

# **History**

Advanced GCE A2 7835

Advanced Subsidiary GCE AS 3835

## **Report on the Units**

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**January 2008**

**3835/7835/MS/R/08J**

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Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

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# **Chief Examiner's Report**

**AS HISTORY [3835]**

**A2 HISTORY [7835]**

## **General Comments**

This Report should be read in conjunction with the Mark Schemes and Centres are urged to discuss the Report with their candidates. The sections on individual Units have been written by Principal Examiners who comment only on questions to which there were a sufficient number of answers on which to base general conclusions. The Introduction to each Unit contains valuable advice for Centres and candidates, and Centres who have taught topics on which there are no, or only brief comments, are advised to study other parts of the Report as well as the Introduction.

There were very few complaints from the large number of Centres that entered candidates. Three Centres complained about different questions in Unit 2586 and one Centre complained about a topic's questions in 2591. Each complainant was given serious attention by Principal Examiners in standardization meetings and by the Chief Examiner and Awarders at the grade award meeting. Assistant examiners were also asked if these complaints seemed justified on the basis of candidates' performances. Though none of the complaints was upheld, an isolated complaint is not necessarily deemed invalid and may feed positively into future question setting.

The number of January entries in all Units continues to rise. AS Document Studies saw an increase of 12 per cent, and both English and European Period Studies saw a rise of 7 per cent since January 2007. At A2, the overall number of candidates sitting 2587 rose by 31 per cent, 2588 by 11 per cent, 2589 by one per cent, 2590 by one per cent and 2591 by 13 per cent. While the majority of candidates was entered for Modern History options – generally in a ratio of 3:1 – for the first time there were more entries for the Medieval and Early Modern English History Period Studies Unit. New Centres enter candidates every session but this January there was a high percentage of individual candidates. Some of these candidates may have moved from another Centre; the majority of single entries, however, was repeating a module and, in many cases, improved upon their June 2007 result.

There was a widespread belief among Principal Examiners that the quality of work in both AS and A2 Units was weaker than in previous January sessions. This impression was supported by the statistics, which confirmed that the mean mark in most papers was lower than in January 2007 and much lower than in June 2007. Only the Investigations Units saw an improvement in some papers. Overall the proportion of candidates who achieved Grades A and B was correspondingly lower than in previous January assessments, while there was an increase in the number of Grade E and Unclassified candidates.

Comments on individual Units follow this Introductory Report but it is worth repeating some points that have been made in previous reports and in Newsletters because not all new Centres may have had access to them. A common cause of frustration to examiners is that many of the candidates who achieved middle or lower band marks could have improved their work if they had paid attention to some basic requirements of Units. Answers in the middle bands often contained sufficient knowledge but it was not used to frame an explanation. Instead it described or narrated developments, and candidates wrote all they knew about a topic or they produced answers to a related question. Answers that were awarded low marks sometimes ignored key instructions in the question such as the need to use both passages and their own knowledge or to compare sources. In the Period Studies, common commands such as 'Assess the reasons' and 'How far...?' require candidates to consider different explanations and to determine which

## *Report on the Units taken in January 2008*

is/are the more/most convincing. Weaker candidates tended to deal only with one, or very few, elements of a question.

Responses in the January session usually highlight candidates' weaknesses in technique rather than a lack of knowledge due to their developing maturity and limited practice at answering questions. This occurrence is usually most pronounced in first-time candidates in both AS and A2 papers. In Units 2580, 2581 and 2582 (AS Documentary Studies), weaker candidates in Question (a) wrote sequential summaries rather than point-by-point comparisons that were focused on the texts. The best answers in (b) grouped and evaluated the sources according to supporting and contradictory evidence, and candidates integrated their own knowledge into the argument rather than bolted it on at the end. The Period Studies (Units 2583, 2584, 2585 and 2586) revealed some excellent answers from a minority of candidates, who focused their answers on the question set and presented a structured line of argument that was supported by accurate factual details. The assessment also produced many essays that were weak in basic knowledge, historical skills and understanding. At A2 in the Investigation Paper (Units 2587, 2588 and 2589), the essence of a good answer lay in the candidates' ability to show an understanding of different historical interpretations before arriving at a personal judgement. There is a clear link between the skills acquired in studying sources for the AS Document paper and in evaluating passages at A2. Many candidates would improve their results if they could resist the temptation to impose a learned interpretation on unseen passages and allowed the passages rather than their own knowledge to determine their responses. The essay similarly needs to reflect a debate that is focused on the question set and not on one that has been learned. The need to answer questions synoptically is the main requirement in the Themes in History paper (Units 2590 and 2591), and the principal discriminator between good and modest performances. Too many candidates disregarded key elements and terms in the question, tried to offload excessive factual details and analysed particular issues rather than synthesised the whole period under review. Striking a balance between total coverage of a long period and demonstrating sufficient depth of knowledge to produce a convincing argument is a skill that comes with practice and maturity. And for many candidates having had only one term's teaching, the January session would not seem to be the most appropriate time to sit this exam. Indeed a feature that emerged from all Units was the degree to which candidates were adequately prepared. Some were clearly repeating a module and though their preparation will have been variable, many performed extremely well. Others who were entering a unit for the first time will have had mixed experiences. Some Centres appear to treat the January session as a rehearsal exam and, no doubt, will judge their results accordingly. Other Centres need to consider carefully whether or not January is the best time to enter their candidates.

Most candidates had little trouble writing their answers in the allocated time. When problems did arise, they were often a result of poor technique. For instance, writing out or re-phrasing a question in an introduction is a waste of time and was a common occurrence in several AS and A2 essays. Candidates need to get to the point of a question quickly and appositely and any introduction needs to be focused, relevant and short. Keeping essay plans to a practical minimum will also save time. Some plans ran to two sides of A4 and were unnecessarily detailed. Moreover, the essay itself frequently ignored elements in the plan or deviated from its structure.

One of the key features of OCR's History Specification is the wide range of topics available for Centres to teach and to construct a coherent course of study. Some topics, such as the Tudors, Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, are perennial favourites. Trends do change, of course, but some Centres seem to be narrowing their selection of topics. In some large Centres in particular, all candidates selected the same question(s). While this development may be understandable if a question is perceived to be the best choice, it seems likely that some candidates actually had no choice as all of the key issues had not been covered. Moreover, the stereotypical answers suggested that an essay had been learned in anticipation of the exam. This is not good practice.

### *Report on the Units taken in January 2008*

The standard of English continues to be very variable and in general was disappointing. Writing formal English is an important feature of any literary discipline, particularly History, and candidates who can explain their ideas clearly, concisely and accurately will always impress an examiner. Conversely, a candidate who cannot communicate effectively, however knowledgeable he or she may be, will not fare so well. Some Centres undoubtedly attach considerable importance to encouraging accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar, and this is to be commended. Too many candidates continue to use abbreviations when referring to proper names and historical events. Abbreviations may be suitable for notes, but not when writing examination answers. They give the impression that the candidate is intellectually lazy, which may or may not be true. In general, students need to read more and practise their writing skills to ensure that they say what they mean and mean what they say.

Finally, it is worth reminding Centres that candidates need to complete the information on the cover page of their answer booklet. Above all they must enter the correct number question; many candidates leave this blank. Though it is usually possible to work out which question has been attempted, this is not always the case. Indeed, some candidates include material in their answer that could easily apply to another question, and the examiner is left to discern which question has actually been attempted. Such occurrences are fortunately rare but they can result in a candidate getting a low mark.

## 2580 - 2582 Document Studies

### General Comments

The total entry for these units was up slightly on January 2007, with approximately a third re-taking, the rest sitting it after a term's teaching. The standard was lower than in the summer, with candidates rarely scoring over 50 marks. Similarly there were few marks below 20, with most scoring between 24 and 45. Nonetheless the mark spread here was reasonable. 2580 outperformed the other two papers. Although the candidacy is much smaller here (431) 2581 also saw a relatively high standard (with 1,510 candidates). 2582 (5113 candidates) saw a drop in standards at Bands I – II and it was felt that this was a very good reason why centres should consider carefully whether candidates are ready for a January entry. The jump from GCSE source work to AS is considerable and not many can achieve what one might deem 'joined up' source evaluation, particularly in Q (b). The contextual grounding, and the practice in assessing a variety of views, is difficult to absorb in the first term of a history course and experience has consistently shown that candidates invariably stand a better chance in a summer entry.

It would appear that our advice on technique is being taken but Centres should not apply such advice **mechanically**. Some Centres or candidates take such advice as absolute, mechanically ticking off qualities that they have 'learnt', sometimes ignoring what the source itself has to say. As a result much of what is said is 'stock evaluation', abstract and unconnected to the material given. A framework is only intended to provide initial security for a candidate and an approach which should be conditioned by the sources, not vice versa. There is considerable diversity in the way the skills are taught and delivered by Centres. Whilst most teach appropriately and have clearly taken on board the advice offered in previous reports, a significant minority have not, or have misinterpreted what is intended. They are advised to consult past reports or the summary and reinforcement of such advice available for the new Enquiry Papers F693/64 on the OCR Website (under new Specification materials). It was particularly remarked upon this January that candidates from whole Centres were disadvantaged by over-prescriptive techniques taught to them. Some have not been told to group sources according to view, a simple 'sort' technique to aid comparison and evaluation in Q(b). Some only measure the sources as evidence against their own knowledge instead of combining this and taking it to a higher level by assessing the sources against each other. Some simply append stock evaluation to a sequenced list so that they proceed via each source, with stock comment added after each. Others 'group' in their introduction but then ignore this and proceed in a sequenced manner. Many still use own knowledge as a 'bolt-on', either after consideration of each source or in the final half or third of their answer. Some deal with the sources at face value, ignoring the introduction, attributions and especially the questions. They become general commentaries rather than specific assessments of a proposed view or question. All too often candidates are evaluating because they have been told to, without reference to the line of argument taken. As such it is formulaic and intellectually limited. They must learn to comment only when an observation is pertinent to their assessment of the source's evidence, insofar as it links to the key issue. Centres need to remember that their candidates are given four pieces of largely contemporary material on a particular issue or problem and are asked to compare two sources as evidence for one aspect of this and then to use all four with own knowledge, comparatively and evaluatively, to assess a particular proposition. The focus should be on an **evaluation of content**. The technique, of which provenance is a part, should enable them to comment on the nature of what is said and assign it relative value. Those who focus too exclusively on technique and provenance run the risk of an answer purely on methodology, divorced from the 'real' history they are expected to comment, critically, upon. Nonetheless many Centres are moving their candidates away from an own- knowledge answer which uses the sources purely as illustration and reference. However well done reference can be, the ceiling is a high Band III. A persistence in the **careless reading of the sources** also continues to worry us. Although relatively brief the four sources contain much, with crucial qualifications and sub clauses which

are all too often missed by candidates who fail to pick up on the subtleties or see that different interpretations can arise from the same source. For example, in 2581 on Q1, Source C actually says that there was no opposition when Richard III made himself the legitimate heir to Edward IV, but there was a general revulsion of feeling against him when he had his two nephews murdered. Most candidates confuse the latter reaction with the former event. Candidates do need to read the question, the introduction and attribution and the sources themselves with great care and with a view to the question asked. For example, the time sequence of sources is often missed. This is well worth checking as part of the initial planning of an answer. Indeed a close reading of the sources should act as a reminder that these are the focus of this paper. However good the knowledge of the topic it will be wasted if the sources are forgotten about or marginalised by using them as an additional quarry for the illustration of an argument. Attentive reading and less writing will raise the marks of those in the lower bands.

We are also concerned that the reduction to two questions has led to a small but significant number of candidates comparing **all four** sources in Q (a), instead of **two**. We would be grateful if centres could draw this to the attention of candidates **before** they enter the exam room. Similarly a small number continue to compare the wrong sources. A high BVI is the highest that can be awarded on these occasions.

Again we would like to reiterate, in simple form, the **major problems that arise** in the two questions.

### Sub Question (a)

On the whole candidates are aware of how to **compare** at a relatively high level and there were fewer marks below 12 (low Band III). However not many managed high Band II or Band I (17 – 20). What contributed to this was:

- The **Sequencing** of sources, especially in the first two out of three paragraphs, remains to rob weaker and middling candidates of higher marks. It is also a problem when comparing provenance. Those who have effectively compared content then sequence, and leave implicit, their provenance points, almost inevitably leading to a lack of judgement.
- Thus **judgement** as to which might be the better source (Band I) is frequently missing. If it is there it can come out of the blue and has not been 'earned' **i.e.** reasoning for the judgment is lacking.
- As more candidates are aware of the need to assess provenance (as part of judgement) the focus lies almost **exclusively** here (especially in 2580) when, if anything, it needs to lie with what the source actually says (content). As content is being compared and contrasted provenance can assess its utility and relative reliability in relation to the issue that the question focuses on.
- Candidates must remember they are comparing two sources as evidence **for a particular issue**, not the sources per se. Too many offer a general comparison that ignores the specific issue. A highlighter pen on the stem of the question should focus minds on this.
- **Assessment by assertion** is to be avoided. A judgement or comparison can only properly arise via a series of valid and relative points that establish it.
- Candidates would do well to steer clear of simplicities like primary, secondary and bias and instead focus on the **purpose** of a source and its intended audience. Usually this will lead to more intelligent comparison and higher marks.
- **Avoid the tick list and 'mechanical formula'** approach that loses sight of both source and issue. The content of the generic Band I Mark Scheme is frequently used ruthlessly to tick off a source's qualities, regardless of whether it has them or not. The pointers in Band I are general and do not always apply to the sources provided. Sometimes tone is the key to provenance, sometimes date, sometimes audience, sometimes precise context etc. Candidates need to be open to whatever is provided and not seek to square circles. A direct engagement with the sources, their introductions and attributions, is the pre requisite.



- Using **comparative words** is part of the process, but only a part. It is not a substitute for specific comparison, especially when merely used as the link word or expression between two sequenced paragraphs.
- A **closer identification with the content** by reference to key phrases or the tone of words would be helpful. Sometimes by their choice of phrase a point of similarity or difference is not born out.

### Sub Question (b)

Answers here were usually too brief. All too frequently they can be the same length as Q (a), (which is often over-long) and are rarely much longer. As a rule of thumb one would expect Q (b) to be twice as long. Own knowledge is frequently very thin, especially on Q7 in 2582. Source use is confined either to brief reference or to a systematic and near-paraphrased plunder. This will confine candidates to Bands III and IV. Points we would continue to stress are as follows:

- Failing to follow through a grouping or a particular interpretation after the first paragraph. Candidates relax into a **sequenced** discussion of the sources with own knowledge bolted onto the end, or appended after each source has been described or referenced.
- Realizing the need to evaluate, but doing this simply by adding a sentence or two of **stock evaluation** after each source. If anything this will divert the candidate from what is supposed to be an argument for the validity of a view or assertion.
- Failing to realise that **evaluation means assigning value to a source in relation to the question**. Here a comparative or grouped approach may throw light on the sources. For example, in Q7 on 2582 two of the sources were from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reich, two were post 1945. The dating aided evaluation or grouping as the two pre 1945 Nazis sources stress Hitler as 'master' of the Reich; the post war sources, one a modern historian, for a variety of reasons, are more critical of this. They may be more authoritative but the Nazi sources may explain a public as opposed to a private view. From here candidates can make intelligent and relevant points rather than adopt the blinkered approach of the one-source assessment. It is a question of opening up the sources as a critical whole. If the candidate fails to evaluate, and many still do not, then they cannot go higher than a Band III.
- Only the very best seem able to see that some, if not all sources, can sustain **different interpretations**. They can be used in both ways and a discussion of this, or even an answer answering two different views using the same sources, is all too rare.
- Most candidates will still use most, if not all four, sources for **illustration and reference** only. However well done, and however excellent the argument, they will not go beyond Band III. The question is about evaluating the sources as evidence for a proposition.
- **Own knowledge** should not be separated out into different paragraphs. It should be there to confirm, extend or challenge the view in the sources or their group. It is also there to provide context and allow the full significance of a source to be realised. Usually knowledge is very thin and basic. If little more than what is in the sources it will count as 'clear imbalance' and gain a Band IV. However in some answers it can also be extensive and swamp an answer that should have the sources at its heart.
- Assessing '**modern historians**' is frequently stock. Candidates need to examine the view or interpretation offered and proceed critically – is the view balanced? Is the focus purely religious, economic, political or social? Is the focus narrow or not?
- **Twisting the Question** or losing sight of it in an attempt to tick off the sources. It is the key issue that should determine everything else – grouping according to view, assessing the evidence for and against etc. Thus many, on Q7 2582, diverted into the structuralist v. intentionalist debate, which drew candidates away from whether Hitler was 'master' of the Third Reich.
- Using **all four** sources and **cross referencing** them as an effective means of evaluation is a useful organisational tool.

## Comments on Individual Questions Unit 2580/01

It was pleasing to see a reasonable cohort of Medievalists in January. The Crusade proved the most popular topic but Alfred is now firmly in second place. The Normans seem to have become a minority topic. Knowledge can be extensive (and is not always appropriate). Provenance and evaluation can displace all else, including the question and the Source content that should provide a large part of the answer. No complaints were received.

### 1. The Reign of Alfred the Great 871 – 899

Again, the quality of those who answered this question was noted by examiners.

- (a) The weaknesses here were to ignore the stem of the question – Alfred's actions on behalf of the English Church, thus missing the key difference of Alfred assisting with recruitment problems in Source A and infrastructure (monasteries, schools etc) in Source B. Few commented on his motives, missing the grants outside Wessex in certain years in 'B' and their possible significance. As a result many struggled to find sufficient in the way of differences in context and attitude, simply assuming both to be Alfred pursuing a religious 'hobby'. The metaphor of the 'hunting dogs' in 'A' was missed by some and identifying the source as a private letter (and therefore potentially insightful into motives) would have greatly helped most.
- (b) Candidates limited themselves by too exclusively focussing on Alfred and religion, instead of linking it to the question on the future survival of Wessex. Those who realised the need for a balanced argument, weighing up military factors (but rarely political or diplomatic) were too keen to offload their knowledge of burghs, boats and heroic battles, instead of linking this to a religious perspective. It was perfectly possible to argue that Alfred was inspired by ideas of defending Christian people from both Vikings and their own sin, but few seemed to see the link. Source D held many clues about how to tackle this question profitably (the prevention... cure idea; failings on the part of the English themselves). Whether because it was at the end or just, as a modern source, distrusted, despite being entirely reputable, it was often overlooked or underused. Candidates could group A, B and D together (although A and B could be seen in a more pragmatic light), to argue for the assertion with C providing the stimulus to look at more practical, 'survival' measures. When discussing religion as the key only a minority made the link with government, literacy, laws and administration. Their focus was too narrowly on the Church, missing the question's naming of education as one of the key issues.

### 2. The Norman in England 1066 - 1087

This was the least well done question on 2581, perhaps because government, sheriffs and administration are perceived to be difficult. Certainly this was not a well grasped area overall.

- (a) The sources provided rich picking for those who were prepared to engage with them – 'unjust exactions', the idea of compulsion, the uncompromising nature of a writ in Source B etc. All of these should have been used as evidence for the problems created by sheriffs but most candidates seemed unaware of whom they were and had little background on the opportunities their office gave for self enrichment. Picot, with the reputation of an 'arch predator', was sheriff of Cambridgeshire and seized lands from the Abbey of Ely, which is the context of Source C. The means of sidelining sheriffs was to send out justices to hear specific pleas, such as that from Ely, where Geoffrey of Coutance presided. In Source B a commission was set up

under Lanfranc to investigate and restore, hence the writ which is Source B. Few spotted that the Church's lands seemed especially vulnerable in both sources but that the Church could also use legal pressure to eventually effect land restitution. Again, few noted the implied rebuke to William himself in Source C or compared it to the rebuke to the Church, for being itself weak, in William's writ (Source B).

- (b) Although candidates found (a) difficult they found (b) more so, failing to pick up on the alternatives provided as areas of concern for William, either upholding property rights (the context being the huge transfer of land at the top of society and the potential for confusion) or changing the English system of government (was it backward, advanced, unable to cope with an Anglo-Norman kingdom and rebellion?). Candidates missed the obvious points on property in all four sources and failed to see that A and B could represent new departures in government, a major trial in A, the Commission in B, and the use of justice in C. Many misread Source D to mean that shires, geld tax and sheriffs were all new. It was, in fact, stating that all were in place in the late Anglo-Saxon state and own knowledge should have reminded candidates that William used the existing Sheriffs in the early years to 1070. Then they could comment that they grew in importance as the number of earls declined (where earls remained important, as in the Welsh marches, they could curb sheriffs). It would appear that Anglo-Saxon continuity is not well known. Candidates also seemed to find it difficult to understand that the Church as an institution, and Bishops and Archbishops in person, were important temporal powers, not just spiritual ones. This would have been a useful way of reconciling property rights and new departures in government for the more able. Domesday Book was brought in as own knowledge, to much relief. Most candidates knew little else on government.

### **3. The First Crusade and its Origins 1073 - 1099**

This should have been a familiar issue for most (religion in the Crusade) but few seemed to appreciate other motives or were particularly perceptive in their approach to religious issues at this time.

- (a) Most candidates talked generally about race and religion, or prejudice in general, failing to see that there was or is a distinction between the two. The question asked about race, Jews and Turks. Some hedged their bets and could have it several ways – was Source B about bloodlust, race or religion? Better candidates made good use of the 'not accept treasure point' which implied a suspension of the normal 'protection' mechanism and could suggest overwhelming racial (or religious) prejudice and fear. As far as the Turks were concerned this would be less obvious until arrival in the East. Indeed hardly any picked up the point of enemies in one's midst and the paranoia this could induce, both in Europe and the Holy Land. Provenance was poorly handled (the committed Christian in C, the Jewish chronicle in B). The chronicler (on occasion referred to as Bart Simpson!) was widely held to be unreliable and bound to exaggerate. He was taken to task for objecting to the slaughter of Jews. In fact his evidence is very reliable but then hardly any realised the involvement of the People's Crusade in these events.
- (b) For many this was simply an opportunity to write about the reasons why people went on crusade. Several Centres had clearly not taught their candidates to evaluate the sources as evidence and to group or pair them according to a view that can then be assessed (in this instance A, B, C v D). Cantor in Source D was clearly crucial, yet his evidence was poorly handled. The best candidates realised that his views are contentious. Too many accepted him at face value. Able candidates realised that Source A tells us (perhaps!) about Papal but not popular motivation. Indeed a sense of different ranks and individuals having very different motives and interests was a

powerful way to evaluate the sources. Thus Source A could be used both to reinforce religion as a motivator but, reading between the lines, it also reveals much about the likelihood of greed, hence the sanction referred to. Bloodlust or military aggression could be another motivator. Source B could be interpreted in this light, as could parts of Source C.

## Comments on Individual Questions Unit 2581/01

Only a minority answered questions on the Wars of the Roses and an even smaller one on Louis XIV. The Mid Tudor Crises proved the most popular. No complaints were received.

### 1. The Wars of the Roses 1450-1485

- (a) Reasonably well answered. Both the content and the provenance of Source B were well analysed by many candidates, but several failed to pick up that it was a private letter, thus missing its possible significance. Source A was handled less successfully. Very few candidates noted that the favourable account of Richard's qualities is not actually Mancini's but Buckingham's as reported by Mancini- though the fact that he reported it fully may suggest that he accepted it as accurate. A fair number of answers did, however, draw attention to the hint in lines 7-8 that one of Richard's 'qualities' as a ruler was intimidation. The best answers showed considerable insight such as the following:

*'Richard clearly had a gift for propaganda (a useful talent for any ruler) and declared his nephews illegitimate officially. While the point Buckingham makes is true, it is undoubtedly a weak one. The nobles would not ordinarily have heeded it, so perhaps more emphasis should be placed on the most menacing last line of the source, which suggests they are thinking of his own safety.'*

- (b) Most candidates were able to extract from the sources evidence that Richard's usurpation of the crown was his downfall. Many, however, went no further. Some thought the question asked whether his reputation was destroyed (almost all agreeing that it was) rather than why. Others failed to provide any counter-argument. Close reading of the sources, especially Source C, should have provided candidates with an alternative view, that it was not the usurpation but the murder of the princes which led to 'a general revulsion of feeling against him'. Very few noted that the first sentence of Source D provides direct support for this. Those candidates that took into account the dates of these sources wrote the most effective analyses of their provenance. Sources A and B for example were written at the start of the reign, surely of some significance to the question. Some candidates used own knowledge, eg Buckingham's rebellion, the death of the queen, the rumours of Richard's plan to marry his niece, to provide alternative or additional explanation for his loss of position and reputation. A few also used the sources to argue that Richard was in many ways a successful ruler whose reputation was destroyed posthumously as a result of his defeat at Bosworth.

### 2. The German Reformation 1517-30

Answers to this question proved a useful demonstration of the need to read the question and the sources very carefully indeed.

- (a) A substantial number of candidates made heavy weather of this by failing to read the question carefully. It was about the attitude of the Emperor's officials, not about the behaviour of Luther at Worms. There was widespread confusion between the Emperor and his officials. At no point does either source report speeches by Charles V: they always refer to his spokesman or his officials. Yet another common confusion was between imperial and Church officials - an important distinction since Source B is a letter by a Church official. The description of Luther as a fool (line 14) is therefore Aleander's, not the imperial officials'. Because of these various common faults answers were in general disappointing - all the more so since the basic contrast between the merciful attitude shown in Source B and the 'scornful voice' of the spokesman in Source D is easily identified when the question and the sources are read carefully. Most candidates did not consider the date difference which might explain this. Source D came after Luther's condemnation at Worms, Source B before it. Source D is clearly portraying Luther in an overly sympathetic light.
- (b) The general standard of answers to this was better than to (a). However, there were some candidates who seemed to read into the sources what they wanted to find there. Source A puzzled some, but it was successfully used by others both to support and to oppose the proposition, ie as evidence of Luther's provocative attitude or to show that he had justified complaints to which the Church had failed to respond and which a German Emperor might be sympathetic to. Despite the steer in the introduction, some candidates saw Source B as evidence that the Emperor was to blame for the failure to reach a settlement, a view which was unconvincing except where it was linked (as often it was not) with an appraisal of Aleander's reliability. A similar problem arose with some interpretations of Source D as evidence that Luther was responsible because his 'answer was not to the point'. The question provided good opportunities to introduce own knowledge drawn from the period 1517-21, but some candidates brought in irrelevant own knowledge from the period 1521-30 or confined themselves to 1521 (rather than 'by 1521'). It would have made a great difference in setting up the structure of the argument if candidates had attempted to define what a 'settlement' might mean. Many spoke of Luther's refusal to compromise without analysing whether he was being offered a compromise. Many ignored Charles V and his position, focusing instead on a different question (Luther and the Church or Luther and the Pope). Comment on Charles's inexperience or political position as emperor would have helped but were very rare. Only a few indicated that he might have tried to do something to reform the kind of abuses Luther described in Source A.

### 3. Mid- Tudor Crises 1540-58

Responses to this question were disappointing.

- (a) This question was not very well answered, partly because candidates failed to understand that the second part of Source A relates to the suppression of Kett's Rebellion after the failure of the attempt at conciliation described in Source B. The sources were set in that order because the first part of Source A refers to events before July 1549, but candidates found it confusing. The time sequence here is that Source B comes between the two paragraphs of Source A. With careful reading of the two sources and some basic geographical knowledge, candidates could have worked out that the second part of Source A is about the same rebellion as Source B, ie Kett's rising, even if they were uncertain about the chronology. We have commented time and again on the widespread ignorance among candidates who are supposed to have studied the subject about the location of Norwich (and Exeter). Kett's rebels were found just about everywhere, including the north. Another common but avoidable fault was the failure to refer to local government, as the question required. It only required careful reading of the first part of Source A to find

the appropriate reference. A final common fault was misunderstanding of the information given about the true authorship of Source B. Many assumed it was Edward and therefore based their comparison around the king's attitude to rebellions. Close reading reveals Source B to be the Privy Council on behalf of Edward. Not many were able to pick up on the dates. Source B is dated 18 July, 1549, fairly close to the beginning of the rebellion, whereas Edward's Journal in Source A is an overview of the entire period of unrest, suggesting that early negotiation gave way to violence.

- (b) Answers to this were also rather disappointing though there were of course some which debated the issue successfully in the light of the sources and own knowledge. Such candidates wrestled with what 'serious' means and how to judge it. The best took up the various ideas suggested by Source D and related them to the other sources and own knowledge to reach a balanced conclusion, which could go either way. A valid point, missed by most, was that only Source D could have a real overview. More moderate candidates used the sources to describe the threats posed by Kett's and Wyatt's rebellions, with little own knowledge and a conclusion which was little more than an assertion. Weaker candidates, seeing the question as simply about Wyatt's rebellion rather than a comparison, were puzzled to know what to make of Sources A and B. Some thought that all four sources referred to Wyatt's rebellion and tied themselves up in knots as a result. Here some assumed that Wyatt's objective was the deposition of Mary (which it may well have been) without mentioning the stated aim of stopping the Spanish marriage. There was a worrying degree of confusion between the various rebellions of the period. The weakest failed to distinguish accurately between 1549 and 1554. Others were confused about 1549, ascribing the Prayer Book rebellion to Kett or Kett's rebellion to the West Country. When added to the confusion about the chronology of Sources A and B, the result was a thorough muddle. For too many the question was merely a peg on which to hang a general essay on rebellion. Inevitably the sources were treated briefly and for illustration only. The definition of 'serious' could be wanting – proximity to London being seen by most as the key and for some the only litmus test of 'serious'.

#### **4. The English Civil War 1637- 49**

- (a) This was satisfactorily answered on the whole. Most candidates identified the evidence in both sources of Charles's unwillingness to negotiate; and many also made some sensible points about the provenance of the two sources, Charles in Source A reliably referring to negotiations in a private letter to his wife, whilst Source D was making a point to justify execution at a much later date. The better answers noted that both sources suggest that religion was a sticking point and that Source A suggests that Charles's unwillingness to negotiate was not absolute. Only a few commented on the fact that Source A contains extracts from two letters written almost two months apart, which might suggest why in the second Charles is talking about counter- proposals.
- (b) Overall this was much less successfully answered than (a), though there were also some very good answers which integrated source analysis and own knowledge into a survey of various factors which led to the execution and a balanced assessment of the importance of the Second Civil War. Many candidates had difficulty in organising the material presented in the sources. Most opted for an argument that the war was a trigger rather than the main cause. A substantial number of candidates, however, based too much of their answer on own knowledge, with occasional references to the sources to illustrate their argument. Some dismissed the Second Civil War as a factor rather cursorily rather than putting it into the context of the whole issue, preferring an essay on the general reasons for execution. Some other candidates went to the other extreme and provided little or no own knowledge. These often

trawled through the sources sequentially and failed to see how references to eg the Heads of the Proposals or the Engagement, could be used to extend their analysis; some felt they had found an 'opposing' reason in the sources, such as 'providence' or 'Charles's failure to negotiate' and tried to set this up in opposition to the Second Civil War without seeing how they combine rather than cancel one another out. 'Failure to reach a settlement' is an abstraction; it does not explain something as extraordinary as the decision to try and execute the king unless the dynamic force indicated in Sources B, C and D is picked up on. Better candidates brought in the politicisation of the army and Pride's Purge. Some harked back to the Eleven Years Tyranny, diverting as a result. The focus was the post 1646 period. Candidates who say there is support for a proposition in a source rather than 'the source agrees/disagrees' present a more meaningful argument. For example, to say Source A disagrees with the idea that the Second Civil War was the reason for the execution is meaningless when it was written before the war and was certainly not concerned with execution.

## 5. Louis XIV's France 1661-1693

- (a) Candidates should have noticed – and some did – the differences of the date between Sources A and D as well as the more obvious difference in the provenance. They should have also noticed that Source A, though warning of troubles, also speaks of France's happiness under Louis – a big contrast with Source D. Weaker candidates saw Source A as critical of absolute monarchy which is not the case.
- (b) Candidates needed both to spell out why Sources A, B and C think absolute monarchy is good, even essential for France and to note that these sources provide a cross-section of France's elite – a courtier, a bishop and a lawyer. Evidence about the rest of Louis' subjects is missing – except for the Huguenot view in Source D. Indeed the key failing of candidates was not to approach the sources from the point of view of whether they provided a cross-section of Louis' subjects, or to have some feel for the chronological breadth of the reign. The sources do cover the whole period from 1673 to 1690, but as sources their focus is on absolutism and the necessity of obedience to it (especially Sources B and C). Some candidates were thus diverted into explaining why it was necessary instead of demonstrating how support was given. Here Sources A and D provide evidence that support could be conditioned by religious attitude (D) and the taxation burden (A). Own knowledge was disappointing and largely confined to the Huguenots.

## Comments on Individual Questions Unit 2582

Question 7 on the Nazis remains the indisputable favourite on 2582 (answered by approximately 70% of 2582 candidates) with few for Question 5 on Parnell and Ireland and more surprisingly Question 6 on England in a New Century. Question 1 on the French Revolution and Question 2 on the Condition of England attracted small but significant followings. Question 3 on Italian Unification and Question 4 on the American Civil War were a little more popular. There was a feeling that candidates on 2582 underachieved, let down by little own knowledge and above all by a failure to evaluate, either individually or collectively, the sources in Question (b). No complaints were received.

### 1 The Origins of the French Revolution 1774-92

Few candidates handled either of the two questions well, although some effective answers were received.

- (a) Candidates often failed to address the issue, revolutionary achievement in 1789, preferring general comparisons of events, and surprisingly few picked up on the all important date differences between **A** and **C**, let alone any of the potentially significant intervening events (the August Declarations, the Great Fear, and the October Days). Similarly audience was neglected, another powerful way of assessing provenance. Lord Dorset in **A** was writing frankly to a limited audience, the British aristocratic government, while Duquesnoy in **C** was a deputy committed to the early revolution in the Constituent Assembly, speaking publicly and editing out negative violence. However, few candidates spotted Duquesnoy's reference to 'intense upheaval' which would establish a difference with Dorset's stress on little loss of life and no great damage. A key mistake of many was to pick up on Source **A**'s reference to the 'barbarity' of the killing of de Launay and his Britishness and assume the whole source to be negative in its view of revolutionary achievement, thus missing its essentially positive thrust and the general similarity with Source **C**. Both sources are clearly in favour of revolutionary change and stress its achievements, albeit from different perspectives. It is the similarity that is striking yet most missed this by taking out of context the killing of one man and by making 'stock' comments about Dorset's British nationality.
- (b) Often this was the weaker response of the two. Candidates seemed to struggle with the concept of 'public unrest' in relation to the sources, with some interpreting 'people' in its widest sense, including nobility and bourgeoisie in with the 'mob'. Sources **A** and **D** clearly linked unrest to political change. Source **A** is on Parisian unrest whilst **B**, on the Great Fear, clearly provided the context of rural unrest in the summer of 1789. Yet most candidates were unable to make the jump to their impact on change, nor could they use **C** to make the point that a 'liberal' Assembly was claiming to effect change and may well have been using or even encouraging events like the Great Fear. By October, in **D**, the historians are arguing that the Assembly had lost the initiative to the mob. It is vital on this topic to have an understanding of the chronology of events and of their impact on groups and institutions. Grouping the sources via a change in the driving force was a useful means of interpretation for an able minority. It enabled the speech in Source **C** to be put into the context of an Assembly very much aware of being watched by the mob, as claimed in Source **D**. There was much sequencing and paraphrasing or candidates simply wrote a general essay. Certainly few could handle (or knew of?) the possibility of a 'driving force' such as the ideas of a liberal nobility or clergy, the collapse of royal authority and the negative role and personal mistakes of the King or the ideas of the educated middle classes who dominated the National and Constitutional Assemblies. Even the sans-culottes were rarely mentioned. On Liberal ideas (or the Enlightenment) few were



able to use the considerable evidences of Sources **A**, **B**, and **C**. Sources **A** and **B** were clearly aristocratic and largely liberal in their views (limited monarchy, freedom, justice, a light touch on Feudal dues etc). Some candidates went beyond December 1789 (the Flight to Varennes was frequently and wrongly discussed).

## 2 The condition of England 1832-53

- (a) Generally done reasonably by most, although many clearly wanted one or the other of the sources to be from a 'physical force' Chartist instead of two 'moral force' ones. In terms of provenance candidates were expected to comment on how both stressed peaceful methods, Lovett in source B perhaps more successfully than Cooper in source B. The other key weakness here was a tendency to focus either on Chartist methods or on those of the authorities. The question asked for both and these were clearly delineated in the two sources. Weaker candidates lapsed into general description, failing to focus precisely on methods (the public-reading of newspapers, meetings, public resolutions and in Source D a riot). Weaker candidates seemed to struggle with the content of source D, failing to see Cooper's attempts to dissociate Chartism from riot.
- (b) Candidates were clearly well informed on Chartism and some impressive answers were read. However, own knowledge could take over and prevent the required focus on the sources which have much to say on the issues explaining the development of Chartism. Weaker candidates were hindered by their lack of understanding of what constitutional issues might be (had they studied the Charter without coming across reference to Constitution; could they not work it out from Source **C**'s reference to a 'constitutional right... to meet freely?') whilst others managed to get there in the end. Others were at a loss to provide or see in the sources any alternative factors, despite **C**'s steer on 'acute economic distress' and its reference to 'lack of provision made for the poor' followed up in **D** by an account of a workhouse riot in Leicester. One interpretation (arguably inaccurate) is to see Stephens in source **A** as specifically referring to 'knife and fork' questions ie economic and social issues. This question provided a good opportunity for candidates to see conflicting evidence in each source, a useful route for the able who were able to comment that all the sources came from Chartist leaders, all of whom took a predominantly political and constitutional view but that the dating (1838-42) and the appeal might suggest that support was a matter of exploiting economic and social issues. Candidates often failed to pick up on obvious evaluative points such as sources **B** and **D**'s commentary from hindsight (memoirs in the 1870s) when a political stance would be appropriate and chimed with their origin and focus anyway. Almost none commented on the title of Lovett's extract (the 'pursuit of Bread, Knowledge and Freedom', with 'Bread' coming first).

## 3 Italian Unification 1848-70

As usual this topic attracts some able candidates whose work was impressive, although perhaps less so than on previous occasions.

- (a) As is often the case, anything 'economic' tends to throw some candidates and this question proved no exception. There was more of a tendency to sequence rather than compare the information and a lack of detailed and close reading of it. This extended to the provenance where it was not unusual for candidates to miss the obvious point that source **B** is an economist referring to national economic problems, source **C** a Neapolitan historian with a regional perspective (confirmed by source **B**'s reference to the possibility of Naples and Sicily drifting away from a united kingdom). There was a surprising reluctance to focus comparatively on finance, industrial development lack of a national (or international) market, old-fashioned methods and

small scale enterprises, lack of a substantial peasant agriculture, rural violence etc. Some candidates understood source **B** but had more difficulty with source **C**. Clearly in some cases there is a lack of understanding of the 'South' or of concepts such as social backwardness.

- (b) Many managed a reasonable or competent answer here. Most used source **D** (Victor Emmanuel's 1871 Address to Parliament) as a starting point, recognising its summary nature and its pious and optimistic hopes for unity. Its limitations were clear to most, both due to its provenance and its limited focus on political unity), although not many saw the implication in the speech that much now needed to be done. The other sources were then integrated into an argument to greater or lesser extent. However, many candidates wanted to keep the focus on political unity, when sources **B** and **C**'s focus was on economic and social issues. Weak candidates wanted to unload prepared information on Cavour, Garibaldi and Mazzini despite the focus of the question being on the 1860s. Whilst there was something relevant to said about Mazzini and Garibaldi, an exclusive focus here distorted answers. Source **A** gave the most problems to candidates who could not decide whether it provided evidence of enforced and precipitate unity (in lines 5, 6 and 7) or disunity (lines 1 and 2). They failed to see the crucial linking material in the middle, the gradual approach to unity, or the steer which clearly states his gradual policy was abandoned. Evaluatively, few pointed out that as an Electoral Programme, it is merely a commentary. Contextual knowledge of economic, social and religious divisions were confined to information on the acquisition of Venice and Rome. Very little was known of the Constitution, of government or of administrative policies in the 1860s.

#### 4 The Origins of the American Civil War 1848-61

Answers to this question were very mixed.

- (a) Some candidates made very heavy weather of the comparison here, partly by missing the key issue for comparison, the reason for Northern opposition to secession (which annoyingly is frequently mis-spelt) but more especially struggling with how to use Lincoln in source **C** to answer the question. The essence of the comparison was the economic fear of the North in source **A** in juxtaposition to Lincoln's legal view that secession itself was an unconstitutional act and indeed there was no ground for southern fears regarding slavery. They failed to use the date to establish the context – that in source **A** Lincoln had just been elected and a trading post (Boston) is worried about southern embargoes and tariffs, whilst four months later Lincoln is looking to the wider constitutional issues as President in his Inaugural Address, following heightened sectional feeling and rumour.
- (b) The failure of some in part (a) to correctly identify Lincoln's position in source **C** carried over, with more seriousness into part (b). Here source **C** was important for demonstrating that Lincoln will brook no compromise whatsoever on the South's right to secede. Many rightly saw Lincoln as conciliatory over slavery, thus grouping sources **A**, **C** and **D** as evidence the war was explained chiefly by the South's failure to compromise. This left them with source **B** (Jefferson Davis) as their only evidence that this was not the case and that the North was determined to erode southern 'rights', when in fact the second half of **C** is clear evidence of the North's unwillingness to compromise over the issue of secession. Here candidates needed to think about the issues at stake in any compromise (expansion of the Union, slavery and property, economic differences, and the nature of the Union – secession). Too many simply glossed it as 'responsibility for the war' when a focus on the issues and on attempts at compromise would have been more appropriate. Better candidates were able to group the sources as above and to introduce pertinent own knowledge on compromises from Missouri to Crittenden, stressing that

the focus of the sources was on the period from Lincoln's election in November 1860 to the outbreak of Civil War in April 1861. Interestingly, no one seemed to know that the North had provocatively re-supplied Fort Sumter. If they had known this, the provenance of source **D** would have been enriched as more than just another subtle Northern attempt to pin the blame for hostilities on the South. Although it attempts fairness ('just rights of the South'; 'wrongs of the south') it clearly thinks attacking the fort started the war.

## 5 The Irish Question in the Age of Parnell 1877-93

- (a) There was much sequencing of this question by many, although a minority produced persuasive and intelligent comparisons. Surprisingly few picked up on tone, a clear way into assessing Parnell's character. The sources are remarkably similar in the way they comment, even using the same word – 'proud'. Indeed most candidates were better at picking up similarities than differences. Some struggled with the provenance of source **C**, mistakenly thinking him to have little experience of the 1880s, despite the steer in the introduction. Political journalists are clearly something of an unknown breed to many candidates. Source **B**, Davitt, should have been more familiar but few seemed to be aware of the uneasy alliance between him and Parnell which gave added bite to the comment 'never a revolutionary in thought or act' and could be used to stress his Parliamentary Westminster preferences referred to in source **C**. Again the dates were not well used (both are post Parnell's death, one post Partition).
- (b) More impressive answers were seen here with the sources at the centre of the debate. Much depended on candidates establishing criteria to establish Parnell's effectiveness as leader. Here the sources provided plenty of leads, Churchill in source **D** referring in a surprisingly positive light in retrospect to the contradictions in his leadership, **B** and **C** to his parliamentary campaign (with Davitt in source **B** hinting at the alliance with the more revolutionary Land League) and Parnell himself in Source **A** in one of his most famous of speeches, clearly providing evidence of his oratory, although few picked up the cue for its effectiveness (cheers and applause). Weaker candidates failed to see the significance of much of this – the more hidden agenda and careful commentary of Davitt; the nuanced approach of Parnell himself and especially the context of sources **C** and **D**, the rather hostile journalist, and Churchill, the latter's comments being highly apt given his own oratory, agenda, greatness and personal background (his father a key opponent of Home Rule and supporter of Unionism). Most successfully grouped **B** and **D** as largely positive on his leadership, **C** as more hostile, although only a minority could see the O'Shea divorce case as a possible key to this (mentioned by source **C** but significantly not by sources **B** and **D**). In general candidates were weak on contextual knowledge, only some venturing much beyond the material on offer in the sources or following the leads (on Parnell's relationship with his lieutenants and the Irish Revolutionary Party).

## 6 England in a New Century 1900-18

- (a) Whilst most candidates grasped the basics of the comparison here (it was, after all, the two main protagonists in the debate, Asquith and Joseph Chamberlain at the beginning of the campaign for hearts and minds), the subtleties eluded most. For example, most asserted that Chamberlain's argument was based around protecting the working class from unemployment. In fact he only implicitly refers to this when commenting on the threat posed by foreign exports. His focus is on the historic memory and linkage of free trade with low prices and therefore low wages, a free market and the obstacle posed to this by workers' trade unions. From this followed low taxation and the inability of the state to address welfare issues. As such it

contrasts with Asquith, whose stress is on high prices for workers, a trade war, and unemployment through different means. Whilst most appreciated Asquith's points, Chamberlain's argument was second guessed, often wrongly. Few commented that he was significantly quiet on food prices. On provenance candidates knew the Liberal background of Asquith in source **B** but seemed unaware that Chamberlain had just resigned from the Conservative government to pursue his Tariff campaign, or of the potential significance of Liverpool (as a port its dockers were involved in imports and exports, although a few good candidates commented on its role in the cotton industry, stressing low raw material prices for the crucial Lancashire cotton trade).

- (b) This question was poorly answered. There was much muddle over foreign competition and what it might mean. Clearly candidates did not understand Britain's economic position in the period and failed to pick up on it when specifically referred to and analysed in a variety of forms by all four sources. As a result they were unable to pick up on the domestic emphases of the debate (the price of food in source **A**, wages, bargaining and welfare in source **B**, unemployment in source **C** and the Empire in both sources **A** and **D**) to provide a balanced argument. It is clear from the sources, and especially the overview provided by the historian in source **D**, that foreign competition took a back seat in the debate, although a possible line of argument, taken by few, was that competition was taken seriously only by some politicians and economists. The populace as a whole and the working class in particular seemed not to have warmed to these, seeing in it only higher prices, which is what source **A** intended them to see. The other weakness in answering this question was lack of own knowledge and/or an understanding of the period. This prevented an extended argument, rendering comment on other 'factors' as brief and skeletal as that on foreign competition. It also had a serious impact upon the evaluation of the sources. For example, few seemed to know what the Tariff Reform League was in source **C** so could not comment on the reliability of its view. Similarly in source **B** Chamberlain's comments on a free market and trade unionism were lost and certainly could not be extended through own knowledge of the Chinese slavery issue, an indirect consequence of 'Chamberlain's Boer War', which may have pre-occupied active workers and unions far more than the issue of foreign competition. Also the issue of 'who pays' for welfare reform (foreign imports or the domestic rich) was not followed up as an issue arising from Tariff Reform, nor the interesting historical assessment in source **D** that Tariff Reform would not have been able to facilitate industrial reconstruction and realignment. In all a disappointing and one dimensional approach to this question.

## 7 Nazi Germany 1933-45

Answers to this very popular question were decidedly mixed. A few excellent responses were seen but also much that was mediocre and fell into the traps outlined in the general comments. It was felt that most were unsuited to an early January entry.

- (a) Most had a fair stab at comparing the sources although many failed to think about the focus of comparison, Hitler's style of leadership. Indeed some got trapped into an irrelevant debate as to whether he was yet the leader. Those who were familiar with the phrase 'working towards the Fuhrer' had no problem with source **A** but those who were not failed to appreciate its significance. Some candidates, aware of torture and the Gestapo, did not spare us the detail of the phrase 'those... will notice it soon enough', a clear misinterpretation of what was said. Many missed the context of source **A**, assuming it to be critical of Hitler (and thus similar in the wrong sense to source **C**) when all it is doing is attempting to justify a lack of written orders perhaps justifiable in 1934. It is defending Hitler who clearly cannot be expected to oversee every detail. Source **C** was better understood and most realised the contrast (yet

essential similarity) between the two sources. However source **C** was peculiarly prone to stock evaluation, dismissed as being the product of poor memory. Better were those who pointed out that such perception was perhaps convenient by the 1960s but nonetheless accurate, especially as it chimed with the public justification in 1934 in source **A**. Thus one had the private and public face of Hitler's style in administrative forms. There was also some considerable gender stereotyping. Willikens and Wiedemann were both seen as female secretaries. Clearly a State Secretary and a personal assistant could still, for some in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, only be women, despite their first names being Werner and Fritz. Some candidates truncated quotations, lifting them out of context. In source **A** for example a common error was to say "Germany has worked best when he has". By ending here the source was completely misinterpreted.

- (b)** Answers here were more varied. Weaker candidates had clearly not encountered the issue of Hitler's relationship to government and administration. The phrase 'master of the Third Reich' puzzled them. At the other extreme some very knowledgeable candidates seized on the different but related debate between Structuralists and Intentionalists. Once writing about this they lost sight of the sources and the question, becoming ever more irrelevant. Most arrived at the Holocaust and dwelt too long therein. We cannot emphasize enough that we do not set questions on historiographical debates. Whilst there was something of relevance here, diversion could and did lead to underachievement. Better candidates grouped the sources into those which suggested power and some purpose and planning (sources **A** and **B**) and those which pointed out his diffidence and inability to decide (sources **C** and **D**). This proved an effective route into evaluation, as **A** and **B** were from the 1930s and constituted the public face of Hitler in the Third Reich, whilst **C** and **D** were post-war sources, one an involved contemporary, the other a historian whose view is that power infinitely dissolved. Nonetheless all but source **B** can bear different interpretations for those willing to probe. Hitler's casual attitude in source **C** can be thus seen as reinforcing rather than detracting from his power. An able few were able to reconcile the above by pointing out that Hitler 'displayed authority but not leadership'. Clearly he was 'master' as Peterson in source **D** confirms with his comment on the ambitious seeking to please him, but on policy and practice he could be persuaded on anything from economic policy to euthanasia. What was particularly disappointing for many examiners was the almost complete reliance on the sources. Very little own knowledge was seen to extend the points made. Much could have been used with profit. Those that did could cite Hitler and the economy, Hitler and the military, Hitler on youth and women or Hitler on euthanasia and Hitler on anti-Semitism. Such examples enriched the evidence in the sources on Hitler's control of the Reich, as did information which saw a purpose in Hitler's apparent diffidence (the neo Darwinism of the struggle of ideas and those below him, whose purpose would win through the struggle to get noticed and approved). Alas, this was rarely seen. Some drifted from the question, writing about the extent to which a dictatorship was established rather than the extent to which Hitler was in control of it. There were many examples of Hitler being seen in very extreme terms. Because Weidemann in source **C** said Hitler let things 'sort themselves out', "Hitler never made any of the decisions in the Third Reich". There is here little sense of change over time or of Hitler keeping key decisions to himself. Many candidates used the White Rose Group, the Bidelweiss Pirates and the 1944 plot as proof Hitler could not be 'master' as not everyone supported him, as though he required personal approbation from every German. Such information was inappropriate for the question. Language was often carelessly employed. Hitler was described as 'laid back' and 'relaxed', hardly the right words to describe his leadership. Many candidates confused assertion with evidence, thus there were comments that Hitler was weak because he got up late, that he failed to control the Reich because he allowed Himmler to control the SS. All told, a very mixed bag indeed.

## **2583 - 2584 English History**

### **General Comments**

The number of candidates taking the two papers was very similar and it is pleasing that a significant number of students are studying areas other than the Twentieth Century. However, it was noticeable, particularly on the Medieval and Early Modern paper, that the range of topics studied appears to be narrower than in previous sessions. There certainly appeared to be a decline in the number of candidates studying the Fifteenth Century and there were virtually no answers on the Social and Economic problems in any of the periods. This contrasted with the increase in those studying the Norman Conquest or the Early Tudor period. Although a similar pattern emerged on the Modern paper it was not as noticeable. There were very few topics with a very small number of candidates, although Foreign policy in the Nineteenth Century and the later Twentieth Century options drew few answers. The most popular topics were the Early Nineteenth Century Domestic and the Twentieth Century Inter-War Domestic issues.

Many examiners, on both papers, commented that the overall quality of the answers appeared to have declined, particularly at the top end. However, there were still some candidates who produced very good answers, showing a depth of both understanding of the historical issues and knowledge that was most refreshing. This contrasted with a large number of weak answers, where knowledge was almost absent and historical skills were very poor. Candidates should be aware of the need for factually accurate material. There were too many instances of confused dates or legislation being used to sustain an argument and this detracts from the overall quality of the answer. Centres do need to ensure that the factual grasp of their candidates is secure and should be looking at methods that will encourage this.

One of the biggest reasons for the underperformance of many candidates was their failure to focus on the precise demands of the question. Many see the topic area and simply write all they know about the topic, whilst others do take an analytical approach, but do not look carefully at the key words or phrases in the question. There were numerous examples of candidates tailoring their answers to questions that had been set in the past; this was particularly noticeable with question 18b on the Medieval and Early Modern paper where many explained the reasons for the failure to reach a settlement, rather than why Charles was executed. This failure to focus on the precise wording will result in candidates not achieving the grade they might otherwise have done. Centres would be well advised to spend time with candidates on the essential skill of breaking a question down into its components and ensuring that they highlight the key word or phrase before they start writing. It does often appear that centres have drilled candidates and encouraged them to learn essay plans that are then used, regardless of the question. Candidates would be better advised to have spent their time discussing the Key Issues highlighted in the Specification as all the questions are derived directly from them and they should therefore be able to frame a plan to fit the question if this has been done. In a similar vein candidates do need to pay attention to dates in the question and again ensure they focus on the period asked. This was very noticeable with question 11a on the Medieval and Early Modern paper, where too many candidates did not see the importance of the death of Henry VIII and focused on the early part of his reign, sometimes to the exclusion of the 1540s.

Examiners do want candidates to reach a judgement in their essays and not simply to reproduce a list of factors. Most Sixth Form students have opinions about every topic and centres should encourage their students to show this in the examination. If the Key Issues have been studied, the questions should not raise issues that candidates had not previously considered and debated, therefore they should be able to put forward their views about the issue raised. There are still too many candidates who use phrases such 'it might be said that' or 'it might be thought that' or 'it might be concluded that'; it is vital that they make clear what they think. Similarly they should be discouraged from learning the views of different historians or schools of historians and

simply describing them in their answers. They will gain credit if they use historians to support their argument, but will gain little for simply running through a list of different views.

Centres should, by now, be familiar with the types of question set on these papers, but some centres and candidates still seem unaware of the skills that need to be demonstrated if the higher levels are to be achieved. There is a significant difference between 'comment' and 'analysis', the latter is a sustained and developed argument and an essential feature of the top levels. In the same way, 'evaluation' or 'assessment' still causes some confusion. Candidates will not score high level marks if their evaluative comment is bolted on to the end of a paragraph. Examiners expect the candidate to have demonstrated and explained why a particular factor is, or is not, important in explaining the event under consideration. The generic mark scheme is skills based and it is therefore vital that candidates have spent time developing the analytical skills required for this paper. It would appear that many candidates have a vast array of factual knowledge, but do not know how to deploy it effectively. Centres do need to teach candidates the skills needed for this paper and it would be particularly advisable if more classroom time was spent discussing and debating the relative importance of factors in explaining an event. The same is true of candidates establishing links between factors, many answers do little more than produce a shopping list of learnt reasons for an event and do not show how they link to explain it, simply assert that they do. These skills are vital for success on this paper and Centres would be well advised to examine their Schemes of Work to see where and how these skills are being taught. It might also be worth remembering, and reminding candidates, that this is building on skills that they will have required for GCSE. We would not expect candidates to master document skills without being taught what is required and the same should be true of essay skills. Previous reports for Units 2585 and 2586 have given detailed advice about the requirements for the different types of questions candidates encounter and Centres should refer back to these for detailed guidance about the precise expectations from examiners for the different types of questions asked.

The quality of the written work still gives cause for concern. There has been no noticeable improvement in the quality of spelling or grammar and although the quality of English will not alone determine the grade a candidate receives, there are times when their inability to communicate in a clear and effective manner will blur their argument or explanation. We need to do all we can to encourage candidates to read more widely as this can have only a positive impact on the quality of written work that we see.

## **English History 1042-1660**

### **England 1042-1100**

#### **1. The Reign of Edward the Confessor 1042-1066**

- (a) There were a few answers to this question and it was competently handled by most, although candidates preferred to dwell on issues such as Edward's relationship with the earls, and were less sure when it came to considering the structural issues relating to Edward's monarchical powers. However, in some instances it was apparent that candidates were reproducing prepared, where most began along the lines of 'This essay will.....These will be listed (sic) in priority order. This essay will refer to historians such as.....' This approach often prevents more able candidates from achieving their potential and is not to be encouraged.
- (b) Although this was not a popular option there were some successful responses. However, a significant number did not address sufficiently the second half of the reign in their analysis.

## **2 The Norman Conquest of England 1064-1072**

- (a) This was by far the most popular of all the questions in this section and drew a wide range of responses in terms of quality. At the lower end candidates knew little about the Scandinavian invasion of England and tended to concentrate their answers on a narrative about the Battle of Hastings. However, there were a number of good answers that considered a range of factors for William's victory, including the Scandinavian invasion, the preparations of William, the mistakes of Harold and luck. At the very top end candidates were not only able to explain the relative importance of these factors, but they were able to make good links between the factors, showing particularly how Harold's mistakes in handling the northern invasion aided William and how the role of luck, through the changing direction of the wind coincided with the northern invasion. In some instances a clearer chronological understanding of the events would have helped some candidates and allowed them to support their ideas with precise examples.
- (b) Although a number of candidates tackled this question, there were very few answers in the highest bands. This was due to a variety of reasons. Some candidates did not have the precise evidence of the unrest to support their ideas and therefore relied on vague assertions, others were sidetracked into an answer that focused on why the rebellions were unsuccessful. There were some answers that simply described the unrest and therefore dealt with the causes only by implication. There were very few who were able to identify precise reasons for the unrest, many simply stated it was inevitable because William was a foreigner. Knowledge of the unrest was often superficial and candidates would be well advised to ensure they know specific examples.

## **3 Norman England 1066-1100**

- (a) There were not enough answers to make valid comments.
- (b) There were not enough answers to make valid comments.

## **4 Society, Economy and Culture 1042-1100**

- (a) There were not enough answers to make valid comments.
- (b) There were not enough answers to make valid comments.

## **England 1450-1509**

### **5 The Threat to Order and Authority 1450-1470**

- (a) This was not a popular question and when it was tackled most candidates lacked a good knowledge of the Council. Most were able to provide a competent paragraph on its role, but then gave over the bulk of their answer to an assessment of other parts of the governmental system e.g. Parliament, local government structures. Comparisons to the Council were rare in such responses.
- (b) There were some attempts to answer this question and the overall standard was somewhat mixed. Many candidates lacked specific examples of problems with the nobility and therefore tended to rely on generalisations. However, most were able to make reference to the problems created by the Woodville marriage, although this could often have been further developed. The other example that was frequently used was that of Warwick, although in some instance the knowledge of his role was



limited or superficial. Candidates should have been able to explain that Edward's split with Warwick, supported by Clarence, was a major reason for the end of Edward's first reign.

## **6 The End of the Yorkists 1471-1485**

- (a) This was quite a popular question, but there are still some candidates who draw information from the first reign of Edward and therefore do not gain credit for the points being made. There were a large number of issues that might have been considered and many chose to focus on the issue of the succession and Edward's failure to secure it, although this was balanced against his early and unexpected death. This issue was often compared with the success he had in handling royal finances or the lack of rebellion he faced. Most were aware that Edward had not destroyed the power of the nobles and often relied too heavily on his own strong personality to keep them in check. Candidates were also able to make use of the legacy of the Woodville marriage and the resulting hostility.
- (b) There were a few answers to this question and most produced a balanced answer considering both the creditable and uncreditable qualities in his kingship. On the negative side candidates considered his untrustworthy, ambitious and murderous nature, with particular emphasis being given to the disappearance of the Princes in the Tower. Some candidates were also able to show how he had alienated many of the nobility and used the Buckingham rebellion to support this line of argument. When dealing with the positive aspects of his reign many candidates were aware of the general argument, but were unable to support this with specific examples and this resulted in unsubstantiated claims. Candidates might have considered his reputation as a law-giver, his meeting with parliament and methods of raising money. This is quite a narrow topic and therefore candidates should have a reasonable depth of knowledge about these issues.

## **7 The Reign of Henry VII**

- (a) This was a popular question and attracted a wide range of responses. There was no requirement for a balance between medieval and modern, what mattered was the quality of the argument. Although candidates are not expected to have detailed knowledge of previous or successive monarchs, many candidates did, and this allowed some very good evaluation of the developments under Henry to take place. The focus for many was the question of finance and the use of a variety of Councils. However, there were some answers that considered his management of the nobility and the nature of government, with the possible growth of a bureaucracy being considered. In assessing this many concluded that the majority of his methods were not new, but what did change was the intensity with which the methods were used or the reorganisation of old methods that took place. Some answers also considered the issue of foreign policy and argued that his more peaceful policy was a modern approach, this was less successful, but where candidates did consider the growing importance of trade as a factor they did gain credit.
- (b) This was a very popular question, but many candidates did not read the question carefully and focused on a slightly different question, assessing the success of his financial policy and not linking it to his success as king. There were a large number of issues that could be considered and the better answers evaluated a range of factors and made clear links, particularly between his securing of the succession, foreign policy and finance. Many argued that financial success allowed him the forces to defeat opposition, or that he used foreign policy to raise money or to help him secure his succession. Other answers also showed that there was a clear link

between his handling of the royal finances and the reduction in the power of the nobility, which allowed him to increase his power and secure the succession. There was a good awareness of his financial success and many were able to see how important it was in securing respect and therefore his throne. Candidates were able to point to the financial legacy he left his son as vital, but it was better when this was linked to the restoration of the prestige of the monarchy.

## **8 Social and Economic Issues 1450-1509**

- (a) There were not enough answers to make valid comments.
- (b) There were not enough answers to make valid comments.

## **England 1509-1558**

### **9 Henry and Wolsey 1509-1529**

- (a) This was a very popular question and produced a wide range of answers. There were a large number of answers that ignored either the early years of Henry's rule or the latter part of the period and thus produced answers that were not well balanced. These answers tended to concentrate on The Field of the Cloth of Gold and the Treaty of London. Better answers were able to establish criteria against which to judge whether the policy was a success and a number were able to differentiate between long and short term achievements and also between the degrees of success at different times of Henry's rule. Knowledge of England's changing relations in the 1520s continues to be sketchy and candidates would be well advised to acquaint themselves with the developments. Answers that focused on events after Wolsey's rise to power also missed out the early successes of Henry's reign and again limited the scope of their argument.
- (b) This was a popular question and it resulted in a number of solid, and some very good, answers. The key to the better answers appeared to be an ability to identify Wolsey's aims in domestic administration and judge his policies against those aims. Many candidates argued that Wolsey's major concern was to please Henry and because the King's concern was foreign policy, Wolsey's main task was to fund it. These candidates therefore considered how successful he was in that sphere. Most candidates were able to write with a reasonable degree of knowledge about the legal and financial changes under Wolsey, although more precise details in both spheres would have helped some answers. There was some attention to the changes made by Wolsey to the church and consideration of his social policy, particularly over enclosure, where a number of candidates were able to argue that his aims were not achieved as he had to abandon the policy in order to raise money. There were some answers that looked at changes like the Eltham Ordinances to see if Wolsey achieved his aim of domination and this provided another valid area of assessment.

### **10 Government, Politics and Foreign Affairs 1529-1558**

- (a) This was not a popular question, but answers that tackled this focused heavily on the financial consequences of the wars and the problems this created.
- (b) This question produced a number of answers and candidates were much better at considering the policies of Somerset and Northumberland than the methods of government. In considering the policies, most answers were quite wide ranging, taking in social policy, finance and administration. Most answers argued that there were significant differences in their policies and suggested that Northumberland's

were more successful, although this latter point was not required. When methods of government were considered some were able to distinguish between the more personal rule of Somerset, seen in his use of Proclamations, and Northumberland's greater use of Council.

## **11 Church and State 1529-1558**

- (a) This was a popular question and resulted in a considerable range of answers. At the bottom end, candidates did not move away from telling the story of the Henrician Reformation and often finished in 1539, thus failing to focus on the key issue of the question, the end of Henry's reign. Better answers did assess the situation in the 1540s and also looked at both the legal or official position. They also looked at the local level and the beliefs of the ordinary people. Although issues such as the Break with Rome ended links with the Catholic church many candidates assumed that this automatically made England protestant. However, there were some better answers that argued both the break with Rome and the Dissolution were for other motives and that Henry's own beliefs were always Catholic, as shown by the burnings for denying transubstantiation or money left for masses for his soul. This was often balanced against the potential for the development of Protestantism with the upbringing of Edward and the Regency Council.
- (b) This was much less popular than (a), but there were a number of encouraging answers that displayed a good knowledge of the religious changes under both Somerset and Northumberland. Some better answers looked beyond Edward's reign to Mary's and argued that the ease with which she restored Catholicism is a clear indication that Protestantism had never been securely established. Some other answers pointed to the Western rebellion as further resistance, but those who also used Kett's rebellion to support their argument need a clearer grasp of the aims of the rebels. These failings under Somerset were frequently contrasted with the lack of unrest under Northumberland, but some argued this was simply due to the harshness of his rule and should not be used to judge the effectiveness of his policies.

## **12 Social and Economic Issues 1509-1558**

- (a) There were not enough answers to make valid comments
- (b) There were not enough answers to make valid comments.

## **13 Church and State 1547-1603**

- (a) This was not a popular question and candidates appeared unsure about the term 'popular support'. Answers tended to focus on the issue of the Marian burnings, but knowledge and interpretation here was very limited. There was some mention of the popular acclaim for Mary on her accession and the ease with which legislation passed parliament, but in many instances candidates did not have the required knowledge.
- (b) This was not a popular question, although those that did tackle it were usually able to identify some reasons for the problems of English Catholics in maintaining their religion. However, the answers tended to be in a list form, with little attempt to evaluate the relative importance of factors. Examination reports have, for many years, stressed the need for candidates to evaluate the importance of factors in

these type of questions, but many candidates are still failing to do this and therefore denying themselves the opportunity to reach the highest levels.

#### **14 Foreign Affairs 1547-1587**

- (a) This was not as popular as question (b) and the standard of responses was also disappointing. Many answers found it surprisingly difficult to identify the aims of Elizabeth's foreign policy and this obviously limited the scope of the answer. For those who were able to identify her aims, the issue of security dominated and this was often linked to Spain, the Netherlands, France and Scotland, providing a useful means of establishing links. Some candidates argued that trade was a crucial factor, but they found this argument difficult to sustain. Very few considered the issue of religion.
- (b) This question produced a number of good answers as candidates displayed a generally sound understanding, although the very early years of Elizabeth's reign did cause some confusion. Answers considered the issue of security, succession relations with France and religion as being the most important concerns and were frequently able to link this to the person of Mary Queen of Scots. As with question 13(b), candidates do need to be aware of the term 'assess'. They should try to prioritise factors, not simply assert that this was the most important reason or this was less important - it needs to be demonstrated.

#### **15 Government and Politics in Elizabethan England 1558-1603**

- (a) This was not a popular question, although those that did attempt it were able to use a good range of examples to support their argument. Many were aware of the debate surrounding the last years of Elizabeth's rule and were able to incorporate this successfully into their answers. Issues considered included finance, her relations with parliament, unrest and Ireland. The answers could have been further developed by placing the problems she faced in context and suggesting that given their scale Elizabeth did remarkably well.
- (b) This was not a popular question and candidates who tackled it, found it very challenging. The idea of the 'power of the monarchy' appeared to be a very difficult concept and candidates tended to write very superficially or generally about Elizabeth or her personality or systems of government.

#### **16 Social and Economic Issues 1547-1603**

- (a) There were not enough answers to make valid comments.
- (b) There were not enough answers to make valid comments.

#### **England 1603-1660**

#### **17 Politics and Religion 1603-1629**

- (a) There were a few answers to this question, but the quality was limited, in many instances because candidates were unclear about the concept of 'royal prerogative'. Most were able to write about opposition within Parliament, but failed to link this to the idea of the royal prerogative, even where there were obvious links, as for example over foreign policy. Answers sometimes drifted into areas such as Divine Right or wrote generally the conflict between King and parliament.

- (b) There were a number of answers to this question and some candidates were able to evaluate the relative importance of factors. Many answers blamed the legacy of Elizabeth for the problems, whilst others looked at the lack of trust between monarch and parliament to explain the failure to solve the issue. Candidates did have enough knowledge of the responsibility of James and Charles for the problems and supported their arguments clearly.

## **18 Personal Rule and Civil War 1629-1649**

- (a) This was the most popular question in this section of the paper and it attracted a very wide range of responses. At the lower end many answers focused on the period of Personal Rule and did not get beyond the calling of the Short Parliament and therefore did not explain reasons for the outbreak of the Civil War. Many candidates did not know enough about religion and wrote a very superficial paragraph about it before going on to consider other issues. At the top end, candidates focused on the developments of 1640-2 and displayed a very good understanding of the events and were able to explain links between factors. These answers were also characterised by an ability to explain that there could not have been a Civil War before the emergence of a Royalist party and gave due attention to that. Many argued that it was the attempt to arrest the Five Members that made Civil War inevitable and this produced a clear line of argument. In considering the role of religion, better answers were able to link the summoning of parliament in 1640 to the religious problems in Scotland and also linked the concern over the command of the army in Ireland to religious disputes. However, some candidates do need a much more secure chronology of the events between 1640 and 1642 if they are to be able to draw valid conclusions from the changes. A significant number of candidates left out crucial developments or got them in the wrong order. Once again, when a large number of events happen in a short space of time many candidates would benefit from a timeline that they then learn thoroughly.
- (b) This question also attracted a significant number of answers, and as with (a) it drew a wide range of responses. Unfortunately, weaker candidates got drawn into a long account of the reasons for the First Civil War and gave the Second either limited or no attention. Some answers were also unable to explain how and why the events they considered resulted in the execution of Charles, but simply asserted that it did. However, at the top end there were some excellent evaluative answers, where candidates were able to link together factors to produce a clear and coherent argument. The Second Civil War as a cause of Charles' execution was less confidently handled by many than other issues, but those who did discuss it pointed to the idea of Charles as a man of blood and unable to be trusted as reasons for his execution. Many candidates did not focus clearly enough on the idea of his execution and instead answered the question from a previous paper about failure to reach a settlement; once again candidates must be encouraged to answer the actual question set.

## **19 The Interregnum**

- (a) There were a few answers to this question, but it was not as popular as (b). Candidate's knowledge was, on the whole, rather limited or superficial and few were able to access the higher levels as they did not evaluate the relative importance of factors. It was pleasing that very few answers went back before 1649, nor did candidates go beyond 1653. Most candidates were able to explain the problems of the Rump and the role of the army, but many ignored the issue of Barebone's Parliament.

- (b) There were a significant number of answers to this question and candidates were able to explain a good range of factors. Most concentrated on the period after the death of Oliver Cromwell, although some good answers did point out that the concept of monarchy had always been popular with a significant number, even during Cromwell's rule. Many answers considered the failure of Richard Cromwell and the actions of Monck and Charles to be the key factors in the Restoration and they were certainly able to establish links between Monck and Charles. It was pleasing to see that in this question a significant number of candidates were able to explain the relative importance of factors with many suggesting that without the actions of Monck, Charles' actions would have been an irrelevance and also that it was Cromwell's death that was the start of the process.

## **20 Society and Economy 1603-1660**

- (a) There were not enough answers to this question to make valid comments.
- (b) There were not enough answers to this question to make valid comments.

## **England 1780-1964**

### **England 1780-1846**

#### **1 The Age of Pitt and Liverpool**

- (a) This was a very popular question and produced some very good answers, which displayed a high level of understanding and were able to evaluate the relative importance of a range of factors and draw substantial links between them. Many candidates were able to explain a range of reasons for Pitt's domination of politics in the period from 1783 to 1793. Answers were able to explain the importance of royal support, often making reference to Pitt's initial appointment, his unwillingness to respect royal wishes over Parliamentary Reform and to his departure over Catholic Emancipation. This factor was weighed up against a variety of other issues. In particular, candidates often considered the weakness of the Whig's and George III's dislike of them; better answers linked this factor to the issue of the Regency Crisis to show the importance of royal support for Pitt's domination. There was a good understanding of the Hanoverian political system and this was reflected in the comments made about royal patronage and the importance of George III in the 1784 election. Candidates also considered the success of Pitt's economic and financial policies, but there was a tendency to drift into a description of his policies, rather than explain how they contributed to his domination.
- (b) This question attracted fewer answers, perhaps because many were uncertain about the importance of the Queen Caroline affair. Many answers struggled to write in significant depth about its challenge to the government of Lord Liverpool. The better answers were able to argue that in the short-term it did present a challenge as it united parliamentary opposition, rallied the disaffected, allowed the monarchy to be discredited and threatened the very future of Liverpool's government. However, her death in 1821 removed the problem and Liverpool was able to reshuffle his government in 1822 and emerge stronger. Most answers dealt with the issue superficially and concentrated on other factors such as the economic problems and the radical threats of the period. The weaker answers tended to describe the radical problems of the Luddites or Peterloo, rather than assess their threat. Some of the better answers argued that the greatest threat came from the legacy of the Napoleonic Wars, creating both an industrial and economic crisis that would lead to

the rise of radicalism and this proved a successful response and allowed candidates to link factors together.

## **2 War and Peace 1793-1841**

- (a) There were not enough answers to this question to make valid comments.
- (b) There were not enough answers to this question to make valid comments

## **3 The Age of Peel 1829-1846**

- (a) This question was more popular than (b) and saw a wide range of responses. At the very top candidates were able to present a balanced view considering not only the dispute over mainstream policies such as the Corn Laws or Maynooth, but also the management of his party, the threats to resign and the 1841 election. However, the better answers showed that Peel did have some success in his management of the party in the 1840s and his reconstruction of the party after Catholic Emancipation and the Great Reform Act. There were some very good answers that were able to analyse the 1841 election results and argued that Peel's attempt to broaden the base of the party had actually failed. These answers also argued that Peel should have realised that his victory was based on traditional Tory values and on MPs from the agricultural south of England, suggesting that the Tamworth Manifesto had little practical impact. Some answers also argued that the rebuilding of the party was not due to Peel but others within the party and that he constantly ignored the feelings of his backbenchers. Weaker answers focused particularly on the Corn Law Crisis and Catholic Emancipation, but with the latter failed to realise that Peel was not leader of the party in 1829. At the lower end candidates were unable to link material on the Factory Acts to the question. There was little consideration of his first premiership or the Bedchamber Crisis, yet these could have been used to show how he did help to rebuild the party and therefore help to produce a balanced argument.
- (b) There were some good answers to this question. Most candidates agreed with the proposition in the question, but many did struggle to support their arguments with precise details from the budgets. Most answers were superficial in their treatment and lacked the precise supporting detail that might be expected. When the budgets were considered, the focus was on the issue of income tax. Knowledge of the lowering of duties and their impact on creating prosperity and killing radicalism was lacking and something of a disappointment. Very few answers were able to challenge the proposition and argue that the impact of the Budgets was limited and that the prosperity was due to other factors, such as railways, and therefore suggest that there were other more successful reforms. Most answers were able to discuss the Banking and Company Reforms and argue that they increased confidence and therefore helped to stimulate the growth in the economy. Some answers discussed Factory Reform or Irish Reforms, but this was less common and the analysis of their impact was often superficial. There were some answers that focused heavily on the Corn Laws and argued that they were the most important as they brought cheap food and helped to destroy radicalism, such as Chartism, particularly in the longer term. However, this view was frequently not balanced by a consideration of other areas of reform and these candidates appeared to be expecting an essay solely on the Repeal of the Corn Laws.

## **4 The Economy and Industrialisation 1780-1846**

- (a) This question produced a reasonable number of responses. Although most candidates were able to explain the importance of road, canal and rail transport, very few picked up on the fact that the development of rail transport occurred only

towards the end of the period in question and therefore canals were crucial in the early stages of industrialisation. Some answers ignored the end date of 1846 and drew their evidence from after the period and therefore drew the wrong conclusions. However, there were some answers that realised that the growth in rail investment took place in the last ten years of the period in question and therefore argued that canals were important as they allowed the cheap movement of bulk goods. This could have been balanced against the fact that by the end of the period the foundations for the dominance of the rail industry was there, but it could also have been noted that rail companies were buying up canals, suggesting that they were still important.

- (b) This was quite a popular question and drew a wide range of responses. At the lower end candidates described the process of enclosure and the different types, without linking it to its impact on the rural economy, or they simply analysed the impact of enclosure without considering other factors. However, at the higher levels candidates were able to weigh up the impact of enclosure against factors such as population increase, rural poverty and the introduction of machinery. These factors allowed better candidates to draw links and therefore access the highest levels. Many concluded that the population rise was the most serious problem and linked it to rural poverty. A number of candidates argued that mechanisation was the most serious problem, but ignored the fact that cheap labour, due to the population rise, and the cost of the machines limited the purchasing of them. However, some balanced this against the rioting and machine breaking that took place to support their argument.

## **Britain 1846-1906**

### **5 Whigs and Liberals 1846-1874**

- (a) This was a popular question and there were many high level responses. Most candidates were able to explain a number of reasons for the dominance of Palmerston during the period from 1855 to 1865; these included the weakness of the Conservative Party, the loss of the Peelites, Palmerston's popular policies, particularly his foreign policy, and the mid-Victorian prosperity. There was much scope for the linking of these factors and this was successfully achieved by many candidates. Candidates were able to evaluate the relative importance of these factors and reach a judgement. There were very few answers that simply described the policies followed. The weakest area for many was the emergence of the Liberal party in 1859 and few commented on the emergence of Gladstone.
- (b) This question caused some candidates difficulty as they were unable to deal with the issue of 'popular' and answers often focused on the reforms of his First Ministry. This need not have been a limiting approach, but many simply considered each reform and described who it annoyed or pleased, rather than looking at different groups in society and considering how popular Gladstonian Liberalism was with each. It was also interesting to note that most candidates were unable to explain what was meant by Gladstonian Liberalism, few answers mentioned the ideas of peace, retrenchment, moderate reform, free trade and an internationalist foreign policy. There was also very little reference to the appeal of Gladstonian Liberalism among the non-conformists, which was something of a surprise. The question did seem to lead to many making sweeping generalisations and not looking at the appeal of Gladstonian Liberalism with different groups; this may have been because it was not the question that most candidates were hoping for, hence the frequent focus on the traditional question of a 'great reforming ministry'.

### **6 The Conservatives 1846-1880**



- (a) This was a popular question and certainly attracted more responses, and a higher level, than (b). Most candidates were able to explain a wide range of reasons, writing in reasonable detail about the impact of the loss of Peel and his followers. The most common approach was to explain the loss of talent as being crucial and link this to the remnant of the Tory party, consisting of backwoodsmen, with the talented, but untrustworthy Disraeli. Many also argued that it left the Tory party tied to protectionism at the very time free trade was bringing about prosperity and that it would take time for Disraeli to be able to abandon it. These issues were contrasted with the weak leadership of Derby, the dominance and appeal of Palmerston and the development of the Liberal party. Candidates were able to show that the failings of the 1852 Conservative ministry did little to help their cause.
- (b) This question was less popular and produced some very weak answers. Many candidates were unable to focus on the idea of 'a belief in stability at home' and were confused by the term. As a result many answers simply described or analysed Disraeli's reforms, assuming that this was the issue of stability, and compared their success with his foreign policy. Some slightly better answers were able to mention the Crystal Palace or Manchester Speeches and make limited reference to upholding traditional institutions. Knowledge of the British Empire was also limited, most making mention only of India and the Suez Canal. There were very answers that considered South Africa or Afghanistan. There were some answers that mentioned his novels and the ideas that they raised; which did not include an imperial vision, suggesting that stability at home was more important. Most noticeably, candidates did not suggest that there might have been a change of emphasis about the Empire, with Disraeli describing them initially as 'millstones around our necks' in 1852, but placing far greater emphasis on it in the elections of 1874 and 1880.

## **7 Foreign and Imperial Policies 1846-1902**

- (a) This question drew a number of responses, but there were very few high level answers. Candidates appeared to struggle to identify the aims of foreign policy in this period and answers were usually focused on a very narrow range or were heavily based on Imperial goals. The aim of expanding the Empire could have been broadened to examine a variety of reasons for increasing its size, including trade, preventing the influence of other nations, maintaining naval supremacy and securing trade routes. However, this was frequently the end of the considerations and answers did not evaluate other factors. Candidates might have been reasonably expected to consider the issue of the balance of power, particularly with Russia, and later Germany.
- (b) Candidates approached this question in two distinct ways and either was acceptable. Some answers focused almost entirely on the Boer War, whilst others compared the popularity and prestige of the British Empire during the Boer War with other periods. In considering the Boer War many argued that the war was initially popular, but this was based on the misconception of an easy victory, therefore when this did not occur opinion began to change. Some answers were able to support this reference to the celebrations that followed the relief of Mafeking and the Conservative election victory in the 'khaki election' of 1900. This was then contrasted with the number of deaths, the revelations about health and conditions of recruits, concentration camps and the use of Chinese Slavery. Some answers compared this period with earlier imperialist adventures such as the annexation of Transvaal and the Zulu Wars, whilst others looked at popular support for Imperialism reflected in Music Halls, songs and popular writings.

## **8 Trade Unions and Labour 1867-1906**

- (a) There were very few answers to this question
- (b) There were a limited number of answers to this question. Candidates focused on a very narrow range of personalities, with most being limited to Keir Hardie and Ramsay MacDonald. It was noticeable that the factual knowledge of these was quite sound, but candidates found it much harder to evaluate their importance in the Labour movement and party.

## **Britain 1899-1964**

### **9 Liberals and Labour 1899-1918**

- (a) This was a popular question that drew a wide range of responses from candidates. Most were able to identify a number of problems facing the Conservative party within the given period, but were weaker on the named factor of leadership. It often resulted in sweeping generalisations about both Salisbury and Balfour, or candidates tried to attribute everything to their leadership. The other area of particular weakness was Tariff Reform, many candidates arguing that it was implemented and failed to see this issue as a key piece of evidence when arguing that Balfour's leadership was ineffective. Candidates were much stronger in explaining the problems created by the Education Act, the Boer War, Taff Vale and Chinese Slavery. Some of the better answers were able to link these issues to the rejuvenation of the Liberal party and explain that as key problem facing the Conservative party.
- (b) This was less popular than (a) and most answers struggled to assess how important an issue female franchise was for the Liberal party. Some answers simply described the Suffragette problem, without linking it to the Liberal party. Candidates could have argued that they failed to solve the growing militancy and the way they dealt with hunger strikes was damaging for the Liberal party. This could have been balanced against the decline in importance of the female franchise issue after the death of Emily Davison, particularly when compared with other issues. Candidates frequently failed to compare the female franchise problem with other issues and this severely limited their final mark. A case for Ireland, which by 1914 was on the verge of Civil War, could have been made, particularly with the Liberals dependent upon Irish Nationalist support, could have been made. In a similar vein the outbreak of the First World War could also have been examined as this challenged Liberal values and ultimately split the party. Some might even have considered the issue of labour unrest and syndicalism or the growing Labour party, which ultimately replaced the Liberals as the opposition to the Conservatives. The lack of analysis and evaluation was the most noticeable characteristic of this question.

### **10 Inter-War Domestic Problems 1918-1939**

- (a) This was a very popular question and drew a wide range of responses. This was a question that showed how important a clear chronological knowledge was as many answers confused events and therefore drew erroneous conclusions. Most were able to explain the general problems facing the coal industry after the First World War and the response of owners to such difficulties. Many argued that the unions were to blame as they refused to accept these problems needed addressing. Some better answers were able to distinguish between the NUM and the TUC movement in general and argue that it was the miners who pushed for the strike, whilst the TUC were unprepared to stage a General Strike. There were some answers which challenged the assumption in the question and blamed either the mine owners or the government, when arguing for the latter point candidates usually argued that the

return to the Gold Standard was the key event leading to the strike, whilst some also pointed to Red Friday as a government tactic to buy time and stockpile before taking on the unions and destroying, what they saw, as the growing militancy that had developed since the ending of the war. There were some comments about the individual role of Baldwin and the Daily Mail in triggering the strike.

- (b) Although factual knowledge for this question was often extensive many candidates were unable to use this to address the demands of the question and answered a different question, assessing the success of the policies. In order to achieve the higher levels it was vital to focus on the key word 'new' and very few did this. Candidates should have been able to argue that in many areas the National Governments followed traditional policies, such as balanced budgets, and did not adopt the radical alternatives suggested by Mosley, Keynes or Lloyd George. There were some who approached the question by examining the alternatives put forward and comparing them with the policies followed by the government to argue that most policies were traditional and this was an acceptable approach. Candidates could have argued that there were some new approaches in areas such as cautious protectionism, the abandonment of the Gold Standard and intervention through the Special Areas Act. However, in many instances the examiner was left to guess whether the candidate thought the policies pursued were new or traditional, analysis was by implication and this prevented some knowledgeable candidates from achieving a higher level. Candidates would be well advised to spend time reading the question carefully and ensuring that they focus precisely on the demands.

## **11 Foreign Policy 1939-1963**

- (a) This was quite a popular question and saw a wide range of responses. Most candidates were able to explain a number of reasons for decolonisation, including the named factor. Candidates also considered pressure from the USA, nationalist movements, particularly with India and domestic issues within Britain. However, it was noticeable that the range of examples used to support the arguments was quite narrow, with a heavy focus on India and Kenya. The question provided an ideal opportunity for candidates to link factors and this was achieved by the more able candidates, with economic problems being linked to the cost of suppressing nationalist movements, particularly in Kenya. Many were also able to argue that the economic benefits of Empire were outweighed by the costs. Some also argued that the lessons of Suez played a crucial role in the decisions made.
- (b) There were a number of answers to this question, but the overall standard was disappointing. Many candidates were unable to identify reasons for Britain's involvement in the Cold War and instead wrote about events that were consequences of Britain's involvement. Very few had specific factual knowledge to support the view that it was the fear of Russian expansionism that sparked British involvement, there was the occasional reference to Greece, but knowledge of events in Persia, Italy and Turkey between 1946 and 1947 was sadly absent. There was some awareness that Britain felt she had to be involved because of preserving her great power status, but few considered the view that British presence in Germany was non-negotiable and that this drew them into the Cold War, rather they argued it was the Berlin Blockade that drew them in; this was the consequence not the cause of her involvement. Candidates were better when it came to explaining the need for US financial aid.

## **12 Post-War Britain 1945-1964**

- (a) This was more popular than (b) and there were some very good answers; however some were less secure when writing about the named factor and either virtually

ignored the re-organisation of the Conservative Party or attributed everything to it, including policy developments. The knowledge of structural reorganisation varied, but many did display a considerable depth of understanding and wrote about Woolton's initiatives, the Young Conservatives and the reorganisation of party structure. Others argued that the reorganisation was based around policy changes and focused on their acceptance of the Welfare State. These factors were balanced against the failings of the Labour governments, particularly with their divisions and the problems associated with austerity. This allowed better candidates to make links between Labour failings and the Conservative offer of a brighter future. The same pattern was repeated by comparing Labour's internal divisions with the Conservatives unity. Some were also able to challenge the question and point out that Labour recorded its highest poll and that it was only the vagaries of the British system that removed Labour.

- (b)** This was much less popular than (a) and produced very few strong answers. Many candidates were unable to focus on the key phrase 'successful' and instead simply described the issues that faced the Macmillan governments. There was little discussion of the relative success of the economic and social policies and whether it was a wasted period. Many answers described the problems, particularly the Profumo Affair, that faced the government in its last years and therefore implied Macmillan was not successful, but the analysis was frequently very weak.

## **2585 - 2586 European and World History**

### **General Comments**

There was a sizeable candidature for both papers, of whom a significant proportion were re-takers. As ever the larger candidature (3:1) was for 2586.

Answers were seen at every level of the mark scheme, with a good number of excellent and informed scripts (especially on 2585). Question 6 on paper 2585 and question 16 on 2586 remain the most popular, but responses were seen on most of the questions set, if only from one or two centres. On 2585, question 3 (The Crusades) is popular but there were good numbers for the 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century topics with rather fewer on the 17<sup>th</sup> century. On 2586, question 13 (Russia 1894 – 1917) was very popular and there were good numbers for Mussolini (15), Unification of Italy (5) and American Civil War (9). Post 1945 topics attract a number of centres but it was hard to find quality here.

As ever, the qualities of the best answers included a tight focus on the question set, good organisation, a clear line of argument and a sustained evaluation of relevant issues substantiated by effectively drawn examples. At the bottom end insecure knowledge of the basic facts seems to be the biggest handicap to producing an effective answer rather than an inability to engage with the question. Indeed the quality of knowledge was often weak in candidates who otherwise had a sound general understanding of the topic – this handicapped their ability to substantiate points effectively or to produce any sustained or developed analysis. This is important as sound and detailed grasp of the factual material is the essential foundation for historical understanding and scholarship at this level.

Examiners reported a large number of weak answers, especially on 2586, where candidates' knowledge and understanding was poor and the writing vague, generalised and often disorganised. Many such answers came from those being entered for the first time, presumably after just one term's teaching. For many this cannot have been a positive experience and one wonders at the wisdom of such an approach if candidates do not have the knowledge, understanding or skills to make a success of the exam.

Examiners also pointed to the often ineffective introductions which merely rephrased the question or provided nothing more than a generic and unspecific approach. Examiners also commented on the extensive plans some candidates produce which seldom translate into effective essays.

Examiners also observed that many more modest candidates were unable to adapt their knowledge and understanding to the demands of the question set, but instead produced answers to related questions (presumably that they had studied or prepared during the course). Candidates should be reminded that examination success in part depends on them answering the actual question set.

The quality of use of English continues to deteriorate. Examiners bemoan the increasing intrusion of colloquial language, the use of vague and general language and the lack of formal writing skills. Poor sentence construction, imprecision of language, poor spelling, use of inappropriate abbreviation continue to impair effective communication. Too many candidates are also unable to spell key historical terms or names correctly.

**2585**

- 1-2 There were not enough answers to make valid comments.
- 3 (a) This produced a range of answers, with a number of responses which successfully discussed religious enthusiasm (and other factors) in relation to the success of the First Crusade. Many more modest answers were able to explain the role of religious enthusiasm in motivating crusaders without effectively linking this to success.
- 3(b) Candidates, apart from the weakest were generally able to identify reasons for failure, but for many actual knowledge of the Second Crusade was at best patchy. The most successful answers both substantiated their argument about reasons and were able to assess relative importance and linkage between factors.
- 4 There were not enough answers to make valid comments.
- 5(a) Quite popular and a range of responses. Knowledge was often good, although grasp of chronology often weak. There was some listing of works related to popes without effective analysis in relation to the question. Others were able to construct an argument which effectively used supporting evidence. One successful approach was to compare Rome with Florence and/or Venice.
- 5(b) This provoked a wide range of responses with the best really excellent. Candidates tended to have good knowledge and the best were able to deploy it very effectively in support of argument and evaluation. Many candidates showed a good understanding of classical influences but also recognised both medieval influences and new developments. Weaker answers often tended to description of individual works of art/buildings.
- 6(a) The most popular question on the paper. Many produced well-balanced arguments and evaluation supported by apposite and effectively deployed knowledge. More modest answers typically had an awareness of the issues but points made lacked development. Some answers dwelt on the nobles and confused the assertion of royal power with unification. Many candidates were aware that Ferdinand and Isabella did not set out to unify Spain, but some are still under this misconception.
- 6(b) Less popular than (a) and answers generally weaker. There was a tendency to general summaries of the reigns of Ferdinand and Isabella with insufficient focus on the issues of security and prosperity and the position at the time Charles I inherited.
- 7-8 There were not enough answers to make valid comments.
- 9(a) Whilst quite popular this question elicited few very good responses. Many candidates failed to focus on the comparison between the start and end dates. Many candidates also focused too narrowly on the struggle with the princes over religion to the exclusion of almost anything else. There was little reference, for example, to the structures of imperial government or events affecting the Emperor's control such as the Compact of Brussels.
- 9(b) There was a range of answers here. Better answers dealt effectively with both France and the Ottoman Empire. These were generally better on relations with France, although there was a tendency to describe events.
- 10 There were not enough answers to make valid comments.
- 11(a) There were not enough answers to make valid comments.

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- 11(b) Candidates showed a general appreciation of the various aims of the French monarchs (good to see that candidates covered both) and how they differed from each other. Knowledge was generally good but some candidates were uncertain how to deploy it and got bogged down in detailed description. At the top end a relative few were able to establish effectively links between the different aims in foreign policy.
- 12 There were not enough answers to make valid comments.
- 13(a) There were not enough answers to make valid comments.
- 13(b) Knowledge was generally impressive over a wide range of relevant issues including the papacy, Jesuits, other orders, individuals and the Council of Trent. However, argument was less good; there was a tendency to list the achievements/activities of different popes and describe what others did. Explicit explanation/analysis of the linkages between deeds and Counter-Reformation was less effective. For example, candidates tended not to go beyond what the Council of Trent decided – they failed to address its impact. Better answers dealt with the main factor – the popes – first.
- 14-15 There were not enough answers to make valid comments.
- 16(a) There were some fairly effective answers which differentiated between finance and the economy without developing answers to the full. Weaker answers gave reasons for bankruptcy whilst better linked detailed of the economic situation with political circumstances and war.
- 16(b) There were not enough answers to make valid comments.
- 17–21 There were not enough answers to make valid comments.
- 22(a) Most candidates recognised that France was stronger in 1713 than in 1661, but arguably not as strong as it was in 1685. Many answers took a broadly chronological approach and this could be reasonably successful when underpinned by analysis, but many merely described events with passing comments on success/failure.

**2586**

Comments relate only to questions where there was a significant candidature.

- 1(a) This was treated by many as simply a general survey of the causes of the French Revolution; there was little focus on the actual events of 1789. Most were able to say something about Louis XVI's weaknesses and some were able to balance this factor against others to produce an argued answer – if mainly multi-causal rather than dealing with relative importance or linkages between factors.
- 2(a) The problem for many here was that they failed to establish a clear definition of the term 'dictator' against which to test the evidence.
- 2(b) More popular and with a range of responses. Most identified a number of factors and were able to show how each contributed to Napoleon's downfall. Better answers recognised the linkages between factors (e.g. Continental System and the war in Spain and the 1812 campaign) and it was good to see some discussing factors such as the growth of disillusion in France.
- 5(b) Whilst there was a tendency in some candidates to treat the title 'write all you know about Italian Unification', there were many effective answers which balanced Garibaldi's contribution against that of others (Cavour, Napoleon III) and other factors. The best not

only produced an argued relative assessment but also evaluated linkages/the interdependence of different elements.

- 9(a) There were not many impressive answers to this question. Many candidates appeared to have little knowledge to draw on beyond Lincoln's appointment of generals. Only the best drew on, for example, his selection of Cabinet ministers, dealings with Congress, timing of Emancipation, oratory and re-election
- 9(b) More popular than (a). Some more modest candidates, clearly knowing little about Grant, treated the question as a generic 'Why did the North win?' question, typically describing a range of factors with only modest analysis. Better answers ensured that they dealt adequately with the issue raised ('Grant's generalship') and balanced this against other factors, typically argued that in Grant the Union finally had a general who knew how to use the North's superior forces to good effect.
- 13(a) This was quite popular but there were few very good answers. Many weaker candidates latched on to 1905 and wrote all they knew about the Revolution. Better candidates did try to address the question of impact but had little to say about the period after 1906. The best answers did look at the period identified in the question whilst usually concluding in agreement with the quotation.
- 13(b) This was a popular question (second only to q16). It was encouraging to see that many candidates are beginning to recognise the need to 'assess' than simply list factors. There were few merely descriptive answers, but some weaker answer dealt generally with the 'causes of 1917' rather than the October Revolution specifically. Most candidates discussed a range of factors, focusing on the weaknesses of the Provisional Government and the relative strengths of the Bolsheviks. However, many examiners commented that surprisingly few candidates had any to say about Kerensky, Kornilov or the actual events of October.
- 14(a) There were a range of responses. Weaker candidates tended to dwell on the background to the alliances rather than explaining their role in the origins of war. Other weak answers were hampered by incomplete or only generalised knowledge of developments. However, many answers were able to set the role of the alliances in the context of other factors and produce a relevant and argued response.
- 15(a) Many candidates appeared to have a poor grasp of developments between 1918 and 1922. Weak candidates tended to dismiss the given factor and preferred to discuss the apparent strengths of the fascists. A common error was to exaggerate the fascists electoral success. Better answers dealt effectively with the threat from the left and set it in the context of 'liberal' politics, the aftermath of the war, economic and social problems, and Mussolini's and the fascists' appeal. The best answers effectively showed the links between the various factors and often distinguished between the fear of communism and the reality of the threat posed by revolutionary socialism.
- 15(b) Far less popular than (a) and with few effective responses. Too many candidates simply wrote generally about aspects of Mussolini's policies rather than focusing on his strengths and weaknesses 'as leader'.
- 16(a) Popular but the question proved problematic for many who found it difficult to effectively distinguish between problems and the reasons for them. Some weaker candidates seemed to rehearse answers to a different question such as "Was Weimar 'doomed from the start'?" rather than the question set. Many weaker candidates do not appear to understand the risings of the early twenties or the distinctions between left and right. However, many candidates did show good knowledge of the period and some skill in argument and there



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were some very good analyses that identified problems and analysed the reasons for them.

- 16(b) This question elicited a range of responses with some very good answers. The best answers provided a careful assessment of economic success and its impact and balanced this against the claims of other factors such as coercion, propaganda and foreign policy success. Many weaker candidates knew little about the economic aspects and simply rehearsed arguments relating to terror and propaganda.
- 17(a) Not many good answers. Many candidates quite legitimately sought to test the Treaty of Versailles against Wilson's Fourteen Points, but knew so little about them that it proved a fruitless exercise. The result was vague generalisation.
- 17(b) This too was not well answered. Candidates knew too little about Japanese foreign policy or about developments in the Far East.
- 20(a) Candidates who had a clear test for success generally did better than those who did not. Latter answers inevitably tended to generalisations. Another weakness was to treat the question as one about the success of US foreign policy only. Better candidates recognised that aims changed during the war and also assessed success in terms of outcomes.
- 20(b) Many candidates struggled on this question because they seemed to know little about the developments between 1954 and 1965. Some related Vietnam to general aspects of the Cold War and discussed the domino theory and Cold War rivalry. Only better candidates were able to relate such general concerns to the specifics of the Vietnam situation (such as the fear that the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu would lead to the unification of Vietnam by Ho Chi Min, or the escalation of fighting after 1964 and the Tonkin incident.

## 2587 - 2589 Historical Investigations

### General Comments

The January session for these units produced some excellent scripts where good candidates were able to use their considerable knowledge to evaluate the relevant historical debate in all their answers. Others, however, were less well prepared and their weaker skills and techniques revealed mistaken approaches to questions.

The most frequent example of poor technique remains that of disregarding the Passages and the views expressed therein to concentrate on writing an essay on the area of debate. Candidates need to be fully aware that the initial focus must be on the views in the Passages and that grouping the views and comparison between the views in the Passages is expected as well as the use of contextual knowledge to support or contradict the interpretations. Trying to fit the Passages into the schools of history on a topic is often counter-productive as they are not chosen on this basis. Some candidates needed to be more explicit in their references to the debate being considered in the Passages. Candidates should also be encouraged to spend time reading the Passages carefully. Candidates are expected to reach a supported judgement and to avoid the bland conclusion that all the factors have a similar impact. The failure to reach any kind of judgement was the reason for a number of candidates being confined to Band II.

In the essay questions, one of the main faults was to avoid the focus in the question. In some instances the dates given in questions were not noted and candidates strayed outside these parameters. Candidates continue to drift away from the actual focus of a question to one they have prepared earlier, sometimes the question on the paper set in the previous session. They also need to remember that there should be a clear sense of debate in their analysis. Some candidates produced arguments which had a large element of speculation. Considering what might have happened had circumstances been different can, at times, be a useful tool but this type of argument needs to be used with discrimination.

The quality of written English remained very variable. There are candidates whose inability to express themselves clearly is a serious drawback, as examiners cannot be expected to make a close textual analysis of what they read, to discern its meaning. Many candidates waste time by including phrases such as *I would argue that*, or *as I believe*, or *It is my contention that* and in conclusions they state what their view is, implying that the fact that it is their view is sufficient to validate the view. The use of *would* as in *an orthodox historian would argue that* is also superfluous. Either the historian argues that or the historian does not. The popular word for analysing views seemed to be *myopic* to describe a short-sighted argument. Some candidates needed to be more careful in their use of tenses, diverting at times into the present tense and few seemed to be aware that the past tense of *may* is *might*. Fewer candidates resorted to abbreviations like Parl. or Bols. Recognised abbreviations like FDR or PG are more acceptable. Some candidates were careless about numbering their answers correctly and filling in the grid on the front of the booklet. Standards of handwriting did not improve either.

**2587**

There were 101 candidates who appeared for this unit. 41 answered on Charlemagne and 50 on King John. No letters of complaint were received about this paper.

**Charlemagne**

- 1 Generally this question was well answered. Passage D was less fully used than the other Passages but it was often well evaluated by reference to the Saxon readiness to break oaths since they were not Christians and attached little meaning to them. Some candidates could have given fuller consideration to the factor identified in the question. Most candidates concluded that Passage C had the answer.
- 2 Candidates were frequently diverted into the debate about decomposition and did not direct their answers sufficiently to the question set. Others wrote about the coronation of Charlemagne and its significance, again without relating their material effectively to the question. But there were some good, relevant answers which were in control of the material. These argued equally forcefully that the Empire was united and strong in 814 and alternatively that it had the seeds of disunity within its administration and structure.
- 3 This was a popular question and candidates had plenty of knowledge about Charlemagne's Christian convictions. Some of them tended to write descriptions of his promotion of learning and of these, few could spell minuscule correctly. Candidates found it quite a challenge to argue strongly for other motives such as the need to improve the administration or Charlemagne's own love of learning per se and often concluded that the motives were all linked. If the synthesis was well supported this was an acceptable judgement.

**King John**

- 4 This question was well answered by most candidates and the debate was familiar to them. They were aware of current discussion about the relative resources of the Capetians and the Angevins so were successful in evaluating Passage C. Many argued that the series of errors which John made from Le Goulet to his treatment of Arthur built up resistance to his rule. Others suggested John was unlucky in coming up against such an able French king as Philip and concluded this was the main factor in John's loss of his lands in France.
- 5 Some candidates focused too strongly on the fate of de Braose and his family and others dismissed this factor in a few words. Most candidates could write reasonably well about the reasons for the souring of John's relations with his barons, but found it more challenging to consider the idea of a turning point. However, some did focus on this aspect, arguing that the turning point was the loss of the French lands in 1204 or that it came later in the events leading up to Magna Carta. Few saw the de Braose incident as really crucial, but more as being symptomatic of the poor relationship John had with his English barons. Some did suggest that it was the potential that the treatment of de Braose and his family revealed, that led the barons to become very fearful and eventually hostile.
- 6 Some of the candidates who chose this question did not have enough detailed knowledge of the campaigns of 1214 or even as to whom John's allies were. Some resorted to material from earlier in the reign, even using the Passages for help. But other candidates did have the requisite knowledge and were able to set the actions of John's allies and the events around the battle of Bouvines against the lack of support from his barons, the actions of Philip and his own shortcomings in character and leadership. There were good candidates who argued strongly that John had every possibility of victory in 1214 until the failure at Bouvines, for which he could not be blamed.

## 2588

795 candidates appeared for this paper, a slight increase on January 2007. 257 answered questions on Philip II, 278 on Elizabeth I, 36 on Oliver Cromwell and 224 on Peter the Great. No letters of complaint were received about this paper. The small number of candidates answering on Oliver Cromwell means that comments on questions 7-9 are less full.

### Philip II

- 1 Candidates seemed to find Passages C and D more difficult to analyse successfully. Passage C's distinction between what a prudent ruler should do and what Philip actually did created some problems. Moreover candidates missed references like *his regular trips were more in the nature of retreats* and asserted that Philip never left Madrid. In Passage D candidates did not use the material to assess the relationship between Philip and his subjects very fully. Some were distracted by the reference to God in the steer and introduced less focused discussion about the Inquisition and papal relations, whereas a comparison with Passage B would have been a better way to proceed. The focus of Passage A on absolutism which is a familiar debate to candidates was better assessed, but the process of Castilianisation was not as well understood. Most candidates were able to utilise knowledge about Philip's personal style of government. Some candidates were fully aware that the interests of subjects living in Aragon, Castile or Catalonia might well not be the same. There was a tendency for some candidates to describe schools of historians as Black Legendists, Agent historians, Universal Monarchists or structuralists and this was rarely helpful and attempts to put named historians into such groups were unfruitful.
- 2 Some candidates preferred to write about Philip's role in the causes of the Revolt. But others were better focused although they did not always concentrate on the reasons why the revolt could not be ended, but most managed to mention Parma at least. The better candidates could identify a range of errors by Philip and the best could assess these against other factors such as foreign intervention and even consider how far Philip could realistically be blamed for such factors as the delay in instructions reaching the Netherlands. Many were aware of the debate about the impact of geographical factors. Weaker candidates tended to believe that the addition of a quotation from an historian to their essay constituted discussion of the debate on the question and failed to focus on the ending of the revolt.
- 3 This question was less well answered, probably because, although candidates could identify a range of motives in Philip's foreign policy, they found it difficult to discuss how these related to his policies being a *reaction*. Some took *reaction* to be a synonym for *defensive*. Others thought it meant *reactionary*. Many referred to *Messianic Imperialism* without any clear idea of the meaning of the term. Some candidates surveyed foreign policy in terms of *expansionist* and *defensive*, which was the focus of the question in June 2007. Few were able to set opportunistic, reactive policies against planned policies and found it simpler to look at Philip's relations with individual countries and reach a series of conclusions in that way. Some considered policy towards Portugal to be imperialistic and part of the grand strategy and missed the opportunistic elements in 1580.

### Elizabeth I

- 4 Candidates tended to find this question unexpected as they are accustomed to assessing the extent of the Catholic decline and wanted to assert that Catholicism in fact died out and why this was so. Candidates who used this approach were likely to be placed in the lower Bands. Passage C proved the most difficult for candidates to use effectively and the *all but* in line 32 was missed by many. Material on the role of priests and Jesuits was frequently used and some candidates were able to link it well to the role of the gentry.

There was often reference to the views of Christopher Haigh about the reasons why the missions failed but this was not the actual focus of the question. Better candidates could use this debate to evaluate who was responsible for the catholic survival. Analysis of the views in the Passages was often done by comparison between them and this could be effective. The material in A and D did not seem to be familiar to all candidates, but some had fuller knowledge about the work of Peter Marshall.

- 5 There were some weak responses, as some candidates found it difficult to write cogently on the issue of gender and wrote a narrative of her courtships. Some consisted of an account of different aspects of Elizabeth's character as typical female traits and considered the different ways in which she presented herself to her subjects to overcome these perceived drawbacks. Few were able to engage with *Elizabeth's power as monarch* in a meaningful way. But some could write usefully about how far Elizabeth's gender had an impact on relations with her Council and her advisers and how far matters like her marriage and the succession problem were affected by her gender. The ways in which she overcame these issues by the use of image and particularly oratory, with the Tilbury speech being quoted in virtually every response, were well known. A few candidates read *undermined as shaped* and this limited the effectiveness of their response. Some candidates wrote too generally about Elizabeth's reluctance to marry and the debate about her reasons when they needed to examine how this impinged on her power, for example in her control of the House of Commons and how she managed to neutralise the effect. One or two made good comparisons with the problems Henry VIII had in these areas to argue that such difficulties were not necessarily gender based. Knowledge of earlier periods is not expected, but most candidates are probably aware of basic events from Henry VIII's reign.
- 6 There were still some candidates who were not able to differentiate between the Privy Council and Parliament but they seemed to be fewer than in previous sessions. There was generally sound awareness of the debate and some strong responses contrasted the views of Elizabeth as the manipulator with Elizabeth as the manipulated. Some candidates who saw the debate clearly were a little short of supporting evidence once they had considered the events around the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots. The effectiveness of Elizabeth's control of faction was often less well assessed, but most candidates did argue that there was a change in the 1590s when her control became less assured.

### **Oliver Cromwell**

- 7 Candidates found the Passages accessible and were able to draw out the contrasts, notably between A and D. They were less adept in discussing the nature of Passage A as few seemed to know anything about Richard Baxter and knowledge of Cromwell's military activities was surprisingly thin in the evaluation of Passage C.
- 8 Some candidates preferred to write about when Cromwell determined on the execution of Charles I, rather than why. Some answers were chronological accounts, not in itself a less strong approach, but leaving the examiner to pick out the relevant motivation. Some were well informed and could assess a range of motives; others neglected the role of providence.
- 9 Few candidates tackled this question and they tended to concentrate on why Cromwell refused the crown. Apart from the Major-Generals, his other policies were not well known and a sense of debate was not always apparent.

### **Peter the Great**

- 10 Some candidates had difficulty in focusing on the key words domestic and achievements. The Passages mostly focused on social reforms which allowed candidates to bring in their contextual knowledge about the economy and the bureaucracy. Candidates were usually able to group the Passages clearly. Some tried to evaluate the success of the policies on the basis of how long they endured, but lacked the necessary knowledge. Others assessed the depth and durability of Peter's achievements to good effect.
- 11 Candidates could write about Peter's aims in relation to the army and navy and link these to his financial policies and the Table of Ranks, but they found it harder to relate these to other reforms and to assess relative importance. Some concentrated on his efforts to build a powerful army and navy and his obsession with military affairs but discussed little else. The most common alternative driving force was seen as westernization with St Petersburg frequently used as an example.
- 12 This was the less popular of the essay questions and some responses concentrated on Peter's successes and failures, rather than the threats he faced or wrote descriptions of his campaigns. Some good candidates argued effectively about the extent of the threats from Sweden and Turkey, given the state of Peter's armed forces, the alliances he could make and the problems within Sweden and Turkey and their failure to act in concert. Some drifted into a discussion of his aims.

### **2589**

2539 candidates appeared for this paper of which 160 answered on Napoleon, 153 on Gladstone and Disraeli, 236 on Bismarck, 426 on Roosevelt, 429 on Lenin, 706 on Chamberlain and 429 on the Cold War. No letters of complaint were received about this paper.

### **Napoleon**

- 1 Generally candidates found the Passages accessible and understood the debate they contained.
- 2 Very few answers to this question were seen.
- 3 Some candidates listed the campaigns and then asserted that these did or did not show Napoleon to be a military genius. Candidates needed to have some idea of the characteristics of a great commander. Others described the debate on Napoleon's military skills but referred to very few campaigns.

### **Gladstone and Disraeli**

- 4 Most candidates found the Passages straightforward and were able to cite contextual knowledge to support Gladstone's moral fibre. The cynics who saw him as an opportunist were in the majority.
- 5 This was the less popular of the essay questions and candidates often needed more knowledge on the events of the period. Some answers made no reference to the Second Reform Act. Better answers took alternative interpretations that Disraeli was more of a hindrance to the Conservatives as against the view that he was crucial to their development and assessed these well. There was also the view that Derby played the major role.

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- 6 Candidates needed to define British interests in some way and to recognise that the term was differently interpreted by Gladstone and Disraeli. There was plenty of awareness of their policies but analysing the principles behind them was more problematic.

### **Bismarck**

- 7 The Passages and the debate they contained were generally well understood. The weakness came in the evaluation of the views, which needed to be stronger. To say A is from Bismarck's Memoirs and so must be biased is not an example of full evaluation.
- 8 This question showed that candidates could discuss a range of factors which led to the rise of Prussia. Some candidates thought that only the South German States fought against Prussia in 1866 when in fact the majority of the German States did so.
- 9 There were some good answers to this question. Some produced lists of factors but were weak in evaluating their relative importance. This confined some responses to Band II.

### **Roosevelt**

- 10 Candidates were readily able to identify the debate within the Passages and to use Al Capone in their contextual knowledge. Evaluation was variable in quality.
- 11 This question was the most likely to lead to a list of factors being presented and to the assessment being largely assertion that one factor mattered most. Better candidates could link the causes and some strong candidates were able to blame the policies of the government for creating the scenario which led to the depression.
- 12 This question was less popular and tended to lead to descriptions of the opposition without much consideration of their effectiveness. The Supreme Court was often not discussed.

### **Lenin**

- 13 The Passages provided candidates with a welcome opportunity to assess the reasons for the downfall of the Provisional Government. There was plenty of contextual knowledge which could be used and some candidates overdid this aspect leading to imbalance in their answers. There were also problems with candidates determined to assign Passages to schools of thought and to consider the statement that this is a soviet view to be evaluative in itself. Similarly evaluation often consisted of references to the research done by the historians quoted. But good candidates juxtaposed analysis of the material in the Passages with contextual knowledge very effectively.
- 14 There were few answers to this question and they mostly listed the problems which the Bolsheviks faced. Some did not note that the question ended in February 1917.
- 15 This question was generally answered competently with the best answers well focused on the reasons for change and avoiding description of the actual changes in policy. There were some whose confusion about Soviet and Liberal schools was the predominant feature of their response. For some the term Leninist ideology was used very loosely without much understanding as to what that might be.

### **Chamberlain**

- 16 The analysis of the Passages was generally competently done, but contextual knowledge was sparse. Others used the material in the Passages to support their own arguments. The reference to the City was not picked up by some candidates.

## *Report on the Units taken in January 2008*

- 17 Candidates tended to describe the alternatives to appeasement, rather than assess how realistic they were. Some much better answers looked at alternatives such as the League of Nations and the Grand Alliance and tried hard to evaluate these in a balanced way. There was general agreement that the alternatives were unrealistic and Churchill came in for widespread condemnation. British military strength was rarely assessed. There were candidates who preferred to consider how far appeasement was justified.
- 18 This question was more popular and often well answered. Some candidates were intent on including the build up to the Munich conference, although outside its scope and others wished to consider whether policy changed or when it changed; allied debates but not the focus this time.

### **Stalin**

- 19 The Passages proved to be accessible, although there was some misunderstanding of Passage D. Some candidates utilised too much contextual knowledge without analysing the Passages fully. The usual orthodox and revisionist schools were cited and some candidates seemed to think Bob Dylan was an example of a revisionist historian. The doubts he expressed in Passage C about the reality of the threat were not always appreciated.
- 20 This question saw plenty of good answers. These could be schools of thought answers as long as they included analysis of the actual events. Some candidates rather neglected to explain exactly why Stalin was obsessed with security. Some answers continued to describe the schools of thought without much linking to the question set, as in previous sessions.
- 21 This question allowed candidates to display detailed knowledge of the motives behind containment and to evaluate successfully. A few candidates saw the issue very much in terms of capitalist freedom (good) as opposed to communist oppression (bad) and needed to be more challenging in their approach.



## 2590 - 2591 Themes in History

### General Comments

Both 2590 and 2591 papers worked well and resulted in effective differentiation. Not surprisingly in a synoptic unit there was a wide range of responses but the overall quality was disappointing. Many candidates seemed to be under-prepared both in their factual knowledge of the chosen theme and in their essay writing skills. As always at the top end of the range there were a few excellent essays, reflecting a real sense of control and ability to synthesise a variety of factors over the whole period. It is worth repeating that candidates who approach their essays thematically usually score more highly than those who use a chronological framework.

Weaker features, however, persisted in the majority of scripts and, unlike in previous examination sessions, there were many Band VI responses. Not answering the question remains the most prevalent problem; some candidates are still prone to setting their own agenda or they twist the question to reflect a prepared answer. Most candidates know quite a lot of facts but either unload them indiscriminately or write narrative accounts with minimal assessments. Many candidates started their essay with a relevant introduction that seemed to suggest that a logical and structured answer would follow; in many cases, however, the introduction was ignored and the essay consisted of a range of ill-assorted generalisations and assertions. A continuing trend among weaker answers when dealing with turning point questions is to make little attempt to evaluate or differentiate between key developments. Although most candidates experienced little difficulty writing their essays in the allotted time, some candidates failed to produce two balanced answers, devoting too much time either to detailed planning or to writing the first essay at length.

A large number of candidates still do not make effective use of the timeline and, as a result, omit basic information, give the wrong dates for events or none at all. Technical terms were often misused; kings and archbishops experienced 'ascensions', 'government' and 'parliament' were used without distinction, and communist rulers were said to have 'reigned'. The overall quality of written English was disappointing. The use of abbreviations continues to be an unacceptable trend – ABC and ABY (in 2590 Question 5), H7 (Question 7), MQS (Question 12), Alex II (in 2591 Question 22), AAs and MLK (Question 28), Fed (Question 29) and NAs (Question 30), were typical examples.

### Comments on Individual Questions: 2590

Comments have been confined to questions that were answered by four or more candidates.

#### The Government of England 1066-1216

1. The least popular question and, on the whole, badly done. Candidates often rejected the role of the church and considered other factors. Sometimes they attempted to argue in reverse, arguing that Stephen and John fell out with the church and so government collapsed. Those who attempted to address the question were often hampered by insufficient coverage of the period and factual support. The time line, which contains many useful pieces of information on the development of justice, was frequently ignored in essays. The weakest answers believed the question was about church government.
2. There were a few good answers that explored the links between feudalism and the Common Law but most answers were poor. This was because many candidates neither understood what was required nor possessed adequate knowledge of the subject. Several attempted to turn the question into one about military and financial aspects. Unsupported and inaccurate assertions abounded. Only a small minority of candidates appreciated the

relationship between factors such as the piecemeal settlement of England and the multiple overlordships and conflicting jurisdictions.

3. Though answers ranged from excellent to very weak, this question was answered much better than Questions 1 and 2. Candidates generally suggested 1154 and 1204 as alternative turning points, though their knowledge of impact on government and their ability to argue varied considerably. Some were well informed about the functions of the justiciarship and William II; many dealt with him cursorily.

### **Crown, Church and Papacy 1066-1228**

4. This question provoked much uncertainty as to what the 'role' of the Archbishop of Canterbury might have been. Several candidates viewed it to be a question about his relationship with the king, papacy and bishops, and failed to consider any of his particular spiritual or secular functions and duties. A minority extrapolated relevant arguments from such interpretations but were hamstrung by a lack of knowledge, particularly of the archbishops' secular activities in government and the judiciary.
5. A mixture of 'conflict and harmony' characterised most answers. Better responses constructed a thematic argument around specific issues and examples. Most argued that the character of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the monarch largely determined whether an issue became a problem, and of course the primacy dispute and Becket loomed large.
6. Surprisingly little was known about Lanfranc's contribution to monasticism. Instead candidates preferred to assess other factors at great length, notably the role of patronage (royal, noble and papal), and the impact of the continental new orders in England. There was a distinct impression that candidates wanted to write an answer to a different question.

### **Rebellion and Disorder in England 1485-1603**

7. The least popular question of this set. Many candidates took a narrow approach and only assessed the causes of the Pilgrimage and a selection of other rebellions. Better answers also considered its location, support, organisation, leadership, and government responses and outcome in respect of typicality. Some candidates questioned whether any rebellion could be described as 'typical' and then proceeded to argue that the Pilgrimage had much in common with other Tudor rebellions. Given the scope for candidates in their assessment to include whatever they liked by way of comparison, careful selection of examples and organisation of material were imperative. Many answers revealed a lack of knowledge of the key features of the Pilgrimage.
8. This was a very popular question and a good discriminator. The weakness of several responses was to assess only those rebellions that were caused by religious change, and to confine their arguments to the years 1536-70. Some responses were a chronological account with comments or a descriptive list of causes with a concluding evaluation. Other candidates devoted unnecessary time to explaining why religious changes caused rebellions rather than the relationship between religious issues and other factors – notably political, factional, dynastic, economic and social. The best essays differentiated between rebellions which were primarily religious and those where religious undertones could be described. Not everyone considered Kett's rebellion and some confused the Western rebellion with the Pilgrimage of Grace.
9. Most candidates argued that very few rebellions posed a really serious threat, and used a range of examples to explain why. The question was generally well answered. Rebellions that aimed to overthrow the monarch and struck at the heart of government in London

were certainly a threat but better candidates pointed out that their seriousness depended on the contingency of other factors – especially the position of the monarch, the condition of the economy, internal and external support for the rebellion, and the quality of rebel leadership. Some candidates were tempted to explain the relative absence of English rebellions after 1570, which took their essays into uncharted waters. The weakest responses wrote a prepared answer on ‘why rebellions failed’, and some candidates considered the Western rebellion a threat on account of its proximity to London. Better answers drew a distinction between potential and actual threat.

### **England’s Changing Relations with Foreign Powers 1485-1603**

10. This was the least popular of the set and poorly answered. The best answers examined the impact of Anglo-Spanish relations thematically, but these were at a premium. Most candidates wrote a chronological account that focused on the political and religious impact but surprisingly said little if anything about the economy and trade. The emphasis of the argument was often on the early Tudors with insufficient attention given to Elizabeth and Philip II.
11. This was a popular question and generally well answered. The best essays set the effects of religious developments from the 1530s onwards against other factors, usually political security, dynastic alliances, trade agreements and the personalities of monarchs and ministers, and assessed the relative importance of religious factors. Weaker responses consisted of a narrative of foreign affairs that contained few points of synthesis or comparative analysis. Few essays examined the implications of Henry VIII’s divorce and Cromwell’s attempts to gain alliances with German Protestants.
12. Candidates needed to think carefully about how Scotland influenced Anglo-French affairs before making a judgement about ‘how far’ in respect of other factors, such as traditional relations, personal attitudes, national interests, the proximity of the Netherlands and the rise of Spain. Weaker answers often lost sight of the question and turned their essay into an appraisal of how France affected Anglo-Scottish affairs. Knowledge of Scotland in general and of Henry VII and Henry VIII’s relations with France in particular was often very thin. Only a few essays noted periods of short-lived amity within the general pattern of hostility.

### **The Development of Limited Monarchy in England 1558-1689**

13. Candidates were generally uninformed on the Interregnum, which weakened the structure of their answers, and preferred to reinterpret the question to one on the personalities of monarchs. Most adopted a linear approach but only a minority achieved anything like the synthesis required. Candidates were generally less well informed on post-1660 events than on Elizabeth and James I.
14. Candidates generally agreed with the premise but devoted too much time (sometimes totally) on describing the personalities of the monarchs, and giving proportionately insufficient space to the later Stuarts. Some reworked a previous question and focused on how monarchs handled parliament, while neglecting areas of disagreement. A small minority of candidates provided a balanced evaluation of both monarchs and parliaments.
15. ‘Social changes’ caused real problems for the few who tackled this question. Many candidates decided to write all they knew about political and parliamentary changes and few addressed the key issue of the ‘powers of the monarchy’.

### **Dissent and Conformity in England 1558-1689**

- 16 -18. No candidates attempted this topic.

### **The Development of the Nation State: France 1498-1610**

19-21. An insufficient number of candidates attempted this topic.

#### **The Catholic Reformation in the Sixteenth Century**

22. The least popular of this set. Almost all candidates agreed that the Jesuits were the most successful reforming order but only the better essays assessed the reasons in varying degrees of detail. Knowledge of other new orders was often at a premium. Too many responses described the work of the Jesuits, and judgements of 'most successful' were often based on assertions.
23. A comparison of turning points was required and the most effective essays compared the Council of Trent's work with the pontificate of Paul III and the foundation of the Jesuits. The Trent decrees were well known though evaluating their effects by 1600 was generally done less well. How to assess a turning point, however, differentiated between candidates who could compare the condition of the Catholic Church in, say, 1534 before Paul III's pontificate, with developments after 1549, and candidates who asserted key changes without setting them in their sixteenth-century context. Some candidates considered factors rather than turning points, so that the new orders were assessed as a group even though, apart from the Jesuits, it is difficult to pinpoint a specific date as a turning point. A common error was for candidates to claim that Paul III was an exemplar pope for later generations when in fact he had many of the vices and personal weaknesses of his Renaissance predecessors.
24. One difficulty facing candidates was to decide how best to construct an argument. The most successful responses organised their essays thematically and evaluated particular problems, such as clerical indiscipline and abuses, over the sixteenth century before reaching a synoptic judgement. Weaker responses assumed that the existence of the Jesuits, a reformed Papacy, and the publication of the Tridentine Decrees guaranteed success, and so failed to consider on-going problems. Many answers overlooked the fact that by 1600 the Catholic Church was no longer universal and that the persistence of Protestantism remained an unsolved problem.

#### **The Decline of Spain 1598-1700**

25-27. No candidates attempted this topic.

#### **The Ascendancy of France 1610-1715**

28. Most candidates had difficulty assessing success. They could describe and assert, stating for instance that Louis XIV and Colbert were successful in everything they did, but singularly omitted any limitations or failures. Generally candidates were better at identifying the problem than assessing the solution.
29. Candidates tended to state what the change was rather than assess its extent. Generally candidates preferred to examine the causes of change rather than what the question had asked. 'Role' was left unconsidered by many who concentrated on 'status'.
30. A handful of candidates attempted to achieve a synthesis by examining nobles, ministers and religion but there was a tendency to describe rather than assess. Overall arguments often lacked appropriate supporting facts.

### **From Absolutism to Enlightened Despotism 1661-1796**

31. This question was answered by a small number of candidates. There was a tendency to recycle general material rather than focus on the question set. Most candidates did not think about the challenges and failed to put them into a comparative structure.
32. Peter's 'Westernization' programme was often said to have been linked with Reason but no explanation was given. Instead a list of each ruler's achievements was given with little assessment or comparison.
33. An insufficient number of candidates attempted this question to merit a report.

### **Comments on individual questions: 2591**

Comments have been confined to questions that were answered by four or more candidates.

### **Britain and Ireland 1798-1921**

1. Most candidates agreed with the premise in the title. The best responses organised their answer according to political, religious and economic policies, evaluated them in respect of concessions, and explained or justified any deviations from these policies in the course of the period. Several strong answers argued that Britain pursued a dual policy of concession and coercion. Weaker attempts failed to assess government policies, had problems structuring their arguments and often ignored the last ten years of the period. Some wrote far too much on Gladstone; others questioned whether Britain conceded anything at all and just wrote about what happened.
2. Answers that evaluated and explained the success/failure of revolutionary leaders scored well, and there were many good answers. The best essays were able to demonstrate and explain how revolutionary movements had both successes and failures in the course of the period. Weaker responses only assessed one or two groups and often could not name or evaluate their leaders. Several weaker candidates wrote about 'nationalism' and so included a lot of irrelevant information on O'Connell and Parnell.
3. All candidates agreed that the Protestant Ascendancy underwent significant changes during the period. Better responses evaluated particular areas of influence, usually political, religious and economic. Weaker answers on the other hand focused on an explanation for these changes and lacked the knowledge or understanding required to write an assessment. The last twenty years of the period were not well known by the majority of candidates.

### **War and Society in Britain 1793-1918**

- 4-6. An insufficient number of candidates attempted this topic to merit a report.

### **Poor Law to Welfare State 1834-1948**

7. Poorly answered. Most candidates adopted a narrative approach that contained an abundance of description. Few considered the limited success of government and instead offered an outline of the 1834 Amendment, Liberal Reforms, Beveridge and post-1945 developments.
8. A narrative approach predominated that described the 1875, 1919, 1924 and New Town Acts. Many emphasised the importance of prefab housing but overlooked the creation of new towns like Harlow and Stevenage.

### *Report on the Units taken in January 2008*

9. This was the most popular of the three questions. The impact of war was generally poorly addressed. Many started with the Boer War in 1899 and failed to cover the whole period; other factors, however, were better assessed.

#### **The Development of Democracy in Britain 1868-1992**

- 10-12. An insufficient number of candidates attempted this topic to merit a report.

#### **The Development of the Mass Media 1896-1996**

13. Few candidates seemed able to assess the relationship between the press, radio and television. Most claimed that radio and television effectively ended the influence of the press and wrote an answer in three separate parts.
14. A very weak set of essays largely due to candidates' inability to understand what the question required. Many answers were factual accounts with little reference to the question set.
15. A poorly answered question. Some candidates did not understand the reference to the period of Appeasement in the 1930s, and their answers lacked the required focus to make any headway.

#### **The Changing Nature of Warfare 1792-1919**

16. Many candidates started with the Napoleonic Wars and tried in a narrative approach to get through to the end (ignoring the thematic approach) and so struggled to discuss the First World War. There tended to be a lot of information on Moltke and weapon development but not a lot of anything else – certainly not much reference to the turning point in the question.
17. The majority of students opted to begin with the Napoleonic wars and tried to reach 1918 by the end of the essay! A number of students wrote unbalanced answers with too much detailed information on Napoleonic tactics and neglected to discuss the First World War, though some excellent answers did point out that there was still very little change by 1914 – as exemplified by the Somme!
18. This was the best answered of the set. Some candidates focused on specific battles rather than wars, and a common error was to neglect the 'outcome of wars'. Factual knowledge was generally very impressive and the best answers included other factors as a determining factor.

#### **The Challenge of German Nationalism 1815-1919**

19. Poorly answered. Some listed all the turning points for the period and paid insufficient attention to the Franco-Prussian War; others wrote solely on the war. A minority supplied good evaluations of the war in the context of the period.
20. There were some good answers but most candidates failed to explore what constituted 'mass support'. Instead essays comprised a narrative of events from 1815 to 1919. Better scripts examined the shift from liberal, elitist nationalism to aggressive, populist nationalism
21. Only a small number of candidates answered this question. Essays, which were generally good, contained some sensitive assessments of relevant factors.

### **Russian Dictatorship 1855-1956**

22. The better answers looked at the aims of Russian governments in respect of their economic, social and political policies towards the industrial working class (which included the urban peasantry) and the expectations and hopes of those groups in terms of Russian rulers and administrations. Many answers revealed a surprising lack of general knowledge on the tsarist period or specific knowledge of the impact of collectivisation and the Five Year Plans under the communists. A few focused mainly on the peasantry and ignored the start date of 1881. Several assumed that there were no benefits under the communists and other weak answers wrote an account of endless suffering with no attempt to differentiate between different tsars.
23. Candidates who defined 'modernise' generally produced an assessment with clear thematic criteria. Most concluded that both tsars and communists tried to change Russia in a number of ways and for different reasons, but that the communists were more successful. Weaker responses wrote narrative accounts and focused mainly on economic changes – with an emphasis on the Five Year Plans and collectivisation and not much discussion of Alexander II. Better responses examined political and administrative reforms, social and educational changes as well as economic; more narrow evaluations focused solely on economic developments.
24. This was a popular question and a good discriminator. Better responses offered a range of explanations for varying degrees of success enjoyed by opposition groups. The use of repression featured throughout the period and most candidates were able to comment on the difference in scale between pre- and post-1917. Too many saw the assassination of Alexander II as evidence of the success of the opposition to tsarism but were unable to see that in the wider context of the tsarist period it was not such a significant coup for the opposition. The unity, support and leadership of opponents were considered important factors, together with the competence of the Russian authorities and rulers at dealing with their opposition. Weaker essays focused heavily on the post-1917 period and the harshness of Stalinism but often overlooked the Civil War era.

### **The Struggle for the Constitution 1763-1877**

25. A very popular question and generally well answered. Strong candidates showed good knowledge of the Compromise and then put a very strong case for an alternative eg Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, which was linked to the rise of the Republican party, the election of Lincoln and the secession of the southern states. Weaker candidates tended to list several turning points without really putting a strong case for them.
26. This was very popular and well answered. There were a few very strong candidates who seemed to understand the full scope of the question. Most started with Washington, then Jefferson, Jackson and Lincoln – mainly relating what each did though aware of there being different reactions to events but not really explaining why. The focus was on the actions of each president – often pointing out continuity and change between each – but few really explained why they acted as they did. In most cases the depth of knowledge was impressive.
27. This question was the least popular and the least well done. Better candidates began with the 10 amendments and explained why they were added. They then linked the 13th, 14th & 15th amendments to social, political and technical causes. Weaker candidates focused on social change and ignored the references to the amendments. The level of background knowledge was unfortunately not strong.

### **Civil Rights in the USA 1865-1980**

28. This was a popular and generally well-answered question. Good responses - and there were many – considered the contributions of men like Washington, Du Bois, Garvey, Randolph, Luther King, Malcolm X and Carmichael, together with the role of presidents, Congress and the Supreme Court. Most argued that the greatest advancement occurred when the Supreme Court acted in conjunction with the president to support an individual or African American organisation. *Brown versus Board of Education* figured in most answers but additional examples were cited in several responses. Economic and trade union rights also figured in better essays. Weaker answers focused entirely on African Americans, often only on the years 1954-68, and produced a descriptive account of developments with little or no synthesis. Some went off at a tangent and wrote at length about groups like the Ku Klux Klan stopping advancement.
29. Many candidates agreed that the 1960s were a turning point in Asian and Hispanic civil rights and cited the concepts behind Kennedy's 'New Frontier' and Johnson's 'Great Society', which were translated into federal legislation, affirmative action and subsequent Supreme Court rulings. The best answers set the 1960s in the context of the period 1950-1980 to evaluate the 1960s decade as a turning point, before comparing it with earlier alternative key moments. The preferred comparisons were the 1880s and restrictions on immigration, the 1930s and New Deal, and the impact of World War II, especially on the Japanese Americans. Generally knowledge was stronger on the Asian Americans than the Hispanics
30. This was the least popular and the least well done of the 3 questions in this set. The consensus of candidates was that Native Americans played little part in advancing their civil rights until the American Indian Movement, and that periodically the conduct of Indian tribes in the nineteenth century and later the Bureau of Indian Affairs may have impeded their progress. The better essays explained how and how far Native Americans achieved improvements in civil rights; weaker answers were unable to assess the impact of key developments, such as the Plains Wars, the contribution of Collier, the BIA and the Indian Reorganisation Act, the work of AIM, the benefit derived from African American civil rights' movements, federal legislation and Supreme Court rulings e.g. *Passamaquaddy versus Morton*. A number of answers completely agreed with the proposition and offered no counter argument! Most essays were generalised descriptions of the treatment of Indians during the period.



# Grade Thresholds

Advanced GCE (Subject) (Aggregation Code(s))  
January 2008 Examination Series

## Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
2580	Raw	60	44	39	34	29	25	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
2581	Raw	60	44	39	34	29	25	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
2582	Raw	60	44	39	34	29	25	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
2583	Raw	45	35	31	27	23	19	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2584	Raw	45	35	31	27	23	19	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2585	Raw	45	34	30	26	23	20	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2586	Raw	45	34	30	26	23	20	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2587	Raw	90	68	61	54	48	42	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2588	Raw	90	68	61	54	48	42	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2589	Raw	90	68	61	54	48	42	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2590	Raw	120	91	81	71	61	52	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
2591	Raw	120	91	81	71	61	52	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0

## Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (ie after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
3835	300	240	210	180	150	120	0
7835	600	480	420	360	300	240	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>Total Number of Candidates</b>
<b>3835</b>	19.40	44.51	72.59	92.40	98.64	100.00	821
<b>7835</b>	14.91	47.37	81.58	95.61	99.12	100.00	136

**957 candidates aggregated this series**

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see:

[http://www.ocr.org.uk/learners/ums\\_results.html](http://www.ocr.org.uk/learners/ums_results.html)

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

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