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# **Examiners' Report**

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCE History  
(8HI0 1B)

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## **Paper Introduction**

It was pleasing to see candidates able to engage effectively across the ability range in this, AS Level paper 1B.

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 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 the 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.

## **8H10\_1B\_Q01**

### **Question Introduction**

Question 1 was a popular choice with candidates in Section A of the paper. The vast majority of candidates were able to engage with the conceptual demands of the question to some degree. What distinguished within these tended to be down to two issues: how precise the focus was, and the quality of knowledge, particularly on the given issue. On the former, stronger responses had a clear focus on the growth of Protestantism, with less successful responses tending to drift to some degree towards description of Henry's desire for an annulment and the Break with Rome. Whilst candidates could have some success with discussing the growth of Protestantism as a by-product of Henry's desire to secure his succession, it was those who could clearly connect this to the impact it had in religious terms, such as arguments that were put forward relating to Cromwell's use of this in advancing the reformist cause. With regards to the latter, some candidates were let down by limited knowledge of the given issues. At the higher end, common arguments included criticism of pluralism and simony, the Hunne case, the preaching and writing of Fish and Colet, weighing this against the extent to which humanist or Lutheran anti-clericalism had influenced England before the Henrician Reformation. Stronger responses also tended to have a greater focus on the chronological dimensions of the question, exploring the growth (and indeed limitations) of Protestantism into the late 1530s and 1540s, with some arguing that Cromwell's demise and Henry's curtailment of the more Protestant elements suggest the limits of the influence of the reformists.

### **Introduction**

### **Examiner Comment**

This response demonstrates many of the qualities of a level 4 essay. The answer is clearly organised and focused, with a good grasp of what the question is asking. The candidate is able to offer a range and depth of specific knowledge, and apply this to examine the role criticism of the Catholic Church, alongside sufficient consideration of other factors. The argument is logical and reasoned, and the candidate produces a well-developed judgement. Development is coherent and lucid, showing a firm grasp of both the period, and the demands of this particular question.

### **8H10\_1B\_Q02**

This was a popular question, which produced a range of responses which were usually well-informed, and in the main offered some degree of analysis. However, the main issue limiting the performance was that a significant minority of candidates did not sufficiently focus on the conceptual demands of the question. This tended to be where, instead of focusing on the consequences of the closure of the monasteries, responses were attempted to consider causation, largely reinterpreting the question as an examination of the causes of poverty, or in a smaller number of examples, the causes of the dissolution. This meant that candidates who appeared to offer the requisite written ability and knowledge produced responses which had significant sections which did not answer the given question, at times meaning the valid material was a small proportion of the overall response. More successfully focused responses tended to cover the issues detailed in the indicative content of the mark scheme, alongside the plight of monks and nuns. The strongest responses made convincing connections between the closure and the consequences offered, e.g. how far it can be attributed as leading to the Pilgrimage of Grace, and tended to weight the extent of individual consequences, e.g. the extent to which educational and cultural loss was offset by the alternatives founded using the proceeds of the dissolution.

### **8H10\_1B\_Q03**

This was a popular choice of question within Section B, and a large proportion of the responses produced by candidates were in the higher levels. Extensive knowledge was evident in many cases, with popular choices of control being the Marcher Council and Council of the North, Justices of the Peace, the nobility, and to a lesser extent a range of other methods, such as the Lord Lieutenants and the role played by the Church in maintaining control. The best responses deployed this carefully to explore the second-order concept of change, with popular arguments including the expansion of the role of JPs, the reorganisation of the Councils and government of Wales under Cromwell, the introduction of the position of Lord Lieutenants, or the basic continuity in the role played by the nobility and gentry classes throughout the period. Factors limiting responses to some degree or other were (i) a tendency to describe/explain the methods, without clear focus on change/continuity (ii) seeing control narrowly in terms of rebellion or its absence, at times allied to a drift to accounts of Tudor rebellions and (iii) a lack of sufficient knowledge placing limitations on the ability to develop points fully.

### **8H10\_1B\_Q04**

Question 4 was a popular choice within Section B. The question produced a broad range of responses. At the higher end, these were often typified by the ability of candidates to draw upon a diverse range of interesting material, clearly relating this to an analysis of the significance of the gender of Mary and Elizabeth, offering a balanced analysis of both monarchs, covering a range of issues, with coverage of marriage, succession, authority over the church and military control proving popular. The strongest responses were often able to critically explore the relative significance of different arguments raised, and where pertinent, make valid comparisons across the two reigns. Less successful responses tended to be limited by one or more of the following issues (i) straying from the question's focus, e.g. lengthy consideration of Henry's reign or other issues outside of the question's parameters, (ii) limited knowledge and depth on one or both reigns, and (iii), uncertainty over organisation of argument and focus on the second-order concept of significance. What was important as far as reaching the higher levels was concerned, was an ability to shape sufficient knowledge to a reasoned analysis and evaluation of the significance of gender.

## **8H10\_1B\_Q05**

Most candidates were able to access the higher two levels, generally by recognising and explaining the arguments in the two extracts, and building on this with own knowledge. The strongest responses tended to offer a comparative analysis of the views, discussing and evaluating these in the light of contextual knowledge. Most candidates were able to identify the differences between Extract 1 and Extract 2, such as the emphasis Loades places on the 'restlessness and dissatisfaction' (Extract 1) and how this fed factional division, against the calmer picture painted by Bucholz and Key. The most common factors limiting the success of some responses were (i) use of the extracts in a manner not fully suited to Section C, e.g. through attempts to analyse provenance in a manner more suited to AO2, or assert an extract is 'more reliable' as it includes statistics, and (ii) limited own knowledge, or a lack of integration of this in order to examine and evaluate the arguments. With regards to these issues, candidates should be minded that Section C is focused around AO3. Responses which made consideration of the argument and evidence within the extracts central to their responses, applying their contextual knowledge to consider the validity of the arguments offered – rather than assessment of the utility or reliability of the 'sources' – were more successful. Responses tended to be more successful when they addressed the issues drawn from the specific question and extracts. Whilst there was some relevance of aspects of the wider controversy of Elizabeth's last years, e.g. through setting the factional dispute in the context of wider issues (as some did, in relation to the last sentence of Bucholz and Key) it was candidates who deployed references to war, or other issues, in direct relation to the issue of faction and succession that tended to have most success. Candidates knowledge and understanding of issues was in the main good, with commonly featuring issues being, as perhaps expected, Essex and his actions, the extent to which Cecil had come to dominate court politics, and various issues relating to succession, including at times good comparative use of material from earlier in her reign. Some issues, such as references to patronage or the 'centralised state under a powerful personal sovereign' (Extract 2), were given less consideration. As with AO1 essays, a discriminating factor in success was to some extent was the deployment and development of knowledge offered, i.e. the difference between referencing an issue with contextual knowledge linked to the source, and, at the higher levels, exploring this in relation to the precise focus of the question, and assessing the validity of argument. With regards to judgement, some candidates appeared to come down to easily on one side or the other, without sufficient consideration of different views. Whilst it is perfectly valid for to reach a judgement which is firmly one way or the other, candidates should seek to ensure they consider the merits of different views in the light of evidence. Examiners are looking for reasoned argument. Overall conclusions may be forceful and come down one way or the other, but discussion and analysis requires some degree of balance.

## 8H10\_1B\_SecA

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, consequences, etc, 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