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# **Examiners' Report**

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCE History  
(8HI0 1A)

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## **Paper 8H10 1A.**

### **Paper Introduction**

It was pleasing to see candidates able to engage effectively across the ability range in this, the third year of the reformed AS Level paper 1A which deals with the crusades, c1095-1204.

The paper is divided into three sections. Section A comprises a choice of essays that assess understanding of the period in depth (AO1) by targeting the second order concepts of cause and/or consequence. Section B offers a further choice of essays, targeting any of the second order concepts of cause, consequence, change and continuity, similarity and difference, and significance. Section C contains a compulsory question which is based on two given extracts. It assesses analysis and evaluation of historical interpretations in context (AO3). Candidates in the main appeared to organise their time effectively, although there were some cases of candidates not completing one of the three responses within the time allocated. Examiners did note a number of scripts that posed some problems with the legibility of hand writing. Examiners can only give credit for what they can read.

Of the three sections of Paper 1, candidates are generally more familiar with the essay sections, and in sections A and B most candidates were well prepared to write, or to attempt, an analytical response. Stronger answers clearly understood the importance of identifying the appropriate second order concept that was being targeted by the question. A minority of candidates, often otherwise knowledgeable, wanted to focus on causes and engage in a main factor/other factors approach, even where this did not necessarily address the demands of the conceptual focus. Candidates in the main were able to apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner suited to the different demands of questions in these two sections in terms of the greater depth of knowledge required where section A questions targeted a shorter-period, as compared to the more careful selection generally required for the section B questions covering a broader timespan.

Candidates do need to formulate their planning so that there is an argument and a counter argument within their answer; some candidates lacked sufficient treatment of these. The generic mark scheme clearly indicates the four bullet-pointed strands which are the focus for awarding marks and centres should note how these strands progress through the levels. Candidates do need to be aware of key dates, as identified in the specification, and ensure that they draw their evidence in responses from the appropriate time period.

In Section C, the strongest answers demonstrated a clear focus on the need to discuss different arguments given within the two extracts, clearly recognising these as historical interpretations. Such responses tended to offer comparative analysis of the merits of the different views, exploring the validity of the arguments offered by the two historians in the light of the evidence, both from within the extracts, and candidates' own contextual knowledge. Such responses tended to avoid attempts to examine the extracts in a manner more suited to AO2, assertions of the inferiority of an extract on the basis of it offering less factual evidence, or a drift away from the specific demands of the question to the wider taught topic.

## **Q01**

### **Question Introduction**

Question 1 asked candidates to consider whether increased European settlement in Outremer was the main consequence of the First Crusade in the years 1099–1144. This question proved to be accessible and popular. At the top end candidates were able to offer good detail on settlement after the First Crusade both in terms of those who sought to settle on the land and those who saw the coastal ports and cities as offering opportunities for trade and commerce. Other consequences were assessed against the stated factor rather than being offered as a separate issue. At the top of level 4 there was discussion and analysis of the evidence offered. Less successful candidates tended to see European settlement simply in terms of the fortunes of the crusader leaders. Other consequences tended to be disconnected from the focus of the question until the conclusion.

### **Examiner tip**

Answers should always be planned. The plan should make sure that the stated factor is properly addressed so that other factors can be compared to it. This will help evaluation and make judgement more convincing.

## **Q02**

### **Question Introduction**

Question 2 asked candidates to consider whether the degree of Muslim unity was the main reason for the different outcomes of the First and Second Crusades. Successful candidates had a tight focus on the question and offered good detail on the degree of Muslim unity, and, at the very top, how this unity was forged by the need to resist the crusaders militarily. This helped to relate the degree of Muslim unity to the different outcomes of the two crusades. Less successful candidates tended to offer information on Muslim unity and the outcome of the two crusades as separate issues. Sometimes very good information missed the focus of the question and stopped access to level 4. At the bottom end candidates tended to offer a narrative of the two crusades.

### **Examiner Tip**

After supplying good evidence show how it answers the question. This helps to maintain focus on the question and builds an argument that makes your answer more convincing.

## **Q03**

### **Question Introduction**

Question 3 asked candidates to consider how significant the absence of natural boundaries in the east was for the defence of the crusader states in the years 1100–87. This was the less popular question in section B. At the top end there was a focus on the second order concept of significance and candidates understood that the crucial evidence was the fall of Edessa and the difficulty thereafter of creating a defensible frontier. A minority of candidates argued that the fall of Edessa made the Egyptian front a crucial defensive issue after the failure of the Second Crusade. Less successful candidates were not particularly clear on the geography of the crusader states and were unable to do justice to the stated factor of the absence of natural boundaries. At the bottom end

candidates tended to offer general material on the defence of the crusader states with castles and the Military Orders being the favoured factors.

### **Examiner Tip**

Before committing to your choice of question check that you understand what is being asked. Too many candidates who chose this question saw the word 'defence' and not 'the absence of natural boundaries in the east'.

### **Q04**

#### **Question Introduction**

Question 4 asked candidates to consider how far they agreed that a lack of European support was the main reason for the decline of the crusader states in the years 1100–87. This question was accessible and popular with a full range of responses. At the top end candidates objected to the unqualified premise of the question that the period was one of decline. This helped them to offer a more considered judgement on the stated and other factors. 'European support' is itself in need of consideration and successful candidates explored this fully by looking at trade and commerce, religion and the financing of crusades and the Military Orders. Less successful candidates tended to take declining support as a given factor and spent more time discussing other important factors such as dynastic quarrels and the rise of the Muslim threat. At the bottom end a narrative of some features of the period was offered.

### **Examiner Tip**

When planning a question asking for causal factors over a long period of time there is a simple method available. List the factors to be used including the stated factor. Rank them in order of their importance. Attach a key date or evidence to each factor. This will ensure you are going to offer range and depth, cover the time period and will see how these factors compare and work together.

### **Q05**

#### **Question Introduction**

Question 5 asked candidates to use the extracts and their own knowledge to consider how far they agreed that Innocent III's personal ambition led to the failure of the Fourth Crusade. At the top end candidates saw two differing historical interpretations, while at the bottom end a simple Innocent versus the crusader leaders analysis predominated. Successful candidates understood that extract 1 was a powerful argument against Innocent and one that linked his alleged personal failings to important issues that spelt disaster for the crusade. This provided an opportunity for an often highly enjoyable exposition of Innocent's strengths and weaknesses. This also provided an important framework for the analysis of extract 2, with a good discussion of the crusader leaders' failings being a result of the predicament Innocent had put them in. Some admirable defences of Innocent were made showing candidates were well prepared. Less successful candidates tended to get mired in the emotive language used in extract 1, and made their critique one of the utility of the evidence in the extract rather than interpretation. At the bottom end candidates denounced the sources for being secondary and preferred an explanation of the failure of the Fourth Crusade based on their own knowledge.

## **Examiner Tip**

Analysis of the extracts requires accurate quotation to illustrate historical interpretation. Once this is achieved the interpretation can be developed and criticised using evidence and argument. Select evidence that can be integrated with the extract.

Section C questions do require a technique to be successful. It is a cross referencing exercise involving analysis of the extracts and the development of these through additional own knowledge. However, the most successful candidates focus on the extracts as interpretations and enjoy the chance to debate and argue what the extracts offer. This makes their work enjoyable to read and it maintains focus on the question. A good idea is to always set out the rival interpretations in the introduction and keep returning to it.

## **Paper Summary**

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

Section A/B responses:

Features commonly found in responses which were successful within the higher levels:

- Candidates paying close attention to the date ranges in the question
- Sufficient consideration given to the issue in the question (e.g. main factor), as well as some other factors
- Explain their judgement fully – this need not be in an artificial or abstract way, but demonstrate their reasoning in relation to the concepts and topic they are writing about in order to justify their judgements
- Focus carefully on the second-order concept targeted in the question
- Give consideration to timing, to enable themselves to complete all three question with approximately the same time given over to each one
- An appropriate level, in terms of depth of detail and analysis, as required by the question – e.g. a realistic amount to enable a balanced and rounded answer on breadth questions

Common issues which hindered performance:

- Pay little heed to the precise demands of the question, e.g. write about the topic without focusing on the question, or attempt to give an answer to a question that hasn't been asked – most frequently, this meant treating questions which targeted other second-order concepts as causation questions
- Answer a question without giving sufficient consideration to the given issue in the question (e.g. looking at other causes or consequences, with only limited reference to that given in the question)

- Answers which only gave a partial response, e.g. a very limited span of the date range, or covered the stated cause/consequence, with no real consideration of other issues
- Assertion of change, causation, sometimes with formulaic repetition of the words of the question, with limited explanation or analysis of how exactly this was a change, cause, of the issue within the question.
- Judgement is not reached, or not explained
- A lack of detail

Section C responses:

Features commonly found in responses which were successful within the higher levels:

- Candidates paying close attention to the precise demands of the question, as opposed to seemingly pre-prepared material covering the more general controversy as outlined in the specification
- Thorough use of the extracts; this need not mean using every point they raise, but a strong focus on these as views on the question
- A confident attempt to use the two extracts together, e.g. consideration of their differences, attempts to compare their arguments, or evaluate their relative merits
- Careful use of own knowledge, e.g. clearly selected to relate to the issues raised within the sources, confidently using this to examine the arguments made, and reason through these in relation to the given question; at times, this meant selection over sheer amount of knowledge
- Careful reading of the extracts, to ensure the meaning of individual statements and evidence within these were used in the context of the broader arguments made by the authors
- Attempts to see beyond the stark differences between sources, e.g. consideration of the extent to which they disagreed, or attempts to reconcile their arguments

Common issues which hindered performance:

- Limited use of the extracts, or an imbalance in this, e.g. extensive use of one, with limited consideration of the other
- Limited comparison or consideration of the differences between the given interpretations
- Using the extracts merely as sources of support
- Arguing one extract is superior to the other on the basis that it offers more factual evidence to back up the claims made, without genuinely analysing the arguments offered
- Heavy use of own knowledge, or even seemingly pre-prepared arguments, without real consideration of these related to the arguments in the sources



- Statements or evidence from the source being used in a manner contrary to that given in the sources, e.g. through misinterpretation of the meaning of the arguments, or lifting of detail without thought to the context of how it was applied within the extract
- A tendency to see the extracts as being polar opposites, again seemingly through expectation of this, without thought to where there may be degrees of difference, or even common ground