

**GCSE (9-1)**

**Examiners' report**

# **HISTORY A (EXPLAINING THE MODERN WORLD)**

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**J410**

For first teaching in 2016

**J410/08 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.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

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## Paper 8 series overview

This paper examines the thematic study of Migration. It requires candidates to display their understanding of change and continuity across a sweep of British history, including a significant event. Knowledge is assessed through four questions asking for recall, causation, significance and analysis of an issue over two eras specified by the syllabus.

The examination focuses on Assessment Objectives 1 and 2, demonstrating knowledge and understanding as well as explaining and analysing historical events.

In order to perform well on the British thematic study, candidates needed to apply their knowledge and understanding to identify migrant groups and explain the impact of government, or king/queen, actions on migration as well as what life was like for the migrants themselves. Many candidates responded well to the challenges the paper presented and had a secure grasp of the chronology. Candidates' learning is examined through questions asking for recall, study of impact, significance, and analysis of an issue over two periods from the syllabus.

Candidates' responses spanned a wide range of ability, they demonstrated an understanding of the 'broad sweep' of this specification. Marks were given across the entire mark range for all four questions.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>showed a clear understanding of the command words and of the demands of the different question types</li><li>recalled specific information about the key groups and used that knowledge to demonstrate understanding of the concept in the questions</li><li>showed consideration in their selection of examples to answer the question most effectively.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>used the questions as prompts rather than focusing on the specific demands of the question</li><li>did not draw their examples from the period stated in the question</li><li>described what happened, 'told the story', rather than answering the question.</li></ul>

## Question 1

- 1 Describe **two** examples of migrant groups who came to England between 1500 and 1700. [4]

The rubric of the question was followed by the majority of candidates who gave two examples and supporting detail. Many candidates offered both a valid group as well as correct and sufficient detail to gain the extra mark. Popular examples included the Huguenots, Walloons, the Jewish migration under Oliver Cromwell, Gypsies, Lascars and Ayahs.

A small number of candidates gave the Huguenots and Walloons together and combined the supporting detail of them both escaping Catholic persecution and so limiting themselves to 3 marks.

Some candidates confused the Huguenots and Walloons saying the Huguenots were escaping the Spanish and the Walloons escaping the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre or Louis XIV. This meant they did not gain the marks for development. Some candidates limited the number of marks they could obtain by giving examples out of the time period such as the Flemish, Lombardy Bankers and the Palatines.

## Question 2

- 2 Explain the impact of government action on migration to Britain between 1900 and 2010. [8]

Successful candidates showed understanding of the second order concept being assessed. They were able to explain the consequence of government action on migration, the impact, even if it was just a brief comment about increasing or decreasing migration to Britain. Some candidates offered impacts that showed more developed understanding such as encouraging chain migration or how saving children made Britain look more welcoming.

Candidates gave good examples such as the Alien Act of 1905, the British Nationality Act of 1948 and the three Immigration Acts from 1962 to 1971. While naming the Act was important, it was more important to give the detail that led to the impact. This is how candidates were able to use their knowledge most successfully. **Exemplar 1** shows how this was done effectively and is representative of how many candidates responded.

Some candidates focused their answer on life in Britain meaning they did not show understanding of the demands of the question, such as examples of racist behaviour. It was accepted this could have had an impact on migration and was credited at Level 2 but if candidates did not take the extra step to tailor their knowledge to the question they could not progress further. A small number of candidates were successful in their use of the Race Relations Acts to explain how it made Britain look like a fairer and more welcoming country and had the impact of increasing migration.

A number of responses showed misunderstanding around the EU. For example, some candidates explained the effect of the Schengen Area or how the government had operated an 'open door policy' in 2004 without understanding what that actually meant, writing about accepting anyone and everyone into the country without passports.

## Exemplar 1

2		<p>The impact of government actions on migration to England Britain between 1900 and 2010 <del>changed</del> visibly changed. This was due to the new Alien Act that was put in place officially in 1905. This act meant that only desirable migrants would be allowed to live in Britain. So, <del>in migrants who</del> those who had criminal records, wouldn't be able to afford living here or didn't have a stable job or plan for the future weren't legally allowed to come to Britain. This impacted the levels of migration as Britain was no longer explicitly a country that would welcome everyone. <del>no</del> immigration decreased while emigration increased. Therefore the Alien Act 1905 had a major impact on migration to Britain during 1900 and 2010.</p>
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## Assessment for learning



Ask candidates to consider the demands of the question in terms of historical concepts; this question examines cause and consequence.

Candidates also need to consider what the consequence is focused on; how migration to Britain was affected, therefore what affected someone's ability to arrive in Britain.

## Question 3

3 How significant was Jewish migration to England in the Middle Ages?

[14]

This question asks candidates to structure a response around significance, more specifically how a change brought about by migration was significant to the history of Britain.

Many candidates showed knowledge of how Jewish migration caused change by introducing a group of people who could lend money for profit because it was banned by Christianity. Some outlined what the money was used for. Another way candidates successfully showed change, achieving Level 3, was showing the growth of antisemitism and how attitudes to the Jewish population changed to the point where they were expelled in 1290.

Some candidates successfully developed this explanation of change into an explanation of widespread or long-lasting significance by explaining how the Blood Libel myth spread across Europe or how antisemitic attitudes could be traced through to the modern day.

**Exemplar 2** gives an example of how this was done and is representative of how a number of candidates responded.

It was harder to demonstrate that Jewish migration had no significance. Those who tried, usually referenced the coming of the Lombardy Bankers but tended to underline the importance of the Jews. This was because they showed how important the Jews were, as they needed to be replaced before they could be expelled.

Some candidates 'told the story' of the Jewish migration and accessed Level 2 because they were implicitly tracing changing attitudes but did not explicitly show they understood how events represented change.

Candidates should also be aware that this is not a question about relative significance so answering that other groups were more significant is not answering the question.

## Exemplar 2

		Jewish migration to England was significant
		in the middle ages socially throughout
		England's society. Some English people
		resented Jews because of their
		wealth and status with money lending,
		this hate was significant to England
		because the feeling led to an accusation
		of the blood libel which changed <del>opinions</del>
		opinions of Jews in England. The blood
		<del>libel</del> libel was an accusation that
		Jewish people used the blood of
		Christians, mainly children, in religious
		<del>rituals</del> rituals and this accusation led

		to a wide feeling of shared hate in
		England and caused Jews to be expelled
		in 1290. This social change was
		significant for England as it lasted
		long <del>term</del> term at the time and Jews
		were banned from England <del>until</del> until
		1656.

### Assessment for learning



Ask candidates to consider the demands of the question in terms of historical concepts; this question examines change and continuity.

It is important that candidates focus on change, or lack of change, and then develop their point into why it was significant.

### Question 4\*

4\* 'Between 1500 and 2010, migrants faced problems settling into life in Britain.'

How far do you agree?

[24]

Question 4 requires candidates to consider a statement across two of the three study periods and offer explained examples of how the statement could be both supported and challenged.

Successful candidates understood that they needed to evidence what settling or not settling looked like, they tailored their knowledge to answer the question. **Exemplar 3** shows a candidate who used their knowledge to explain how their reception from the start made it difficult to settle, how the antagonism manifested and how the result made it difficult to settle in Britain.

Candidates who tailored their knowledge to answer the question were unlikely to use examples of individuals who had problems, such as Stephen Lawrence or Kelso Cochrane, without making sure they related their experience to a wider migrant group, to explain their experience was not an isolated incident and how it was an example of migrants having problems.

Some candidates wrote out their knowledge without showing how that would demonstrate the migrant groups' problems or lack of problems in settling. For example, writing about the economic effects of the Huguenot migration was insufficient to explain the answer to the question. However, candidates who explained that this economic success could only be achieved by a migrant group who had settled well because people worked for them or bought goods from them were using their knowledge to explain their answer.



Some candidates wrote a description of life in Britain for a migrant group that included examples that could be used to demonstrate both problems or lack of problems but did not construct an argument.

Some candidates successfully wrote 'clinching arguments' considering the examples they had given and used commonality from the groups from either side of the argument to draw a conclusion. Most frequently candidates decided a perceived economic benefit was key to not suffering problems in settling. Most often those were the candidates who showed evidence of planning.

The majority of candidates showed understanding of how to balance their examples across both time periods and the arguments.

### Exemplar 3

		I agree with the statement as from 1750 - 1900, during the industrial era, Irish migrants faced economic and social problems. The Irish were forced to migrate as they suffered poverty and starvation from the 1840s potato famine but when they arrived in England they didn't settle well into society. Socially, they faced anti-Irish and anti-catholic tension which caused difficulties gaining housing and employment. They were forced to live in cramped housing with poor sanitation and were given the more dangerous jobs in Britain. For example, working as navvies building canals and railways in Britain to enhance Britain's trading system. Economically, the Irish were poor and their low wages and long working hours meant they had bad living conditions. All of these reasons led to the Irish struggling to settle into British life during the industrial revolution era.
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