

Examiners' report

A LEVEL

# HISTORY A

**OCR Level 3 Advanced GCE in History A**

**H505**

For first teaching in 2015

**Y112/01 Summer 2025 series**

## Contents

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Introduction .....            | 3 |
| Paper 1 series overview ..... | 4 |
| Section A overview .....      | 5 |
| Question 1 .....              | 5 |
| Section B overview .....      | 7 |
| Question 2* .....             | 7 |
| Question 3* .....             | 8 |

## 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 responses 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 [Teach Cambridge](#).

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## Paper Y112 series overview

Y112 is one of thirteen 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"> <li>considered the provenance of the source(s) and used relevant contextual knowledge</li> <li>clearly 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>in answering the essay question candidates discussed at least two issues in depth</li> <li>presented supporting detail which 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> <li>made a series of interim judgements about the issues discussed in relation to 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 answer 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 answer 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> |

### OCR support



You can find information on exam review webinars and other support events in **Training** on the horizontal menu within AS and A Level History A on [Teach Cambridge](#).

## 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 Y112 is focused on whether working people were prepared to sacrifice their rights and liberties to support the national war effort in World War One.

### Question 1

#### England and a New Century c.1900–1918

- 1 'Working people were prepared to sacrifice their rights and liberties to support the national war effort.'

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

This was generally well-answered, with candidates able to provide a range of contextual detail surrounding the idea of rights and liberties. Government reform in the case of the Defence of the Realm Act, was particularly well-used as was the Munitions of War Act 1915. Similarly, discussions of trade union unrest prior to the war as well as Suffragette actions was equally used to good effect. Knowledge of the war, including key battles and the impact of the U-boat campaigns and their impact by 1917 were often seen in these answers. Provenance was similarly well-handled with most candidates able to discuss the typicality of sources from female factory workers and members of the Land Army, while knowledge of Cook was well-known. Candidates who focused on the purpose of these sources were well-rewarded when evaluating provenance. Many candidates were able to evaluate using both contextual knowledge and provenance, although where one of these was missing, answers stalled at Level 3 and below. Judgement continues to be an issue with good answers remaining in Level 4 due to a lack of judgement. In order to reach Level 5 there needs to be an overall judgement based on provenance and to achieve Level 6 then there would also be judgements about each source, again based on provenance, after each source has been discussed.

#### Assessment for learning



Candidates should make sure 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

|  |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | In conclusion, whilst sources C and D A and B disagree with the view, the credibility of source D in agree supporting the view offers greater weight to the idea that people were prepared to sacrifice their rights and liberties to support the war effort. Most notably, sources A and C offer only an individual perspective on the view and therefore cannot be used as a nation-wide narrative. Source B does convey the discontent within the mines, however due to the nature of being a speech promoting propaganda and lack of materialisation of a strike near it is limited as a source. Therefore, source D as a report carrying expert ideas and being used by the government asserts the authenticity of its findings and that overall people were prepared to sacrifice but that growing discontent towards their treatment was happening in 1917. |
|--|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The chosen exemplar demonstrates a judgement based on provenance that provides the full analysis required for a Level 5 response.

## 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 Y112, the candidates were asked to consider whether the abdication of Edward VIII was the most serious domestic problem faced by governments in the period 1929-39 or how successful were the Labour governments of 1945-51 in establishing a welfare state.

### Question 2\*

#### Britain c.1918–1951

- 2\*** 'The abdication of Edward VIII was the most serious domestic political problem faced by governments in the period from 1929 to 1939.'

How far do you agree?

[20]

This was the less popular of the two essay questions but elicited a range of responses which demonstrated a reasonably good grasp of the topic by those who completed this question. Most candidates were able to discuss the abdication crisis and could discuss the damage to the reputation of the monarchy as well as the divisions that ensued within the Conservative Party. The best responses were also able to highlight the constitutional issues created by the abdication. The alternative views considered a range of other issues, including the rise of extremist movements, including the BUF and the Communists, and the problems that faced the governments of the period. Economic issues were another common problem highlighted by candidates as were protests such as the Jarrow March. Some candidates had an uncertain grasp of the chronology of the governments of the period, with discussions of the first Labour ministry of 1924 and the Zinoviev letter noted.

## Question 3\*

**3\*** How successful were the Labour Governments of 1945–51 in establishing a welfare state? **[20]**

This was the more popular choice for candidates and was generally well-known. Most candidates were able to discuss the Beveridge Report and structured Labour's welfare reforms around the five giants of this. Virtually all candidates could discuss the creation of the NHS and its strengths and initial problems with strong responses including statistics to support their arguments. Education and Housing were also key features of many responses, and again candidates were able to analyse the successes and limitations of both of these factors. The best responses drew on a wider range of evidence including the National Assistance Act and were able to measure its success against continuing poverty and the limited amounts of financial support offered.

### Assessment for learning



Candidates should adopt an analytical approach to essays which consider a range of factors, supporting their analysis with good contextual detail.

## Exemplar 2

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3. | <p>The <del>statement</del> Labour governments of 1945-51 were not successful in the establishment of a full welfare state due to the economic situation they inherited, however they did the best they could given the circumstances and did undeniably make extensive reforms. This can be seen through the case of Health care, Education and Housing reforms.</p> <p>One reason why the statement is incorrect is due to the case of Health care. The Labour gov of 1945-51 made huge</p> <p>changes to health care that were initially very successful. The NHS introduced in 1948 was a great system that improved the overall health of the population causing a significant decrease in deaths from preventable diseases like TB and diphtheria. Furthermore because the NHS was not privatised health care it made society one step closer to an egalitarian society, highlighting the huge success of the policy. However the economic crisis that Clement Attlee's Labour government inherited highly damaged the extent of the NHS, with it costing £400 million in year 1 alone. Attlee was forced to introduce charges for prescription and dentistry. This was exasperated by the UK's stance on foreign affairs and obligations to support South Korea in the Korean War 1950. This ultimately resulted in Berkeley's resignation as he was not prepared to make these concessions. Despite the success of the NHS which can not be understated being the largest change to health care and being so much more extensive than the reforms of New Liberalism, the Labour government of 1945-50 fell short of implementing a full welfare state.</p> |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Exemplar 2 demonstrates the start of a Level 5 response with an analytical approach to the question which is supported by pertinent information.

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