

AS LEVEL

Examiners' report

ANCIENT HISTORY

H007

For first teaching in 2017

H007/01 Summer 2022 series

Contents

Introduction	3
Paper 1 series overview	4
Section A overview	5
Question 1	5
Question 2	9
Section B overview	11
Question 3*	11
Question 4*	12

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.

Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

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Paper 1 series overview

Examiners commented on a good standard of engagement with the questions. Question 1 and the two essay questions went well for the majority of candidates who managed to engage with the wording of the questions and offer some good, well supported analysis. When answering Question 2, very few candidates managed to mine both passages effectively.

The main issue this series was a lack of detailed supporting evidence, with conclusions reached without any real examination of the evidence. It is important that AS candidates know they are expected to construct arguments which make use of supporting source material. 50% of the marks available are for using, analysing, interpreting and evaluating sources. Many scripts did not use one source and relied on unsubstantiated assertion.

That said, there were many examples of well-prepared candidates who engaged fully with the paper and achieved marks in the 50s.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • had a secure knowledge of the period studied • had a precise and clear grasp of the chronology • selected sources focused on the specific terms of the question. • prioritised the explanation in response to the terms of the question, using evidence and knowledge in support • demonstrated evaluation focused on the reliability of the specific point being made. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attributed an event incorrectly to a person/group • did not focus on the main issue of the question but offered a generalised account of the period • provided a narrative of events, not an analysis • offered generic evaluation.

Section A overview

Question 1 requires no extra support from sources; a simple factual response to the issue which then goes on to make convincing judgements is all that is required. The central issues are wide enough for all candidates to score highly even by approaching the question in different ways. Question 2 asks the candidates to extract relevant support from the passage(s) cited and to use supporting evidence from other relevant sources to address the question posed.

Question 1

1 How effective were the strategies of Sparta during the Archidamian War (431–421 BC)? **[10]**

The majority of the candidates engaged with this question well. It is a key part of the specification and seemed well known.

Most candidates wrote around a page which seems sensible with the marks available in the time. Mid-range responses tended to list strategies but not talk about effectiveness. Less successful responses focused on Athenian strategies or vague assertion.

Most responses focused on Spartan invasions of Attica, the embassy to Persia, the Pylos and Sphacteria episode and Brasidas' Northern campaigns.

Exemplar 1

1	<p>Throughout the Archidamian War, Sparta implemented multiple strategies with varying degrees of effectiveness.</p>
	<p>The original Spartan strategy in 431 BC was focused on the strength of their hoplite force & the tactic of yearly invasions into all Attica in an attempt to provoke a direct conflict with the population of Attica. However, neither strategy were effective due to the fact that, knowing the Spartans had a superior military force, the Athenians' policy under Pericles was to avoid any direct battles to hoplite battles. Furthermore, according to Thucydides, Pericles also instructed that the Attic countryside be evacuated into Athens during the Spartan invasions to ensure that they guarded the city rather than not go out and "make war." This meant that the Spartan strategy was entirely ineffective as they were unable to provoke a direct conflict through the invasions. Moreover, the invasions re relied on the assumption that the rest of the Greeks were farmers & so would be keen to protect their countryside and</p>

crops. This failed to account for the fact that Sparta's allies were also farming states and would therefore also need to return to their own land for the harvest - this resulted in the invasions being extremely short, with the longest being only 40 days.

After the failure of this strategy, Sparta moved towards ~~considering~~ converting Athenian allies in the Thrace-Ionia region, starting with Ambracia in 474 BC. The General Brasidas is recorded by Thucydides as being both forceful & persuasive in convincing Athenian allies to revolt or convert, a strategy which can be seen as highly effective as multiple allies did convert or revolt. After Brasidas died in 477 BC, Spartan strategy changed again, this time focusing on promoting peace. This was ~~taken~~ motivated mainly by the expiration of the 50-year Peace with Argos and Sparta's fear of fighting two opponents at once. While this strategy may be considered effective as the Peace of Nicias was signed in 421 BC, it must also be taken into

consideration that the treaty did not last due to the displeasure of Sparta's own allies ~~to~~ which stemmed from the clause stating that the agreement could be altered if Athens & Sparta agreed ~~by~~ but excluded their allies.

In conclusion, while there was a period of effective strategy under ~~So~~ Brasidas between 474 and 477 BC this was only a short section of the entire Archidamian War which spanned from 431 BC to 421 BC. Therefore, it is far more credible to say that the strategies Sparta used in the war were largely ineffective as the invasions failed to provoke direct conflict & the Peace of Nicias failed to last.

The response in Exemplar 1 was given full marks and shows a good way of approaching a 10-marker. The candidate deals well with both the Spartan strategies and the extent to which they were or were not effective. Factual information is accurate and detailed, and fully relevant to the question.

Question 2

2 Read the following passages.

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On the basis of these passages and other sources you have studied, to what extent did both the Spartans and the Athenians seek the help of the Persians during the Peloponnesian War? **[20]**

Very few candidates achieved a mark in the top level on Question 2. The passages seemed unfamiliar to some candidates despite being set sources on the specification. There was confusion with the Thucydides passage although the Andokides passage seemed more familiar and was mined well on the issue of Amorges.

There were very few instances of candidates seeking extra support from sources outside the question paper despite the invitation to do so in the question.

Successful responses made use of material from later in Thucydides regarding the support of Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus as well as some good discussion on the role of Alcibiades' attempts to broker a deal between the Persians and the Athenians.

Some responses did not make use of the extracts.

Exemplar 2

		Meanwhile the Athenians mainly sought peace with Persia. After the Athenians learnt of Sparta's attempts to sign an alliance with Persia, in 425 BC, the Athenians sent delegates to try and negotiate a peace with Persia. This is what is mentioned in the source, with
		Athenians sending 'Artephernes back in a trireme to Ephesus and sent some ambassadors with him.' This is likely a truthful statement, as Thucydides is known for using 'Greek rational', methodical research, and it is supported by sources such as Diodorus and Andocides in his 392 BC speech. This suggests that Athens did not did not want Persia involved in the war, they merely wanted a 'friendship for all time' with Persia, in order to prevent them getting involved. This then suggests that the Athenians appealed to aid in a far less significant way than the Spartans, as they did not actively seek support, rather they wanted the guarantee that they wouldn't get involved.

Exemplar 2 shows well how a 20-marker should be approached. There is accurate factual content and the passage on the paper is mined well as the candidate has selected small parts of the extract and made it fully relevant to the question. There is good evaluation on Thucydides and there is some good and relevant support from Diodorus. Analysis is sustained and the points being made are made convincingly and are focused on the specific issue of Persian support raised by the question.

Section B overview

Most responses to the essay questions reached sensible conclusions derived from the ancient evidence. To repeat the advice from last year, evaluation of the sources must be specific to the point being made. There was still too much generic evaluation added on at the end of an essay, which received very little credit.

Question 4 was much more popular, possibly to do with its wider scope.

Question 3*

- 3*** How effective was the Thirty Years' Peace of 446–445 BC in resolving the conflicts between the various cities of mainland Greece?

You must use and analyse the ancient sources you have studied as well as supporting your answer with your own knowledge.

[30]

Few candidates answered this question which is a shame because the technique to deal with it effectively would have been straightforward. The more successful responses did adopt such a technique where they outlined exactly what the peace treaty said and then looked at why the treaty had been necessary to resolve conflict in the first place. From there, other sources should be brought in to assess how effective the treaty was at fulfilling its aims.

There was some very good discussion about what Thucydides tells us about the causes for war in 431BC and how the peace treaty had collapsed in the 15 year period. More successful responses assessed the role of Corinth, the attitude of Archidamus in trying to avoid conflict and the influence of Pericles. Chalkis Decree, Megara, Potidaea and Corcyra were all used well with good support from the sources.

Question 4*

- 4* 'Persian desire for expansion and conquest made conflict with the cities of mainland Greece inevitable.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?

You must use and analyse the ancient sources you have studied as well as supporting your answer with your own knowledge.

[30]

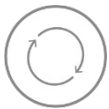
Candidates demonstrated that they knew the material to answer this question well. The more successful responses engaged with the idea of 'inevitable' by assessing what the sources tell us about Persian aggression and imperialism.

Candidates put forward good arguments in favour of the proposition in the question discussing the attitudes and motives of Darius and Xerxes, the expeditions of the late 490s and the 460 invasion too.

Although not technically on the specification, candidates were given credit for information regarding the Ionian Revolt. Most responses used Herodotus exclusively but it was pleasing to see Herodotus' claims being refuted or supported by inscriptions.

There is so much material, that candidates would be advised to focus their responses and not try to do too much. On the whole though, this question was well answered and the analysis was sound, good or thorough in most answers.

Assessment for learning



Centres should advise candidates that ancient history essays often have a very wide scope (Question 3 is a rare example of an essay question with a narrower focus). It can appear that candidates write almost everything that they think is relevant and often at the detriment of incisive analysis.

Candidates should go deeper rather than wider. Examiners much prefer to see fewer arguments but more depth and insight. Examiners mark the quality of the analysis and support from the sources; they do not penalise if certain details are missed out. Therefore, candidates should feel confident that so long as their arguments and supporting evidence are relevant to the question, then they can get marks in the highest levels.

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