



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel

In GCE History (8HI0/2A)

Paper 2: Depth study

Option 2A.1: Anglo-Saxon England and the  
Anglo-Norman Kingdom, c1053–1106

Option 2A.2: England and the Angevin  
Empire in the reign of Henry II, 1154–89

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## **Introduction**

It was pleasing to see candidates able to engage effectively across the ability range in this first summer examination series after the disruption of the pandemic of the AS Level Paper 2A which covers the options: Anglo-Saxon England and the Anglo-Norman Kingdom, c1053-1106 (2A.1), and England and the Angevin Empire in the reign of Henry II, 1154-1189 (2A.2). The paper is divided into two sections. Section A contains a compulsory two-part question for the option studied, each part based on one source. It assesses source analysis and evaluation skills (AO2). Section B comprises a choice of essays that assess understanding of the period in depth (AO1) by targeting five second order concepts – cause, consequence, change/continuity, similarity/difference and significance.

In Section A most candidates achieved level 2, demonstrating their ability to comprehend, select and summarise source material and to make comments on the provenance. In addressing the questions, some candidates were still not clear on what was meant by ‘value’ and ‘weight’ in the context of source analysis and evaluation. Performance in Section A was also affected by the absence of the detailed knowledge base required to add contextual material to support/challenge points derived from the sources. Most candidates did use their time effectively and, although a few responses were quite brief, there was little evidence on this paper of candidates having insufficient time to answer questions both sections. The ability range was diverse, but the design of the paper allowed all abilities to be catered for.

Unlike in previous series, many candidates found Section B more challenging than Section A. Section B, most responses attempted a analytical focus and there were very few that were wholly descriptive essays which were devoid of analysis. The most common weakness in Section B essays was a lack of knowledge and especially precise knowledge applied to the question. It is important to realise that Section A and Section B questions may be set from any part of any Key Topic, and, as a result, full coverage of the specification is enormously important.

The candidates’ performance on individual questions is considered in the next section.

### **Question 1(a)**

There were just three candidates sitting Option 2A.1. Most candidates understood the question and were able to comprehend the source and comment on what it revealed about the operation of the feudal system. The well-focused responses drew out inferences about the feudal system and the place of the Church within it. To achieve in level 3, candidates need to develop the inferences with well-selected context to establish their validity. Candidates would do well to remember that contextual knowledge does need to be used to explain and develop the inferences drawn from the source and not just to provide free-standing knowledge. Some candidates did not use any contextual knowledge, and this did depress their achievement within the levels. Some candidates were able to use the attributes of the source effectively to develop their ideas about the value with reference, for example, to the importance of Source 1 as a record of an agreement that was usually agreed orally. Those candidates who discussed the limitations could not be rewarded for that part of their answer as it is not the focus of part a responses.

**Doc ID: 0507002011496 (part a only)**

This is a L3 entry response. It has secure knowledge that is used to expand on the details in the source. It achieves level 2 for both bullet points 1 and 2. It achieves level 3 for drawing out valid points about the value of the source.

Tip remember to use contextual knowledge to develop and explain inferences

### **Question 1 (b)**

Candidates understood the source material and were able to select from it to develop some inferences about the reasons for the appointment of Anselm as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1093. Effective answers weighed up the strengths and limitations of the source and used this as a basis to reach a judgement about the weight that should be attached to the source for the enquiry. In this series, answers did consider the strengths and weaknesses of the source material but tended to assert a judgement by choosing a side rather than weighing and providing reasons for judgement. Some candidates were able to use contextual knowledge to add to the source, but candidates did not use it to interrogate and as a means to assist in reaching the judgement.

### **Doc ID: 0507002011495 (part b only)**

This is a secure L3 response. It has inferences developed and supported from the source and some relevant knowledge used to develop the evaluation. The consideration of the reliability of the source is brief but has some validity.

Tip Remember to use the evidence in the source to justify comments on reliability

### **Question 2 (a)**

The majority of candidates were entered for 2A.2. Most candidates were able to understand the source and the focus of the question on development of the legal system under Henry II. The most effective responses developed inferences from the source material and integrated the source with their knowledge of the development of the legal system. However, most candidates showed comprehension and selection and did not draw out inferences. Very few attempted to develop inferences with their knowledge but tended to provide some free standing knowledge about the legal system. Even more candidates did not use any contextual knowledge or included knowledge that was not relevant to the investigation. In some cases, potentially relevant knowledge was undermined by imprecision. Most candidates were able to comment on the provenance of the source and refer to its value.

### **Doc ID: 0507002008007 (part a only)**

This is a Level 3 response. It makes relevant comments on the value based on a consideration of the provenance. It draws out an effective inference on the trust that Henry could place in his hand-picked judges and supports comments with accurate contextual knowledge.

Tip

Always develop inferences using contextual knowledge to draw out judgements about the value of the source.

### **Question 2 (b)**

Candidates demonstrated an understanding of the source material and an ability to select points to comment on the significance of Thomas Becket as Chancellor. Some candidates drew inferences about Henry's reliance on Becket and his trust. Most candidates were able to make relevant comments on validity of FitzStephen's views about Becket and many drew upon their knowledge of Becket's murder as a factor impacting on the reliability of the source. However, candidates did not use their knowledge to develop inferences and there was no use of context to interrogate the claims made in the source. Consequently, candidates did not achieve level 4 in addressing this question. In some cases candidates wrote about Becket's role as archbishop and thus their knowledge was not relevant to the question set.

### **Doc ID: 0507002008002 (part b only)**

This is a secure level 3 response. The candidate develops an inference on the importance of Becket in the smooth running of the kingdom and supports this with valid context about Henry's role as an itinerant king. It's comments on the provenance do include some questionable assumptions but do include justified points about FitzStephen's position and access to information and thus enter level 3.

### **Question 3**

There were no responses to this question

### **Question 4**

There were two responses to this question. The best response was focused on dealing with the opposition and considered a range of ways in which William suppressed opposition including the harrying of the north and the building of castles. It also considered the limitations of the submission of the earls, including the roles of Edwin and Morcar in the northern rebellion and in East Anglia, and the rebellion in the southwest which erupted without any input from the earls. It entered level 4 but did not reach the top. Its main limitation was a lack of any consideration of the way in which the submission of the earls may have aided William I in dealing with the opposition.

### **Question 5**

There was just one response to this question. To address this question successfully, candidates need to have a clear focus on the range of reforms introduced in the church during the reign of William I, and to consider the relative significance of the deposition of Stigand in comparison to other reforms such as the establishment of church courts, the establishment of the primacy of Canterbury, the reorganisation of dioceses and the effort to deal with issues of clerical marriage and clerical offences such as pluralism, absenteeism and simony.

### **Question 6**

There was only one answer to this question which was confused in places in terms of events and the date range. To address this question successfully, candidates need to have a clear focus on both the nature of the dispute that needed addressing, the terms of the peace of Montmirail and the extent to which the terms solved the issues.

### **Question 7**

This was the most popular essay question on the paper. It prompted a range of responses from those that showed good focus on the second order concept of change and had good knowledge to number from which to construct the argument, to those responses that were limited in terms or accurate and/or relevant knowledge. Most candidates did refer to the issue of church courts and Henry's desire to bring secular crimes committed by clerics under the jurisdiction of the secular courts. Many candidates referred to the dispute with Becket and the extent to which Henry was able to assert his power. However, in many cases knowledge was very weak and claims made that could not be substantiated by the evidence. Candidates do need to prepare thoroughly for the essay question to enable them to select the material that they can use to construct an argument and reach a judgement. This was very often lacking in this series.

### **Doc ID: 0507002008012(Q7 only)**

This is an entry level 4 response. It has a good focus on change and supports the argument with relevant knowledge. It is rather limited in range.

### **Question 8**

Approximately a fifth of candidates answered this question with varying degree of focus. Most candidates were able to comment on Richard's desire to be king and Henry's reluctance to announce his successor. Many referred to the alternative reason for collapse – the ambitions of the French king. However, many answers were undermined by a lack of precision – candidates muddled the period 1180-89 with the years of the Great Rebellion and attributed ACTIONS TO Richard that were taken by Young Henry as well as emphasising the role of Eleanor of Aquitaine in encouraging her sons, whereas she was actually in prison during the specified period. Again, precise knowledge is essential to enable successful completion of Section B.

### **Paper Summary**

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

### **Section A**

Value of Source Question (1(a)/2(a))

- Candidates must be more prepared to make valid inferences rather than to paraphrase the source
- Be prepared to back up inferences by adding additional contextual knowledge from beyond the source
- Move beyond stereotypical approaches to the nature/purpose and authorship of the source e.g. look at the specific stance and/or purpose of the writer
- Avoid writing about the deficiencies of the source when assessing its value to the enquiry.

#### Weight of Source Question (1(b)/2(b))

- Candidates should be prepared to assess the weight of the source for an enquiry by being aware that the author is writing for a specific audience. Be aware of the values and concerns of that audience.

In assessing weight, it is perfectly permissible to use contextual knowledge to support/challenge statements and claims made in the source

- Try to distinguish between fact and opinion by using your contextual knowledge of the period
- In coming to a judgement about the nature/purpose of the source, take account of the weight you may be able to give to the author's evidence in the light of his or her stance and/or purpose
- In assessing weight, it is perfectly permissible to assess reliability by considering what has been perhaps deliberately omitted from the source. However, simply stating that a source is limited because it does not cover certain events or developments does not establish weight since no source can be comprehensive.

### **Section B**

#### Essay questions

- Candidates must revise thoroughly and ensure that they have good knowledge to draw upon in addressing the essay question. Candidates must provide more factual details as evidence. Weaker responses lacked depth and sometimes range
- Take a few minutes to plan your answer before you begin to write your response
- Pick out three or four key themes and then provide an analysis of (for e.g.) the target significance mentioned in the question, setting its importance against other themes rather than providing a description of each

- Pay more careful attention to key phrases in the question when analysing and use them throughout the essay to prevent deviation from the central issues and concepts
- Try to explore links between issues to make the structure flow more logically and the arguments more integrated.