

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y113/01 Summer 2024 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.

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Paper Y113/01 series overview

Y113 is one of 13 units in Paper 1 for the A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests an extended period of History of about fifty years through an Enquiries or source-based question and a traditional essay question. The paper is divided into two sections. In Section A, candidates have to answer a compulsory source question based on four written primary sources. The question requires them to use all four sources to assess the validity of a view. In Section B, candidates are required to answer one essay 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. The judgement should be based on an evaluation of the reliability of the evidence given, not on the topic or contextual knowledge. To reach Level 6, a judgement should be made at the end of the analysis of each source, with an overall judgement in the conclusion.

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. To reach Level 6 candidates should also make an overall judgement as well as interim judgements when assessing each factor.

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

Section A overview

There is one compulsory question in this section. This question requires candidates to critically assess evidence and reach judgements. The critical evaluation of sources is the central theme in this section with all marks given against AO2.

The Enquiry section in Paper Y113 is focused on whether Churchill was best suited to be Prime Minister in 1940.

Question 1

Churchill 1930–1951

1 'Churchill was best suited to be Prime Minister in 1940.'

Use these **four** sources in their historical context to assess how far they support this view. [30]

This question elicited the full range of responses, with many strong answers. Most candidates were able to deal with the content of each source fairly well. Source A was seen to demonstrate the alternative viewpoint to the question, with many candidates able to discuss Churchill's proclivity for alcohol and show why Kennedy felt this was perhaps unsuitable. Provenance was less well-handled. "The Times" was seen as being from many different political viewpoints, with some suggesting it was a far-left publication. Better responses focused on Kennedy's position as a diplomatic editor and found fruitful evaluation there. Source B was seen as supporting the view with good contextual knowledge of Churchill's political and military experiences noted here. Provenance was also soundly dealt with by those who focused on his friendship with Churchill. Source C saw few issues. Most candidates felt Churchill was being fair-minded in showing that Halifax was preferred by Chamberlain and there was good knowledge of the dispute in the House of Commons over the Norway Campaign with candidates using the contextual knowledge to support their evaluation. Finally source D saw few problems, with candidates again using knowledge of the Norway debates to evaluate the context of the source but noted the provenance of a minister whose views were in line with Churchill's when evaluating its content.

Assessment for learning



Candidates should ensure that they are reaching a judgement about the sources using provenance in order to access Level 5 and Level 6 of the mark scheme.

Exemplar 1

		Source D supports the view that Churchill was best suited to be Prime Minister in 1940 to quite a large extent, by stating that the 'choice was obvious'. The source considers Chamberlain, Halifax and Churchill as the main candidates for its judgement and states that Chamberlain's failure in preventing Germany's invasion was a real ^{clear} mean ^{fact} that people were against him. This is a valid ^{This is a} valid ^{valid} due to the impact of 1940 events on Chamberlain's past ^{pre} support with events like the failed Norway Campaign in March ^{April} 1940 which resulted in Chamberlain being opposed by 40 MPs in a House of Commons debate. Source D's view that this left Halifax and Churchill and judgement that Churchill was more popular and successful in the eyes of the public shows that it highly supports the statement. This is quite a reliable ^{credible} judgement due to the rise in public agreement following the failure of appeasement policies which Chamberlain had been right about in his warning of Germany's
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development of a superior air power in 1934. Moreover, Churchill's attitude towards war and experience, having served in World War One and ⁴⁰time as a colonial secretary in the 1920s, meant that he gained more public support as a 'highly competent First Lord of the Admiralty'. The provenance of the source, however, somewhat limits the value of the view as it came from a former ~~Conservative~~ Conservative cabinet minister who resigned over Munich. Since Churchill opposed the 1938 Munich agreement it is likely that this member shared the same view and so ~~there~~ his political standing would have been the same. Since Halifax was in favour of appeasement, the choice for the cabinet member would certainly have been Churchill but may not have been representative of ~~the rest of the~~ others like the Queen who favoured Halifax. This makes the source somewhat unreliable due to ~~his~~ his ~~origi~~ political background being largely specific to Churchill's side.

Source B also supports the view but to a slightly smaller extent than D. Source B ~~suggests~~ similarly suggests that Chamberlain was not at all supported by any political party, which holds merit as he was opposed in parliament ~~with~~ and seen as an unfit war leader due to his commitment to appeasement.

Source B states that ~~Churchill was viewed~~ Halifax was also largely opposed, suggesting that Churchill was the only option left. ~~the~~ and the rising support of Churchill as the 'necessary and inevitable' PM shows that he was viewed as the most suitable candidate by the majority of people. While this viewpoint is strong in terms of its content, as Churchill was indeed ~~required to~~ needed to take on the role and supported as a brilliant orator, the provenance somewhat weakens its reliability. The origin of the source being from a member of a pro-Churchill group suggests there was some level of political affiliation and so the viewpoint is skewed in Churchill's favour. ~~The nature of it being a letter to Churchill~~ The nature of it being a letter to Churchill could suggest there is some vested interest in encouraging Churchill to take on the role and perhaps be more assertive in ~~persuading~~ challenging Chamberlain as a leader. This would have been beneficial for the member as Churchill in power would be favourable to their group and so the reliability of the source is somewhat diminished. Moreover, the ~~claim the~~ exaggeration of the 'consensus of opinion' about Churchill as the leader limits the source as a vast number of

		<p>Alternative officials opposed Churchill after his attack on the government during the 1930s. This suggests that the view is not entirely reliable.</p>
		<p>Source A, on the other hand, does not support the view that Churchill was best suited to be PM as it focuses on the view that Churchill should leave his political role instead. The content of the source indicates the Churchill was an alcoholic with characteristics unlike that of a suitable candidate and that his strained attitude was not fit for a political leader. This is evident in his style of leadership, with an impatient attitude causing him to become frustrated by delays, as evident later in his interaction with Auchinleck when he delayed the 1942 North Africa invasion. The source suggests that Churchill was not best suited in terms of his qualities but still acknowledges that he was a 'popular hero' and so some believed he was indeed suitable. The provenance of the source does in fact strengthen this claim and is reliable due to its origin being a journalist whose role is to be generally unbiased politically.</p>

With the audience of a journalist being the general public, the source is reliable in that it provides a viewpoint on Churchill's ^{likely} rather than the decision of who should be PM and so it is somewhat credible ~~that~~ as it focuses on Churchill's character. However, there are some limitations as the journalist ~~is~~ was unlikely to have had a first-hand account of Churchill's character and so his report could have largely been misled by misjudgement. Yet the focus on more objective facts like his calling of conferences after 1am suggests there is some value and so it is quite reliable.

~~Source A also~~ Source C also opposes the view that Churchill was best suited despite being from Churchill himself. The content suggests that the Labour party as well as Chamberlain were not in favour of his candidacy and that Halifax was instead best suited. This is indeed a valid judgement due to Labour party members largely opposing Churchill after his attacks on their allies, the Trade Unions, in the 1926 General Strike. This suggests that it views Churchill as not the

most suited but instead the last option after Halifax refused, which was certainly the case as the offer only went to Churchill after Halifax turned it down due to his belief that he would be an unfit PM at the time of war. The provenance somewhat strengthens the source as it was written about a meeting between the major political leaders at the time & was likely about the serious nature. Since it was written in Churchill's book the 'Gathering storm', then it may have been used to demonstrate Churchill's ability in a subtle Churchill's requirement to be PM when no one else could. Since it was written in 1948 & when Churchill was out of office it may have been used to show that even if others did not support him, the lack of rivals from other candidates made him a prime candidate. This somewhat limits the reliability as it could have therefore been used to manipulate the meeting in his favour.

Overall, the sources are split but the value of sources C & A are

		overall more than B and D. Sources A and C have fewer limitations to their viewpoints as the political affiliations and potential vested interest are less predominant than B and D which come from Churchill's supporters. Despite C having some limitations by being a potential political tool for Churchill's campaign for 1951, the value together with A is greater and so overall, the sources do oppose the view that do support the view that do oppose the statement.
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This candidate response demonstrated a high level of contextual evaluation as well as provenance and so reached the top of Level 5.

Section B overview

Candidates are required to answer one essay from a choice of two. Each question is taken from a different Key Topic and requires candidates to weigh up the importance of a range of factors or issues.

In Paper Y113, the candidates were asked to assess the impact of scandals on the Conservative governments of 1951-64 or to assess whether Heath's government was more successful in dealing with Trade Unions than the Labour governments of 1964-79.

Question 2*

Britain 1951–1997

2* Assess the impact of scandals on the Conservative governments of 1951–1964.

[20]

This was the slightly less popular of the two questions, although still answered by a significant number of candidates. Several approaches were seen with some candidates focusing on the impact of scandals alone, tackling the severity of each scandal and then generally taking an overall position that they had some or limited impact on the Conservatives across the whole period. Other candidates compared the impact of scandals with other factors and suggested that as many of these were at the end of their period in office there were other factors that were more significant in their defeat in 1964. The definition of scandal was seen to be broad with candidates given credit for using the Suez Crisis as a scandal, as well as the political machinations of the Night of the Long Knives rather than the more obvious social and political scandals of the 1960s. All approaches were seen as valid.

In focusing on the scandals, candidates had good knowledge of the Profumo scandal and the Suez crisis and could point out the damage caused by both. Stronger responses also had good knowledge of the Argyll case, Philby and the Vassall scandal. Those that compared scandals to other factors mostly believed economic problems were more significant. In focusing on the defeat of the Conservatives they also looked at the leadership change to Douglas-Home as well as the emergence of Wilson. The strongest responses made a judgement about the impact of each factor before making an overall judgement about the issue.

Question 3*

- 3* 'Heath's Conservative government was more successful in dealing with the Trade Unions than the Labour governments of 1964–1979.'

How far do you agree?

[20]

This was the more popular of the 2 essay questions and it elicited a wide range of responses. At the lower end of the scale some responses failed to consider trade unions and instead dealt with general economic policies and therefore failed to answer the question fully. Better responses tended to look at the 3 governments separately and focused on how each dealt with Trade Unions before arriving at a conclusion, although some strong answers also adopted a thematic approach. In arguing for the premise of the question the best responses noted Heath's attempts to negotiate with the unions and his support for apparent "lame-duck" industries, contrasting this with the failure of Wilson's "In place of strife" as well as the seamen's strike of 1966 and Callaghan's problems with the "winter of discontent". In contrast a number of good responses argued that the failure of the Industrial Relations Act, Heath's u-turns on support for industry and the imposition of the 3 day week during the miner's strike were all signs of failure and that in fact Labour's long term plans and the initial stages of the social contract were more successful.

Misconception



Some candidates argued that the Social Contract was a Conservative rather than Labour policy.

Exemplar 2

		Heath was more successful than the
		Labour governments in dealing with
		economic agreements between Trade
		Unions and the government. The 1971
		Industrial Relations Act was an attempt
		to challenge Trade Union power and a
		part of Heath's 1970 campaign promises,
		yet the failure of the Act in changing
		relations meant they were unsuccessful.
		However, the economic implications
		were not as unsuccessful compared to
		the Labour governments in which
		Wilson's 1975 Social and Contract
		caused the Trade Unions to directly
		challenge the regulation and
		demand wages exceeding the rate
		of inflation. The failure of the Labour
		government in handling the

Trade Unions and exacerbating the economic problems, with inflation reaching 33% and wages rises exceeding 40% in many industries suggests that Heath's dealing with Trade Unions was much more successful. In this instance, success could be measured in terms of limiting backlash and problems so it is arguable that Heath's act, which did not contribute to the inflation rate (which remained at 8%) was relatively more successful, though there were economic issues indirectly.

Similarly, the manner of dealing with the power of trade unions was more successful by the Conservatives under Heath due to their ~~better~~ smaller affiliation with the unions. Indeed, Labour's historic connection with Trade Unions meant that their policies were far less effective and unable to be enforced strongly. The attempted 1969 'In Place of Strife' policy was a massive failure in that it demonstrated Labour's ~~weakness~~ weakness in enforcing effective industrial relations policies, which ultimately resulted in the mass

opposition to Wilson in the 1970 election. Compared to this, Heath's attempt to deal with ~~initial~~ Trade Unions initially caused less issues ~~a~~ like political divisions and so they were more successful.

However, Heath's dealing with the strikes of the Trade Unions was largely unsuccessful compared to the Labour governments, ~~thereby~~ thereby making their dealing over all more unsuccessful. The 1972 miners' Strike with 280,000 supported demonstrates the magnitude that the strikers were able to reach under Heath's government, and the effect of this strike in increasing the miners' pay by 47% suggests that the response to strikes was also unsuccessful. Though the Labour government had considerable strikes, especially during the Winter of Discontent from 1978-79 where lorry drivers demanded a 30% pay rise, the scale of the strikes were much less. The Labour government did however experience a social

impact from these strikes, with rubbish piling up in streets due to the strikes of public employees, which could suggest that Heath was more successful. However, Heath's response to the 1973 miners' one-time ban causing the three-day working week demonstrates how chaotic the strikes became under Heath's control and the effect on the industry of Britain meant that ~~he~~ he was more unsuccessful.

Overall, Heath was more unsuccessful than the Labour governments as his handling of strikes meant that the impact was of a much greater magnitude than other strikes. While the Labour governments experienced more direct links with trade union to the deterioration of the economy, Heath's government was still affected by the strikes and economic issues. The success of Heath was only ever in having less failures which is not a highly convincing measure.

This exemplar shows a good Level 6 response which deals with the full range of issues, making both interim and concluding judgements on the issue in the question.

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