into themes and that links between these could be explored successfully (for example, between land and sea transport). Others included material on communications more generally which proved not to be relevant. Some talked about the success and failure in warfare (not the question) and others lost sight of the thrust of the question with respect to the comparison of two time periods. In general, more was written about the second than first time phase. With respect to the early part of the period there tended to be highly generalised comment about 'primitive' transport on foot and/or using horses and carts. A significant number of answers compared transport developments with other factors which was not required and subsequently resulted in responses that were classified as partially focused. The very best answers provided thematically developed structures that allowed for a compare and contrast approach between the two time periods stated

Question No. 3

Most candidates displayed a sound knowledge and understanding of 'allies' and the different ways in which help could be provided (formally through alliances or more informally). The most effective responses focused on the command stem and showed firstly how, when and where allies were crucial before considering counter-claims (often by referencing other discrete influences). There were some very good responses that discussed the links between allies and other developments in warfare such as changing strategies, tactics, resource availability, logistics and access to technology. The least successful answers relied on a chronological, narrative and/or descriptive based approach.

Question No. 4

Some candidates did well on this question as they were able to take a fairly broad view of what constituted public opinion and how the influence of this could be measured over time. The very best answers focused consistently on key words in the question ('always an important' and 'winning') and challenged the underlying assumptions behind their usage. Weaker responses seemed to gloss over these terms to look simply at how public opinion did or did not impinge on the outcome of wars. Some were dismissive of public opinion in the early part of the period and

were anachronistic in their commentary of who the public were. As with the other essay questions, a significant number resorted to a chronological plod-through of wars with some nods to public opinion as a determining factor with respect to the outcome of conflicts.

Y316 Thematic study and historical interpretations: Britain and Ireland 1791-1921

Comments on Individual Questions

Question No.1

In general, the interpretations were well understood by candidates and nearly all made at least a satisfactory attempt to evaluate them. Some simply described or paraphrased each interpretation while others went beyond this to explain the views of the authors. However, such approaches were unlikely to be given marks beyond Level 3. There were a good number of answers that carefully utilised a range of contextual knowledge to assess the strengths and limitations of the interpretations. There were a significant number of others that used more generalised knowledge and/or that failed to stick to the exact demands of the question. Thus, some candidates failed to focus consistently on ‘failure’ (considering the Rising more generally and/or its legacy) while others did not give indication that they knew about the context of the Rising. There were a minority who commented on the fact that Passage A stated more reasons for failure than Passage B and turned this into, rather unsuccessfully, a critique of the validity and reliability of each one.

Question No.2

There were some excellent answers to this question that were clear about how ‘success’ could be measured (mainly through the extent to which aims were achieved), how ‘quality of leadership’ could be defined and how other factors (for example, level of support, strength of opposition) might have been crucial. A good range of leaders was considered with some of the best answers arguing the case for Michael Collins to be seen as a prime example of how success was dependent on charismatic leadership. More nuanced responses took a broad view of success to include legacy (inspiration, the concept of folk-hero and laying platforms for future leaders) resulting in some very well-developed and balanced arguments. Despite numerous comments made in previous examiners reports on this topic area, there are still a significant number of candidates who insist on discussing constitutional nationalism when the focus should be on the revolutionary type. In the question concerned, it was possible to link the two in a relevant way (the success of the revolutionaries depended on the success of the constitutionalists) but most did not do this. The weakest of all answers resorted to describing the achievements (or not) of leaders in chronological order.

Question No. 3

Candidates who did well on this question tended to be clear about what they believed to be the key Irish issues (for example, civil rights, land and religion) and how these changed in importance over time. These themes were then used to provide a comparative framework to argue a case either for Tories/ Conservatives and Whigs/Liberals (with later Unionists and Coalitions being given attention by some). Most candidates made a good stab at offering criteria to measure ‘most effective’ but some drifted over this term to talk about who achieved the most. A significant number of responses were very well informed but tended to state rather than explain developments especially with respect to land reform and Home Rule. There were also many rather simplistic comments about how certain pieces of legislation ended specific problems in Ireland (for example Wyndham’s Act). Also, the early and middle parts of the period tended to gain more attention than the end.

Question No 4

It was pleasing to observe that the majority of candidates who tackled this question paid close attention to ‘preserving the Union’ and maintained a focus on this term throughout. Very few

discussed problems facing Ireland more generally. The very best responses compared and contrasted a number of areas of reform (economic, political, religious and, in a few instances, social and cultural), linking analysis to the degree to which they contributed to the preservation of the Union. Some candidates took a narrow view of land reforms and claimed the land issue was mainly prevalent in the middle part of the period (and therefore, other reforms were more important). Only a minority discussed just land reforms and/or one other area of reform. Nearly all candidates understood what Union referred to and how this was under threat pretty much throughout the period but, obviously particularly at the end.

Y317 Thematic study and historical interpretations: China and its rulers 1839-1989

Question 1.

Candidates were able to access the higher bands within this question by successfully evaluating both interpretations and coming to a sustained conclusion, assessing which interpretation was the most convincing. The most successful answers addressed each interpretation in turn, analysing the reasons given for the Boxer uprising and testing the validity using their own knowledge. Candidates who assessed what was present within the interpretations and used factual knowledge to test this scored most highly.

Question 2.

This question demanded that imperial ambitions were compared to a range of other factors. At the lower levels, candidates only assessed imperial ambitions, often in a chronological format. Candidates who dealt with Chinese relations in a country by country format were often unable to formulate strong synoptic links across time periods. The best answers dealt with broad themes, such as imperial ambitions, foreign policy challenges and military challenges and interwove the struggles across the time period.

Question 3.

This was the most popular question attempted in section B. At the top end, candidates considered relative themes associated with government (ideological change, structure of government, use of repression, for example) and assessed the changes under Deng against other rulers in each, thematic, paragraph. Centres should note that this question was concerned with government. Therefore, any reference to the economy or societal changes would not have been rewarded.

Question 4.

This question was answered, on the whole, to a good standard. Candidates were able to focus on economic aims as opposed to outcomes in a thematic format (for example agriculture, industry, trade) and assess whether aims changed across time. At the top end, candidates were able to explain why these economic aims changed or stayed the same, for instance by the impact of ideological change. Less successful answers were structured as a descriptive narrative of chronological events or looked at economic outcomes.

Y318 Thematic study and historical interpretations: Russia and its rulers 1855-1964

Question 1.

Candidates were able to access the higher bands within this question by successfully evaluating both interpretations and coming to a sustained conclusion, assessing which interpretation was the most convincing. The most successful answers addressed each interpretation in turn, analysing the reasons given why the Provisional Government was overthrown and testing the validity using their own knowledge.. Candidates who assessed what was present within the interpretations and used factual knowledge to test this scored most highly.

Question 2.

This question was the least popular amongst candidates but produced some very strong answers. At the top end, candidates assessed the advancement of rights amongst the nationalities (political, economic and social) before judging which ruler advanced them the most. In most cases, this meant that Lenin was compared to two other rulers in each paragraph. In the highest levels, candidates assessed what motivated the nationalities, enabling them to reach a clear judgement. These would have contained a broad range of examples, for instance (but not limited to) the Ukraine, the Jews, the Baltic States and Finland. References to the satellite states in Eastern Europe during the Cold War were also credited. Some candidates compared rulers who did not advance the rights of the nationalities, which was acceptable, as long as there was some reference in each paragraph to a ruler who did.

Question 3.

At the top end, candidates focused on war and the impact that it had on the economy. This was constructed within three or four thematic paragraphs (agriculture, industry, conditions of work, trade, cost of war to name a range) with a conclusion reached. Again, the most successful candidates compared the Crimean War to two or three other wars within each paragraph, explaining which had the greater impact on that specific area. In the most successful answers, candidates assessed which area of the economy defined Russia the most, allowing these candidates to reach a highly substantiated judgement.

Question 4.

This question was the most popular amongst candidates, it having been a staple on the old specification. Most candidates were aware that the question revolved around government and therefore the more successful answers picked three themes (generally ideology, structure of government and methods of control) to assess the change the Fundamental Laws had. Centres should be aware that answers which scored the most high began each paragraph with the Fundamental Laws and then compared them to two or three other events to reach a substantiated argument.

Y319 Thematic study and historical interpretations: Civil rights in the USA 1865-1992

Question 1

In the higher levels, candidates took a consistently comparative approach to the Passages, tracing views across them point-by-point. This more complex approach worked well in cases where knowledge was used to extend and evaluate views. Of course, it was not necessary to adopt this approach in order to reach the highest marks. Most brought together their evaluations of each Passage as a synthesis in the conclusion. In the mid to lower levels, candidates mostly explained Passage content with limited use of own knowledge and less developed comments. It seemed surprising, for example, that so few examined the fact that African Americans transferred their allegiance and voted democrat in FDR's second election and from then on. Judgements, if there were any, were underdeveloped or merely simple comments. Some at the lowest level did not see any views in the Passages, and merely imparted what they said. Many merely imparted some Passage content or narrated what they could remember. The majority of conclusions seemed to favour Passage B over Passage A, not always for clear reasons.

Question 2

In the higher levels, one of the better approaches was to adopt a thematic approach to factors which changed the extent of Civil Rights and compare WW2 with other eras. The most common judgement was that the 1960s was the most important era. Those who achieved the very top marks developed a synthesis of themes during the essay and consolidated them in a final synthesis to support a judgement. One stand-out Level 6 candidate concluded convincingly that the Reconstruction era was the most important turning point after an extremely thorough evaluation. In the middle levels, those who traced WW2 through their answer and adopted a thematic approach achieved some synthesis, where-as the majority approached the answer era by era chronologically or randomly, sometimes as afterthoughts. In the lower levels, little or inaccurate evidence was known about WW2 or the early part of the period, so most concentrated on the 1950s and 60s. Some 'facts' were simply stated, for example, the case of Emmet Till, their significance assumed rather than explained.

Question 3

Those in Level 3 stated reasons for their views, judgements and conclusion rather than, as lower levels did, merely explaining changes and giving examples for example, the PATCO strike. At the highest level many developed a convincing synthesis, and there were some stand-out answers where a thematic approach was adopted, defining the tasks of TUs, for example, representing members' interests, collective bargaining, strikes etc., and tracing these themes across Presidents setting them within their economic and social context and sustaining a synthesis throughout.

Question 4

In the top Level there were many very well informed and developed answers with a high level of synthesis based on very thoroughly used and linked evidence. At the lower middle and lower levels, there were some explanatory and many descriptive answers where knowledge was merely stated, for example, 'Roe v. Wade' as though this spoke for itself. Even a simple explanation could have made a point, improved clarity and shown understanding. Many stated the changes but didn't focus on 'improved'.

Y320 Thematic study and historical interpretations: From colonialism to independence: The British Empire 1857-1965

Question 1

Candidates were able to access the higher bands within this question by successfully evaluating both interpretations and coming to a sustained conclusion, assessing which interpretation was the most convincing. The most successful answers addressed each interpretation in turn, analysing the causes of the Mau Mau Rebellion and testing the validity using their own knowledge. Candidates who assessed what was present within the interpretations and used factual knowledge to test this scored most highly.

Question 2

Candidates that achieved the highest levels on this question were able to focus on the nature of opposition and assess the methods used across the time period. Due to the demands of this paper, a country by country approach could be successful, as long as there were clear synoptic links and a focus on change in each of the different areas. Other candidates adopted a thematic approach based around the different characteristics of opposition movements (direct action, leadership, constitutional change for example) and assessed the nature of change in each of these areas). At the lower levels, some candidates only focused on the post war period.

Question 3

This question was the least successfully answered of the essay question. Some candidates mistook the question for the impact of Britain on the Empire. These answers would not have scored highly. Other answers in the lower levels would not have contained specific examples in regards to British culture or focused on a small part of the period. At the top end, of which there were few, candidates were able to establish thematic paragraphs (revolving around different aspects of culture such as education, art and architecture, music) and use a variety of examples to assess the impact.

Question 4

This question was the most popular amongst candidates. Candidates were able to assess a variety of wars but only at the top levels did candidates progress to evaluating wars against other factors (economic, decline as an international power, nationalism). In the highest levels, candidates then went on to assess the impact of war on each of these other factors to reach a substantiated judgement. Unfortunately, most candidates focused on a range of wars, explaining the impact of each of them before coming to a judgement on the most important war for changing attitudes.

Y321 Thematic study and historical interpretations: The Middle East 1908-2011: Ottomans to Arab Spring

Question 1

Candidates were able to access the higher bands within this question by successfully evaluating both interpretations and coming to a sustained conclusion, assessing which interpretation was the most convincing. The most successful answers addressed each interpretation in turn, analysing the motives and intentions of the main countries involved in the Suez Crisis and testing the validity using their own knowledge. Candidates who assessed what was present within the interpretations and used factual knowledge to test this scored most highly.

Question 2

This question, on the whole, was answered well. Candidates recognised that Zionism needed to be compared to other factors (leadership, Palestine, intifadas) to reach a substantiated judgement. At the top end this was done well, with a range of examples across the whole time period. In the lower levels, candidates resorted to a list approach, reminiscent of a Unit 2 answer, either by time period or by factor, and did not explain which was the most important influence.

Question 3

Candidates by in large struggled with this question and it produced the lowest number of responses. The more successful answers defined Pan-Arabism and then compared Syrian policies to a range of others. These answers also were able to give clear chronological links, exploring the majority of the time period. At the lower levels, answers either only focused on Syrian policies or explored Pan-Arabism in a descriptively chronological fashion.

Question 4

This was the most popular question and that which was answered the most successfully. Most candidates were able to address a number of religious groups and then were able to discuss a number of other themes (e.g. resources, conflict). At the top level, candidates were able to assess across the time period. At the lower levels answers dealt with only religious groups or approached the essay in a manner which did not offer comparison between factors and time periods.

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