

AS LEVEL

Examiners' report

ANCIENT HISTORY

H007

For first teaching in 2017

H007/02 Summer 2022 series

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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. A selection of candidate answers is 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

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Paper 2 series overview

Examiners commented on the high number of scripts which engaged very well with the four questions. Answering Question 1, many candidates did not seem able to recall anything from the Res Gestae and there were many examples of candidates making up things which were clearly not in the Res Gestae. The role of Sejanus was better understood and the passage from Dio was mined well.

There were a number of responses to the essay questions which did not make use of supporting evidence from the sources and so lost 50% of the marks available. Examiners do not expect AS students to know verbatim references to sources but there has to be discernible support from the evidence which is detailed enough to be identifiable in order to gain marks in the highest levels.

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"> • had a secure knowledge of the period studied • had precise and clear grasp of the chronology • selected sources focused on the specific terms of the question • prioritised the explanation in response to the terms of the question, using evidence and knowledge in support • demonstrated evaluation is focused on the reliability of the specific point being made. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attributed an event incorrectly to a person/group • did not focus on the main issue of the question but offered a generalised account of the period • provided a narrative of events, not an analysis • offered generic evaluation.

Section A overview

Question 1 requires no extra support from sources; a simple factual response to the issue which then goes on to make convincing judgements is all that is required. The central issues are wide enough for all candidates to score highly even by approaching the question in different ways. Question 2 asks the candidates to extract relevant support from the passage(s) cited and to use supporting evidence from other relevant sources to address the question posed.

Question 1

1 How important to Augustus is the idea of tradition in the Res Gestae?

[10]

This question produced the least successful responses across the paper. Many candidates relied on unsubstantiated assertion or simply made claims about the Res Gestae which were not true. The better responses examined Augustus as a traditionalist in terms of his religious policies and his relationship with the Senate and the political traditions. There were some good discussions about tropes such as ancestral observation and the importance of peace.

Exemplar 1

1	<p>Augustus placed great importance on tradition in the Res Gestae. Augustus placed importance on temple traditions and people being religious. He showed this by building 82 temples across the Roman territory, this was to help people please the gods, one thing that Augustus saw as a virtual tradition.</p>
	<p>Augustus also placed great importance in the fact that he saw as traditional women's values. He had a strict policy against women who committed adultery. This was to keep the men in Roman society more powerful than their wives and other women around them. This was one of the main traditions Augustus wanted to uphold.</p>
	<p>As well as this Augustus also upheld the tradition of keeping Rome a good and well-respected city to live in. He placed great importance in keep returning Rome to its more traditional values. One way he did this was through the upkeep and betterment of the city. This included more investment and making the city look better. One</p>

	historian wrote he inhabited a Rome of stone and left with a Rome of marble. This made the life around the city much better and moved the citizens' minds to more traditional and a moral way of thinking.
	Augustus also placed traditional values on making the Senate smaller. Augustus brought the membership of the Senate to from 1000 to 600. He did this because he thought the power should be shared by less people which can be seen was a traditional view.

Exemplar 1 is a typical response to Question 1. Some reasonable points were made on religion and the Senate but these were significantly underdeveloped and the idea of tradition lost. The claims made about women and the marriage laws seem to be an attempt to engage with the idea that a restoration of morality is traditional but this is not underpinned in the Res Gestae. On the whole there is some attempt to engage with the question but the analysis is basic and the support from the Res Gestae scant.

Assessment for learning



The Res Gestae is a unique source. Centres should look to study it as a complete document and encourage candidates to consider its purpose and what it says about the official view of the Principate at its terminal point. Candidates could think about the themes of political change, ancestral tradition, transformation of the city of Rome and relationships with the aristocracy, armies and the plebs.

It is a document to become immersed in. Almost any question on 31BC-AD14 will require some knowledge of the Res Gestae and so it should be a central part of the delivery of the Augustan years.

Question 2

2 Read the following passage.

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On the basis of this passage and other sources you have studied, how far was the ambition of Sejanus a serious threat to the state? **[20]**

The vast majority of candidates were able to mine the passage well for specific examples of the threat of Sejanus. Some responses focused only on the passage despite the clear call to action in the question to use other sources.

The most commonly used 'other sources' were other parts of Dio, the panegyric from Velleius and the extensive coverage of the rise of Sejanus in Tacitus.

On the whole, good responses were produced, with the more successful ones evaluating the claims in Dio and Tacitus well to conclude that the threat was exaggerated with hindsight. Sejanus only received one consulship (in the year he was deposed) and his request for marriage to Livilla was denied.

Evaluation was better than in its Greek 20-marker counterpart with some very pertinent points made about the motivation of Tacitus and Velleius to exaggerate threat and benevolence respectively.

Section B overview

Most responses to the essay questions reached sensible conclusions derived from the ancient evidence. To repeat the advice from last year: evaluation of the sources must be specific to the point being made. There was still far too much generic evaluation added on at the end of an essay, which, could be given very little credit.

Question 3*

3* How far did the credibility of the Julio-Claudian emperors depend on their military successes?

You must use and analyse the ancient sources you have studied as well as supporting your answer with your own knowledge.

[30]

This was answered very well. It is a question which is central to the understanding of the Principate but probably one that candidates had not anticipated. Candidates worked out that the military persona of the emperor is central to his claim to rule. Responses focused on Augustus' victory at Actium and its far reaching consequences in establishing the Principate. There was lots of good supporting evidence from the Augustan poets, numismatic evidence, and the Res Gestae to show how important the military achievements of Augustus were to consolidating his position. Tiberius' response to the revolts in Pannonia and Germany were often mentioned with varying degrees of success as well as Caligula's 'sea-shell' invasion of Britain. Candidates seemed to know about the Claudian invasion of Britain with good detail (although the accounts of Dio were often misattributed as Tacitus) but some missed the obvious idea that his invasion was more political than necessary. Nero was often omitted and so the opportunity for a good counter-argument was missed. The evidence shows that Nero neglected the military in favour of entertainment and private enterprise.

The more successful responses drew the themes together in a convincing conclusion about the need for any emperor to be portrayed as a military leader even if he has to exaggerate his achievement.

Exemplar 2

		Augustus continues to build his ^{of} military credibility through a series of so conquests throughout his reign. In the Res Gestae he wrote that
		he conquered Egypt, and ^{brought peace to} Gaul, Spain and Germany, and conquered ^{conquered} parts of Ethiopia and Arabia. this This showed people that he expanded the empire all across its frontiers. However, Augustus also used the achievements of others to build his own military credibility. An aureus shows Tiberius and Drusus handing Augustus triumphal branches. This is propaganda that Augustus was responsible for all military achievement in his reign, and shows us that the reality of the emperor's military success is less important than propaganda in developing military credibility.

Exemplar 2 is a good paragraph which scores highly in all three assessment objectives. There is clear engagement with the question and the Res Gestae is used well. The point is sustained with support from a coin with the proposition in the question revisited at the end of the paragraph to unite the evidence and the argument to make the convincing point.

Question 4*

- 4* How successful were the emperors of this period in dealing with the problems facing the city of Rome?

You must use and analyse the ancient sources you have studied as well as supporting your answer with your own knowledge.

[30]

This was a question which is central to the specification and the level of engagement was lower than expected. Many candidates interpreted 'problems' and even 'city of Rome' liberally. More successful responses focused on the administrative improvements brought about by Augustus and Claudius. The most successful responses dealt with 'how successful' and critiqued the evidence to conclude what degree of success each attempt had. Water, fire, food, entertainment, law and order were dealt with well and there was some good discussion on peace and stability. The more successful responses drew a distinction between the rich and poor, and how the poor are unrepresented in the sources.

Evaluation was very generic compared to that used in Question 3.

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