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Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCE History
(9HI0 32)

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June 2018

Publications Code 9HI0_32_1806_ER

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9H10 PAPER 32 THE GOLDEN AGE OF SPAIN

The paper had a small entry, just over 30 candidates, but the overall standard was very sound on all the questions. Clearly the course had been thoroughly covered and there was a good level of knowledge and understanding.

Q1. SOURCE QUESTION ON THE COMUNEROS REVOLT

The overwhelming majority of candidates rooted their answers in the source and addressed both enquiries with some effective use of specific extracts to illustrate points. The attribution was used well and there was some good deployment of contextual knowledge to develop points, e.g. consideration of the campaign by Charles to be Holy Roman Emperor and the reaction to his Burgundian advisers. The tone of the source was also commented on appropriately by a majority of candidates. A few candidates did not go far beyond paraphrase but generally this question was tackled well.

Q2. ESSAY QUESTION ON INQUISITION

A mainstream question which was addressed effectively by most candidates. A sound range of points was identified, explained and illustrated. The attitudes of the Catholic Monarchs was clearly understood and the influence of individuals such as Torquemada was also dealt with effectively. The majority of candidates weighed up a range of points and produced an informed argument.

Q3. ESSAY QUESTION ON ANTONIO PEREZ

This essay attracted a minority of candidates but was generally well known. The threat of Perez was debated and illustrated with most candidates coming to the judgement that the biggest threat was to the reputation of Philip II. There was some tendency to lapse into narrative and the actual threat posed by the revolt in Aragon was not always explained. Some candidates were not aware of the implications of the links with the Guise and/or Elizabeth.

Q4 BREADTH ESSAY ON GONZALO DE CORDOBA AND THE ARMY

The least popular of the two breadth essays but with generally sound knowledge and range. There was some effective address to the nominated factor with some awareness of both specific military successes and his qualities as a military leader. Most candidates identified a fair range of other factors with the tercios, Alba and Parma being especially well covered.

Q5. BREADTH ESSAY ON NEW WORLD AND ITS IMPACT

The most popular of the two questions and producing a good range of answers although coverage of the timeframe was an issue in some essays. Most candidates developed some specific examples, e.g. Potosi which was tackled effectively by several candidates. The political and economic implications were weighed up by most and there were several examples of well informed discussion of the debate re Inflation.

GENERAL POINTS

The majority of responses showed clear evidence of planning and the essays were structured.

Most candidates recognised that informed debate is the key to success on this unit and worked towards this.

It is important that centres are aware that in the Breadth essays candidates need to be aware of the timeframe of the specific question. In relation to BP2 of the mark scheme candidates needed to cover 75% of the period and to be awarded L4 coverage of 60% was expected.