

## **A LEVEL**

*Examiners' report*

# **HISTORY A**

**H505**

For first teaching in 2015

## **Y106/01 Summer 2019 series**

Version 1

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## Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates. The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report. A full copy of the question paper can be downloaded from OCR.

## Paper Y106/01 series overview

There are thirteen British period study and enquiry units from which to choose. Each unit has two elements: a Period study and an Enquiry. The Enquiry element either precedes or continues the Period Study element so as to provide increased coherence and coverage of the chosen period of British history. The Enquiry element consists of one compulsory question based on four sources where candidate are required to explain and evaluate the sources using both contextual knowledge and provenance to reach a judgement about the sources in relation to the question. The Period study element is assessed through essays, with candidates choosing one question from a choice of two.

To do well on Section A, candidates need to be able to consider both provenance of the sources and apply contextual knowledge to them in order to reach a judgement about the sources in relation to the issue in the question.

To do well on Section B, candidates need to address the issue in the question, using detailed supporting knowledge. In order to reach the higher levels candidates will need to assess the issues they discuss and reach a supported judgement at least in the conclusion.

<p><b><i>Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:</i></b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• considered the provenance of the source(s) and used relevant contextual knowledge</li> <li>• linked the contextual knowledge clearly to the source being discussed to show whether the view of the source was valid or not</li> <li>• reached an overall judgement as to the extent to which the sources supported the view in the question</li> <li>• in answering the essay question, discussed at least two issues in depth</li> <li>• gave supporting detail that both accurate and relevant to the question set, not just the topic</li> <li>• reached a supported judgement about the issue in the question</li> <li>• made a series of interim judgements about the issues discussed in relation to the question.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• did not consider both the provenance and did not use contextual knowledge to evaluate the sources</li> <li>• wrote an unbalanced answer in their treatment of the sources, with very little consideration of one of the sources</li> <li>• reached a judgement based on their knowledge rather than the sources</li> <li>• showed a poor understanding of the major issues relevant to the essay</li> <li>• were unable to support their answer with relevant material</li> <li>• did not focus on the precise wording of the question</li> <li>• made unsupported comments about issues which were assertions.</li> </ul>

## Section A overview

The focus in this section is on the critical use of evidence in investigating and assessing historical questions, problems and issues. The focus may be on depth of one key topic or breadth, using parts of several key topics for the evaluation of a theme. The critical evaluation of sources is central to this element, with all marks given against AO2. The sources selected are all written and contemporary to the period. Candidates have to evaluate four sources, answering one question which sets the sources in their historical context.

### Question 1

#### Mid Tudor Crises 1547–1558

- 1 Using these four sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that enclosure was the main cause of unrest in 1549. [30]

Although all of the sources made some reference to enclosure, most responses were able to argue that not all of the sources argued that it was the main cause. There were a number of responses that drifted to how serious the unrest was and did not focus on causes, which was essential if a high level was to be achieved. In discussing Source A many argued that it did put forward it was the most important cause, pointing to 'have sent commissioners to reform enclosures' and suggesting that unless it was the main cause the Privy council would have not responded this way. Some also suggested that Privy Council would be anxious to deal with the main cause and suppress the unrest because of problems elsewhere and the concerns in Scotland. However, many were confused over the reference to the Bible and thought that meant either Kett's rebellion was about religion or confused Kett with the Western. The provenance was usually linked to the government wanting to deal with the main cause and therefore it was reliable and some linked this to the Kett/Flowerdew dispute. In dealing with Source B, many responses commented that this source suggested there were a number of causes, including enclosure, including foodstuffs and religion. The reference to unrest in Devon and Cornwall allowed many to discuss the causes of the Western rebellion with some aware of the earlier demands that included reference to enclosures and the sheep tax. Discussion of the provenance varied from the simplistic comments about the role of the ambassador to discussion as to why he mentioned the issue of religion. Source C, on the surface appeared to be the most straightforward with responses stressing it mentioned enclosure and greed, the latter allowed contextual knowledge about class war to be used and there were particularly good examples of this from the Western rebellion. However, the provenance was a greater challenge and knowledge of the Commonwealthmen was very limited, with some suggesting because he was from the Commonwealth he would be abroad and therefore not know about events. The final source, Source D, caused some challenge as many did not pick up on the date and how that might have influenced the content. It was written in 1550 when Northumberland was gaining power and this may well have influenced the comments made in the last part of the source.

There were a number of very strong responses, as illustrated in Exemplar 1, where responses explained the source in relation to the question and evaluated using both contextual knowledge and provenance in order to reach a judgement as to how far the sources supported the view that enclosure was the main cause, taking the response shown into Level 6.

## Exemplar 1

In conclusion, the sources generally do support the view that enclosure was the main cause of unrest in 1549, despite there being other reasons too. The sources that focus on enclosure primarily, sources ~~A and~~ C and A, do have a weaker prominence; Source D has a slightly stronger prominence and Source B the strongest. However they all suggest that enclosure was

a definite cause of unrest, if not the main cause. Therefore, considering the sources and their prominence, it is fair to say that collectively they support the view that enclosure was the main cause of unrest in 1549. The fact that many of the attacks from these rebellions were on gentry, land lords and their enclosures, suggests that this view has much validity.

## Section B overview

The two questions set are drawn from different key topics and candidates are required to recall, select and deploy appropriate knowledge and communicate this clearly and effectively. Candidates are expected to demonstrate abilities to explain, assess, analyse and reach substantiated judgements.

### Question 2

#### England 1485–1547

2\* 'Yorkist opposition was not a serious threat to Henry VII.' How far do you agree?

[20]

This was the more popular question and there were a wide range of responses. Most focused just on the Yorkist threat, but some considered other issues. The latter was acceptable provided the main focus was on the Yorkist threat and that the threat of other issues was compared to that of the Yorkists. The strongest answers adopted a balanced approach, considering both the strength and weaknesses of the issues discussed. Many responses considered Henry's claim to the throne and how he attempted to overcome this through the dating of his reign and his marriage. Most were able to write in some detail about the Yorkist threats from Lovell/Stafford, Warbeck and Simnel, although some considered Simnel Warbeck to be one and the same person. It was surprising that a number appeared unaware of the threat posed by Simnel with the Battle of Stoke and argued that the threat was solved simply by parading the real Earl. Discussions about Warbeck were often stronger, balancing the longevity of the challenge against Henry's ability to sign a range of treaties with overseas nations. The discussion about Lovell/Stafford was also sound, although the analysis was often limited to the fact it was a threat because it took place in the first year of his reign. Discussion about de la Pole featured in some answers, but was often ignored and could have been used to show that the potential Yorkist threat continued until virtually the end of his reign. When other issues such as the nobility or finance were discussed the strongest answers linked them to the Yorkist threat. A number argued that his control over the nobility limited the threat, whilst discussion about finance again led to many saying his financial strength gave him the power and authority needed to deal with such issues, although some did link the tax rebellions to the problem.

The strongest answers, as shown in Exemplar 2, were able to make judgements about each issue following a balanced discussion and bring these together in an overall conclusion.

#### Exemplar 2

Lastly, Yorkist rebellions were the the least serious threat, but still serious. This is seen in as early as 1486, during the Lovell and Stafford rebellion; they planned to kill Henry and place Lovell on the throne, showing how serious a threat their aims

posed to Henry's reign. However Henry heard of the plot and was able to defeat them, showing the limitations of this opposition's seriousness. Yorkist opposition and rebellions were more common in the North of England, as they generally supported the Yorkists. This was a serious threat to Henry VII's authority, as it meant that he had less control over the North. In fact, he had to place the Duke of Northumberland, ~~an~~ <sup>was</sup> a Yorkist supporter, in charge of the Council of the North, as Henry himself was unable to have sufficient support and authority. Thus this was a serious threat as Henry had to place his trust in a man whom he had previously imprisoned. The Yorkshire rising in 1489 is also evidence of Yorkist opposition to Henry's authority, as they refused to pay the taxes needed for Henry's army during the Brittany crisis. However this was crushed. Hence, Yorkist rebellions, <sup>which were</sup> especially in the North, were the least serious threat to Henry VII; for he was able to crush them. Nevertheless they did remain as potential threats, and threats to his other foreign policies.

In conclusion, the Yorkist opposition was a serious threat to Henry VII, and this is especially seen <sup>with</sup> Margaret of Burgundy. She not only supported pretenders <sup>undermining his dynasty,</sup> but also undermined his foreign policy. Therefore she posed a two-sided threat to Henry. The Yorkist claimants were also serious, especially Edmund de la Pole, for he was around for a long time. These were especially serious, as given they were legitimate, they could topple his rule. However they weren't as serious as Henry dealt with most of them early in his reign. Yorkist rebellions, in the North, were the least serious threat as they never truly had an impact on Henry's rule; however, they had the potential to do so.

Therefore, Yorkist opposition was serious to Henry VII.

## Question 3

- 3\* 'England's foreign policy was more successful in the period from 1485 to the capture of Warbeck in 1497 than in the period after his capture to the death of Henry VII in 1509.' How far do you agree? [20]

This question was less popular. Many responses to this question lacked the depth of knowledge of the period after the capture of Warbeck to do justice to the latter part of Henry's reign and this resulted in imbalance and a partial answer. The strongest answers were aware of the latter years and the diplomatic isolation that followed developments in Spain, the death of Elizabeth and Arthur and also developments with Burgundy over trade. Candidates tended to approach the answer either country by country or through issues such as trade, security, marriages and alliances. A number spent too long on the early conflict with France over Brittany and this prevented them from developing their argument over later events. Many argued that Henry was more successful in the earlier part because of his ability to gain recognition, make alliances with Spain and Scotland and gain financially from Spain. Exemplar 3 below shows how an issue was developed and analysed before a judgement about it was made and it is this type of practice that should be encouraged if candidates want to reach the highest levels.

## Exemplar 3

Henry VII was more successful in 1485-97 than 1497-1509 because England was left diplomatically isolated by the end of 1509. This is because in the League of Cambrai, although he was initially included, along with ~~Spain~~ the Holy Roman Empire, Charles V then abandoned Henry VII because he didn't want to antagonise Spain, leaving England isolated. In comparison to 1485-97, England was much more respected as a monarch, as shown through the Treaty of Etaples with France where they promised to no longer support Warbeck and pay a pension of £5000 a year. This was a success because it gave Henry ~~the~~ <sup>more</sup> financial and political stability, which is what he aimed for given that the Wars of the Roses left England politically unstable and Henry VII had a weak claim. Although

Some might argue that it wasn't a success because France only agreed to the terms because it was distracted by events in Italy so it was a case of luck rather than success. Henry VII still achieved his aim of increasing foreign recognition, which he then lost in 1509.

So Henry VII's foreign policy was more successful in the period 1485-97 rather than 1497-1509.

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