

**AS LEVEL**

**Examiners' report**

# **HISTORY A**

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**H105**

For first teaching in 2015

**Y137/01 Summer 2024 series**

# Contents

Introduction .....3

Paper Y137 series overview .....4

Section A overview .....5

    Question 1 .....5

    Question 2 .....8

Section B overview .....13

    Question 3 .....13

    Question 4 .....14

## 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 Y137 series overview

Y137 is one of four units for the AS Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests an extended period of history of about fifty years through an Enquiries or source-based option and an essay. The paper is divided into two sections.

In Section A, candidates have to answer two compulsory source questions based on three written primary sources. The first question requires them to use one source to assess its usefulness. The second question requires the use of all three 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 the evaluation of the reliability of the evidence given not on the topic or contextual knowledge.

To do well on Section B, candidates needed 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.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<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 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>discussed at least two issues in depth in answering the essay question</li> <li>gave supporting detail that was 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> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>did not consider both the provenance and use contextual knowledge to evaluate the sources</li> <li>wrote an unbalanced response 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 response 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 Enquiry section in this unit contains two questions that require candidates to critically assess evidence and reach judgements.

### Question 1

- 1 Use your knowledge of the social and economic problems in the period to assess how useful Source A is as evidence for the nature of the complaints against landlords. [10]

The question requires candidates to consider the provenance of the source and apply contextual knowledge in order to arrive at a judgement as to how useful the source is as evidence for the nature of the complaints against landlords. The judgement should be based on the provenance of the source. Candidates should explain the source in relation to the issue in the question – what is the view of the source about the nature of complaints – and not just write a general explanation of the source. Weaker responses focus on a more a general explanation, while others consider either the provenance of the source or do apply contextual knowledge.

Here, stronger responses pinpointed the issue of enclosure and were able to link this to the Hales Commission and the issue of enclosure in Kett's rebellion. Some responses also commented on the issue of the price rise. Where candidates found it harder was commenting on the provenance of the source and were unable to tie in the authors attitude to the ideas of the 'commonwealth men' and their views on greed. However, they were able to suggest that as a former Chaplain to Somerset he was likely to favour evangelical beliefs, but they did not see the writing as part of a pamphlet designed to try and influence opinion.

Exemplar 1 provides an example of a response where both good contextual knowledge and provenance were used, but does not reach a supported judgement about the utility of the source based on its provenance.

## Exemplar 1

1	Overall, I believe that source A is useful as evidence for the nature of complaints against landlords. It says: 'See how landlords... oppress the king's subjects by enclosing the common pasture and filling it with their sheep.' And 'Yet when was wool so expensive or mutton so great a price?' These quotes <del>show</del> state that the complaints against landlords were largely due to enclosure (specifically sheep enclosure) and <del>that</del> yet they sell wool and mutton for very high prices which is seen as greedy and puts people into poverty. This is useful, as I know that the Kett's rebellion, which is just a year after this complaint, was started due to John Flowerdew enclosing the Abbey land, and due to rising prices. I also know a large number of the gentry were also known to enclose common ground, which was valuable, for sheep farming which meant a lot of farmers couldn't make as much money and fell into poverty. This shows that the
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	source <del>is</del> <sup>is</sup> reliable as evidence for the nature of the complaints against landlords because it is a typical view at the time that enclosure & rising prices were making them unpopular. <del>However,</del> <del>the source is not reliable</del>
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1		However, <del>the source is written by someone who had been a</del> the source is written by someone who had been a chaplain to Somerset. This could <del>the</del> mean that they are <del>for</del> focusing on enclosure and price inflation as a cause for unrest because they want to shift the pressure onto the gentry rather than Somerset, who is in the middle of reforming the
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		Church, which was very unpopular because most people were still Catholic and the western rebellion would later prove people disliked the reform. (The Book of Common Prayer was made December 1548) as they rebelled over wanting more Catholic reformation. Also, during this time the treason act had been abolished so a lot of nobles were pressuring Somerset for more <del>the</del> radical reformation. Therefore, the purpose of this source is to deflect <del>some</del> issues <sup>landlord</sup> onto the gentry rather than Somerset, as he would be on his side <del>making this source slightly</del> . Although there is ulterior motives to the source, the insight into complaints against landlords is typical for the time and so it is still useful <del>valuable</del> evidence.
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### Assessment for learning



Candidates do need to focus on the actual issue in the question and not explain the source in general terms.

## Question 2

- 2 Using these three sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that price inflation was the main cause of unrest in 1549. **[20]**

The three sources offered different views as to the cause of inflation and most responses were able to identify these. Source A, written before the unrest, could be used to argue that both enclosure and price inflation were causes, Source B clearly suggests greed was a cause, and Source C again suggests enclosure and greed.

Exemplar 2 provides a good example of where both contextual knowledge and provenance were used to a good level, but no judgement based on the provenance of the sources was reached. Although the response does not consider the provenance of C, there was sufficient development on A and B for it to have little impact on the overall quality of the response.

Most responses were able to provide some contextual knowledge to support the sources, reference was made again to Hales and Kett's rebellion, but others were able to comment on the distribution of wealth within Norwich, the cries of 'Kill the Gentleman' in the Western rebellion, action taken against gentry and the pulling down of enclosures, while others were able to display knowledge of the scale of the price rise in the 1540s.

It was the provenance that proved to be the more demanding element, with very few seeing the link between all the writings and how this might explain the views. Some did note that they were all written by protestant clergy, but then did not develop this and link it to the ideas of the 'commonwealth writers', which would help to explain the views in the sources. There was some comment about the dates of Sources A and C, one before the unrest and one after.

## Exemplar 2

2	<p>Source A supports the view that price inflation was the main cause of unrest in 1549. It says: 'When was wood so expensive or mutton so great a price? If this goes on, the people will die of cold or starve to death.' This means that the high prices of food &amp; wood set by the landlords was making people get into poverty, which would eventually lead to rebellion if this happens too much, as the people will rise up. I know this is accurate, as Kett's rebellion a year later had demands which included to stop rising rent prices and also to stop the sabbon grounds enclosure, which stopped people passing sabbon (a valuable plant) and meant they earned less money and couldn't afford to keep up with inflation. However, this is written by someone who was chaplain to Somerset before 1549. This means that whilst it is clear rising prices were an issue before the summer of unrest in 1549, we cannot say using this source that it was the main cause of unrest because it hadn't happened yet. Also, he was a chaplain to Somerset, so he will omit things like religious change or being an</p>
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issue because he will want to be on Somerset's side, who is currently reforming the ~~the~~ church which greatly stirred unrest. The purpose of this source could be to divert attention to the issue of rising prices & enclosure to stop backlash on the change of religion to support Somerset. Overall, this source is largely typical & accurate as it is good evidence for price inflation being the main cause of unrest.

Source B disagrees that price inflation was the main cause of unrest. It says: 'Greed was the cause of rebellion... The people thought they had the right to things they desired, and the gentlemen wanted to keep what they had.' This source states that greed was the cause: the gentlemen didn't want to give up their enclosures as it benefited them, and the people thought they ~~to~~ all had the right to ~~the~~ the land, which was the case prior to enclosure ~~that~~. This is true ~~about the~~, as it is true the gentry didn't want to give up their enclosures: ~~as~~ Somerset tried to remove all enclosures after a certain year, ~~but~~ as he wanted to prevent unrest, however his legislation was stopped in parliament as most of them were gentry and would have lost out if they agreed to this. It actually made ~~the~~ <sup>on money</sup> Somerset fall out of favour with them, showing how strongly they felt about it. However, this may not be Labiner's true feelings. As it is a sermon just after the summer of unrest, he could be blaming both the common

people and gentry so he ~~can~~ can have a neutral stance and prevent any more unrest. He also doesn't mention religious as a cause for rebellion which was arguably the main reason, but this could be because he is a leading protestant, so he is likely preaching in the south/south-east of England, so would be less focused on the western rebellion (which was very south) and more focused on the Kett's rebellion which was south east. So while it has truth to it, it has some limitations, but is overall reliable evidence.

Source C also disagrees that price inflation was the cause of unrest in 1449. It says: 'If I should ask a poor man what is the cause of rebellion he will blame the great farmer, lawyer... Men who take our house and enclose the common.' This states that enclosure is the main cause of unrest from the poor man's perspective. This is true, as when 25 counties rebelled, a lot of these did start an enclosure riot. Also, Kett's rebellion started due to enclosure as John Flowerden had enclosed the local Abbey land, this ~~land~~ had a lot of support and 16,000 people joined, showing it was a typical view at the time that enclosure was to blame. It also says 'If I should ask these greedy men they will say the peasants... would destroy gentlemen.' This is also ~~pretty~~ true, as at Bocking the western rebel shouted 'Kill the

		<p>gentlemen.' Showing they did want to destroy the gentlemen. However, this source <del>is written</del> again omits the fact that the western rebellion was due to the lack of uniformity and working more Catholic practices rather than Protestants, and only speaks of the greed of the gentry. This could be explained by the fact he is a commonwealth writer, who are known for always blaming the gentry for issues, which is likely why the source is <del>so</del> sensitive in tone. Therefore it is beneficial to them to ignore the issue of religion because it means they can blame the gentry. <del>The purpose of this source is</del> Although it does ignore religion, it is largely correct in the viewpoint of both the gentry and poor, <del>in conclusion</del> so it is still useful evidence.</p>
		<p>Q In conclusion, source A does <del>not</del> support that price inflation was the main cause of unrest <del>in</del> in 1549, and B &amp; C do not in favour of the greed of the gentry and enclosure.</p>

### Assessment for learning



Candidates do need to consider the dates of the sources and how this might influence views.

## Section B overview

Two essays are set, each from a different key topic. Here the candidates are asked to analyse two aspects of Elizabethan government and its relative success. The questions set require candidates to analyse causes and consequences of major historical issues.

### Question 3

**3\*** How effectively did Elizabeth I and her governments deal with the problem of poverty? **[20]**

There were few responses to this question. When it was attempted, the knowledge deployed was limited and showed little detail of the Poor Laws or the issues that faced the government when dealing with poverty.

Responses could have placed the issue of poverty in the wider context of the issues of the Elizabethan period, although some did comment on demobilisation after wars and the problem that created. Candidates were not often aware of the different types of poverty and how these were dealt with and could not contrast these attempts with local initiatives.

#### Assessment for learning



Social and economic problems are part of the specification and candidates should be able to place the issue of poverty in the broader context of rising prices, population growth and the problems of the 1590s.

## Question 4

**4\*** 'Elizabeth I's reputation declined in the period after 1588.'

How far do you agree?

**[20]**

This was by far the more popular question. Exemplar 3 provides an example of well explained response with judgement which placed it in the highest level.

Weaker responses often included material from before the period, particularly religious issues or Mary Queen of Scots and it was difficult to credit this. However, most were able to write about issues such as victory over the Spanish, which did little to diminish her reputation, or the Golden Speech, which did much to restore it after the problem with monopolies. There was discussion about the impact of her age on her reputation and this was often linked to the question of faction, illustrated by the struggle between Essex and Cecil and the death of many of her trusted advisors.

Responses considered the issue of unrest and the extent to which that damaged her reputation and this led to mixed analysis, with some considering her crushing of both Essex and the Oxfordshire rising as showing that she was still a strong monarch, while others argued that the length of the Tyrone rebellion and Essex's behaviour suggested her reputation was in decline as she was challenged by men who she believed were her supporters. There was often comment about the social and financial issues and how this reflected on Elizabeth, while some did comment on the image of Gloriana and the cultural impact of her reign, which did little to damage her reputation.

## Exemplar 3

4	Overall, I disagree that Elizabeth's reputation declined after 1588.
	One <del>example</del> factor that shows Elizabeth's reputation was slightly damaged was the fact she had less respect from her younger courtiers in this time. Elizabeth was older and less attractive than she had once been - many younger courtiers mocked her wig which showed they felt less respect for her than her previous courtiers had. Also, in 1596 a law was put out which <del>meant</del> <sup>stated</sup> any offensive portraits of Elizabeth would be burned, suggesting that this had happened which threatened her image. She had to have a template for artists to use when drawing her. During this time, attendance at court had also <del>decreased</del> <sup>decreased</sup> and the aristocracy were unwilling to accompany her on her progress in 1600 suggesting she had less control over her <del>more</del> recent <del>courtiers</del> courtiers as this had once been seen as a privilege. However, <del>on</del> <sup>despite</sup> this, her reputation was <del>not</del> largely undamaged because people still celebrated Accession Day - the day she became queen - which showed that people still loved her, and she was represented well in plays and pageants*, so her image was mostly untainted so these issues were minor in regard to how much her reputation was affected. * which means the general public would see her positively

~~Elizabeth's~~ Elizabeth's reputation was also shown to be preserved was through her handling of the issue on monopolies. In 1597, parliament complained of her issuing monopolies (the right to a trade or item) on basic goods such as salt, to which Elizabeth said she would look into it, but continued issuing them. In 1601, it was brought up again but more aggressively - as people ~~was~~ were starting to fall into beggary. ~~So~~ There was a heated debate about ~~whether~~ if the MPs should send a bill to Elizabeth stopping monopolies - which was a very direct approach that could be seen as disrespectful and that her reputation was affected by this or ~~or~~ write a petition. As soon as Elizabeth heard of this, she stopped the most harmful monopolies immediately. ~~While~~ While this issue of monopolies ~~did~~ did likely harm her reputation as people blamed Elizabeth for ~~not~~ poverty, she was able to save it through the golden speech, which ~~is~~ was her final speech to parliament where she spoke of how grateful she was to her MPs. This ended her last parliament on a positive note, and made sure her reputation was favourable amongst parliament before her death, securing the idea that whilst monopolies damaged her reputation, her ~~to~~ better handling of the issue won her parliament over.

Another way Elizabeth ~~was shown to have~~ ~~was shown to have~~ showed her reputation was not declining was through the Essex ~~&~~ rebellion. ~~The Essex rebellion was originally a close cousin of~~

Essex rebelled because he had been stripped of his job as a consequence of ~~the~~ his failure in Ireland, and he felt his factional rivals in parliament were unfairly favoured, as Elizabeth had chosen Cecil's choice of Attorney General rather than his choice of Francis Bacon. Elizabeth had also let him get too much power - suggesting she was losing some control over her courtiers. He planned to seize the queen and control government, and he had some support in court as well as in London, which carried the privy council. However, Elizabeth handled this by sending his ally Lord Mountjoy to quell the Tyrone Rebellion in Ireland, which was Essex' biggest supporter and he also had a lot of influence - which meant getting rid of him lessened the impact on the rebellion. When Essex marched, he gained very little support. Although his rebellion can ~~be~~ show that her reputation was in decline as it showed her loss of control <sup>over courtiers</sup>, only 6 people were executed suggesting this was nothing more than a nuisance, and he was unable to make his rival's opponents, so he made for very weak opposition. Elizabeth's handling of the situation only strengthened her reputation as she was able to easily crush it showing her intellect and strength.

Overall, despite the fact that younger courtiers were less loyal to her than her previous ones, the backlash she got from her issuing monopolies, and her

loss of control over Essex, I believe Elizabeth's reputation was not declining after 1588 because she was able to effectively handle the issue of marriage with the golden speech, and she easily crushed the Essex rebellion, both of these events put her in a good position with regards to reputation. Also, her plays & pragmatic skill showed her in a good light so the general public would also see her in a good light. Therefore, her reputation was positive with both her parliament and her subjects.

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