

**A LEVEL**

**Examiners' report**

# **ANCIENT HISTORY**

**H407**

For first teaching in 2017

**H407/23 Summer 2022 series**

# Contents

|                                |    |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Introduction .....             | 3  |
| Paper 23 series overview ..... | 4  |
| Section A overview .....       | 6  |
| Question 1* .....              | 7  |
| Question 2* .....              | 11 |
| Question 3 .....               | 14 |
| Section B overview .....       | 16 |
| Question 4 .....               | 17 |
| Question 5* .....              | 18 |
| Question 6* .....              | 20 |

## 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. A selection of candidate answers are also provided. 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 and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

### Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our [website](#).

#### Would you prefer a Word version?

Did you know that you can save this PDF as a Word file using Acrobat Professional?

Simply click on **File > Export to** and select **Microsoft Word**

(If you have opened this PDF in your browser you will need to save it first. Simply right click anywhere on the page and select **Save as . . .** to save the PDF. Then open the PDF in Acrobat Professional.)

If you do not have access to Acrobat Professional there are a number of **free** applications available that will also convert PDF to Word (search for PDF to Word converter).

## Paper 23 series overview

Having had two years in which candidates did not sit examination of this specification, there was some concern about how candidates would manage the structure, timings and techniques required to perform well. The specification requires a number of skills in using analysing, and evaluating their knowledge and information of the historical periods, and the complex array of evidence prescribed for their study. In addition, the candidates have to master both a period and a depth study with differing demands. In general candidates performed excellently in many respects, with few clearly having difficulties.

A key element for assessment and responses in this specification is the application of ancient sources, literary or material. The integration of the evidence into the explanation or analysis or argument is the core element of good response to any question in this specification. This applies especially to the essay questions (Questions 1, 2, 5, and 6). Here candidates do well when they support their views with specific and detailed evidence in order meet the criteria of a convincing and substantiated response. In addition, in reaching judgements, candidates should try to avoid assertions in favour of developing their conclusions thoroughly. Besides, candidates will do well when they present an array of accurate and detailed knowledge, displaying understanding of the topic and historical context. Candidates are having to exhibit these complex skills in a timed environment in the face of questions which are new to them. It was, therefore, pleasing to see so many candidates rising to the challenges in a difficult year. All credit is due to them and their teachers for their hard work and commitment, displayed at all levels in the series.

The candidates found the questions accessible. Some either misunderstood the focus of the question or misread what the question was about.

The great majority had clearly studied the prescribed sources. Candidates used their knowledge to display a consistent engagement with them. Candidates did not do well where they recorded no ancient sources within the response; this is clearly a difficulty in assessment where the majority of marks for a question are for the use of sources. Even in Question 3 (Modern interpretation), the analysis needs to be substantiated with knowledge, and sources are often the means of doing this.

Good responses displayed secure knowledge and understanding of at least part of the period and the depth study; errors were made and misconceptions arose given the strictures of the examination. There were few less successful responses which displayed quite limited knowledge, and only partial understanding of some aspect of the study.

A selection of evidence, which is accurate and precisely used, is more effective than a narrative preceded by 'Tacitus tells us'. The evidence forms the basis of what will be a well-developed, convincing judgement. The majority of answers had this in parts of responses, where a really thoughtful point was developed, supported and led to a sound conclusion. Candidates will do well if they try to be consistent throughout most of a response for the highest levels.

Candidates do less well where assertion replaces argument. A good piece of evidence was followed by 'this shows that...' without an attempt to explain how we get from the evidence to the conclusion.

Candidates performed well when the explanation was the focus of the response. Where candidates were clear in their analysis of the issue and marshalled their argument, supported by the evidence and knowledge, then a good or better response resulted. The vast majority of responses offered good or very good explanations at some point in the text. This suggested they had engaged with the material and had understood the issues in both the period and depth study.

The majority of good responses formed most of their judgements on the evidence producing convincing, and at times thorough, explanations.

Less successful responses had generalised factual knowledge, inaccurate chronology, general source references ('Suetonius tells us', 'According to Plutarch'), confusion between emperors and simple inaccuracies. More serious were those which did not offer any sources or very few sources. There were the mis-attributions between Tacitus and Suetonius, or Plutarch and Suetonius; the Res Gestae text has grown considerably in content during this examination with a number of new additions notably his views on the Imperial Cult.

Many responses made excellent evaluations of sources especially material ones, e.g. coins, inscriptions in the period.

Candidates did well when the prescribed sources were evaluated in their contexts showing how the context, genre and preconceptions of the author impacted on the reliability of the evidence. Sometimes this resulted in a disconnected paragraph on the author. This was occasionally placed at the beginning or the end of the response. For example, 'Dio was writing in the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, was not contemporary to events but was a senator so had access to...'. This information was not then related to the point it was meant to support. There is the paragraph which concludes that we cannot not trust the author. Yet the candidate did not seem to see that this negated the argument just presented.

There appeared to be little difference in knowledge between the period and depth studies. It was very rare to see a candidate gain high marks on one and low on the other. Timing did not seem to be an issue with again very few appearing to run out of time. When it did occur, it was with those who chose to do the two essays first leaving not enough time for the shorter Question 4. The majority of question was answered.

| Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:   | Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a secure knowledge of the period studied</li> <li>• a precise and clear grasp of the chronology</li> <li>• selected sources focused on the specific terms of the question.</li> <li>• prioritised the explanation in response to the terms of the question, using evidence and knowledge in support.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attributed an event incorrectly to a person/group</li> <li>• confused the reign of one emperor with another</li> <li>• did not focus on the main issue of the question but offered a generalised account of the period</li> <li>• provided a narrative of events, not an analysis</li> <li>• used few or no sources.</li> </ul> |

## Section A overview

Question 1 was more popular than Question 2 which required a detailed knowledge of events in the provinces. Most responses for Question 1 displayed a knowledge of the aims of the person/group discussed, and an understanding of the actions for AO1; there was a variety of sources including material evidence for AO3; the dates and agendas of authors were not always developed for the value of the evidence; most explanations and judgements were clearly expressed and led to logically reasoned judgements (AO2). The questions appeared to be accessible, with very few seeming to misunderstand what was required.

Question 3 revealed how well the candidates had engaged with the material. The responses generally analysed the interpretation thoroughly. Almost line by line they displayed relevant and well-developed evidence in assessing the opinion of the author, both in agreeing with and challenging it.

## Question 1\*

### SECTION A: The Julio-Claudian Emperors, 31 BC–AD 68

- 1\* How far does the evidence help us to understand the aims of those who tried to control the succession throughout this period?

You must use and analyse the ancient sources you have studied as well as your own knowledge to support your answer. [30]

The key issue in this question is the value of the evidence which details actions of those involved with the succession and their aims. Assessments of the evidence varied. Some argued that 'aims' was less well documented than actions. Many took what was in the literary and material evidence as fact of aims. Evaluation of the sources was most important, as with any question which focuses on the sources. Candidates, who were secure in their knowledge of the prescribed sources, were able to develop and support their analysis. Those who narrated the events of one or other individual or group were less successful in dealing with the issue of sources.

The majority of responses covered the most obvious content in answering this question.

The large majority dealt with the Augustan succession, to varying degrees. Marcellus, Agrippa, Gaius and Lucius and Tiberius were mentioned but not always all of them; some jumped from Marcellus to Tiberius. Good responses noted Tacitus on the *tribuncia potestas* and his view of its importance in the identifying a successor. Most mentioned Augustus' means- adoption, marriage to Julia, appointed to various posts.

Not all developed the analysis to identify possible aims such as creating a dynasty or focusing on the bloodline, despite Tacitus' making this clear in *Annals* 1.3. They were aware of what he and Suetonius (and others) had to say about Livia. It was generally accepted that Augustus did not want Tiberius, although the sources on this were not detailed, or even present in some cases. The coverage of Augustus was generally very good; the explanations were less focused in a number of cases, replaced by narrative.

Most responses dealt with the remaining emperors but in much less detail, apart from Nero and Agrippina. The detail on Sejanus (or Sir Janos) was variable based on Tacitus with little reference to Dio. Suetonius was the main source for the succession to Gaius and Claudius. Good responses made excellent use of Josephus in both these cases, especially dealing with the motives of the Senate, the people and the Praetorian Guard. There was much analysis of Agrippina's aims, whether for her son or herself (using the coin of AD 54 as evidence).

Good responses covered the issue of aims linked to sources, tending to focus on the idea of a smooth transition as the main aim. They displayed a range of knowledge of the sources, often detailed, with accurate quotes. This was used to support the judgements and explanations in those which performed well. Good evaluation of specific examples produced well-developed judgements.

Some responses treated sources as fact rather than as support for an explanation. For example, using Tacitus/Suetonius on Livia and/or Agrippina to narrate events. There was much less of the context and how that impacts on the conclusion from them. Three or four lines of general 'evaluation' often followed with no explanation as to how the background of the author impacted on the information from the source.

Some responses showed how important it is to integrate the evaluation into the analysis as support. Naming a source before a stretch of narrative, without any detail of what they say or what the relevance is, does not add a great deal to the quality of the response.

Some responses seemed at times confused. Where this confusion was continued with a discussion which could have applied to the individual, it lessened the effectiveness of the response. For example, Agrippina and Messalina were interchangeable at times; Gaius seemed to be Claudius in places, and Nero, Gaius. A perfectly relevant reference to evidence might be affected by a mis-attribution leading to a wrong conclusion; it may be a misunderstanding of the context, again leading to an unconvincing analysis. This was true of Tacitus and Suetonius throughout.

### Misconception



Suetonius was often termed a 'senator'. He was said to have a bias against emperors in support of the senate. He was, in fact, an equestrian.

It was stated that Tiberius made no effort over succession to Gaius; in reality he did make a will (Tacitus) naming Gaius and Gemellus as heirs; the will was overturned by the Senate (Suetonius).

In a few responses, 'succession' was understood to be 'accession' or even 'success'.



## Exemplar 1

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>The sources tell us of Claudius' wives plans to control the succession throughout this period. Tacitus tells us that his third wife Messalina tried to replace Claudius with her lover Silius. Suetonius talks of her schemes too. This evidence clearly helps us understand and see the aims of Messalina here, which are to replace someone else on the throne and have more control over succession.</p> <p>Josephus tells us that Claudius next wife Agrippina was afraid of <del>the</del> the empire going to Claudius' son Britannicus instead of her own son Nero. Josephus and Suetonius blame her for having a hand in Claudius' death to control the succession and have Nero on the throne.</p> <p>The evidence the sources provide are, in my opinion, very clear in informing us of both Messalina and Agrippina's aims in controlling and influencing succession. Tacitus was a senator with experience under harsh domination so may be bias but isn't in this case. Suetonius talks about Messalina's character due to <del>her</del> his fascination with characters as he's a biographer.</p> |
|--|---|

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  | His work is backed by Tacitus here, so probably reliable. Josephus is from a Jewish background, so most afar from the <del>other sources</del> Roman world out of the sources. However he could be more biased than obvious as he was a freedman and friends with one of the emperors, Vespasian, son Titus. |
|--|--|--|

The response is describing the efforts of the two wives of Claudius to control the succession. Messalina is considered first supported by Tacitus; extra support is provided by Suetonius. Neither of the sources are detailed, and do little more than establish the facts. A conclusion is drawn from these facts about her aims. The actions of Agrippina are underpinned by reference to Josephus and Suetonius. Again, they establish the facts of the situation and suggest her intentions. The candidate concludes that the sources do clearly indicate the aims of both these women. In general terms this is sound and to some extent developed from the evidence used. The discussion then continues with a general attempt to establish the reliability of the authors: Tacitus could be biased (bias) but apparently is not here – although no argument is offered – in any case Tacitus only told us what happened. With Suetonius we are not told what he says of Messalina's character, but that he is fascinated with characters. It is claimed that Suetonius is supported by Tacitus, and, therefore, he is reliable (provided that Tacitus is reliable presumably). Josephus could be biased as a friend of Titus. It is clear that the extra evaluation segments are not integrated into the analysis and are not helping the overall argument. This is that the sources help us understand the aims. The sources do not precisely tell us what the aims were- they tell us what the women did. They are not put into the context of the authors' views on women, Claudius and the politics of the times but used as fact.

## Question 2\*

2\* To what extent were the emperors of this period successful in their military and political aims in the provinces?

You must use and analyse the ancient sources you have studied as well as your own knowledge to support your answer. [30]

Very good responses recognised that this was a question concerned with the actions and aims of emperors in the provinces not in Rome. Some of the political aims could relate to the effect actions had in Rome on the reputation of the emperors. The focus of the response needed to be on the achievements of emperors in the Empire and their success or failure.

Very good responses deployed examples from across the Empire and the time period – i.e. Tacfarinas, Britain, Armenia and the Rhine and Danube frontiers. The Nero period tended to be overlooked – but some good responses talked about Vindex.

Responses mostly discussed Augustus' victory at Actium and the acquisition of Egypt; some continued with the various activities in Gaul and Spain; they referenced the triple triumph; not all could say what it was for. Better responses added the Varus disaster; some included the events in Pannonia and Germany (with Tiberius as general). Some used the coin of Tiberius and Drusus and their successes. Sources were mainly on Actium; better responses referenced the *Res Gestae* (which has a range of information). Some mentioned the return of the Parthian Standards.

Apart from Claudius and the invasion of Britain, there was some information and evidence on the other emperors in the responses. Most knew of the mutinies in AD 14 and Germanicus' adventures in Germany (although not in any detail). Some were able to extend this with other activities, for example the Sacrovir revolt, The Frisii; Tacfarinas had more coverage. Tiberius had been a successful general himself (according to Velleius). Some stated that he took no interest in the provinces accepting Suetonius *Tib.* 41 as truth.

Gaius' expedition to Gaul and Germania, with the failed attempt at Britain received some coverage; this was sometimes marred by reference to the sources as Tacitus. Nero also was said not to be interested; some did in fact deal with the events under Corbulo in Armenia and his promotion of Tiridates. Better responses mentioned Boudicca and, of course, Vindex. Nero's interest in Greece was also sometimes developed. Claudius was covered in detail, although again Tacitus, rather than Cassius Dio, was used as the source. Good use was made of the efforts to promote his success, by reference to coins, and the Arch and achieve some political ends.

The responses varied on 'aims' and success. The better responses identified a range of aims from expansion, securing the frontiers, control of provincials and the army, rationalisation of defence, promoting the emperor, resources and the spread of the Imperial Cult and Romanisation in general. Many focused on the latter. Some unfortunately concentrated all their effort on what happened in Rome rather than the provinces. Good use was made of the Gytheion inscription, Claudius' letter to Alexandrians, the altar at Narbonne and so on. Augustus' restraint was contrasted with Gaius' aggressive promotion by using the evidence in Dio and Suetonius.

Most were able to use the closing (not opening) of the doors of Janus, suggesting peace was an aim, along with his claims in the *Res Gestae*. The settlements of 27 and 23 were well-used to suggest Augustus's aim was control. Candidates used the Cyrene edicts to good effect. They also referred to the banning of senators from Egypt as a good indication of his aims. Some candidates assessed Tiberius' aims. Most discussed Claudius' aim of promoting his military credentials and some developed his efforts to include Gauls in the senate, as well as his view of worship in Alexandria.

Good responses very carefully selected a range of examples and organised the analysis well around these rather than trying to cover all period in a narrative. Those focused on the aims and arguing for success or failure produced the better responses. These had a clear explanation, well-supported and reasoned well.

### Misconception



Tacitus as source for Gaius; this section of the *Annals* is lost.

Tiberius was uninterested in the provinces or government in general. There are a number of examples of his involvement in Rome and in the Empire; for example, we are told by Dio that he did not want excessive taxes in the provinces.

Plutarch's *Life of Augustus* no longer exists. Extant still are his *lives of Galba and Otho*.

## Exemplar 2

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | Success, Plutarch writes about how Claudius succeeded       |
|  | where Julius Caesar failed in conquering Britannia, winning |
|  | him considerable favour amongst the Roman citizens.         |
|  | However Plutarch writes mostly biographies and sometimes    |
|  | romanticises / glorifies certain aspects of his writing     |
|  | for his readers, making him not completely reliable.        |
|  | Now that Claudius had a great military victory              |
|  | to his name, it gave him the freedom to pass                |
|  | more laws through the senate, such as granting              |
|  | former slaves Roman citizenship and then awarding           |
|  | them with positions in the Roman treasury and other         |
|  | higher offices. This is something he likely couldn't        |
|  | do without his triumph in Britain.                          |

The paragraph begins with a reference to Plutarch commenting on Claudius' invasion of Britain; while Plutarch describes Caesar's invasion he makes no reference to Claudius. It could be Suetonius which is meant. There follows a general evaluation of Plutarch. In itself, it has little value since it does not relate to the specific information- the candidate seems to be claiming that Plutarch is romanticising Claudius' invasion and is unreliable. It is unclear if the invasion is unreliable or his success. The lack of value is compounded by the fact the evidence is mis-attributed. The passage continues to argue that the victory gave Claudius powers he did not have before, presumably as a political gain or aim. This is unclear. Apart from the damage done by not being accurate on the source and not making the evaluation relevant, the claim is questionable. It is a good example of the problems arising from this error.

### Question 3

3 Read the interpretation below.

How convincing do you find Goodman's interpretation that, for the inhabitants of Imperial Rome, 'it had become a civilised place in which to live'?

You must use your knowledge of the historical period and the ancient sources you have studied to analyse and evaluate Goodman's interpretation. **[20]**

The interpretation gave candidates a selection of issues and points to examine. It was important that candidates dealt with what Goodman said rather than what he did not say. Responses which dealt with what he actually wrote and assessed the points with close attention to the text were clearly going to score well. Good responses supported their views with precise knowledge of the context and details of this debate.

Candidates who recognised that Goodman described a 'peaceful society' and a 'pleasanter place to live' as well as 'civilised' as in the question developed their discussion on what he meant. Good responses were able to assess the extent to which he had made a case for Rome being a civilised place by placing it in a wider context.

Most responses were very thorough in their treatment of the extract with very few discussing it as a whole without reference to any specific part. Some responses treated this as an essay on the benefits of the emperors to the Romans or improving the lives of the people of Rome.

Good responses supported their views with reference to specific knowledge of the areas covered by Goodman. These supported their view of how far they found it convincing.

It was important to set out the positives as well as the negatives. Some focused mainly on the negatives which suggested he was incorrect in his statement. As a result, the discussion pointed out that his view took no account of such events as Nero's Fire in AD 64 or Gaius' cruelty or Tiberius' trials. These responses did not mention that many positive events were happening in period 31 BC to AD 68; also, that these were far more common than the negative ones which the responses focused on. These responses, therefore, tended to be unbalanced analyses; while making valid points, the argument was one-sided

Successful responses looked at his points and examined the case with supporting material. Most referenced Augustus' buildings and his 'brick/marble' quote; better ones named the buildings and how they applied specifically to religion, water or entertainment. Claudius' projects were also well-used to support the idea of fresh water and entertainment. Better ones could name a bath built by Agrippa or Nero; good ones identified the provision of food by use of Augustus' arrangements or Claudius' port at Ostia. There was excellent detail on Claudius' arrangements by some candidates. Peace was supported by the closing of the doors of Janus or the work of the vigils.

In reference to religious reforms, this was taken to mean the Imperial Cult, although not exclusively given Augustus' promotional of 'traditional religion'. However, the reference to the Cult led some to develop a discussion in the Empire which was not relevant. Much time was also spent on Gaius in this respect who was credited with upsetting the peaceful society as a result. Good responses used the evidence of the worship of Augustus' genius (with Ovid in support) and the deification of some emperors, as well as the rejection of it by Tiberius and Claudius. Good responses noted that Augustus wished to downplay this aspect for political reasons and support traditional religion instead (coin of four priesthoods). Many responses, again, focused on the point that whatever the reforms, the acceptance of them led to a more peaceful society than under the Republic.

Good responses noted the less positive side of life in Rome with a balanced discussion. Few accepted without question the claim that Nero set fire to Rome and many noted his new regulations. Most recognised the disruption of Gaius' reign was solved by Claudius' prompt actions. Some took up the reference to a 'modicum of wealth' to note that the majority still had a hard life.

In general, the responses displayed a good set of skills and careful analysis of the passage.

### Misconception



The claim by Augustus that he found Rome built of bricks; I leave it clothed it in marble is found in Suetonius *Aug.* 28; it is not in the *Res Gestae*. It is also in Cassius Dio 56.30.

## Section B overview

Both Question 5 and Question 6 were answered, neither being more popular than the other. Question 5 dealt with a specific source, whereas Question 6 focused more on an aspect of the period as a whole. However, Question 6 did have a specific focus (the organisation of the Roman army) and in essence covered the whole period. Some candidates did not keep to the terms of the question in both cases. Question 5 asked the candidates to deal with an assessment of the text Tacitus' *Agricola*, as a reliable account of the governorship of Agricola. Most candidates responded to the text well. Some tried to cover the whole account rather than the governorship. Question 6 asked candidates to assess the contribution of the organisation of the army when dealing with the challenges to the Romans. Responses displayed a good knowledge of the army structure and deployment. Most selected examples for both aspects; some had general instances rather than specific examples. Question 4 also required candidates to assess the usefulness of an extract and draw some conclusions from them on its usefulness. They had to relate it within a specific event. These are very important skills for this specification. Candidates mostly displayed a good level of ability in these areas. Most candidates had a secure knowledge of the content of the Depth Study and the prescribed sources, some to a very high level indeed.



## Question 4

### SECTION B: Ruling Roman Britain, AD 43–c.128

4 Read the passage below.

How useful is this passage for our understanding of the reasons for the Boudiccan Revolt? [12]

The passage the candidates were given for assessment was taken from Cassius Dio, specifically from the speech of Boudicca before the revolt and attack on the cities. There are a number of elements in the speech which candidates could discuss and assess the usefulness of the passage. An important factor was that it is a speech by Boudicca and its context. The passages references various points which the candidates could identify as reasons for the revolt. These they could support with knowledge of the events, as told by Cassius Dio and Tacitus.

Most responses highlighted the shameful treatment. They supported this with reference to the whipping and raping incident in Tacitus. Some referred to it as either in Dio or in Suetonius. Some mentioned the evidence at the Stonea Camp in connection with Scapula's removal of arms in AD 49. This was also used to support Boudicca's claim that they were deprived of their most important possessions. Some displayed a very good knowledge, in adding the loss of Boudicca's inheritance, the robbing of the Iceni and the land taken from the Trinovantes. Most noted the tax issue; some supported it in some way, mainly referencing Dio's information on Catus' demands or Seneca's recall of loans. The amount varied, as did the denomination. Some knew what tax was meant. The issue of slavery and freedom produced some general descriptions of Roman cruelty or mis-treatment, cited in the *Agricola* also. This text was not commonly used to compare with the extract, despite similarities. Most compared the extract with Tacitus' speech in the *Annals*, when they did make specific references. The mention of promises was often taken to mean the Client Kingdom status, and how the Romans had reneged, especially in the case of Prasutagus.

Overall candidates displayed knowledge and understanding of the text; they supported their interpretations by sometimes very accurate knowledge. Most assessed Dio's account by indicating what was not mentioned, for example the mis-treatment of Boudicca and her daughters, or more details of the economics – Dio's own information on the loans. This approach led to the conclusion that it was partially useful since it did not tell the whole story. Good responses emphasised that it was a speech. In itself this meant it may have exaggerated the conditions. Furthermore it was not a reliable account of a speech by Dio for all the right reasons, and so less useful than it might have been had it been a genuine speech. Some suggested it was Dio's view of the reasons rather than Boudicca's. This then meant it was useful to a degree given Dio's experience and research, and understanding of what was most likely. Most responses were interesting to read with only a few talking the opportunity to discuss at length the terrible nature of Roman occupation.

## Question 5\*

5\* How reliable is Tacitus' account of Agricola's governorship in Britain?

You must use and analyse the ancient sources you have studied as well as your own knowledge to support your answer. **[36]**

There were some very good, even excellent responses to this question. They displayed a detailed knowledge of the text. They also had a very good grasp of the limited archaeological evidence for his governorship. Most responses had detail of some parts of the account. Some had more generalised descriptions of the eulogy or spent much time on Tacitus' relationship with Agricola.. This was a reason for either reliability- he would have first-hand information – or unreliability – too close to be objective. Candidates displayed a good range of views from totally unreliable to very reliable. Most opted for both at different points in the text.

Popular among the selection of points in the governorship was the Battle of Mons Graupius (various spellings). It was usually dated correctly as far as possible, and usually placed in Scotland. Also frequently cited was Section 21 on Romanisation. The initial campaign into Wales and Mona was another popular item. Selected by some were the night attack on the camp, the construction of forts, Agricola's use of the fleet and his recall to Rome – 'conquered and immediately let go' was closely assessed by some as a reliable or unreliable statement (although not in the *Agricola*).

Many responses displayed good knowledge of the detail of the Mons Graupius and Agricola's tactics and strategy. Some gave detailed accounts of the battle itself. The numbers of dead were usually accurately recorded. Some responses questioned the account partly because of the lack of evidence for the battle, although few went so far as to suggest Tacitus made the whole thing up. Some suggested it was unreliable as a great victory- only auxiliaries were used. Most accepted the account as coming from Agricola but felt it was too good to be true in entirety.

Many argued the same with Section 19 (checking abuses) and 21. Archaeological evidence was used to criticise Tacitus on the extension of Roman practices in education, housing, etc. Responses argued the Verulamium forum must have been begun by Frontinus, and Agricola only finished it by the date of the inscription. Many responses used the evidence of Tacitus' brief summaries of other governors to show that much had begun before he arrived. Tacitus was accused of denigrating their achievements (Turpilianus, Trebellius and Bolanus) to bolster Agricola. Some mistakenly said Tacitus called Cerialis 'lazy', which he does not. Some responses confused the order of the various governors.

Responses invariably cited the Chester lead water pipe as a sign of his fort building. Many were accurate about its dating and placing, and showed again that the work was underway before Agricola arrived. Some were unsure as to where Chester is (in Scotland as proof of Inchtuthil). Some used the evidence of the dating of Carlisle to show forts were under construction during Cerialis' period. Good responses collected and organised their evidence around their sustained analysis and developed their judgements well.

The conquest of Wales and Mona received the same critical examination in a number of responses. Good responses used the evidence of previous governors (Suetonius, Frontinus) to show that Tacitus might have exaggerated the achievement. Responses were often very detailed about the retrenchment- popular were the nails of Inchtuthil as a sign of organised retreat. The night attack was argued to be a mistake, which Tacitus turns into a victory.

Overall the responses displayed a detailed knowledge of the text and an understanding of the context. Many recognised that it was both reliable and unreliable.

## Misconception



The statement that 'Britain was conquered and immediately abandoned' comes from Tacitus *Histories* 1.2 and is not in the *Agricola*.

The Chester pipe is for a fort not part of the construction of a town

Tacitus is not a source for the invasion in AD 43; this section of the *Annales* is lost.

## Question 6\*

- 6\* How important was the organisation of the Roman army in meeting the challenges posed by the Britons during this period?

You must use and analyse the ancient sources you have studied as well as your own knowledge to support your answer. [36]

The question asked the candidates to examine the way the army was organised and how that was reflected in meeting the challenges in Britain. The candidates were also asked to assess how important this was in terms of a range of challenges. Candidates could look at military challenges – the invasion in AD 43, the conquest of the south and Wales, the advance north and the Brigantes and Scotland. Alternatively, they could examine the challenges of consolidation – Romanisation, colonisation, infrastructure, administration – areas in which the army played a part, if not necessarily an important one.

Some responses explained the detail of how the army was organised- legions, auxiliaries, command structure, even training and types of weapons and tactics. Most were aware of the division into legions and auxiliaries; some had detail of specific legions at different points in the narrative and where they were stationed. Most detailed the legions at the time of the invasion. Most responses has some understanding of the deployment of the legions around Britain at various times. Some responses made little use of the detail of the organisation.

Military challenges included the invasion. The account in Cassius Dio was used well. Some thought Tacitus had a version, and sometimes the names were interchanged in describing the events. Most responses narrated the use of the auxiliaries in crossing the River Medway (or Thames sometimes). This was again mentioned when Agricola attacked Mona. Auxiliaries were also included at Mons Graupius. Occasionally the group was named. Responses sometimes included Suetonius and Vespasian's move south west in meeting challenges. Some responses narrated the gradual conquest- Scapula and Silures, Paulinus and Boudicca, some reference to Cerialis and Frontinus, finally detail of Mons Graupius. Evidence for these events was sometimes provided and often it was not much more than a named author.

Some responses offered quite good detail of the army's involvement in administration or infrastructure such as Hadrian's Wall. Good use was made of the inscriptions available to the candidates; tombstones often included good detail of the individual and his role, as well as where he was stationed. The movements of the legions were tracked in some responses. The existence of forts (for example, Chester, Carlisle) provided evidence of how the army was organised to maintain security. Colchester's colony of veterans was used as an example of the army involved in Romanisation (although responses did not make the point it was not successful). Some used the Vindolanda tablet concerning the numbers of troops and deployment to suggest how they were meeting various challenges, not all military.

Some responses argued that other factors met the challenges in some cases more effectively. Client Kingdoms such as the Iceni and Brigantes – and the 11 kings who surrendered according to the claim on the Arch of Claudius – helped make the invasion easier and allowed effective consolidation – at least until Boudicca.

Some noted rightly that the disorganisation of the army over the treatment of the Iceni under Catus created a challenge. Other responses commented that the veterans of Colchester were disorganised (according to Tacitus *Annals* 31-32) making things worse. Similarly, the problems Scapula had after Caratacus were due to lack of organisation.

Good responses had the detail of the way the army used its organisation to counter the problems. Some had a general idea about the army but lacked a secure knowledge of its organisation.

## Exemplar 3

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  | <p>Roman legionaries were highly trained <del>soldiers</del> and disciplined soldiers who the ancient sources tell us were better trained and equipped than the Celts who fought them. In particular the tactics used by the legionaries were significant in defeating the natives; for instance, in <i>Annals</i>, Tacitus says that <sup>despite being vastly outnumbered,</sup> the Romans were able to defeat the Celts at the Battle of Watling Street in 61 AD because the soldiers formed a wedge, allowing them to break through the British line and win an easy victory. While Dio's account of the battle in <i>Roman History</i> differs slightly, as he <del>compares the Roman army</del> says that in some places the <del>R</del> Romans were driven back by the Celts, and that the battlefield was more chaotic than Tacitus suggests, both sources agree that the superior training and discipline of the Roman army allowed them to defeat the Brits.</p> <p>Arguably the most valuable asset to the Roman army was the provincial auxiliary soldiers, whose ethnic diversity meant that they had a diverse range of skills, such as archery and cavalry. The importance of the auxiliaries in meeting the challenges posed by the Britons can be seen at the Battle of the Medway and against the Battle of the Thames in 43 AD, in which the Bavian auxiliaries swam across the rivers and surprised the</p> |
|--|--|--|

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  |  | Celts, who Tacitus says were not properly fortified or prepared for battle since they had assumed that the Romans would not be able to cross without a bridge. That the auxiliaries were used in the initial invasion suggests that they were seen as highly versatile and suitable to adapt to new environments, and is supported by tombstones dated between 43 and 47 AD in Lincoln, Chester, Wroxeter and Cirencester, which show that both auxiliaries and older, more experienced legionaries were used for the initial invasion and scouting of Britain. |
|--|--|---|

The paragraph begins by outlining the superiority of the Roman army to the Celts; the examples of Watling street battle supports the statement with a description of the tactics and skills of the army (wedge formation). The candidate uses both Tacitus and Dio in the discussion of the army's superior organisation. The analysis develops further with the auxiliaries and their contribution to the 'diverse range of skills'. Again, a specific example of the battles at the Rivers Medway and Thames is used to support the view. The presence of both legionaries and auxiliaries is attested by reference to tombstones in a variety of places. The only obvious error is to reference Tacitus for the invasion. The narrative is detailed and specific; the judgement of the superior organisation is substantiated and largely convincing based up the evidence. More might have been made of the tombstones regarding the importance of the carious divisions of the army. The candidate interprets the evidence very well in support of the analysis but lacks evaluation, given that neither author was present. Essentially the account is well-organised and focused on the issue.

---

# Supporting you

---

## Post-results services

If any of your students' results are not as expected, you may wish to consider one of our post-results services. For full information about the options available visit the [OCR website](#).

## Keep up-to-date

We send a weekly roundup to tell you about important updates. You can also sign up for your subject specific updates. If you haven't already, [sign up here](#).

## OCR Professional Development

Attend one of our popular CPD courses to hear directly from a senior assessor or drop in to a Q&A session. Most of our courses are delivered live via an online platform, so you can attend from any location.

Please find details for all our courses on the relevant subject page on our [website](#) or visit [OCR professional development](#).

## Signed up for ExamBuilder?

**ExamBuilder** is the question builder platform for a range of our GCSE, A Level, Cambridge Nationals and Cambridge Technicals qualifications. [Find out more](#).

ExamBuilder is **free for all OCR centres** with an Interchange account and gives you unlimited users per centre. We need an [Interchange](#) username to validate the identity of your centre's first user account for ExamBuilder.

If you do not have an Interchange account please contact your centre administrator (usually the Exams Officer) to request a username, or nominate an existing Interchange user in your department.

## Active Results

Review students' exam performance with our free online results analysis tool. It is available for all GCSEs, AS and A Levels and Cambridge Nationals.

It allows you to:

- review and run analysis reports on exam performance
- analyse results at question and/or topic level
- compare your centre with OCR national averages
- identify trends across the centre
- facilitate effective planning and delivery of courses
- identify areas of the curriculum where students excel or struggle
- help pinpoint strengths and weaknesses of students and teaching departments.

[Find out more](#).

## Need to get in touch?

If you ever have any questions about OCR qualifications or services (including administration, logistics and teaching) please feel free to get in touch with our customer support centre.

Call us on  
**01223 553998**

Alternatively, you can email us on  
**support@ocr.org.uk**

For more information visit

 **ocr.org.uk/qualifications/resource-finder**

 **ocr.org.uk**

 **/ocrexams**

 **/ocrexams**

 **/company/ocr**

 **/ocrexams**

## We really value your feedback

Click to send us an autogenerated email about this resource. Add comments if you want to. Let us know how we can improve this resource or what else you need. Your email address will not be used or shared for any marketing purposes.



**I like this**



**I dislike this**

Please note – web links are correct at date of publication but other websites may change over time. If you have any problems with a link you may want to navigate to that organisation's website for a direct search.



OCR is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge.

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored. © OCR 2022 Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England. Registered office The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8EA. Registered company number 3484466. OCR is an exempt charity.

OCR operates academic and vocational qualifications regulated by Ofqual, Qualifications Wales and CCEA as listed in their qualifications registers including A Levels, GCSEs, Cambridge Technicals and Cambridge Nationals.

OCR provides resources to help you deliver our qualifications. These resources do not represent any particular teaching method we expect you to use. We update our resources regularly and aim to make sure content is accurate but please check the OCR website so that you have the most up to date version. OCR cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions in these resources.

Though we make every effort to check our resources, there may be contradictions between published support and the specification, so it is important that you always use information in the latest specification. We indicate any specification changes within the document itself, change the version number and provide a summary of the changes. If you do notice a discrepancy between the specification and a resource, please [contact us](#).

You can copy and distribute this resource freely if you keep the OCR logo and this small print intact and you acknowledge OCR as the originator of the resource.

OCR acknowledges the use of the following content: N/A

Whether you already offer OCR qualifications, are new to OCR or are thinking about switching, you can request more information using our [Expression of Interest form](#).

Please [get in touch](#) if you want to discuss the accessibility of resources we offer to support you in delivering our qualifications.