

**A LEVEL**

**Examiners' report**

# **HISTORY A**

**H505**

For first teaching in 2015

**Y113/01 Summer 2022 series**

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## Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers are also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

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To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our [website](#).

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## Paper Y113 series overview

Y113 is one of thirteen units for the revised A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests an extended period of History of about fifty years through an Enquiries or source-based option and an essay. The paper is divided into two sections. In Section A candidates have to answer a compulsory source question based on four written primary sources. The question requires them to use all four sources to assess the validity of a view. In Section B candidates are required to answer one essay question from a choice of two.

To do well on Section A, candidates need to be able to consider both provenance of the sources and apply contextual knowledge to them to reach a judgement about the sources in relation to the issue in the question.

To do well on Section B, candidates need to address the issue in the question, using detailed supporting knowledge. To reach the higher levels candidates will need to assess the issues they discuss and reach a supported judgement at least in the conclusion.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• considered the provenance of the sources and used relevant contextual knowledge</li> <li>• linked the contextual knowledge clearly to the source being discussed to show whether the view of the source was valid or not</li> <li>• reached an overall judgement on the strength of the evidence in the sources as to the extent to which the sources supported the view in the question</li> <li>• in answering the essay question, discussed at least two issues in depth</li> <li>• gave supporting detail that was both accurate and relevant to the question set, not just the topic</li> <li>• reached a supported judgement about the issue in the question</li> <li>• made a series of interim judgements about the issues discussed in relation to the question.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• did not consider both the provenance and use contextual knowledge to evaluate the sources</li> <li>• wrote an unbalanced response in their treatment of the sources, with very little consideration of one of the sources</li> <li>• reached a judgement based on their knowledge rather than on the strength of the sources or did not make a judgement at all</li> <li>• showed a poor understanding of the major issues relevant to the essay</li> <li>• were unable to support their response with relevant material</li> <li>• did not focus on the precise wording of the question</li> <li>• made unsupported comments about issues which were assertions.</li> </ul>

## Section A overview

The Enquiry section in this unit examines whether Churchill managed relations between Britain and the USA successfully in the period 1941 to 1945. The question requires candidates to critically assess evidence and reach judgements. The critical evaluation of sources is the central theme in this section with all marks awarded against AO2.

### Question 1

#### Churchill 1930–1951

- 1 Using these four sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that Churchill successfully managed relations between Britain and the USA in the period between 1941 and 1945. [30]

Many candidates were able to analyse the content of the four sources and reach a reasonable conclusion regarding those which supported the premise in the title and the sources that didn't. Most candidates displayed a well-developed understanding of technique and so understood the need to use both context and provenance, although provenance was sometimes less well developed. Judgement remained an issue though, meaning that many otherwise good responses were capped at the top of Level 4. Exemplar 1 demonstrates an extract from an otherwise good response that does not reach Level 5 because the judgement is not on the sources.

Judgements must be made on the provenance of the sources and their overall strength in either supporting or challenging the view in the question. Candidates were assessing the strength of evidence in relation to whether Churchill successfully managed relations between Britain and the USA between 1941 and 1945.

Source A was generally used to show how Churchill did manage relations successfully, with candidates able to explain how he courted Roosevelt before entering the war. There was some good knowledge noted on the end of the Neutrality Acts and the establishment of Lend Lease as well as direct references to the Atlantic Charter. Most candidates were at least able to point out how Churchill might be exaggerating these links in a public broadcast at this stage as the USA had yet to enter the war, with very good candidates using specific evidence in pointing out the problems Britain was facing in Europe at that time and that the British public might need reassurance.

Source B was generally analysed well with candidates noting how the Atlantic Charter was a joint enterprise and where there were disagreements, Churchill was able to win over Roosevelt to his way of thinking. The best candidates were able to discuss the Ottawa Agreements and imperial preference but most were able to discuss Churchill's view of imperialism and how this clashed with Roosevelt's - particularly with regard to the post war world. Provenance tended to focus on the idea of hindsight and the fact that Churchill would want to demonstrate cordial relations with the USA in the period after 1945. Better responses pointed out that this book was written before the election of 1951 with Churchill wishing to create a positive impression of his successful role in the negotiations.

Source C was used by virtually all candidates to demonstrate how Churchill did not successfully handle relations in this period. Provenance focused on the fact that this was a reliable source as it was a private conversation between Roosevelt and his son, although some candidates were able to relate this to their personal differences over imperialism. Much contextual knowledge over the Mediterranean strategy and the creation of the Second Front was noted in many responses and used profitably.

Source D was again used to contradict the view given in the question with candidates focusing on the fact that Roosevelt turned down Churchill's request for a meeting while agreeing to see Stalin. Contextual knowledge focused on the role of the Soviet Union in the war and the desire for a Second Front and the differences that emerged between the leaders. Provenance was handled well with many commenting on the personal relationship between Lord Moran and Churchill, while some candidates were able to discuss the publishing of Lord Moran's diaries in some detail.

### Exemplar 1

In conclusion, to an extent Churchill is presented as managing relations successfully between the USA and Britain, although he is presented as a senior partner and winner of sorts to FDR, he is also shown as a declining power frequently sidelined in favour of the Soviets, and thus one must conclude that although he played a substantial role perhaps earlier in the period, the declining nature of Britain tarnished his image and thus his influence.

### Assessment for learning



On the source question there must be a judgement on the strength of the sources supporting each argument. This judgement should come on the provenance of the sources not knowledge of the subject. This is crucial to access Levels 5 and 6.

## Section B overview

Two essays are set, each from a different Key Topic. Here candidates are asked to examine the seriousness of the problems facing the Labour governments of 1974 to 1979 or whether scandal and sleaze were the most important reasons for the defeat of Major in 1997. The questions set require candidates to analyse the causes and consequences of major historical issues.

### Question 2\*

#### Britain 1951–1997

**2\*** Assess the seriousness of the problems facing the Labour governments of 1974–1979. **[20]**

This was the more popular of the essays completed. It was generally well-handled although several candidates included reforms from the Labour government of 1964–70 in this question. The best responses adopted a thematic approach looking at the economy, Trade Union relations, divisions within the party and the slender majority which resulted in the Lib-Lab pact as the main focus. Most candidates were able to discuss the impact of the Winter of Discontent, although there was confusion with the 1984–85 Miners' Strike in some responses. Although the impact of the Oil Crisis was relevant in part, some responses relied too much on events in the Heath government and confused events.

Exemplar 2 highlights the excellent treatment of one factor in an essay, highlighting the contextual understanding, analysis and an interim judgement. All are aspects of a successful Level 6 response.

#### Misconception



Several candidates confused reforms of the Labour ministry of 1964–70 with these later governments.

## Exemplar 2

The least serious problem facing the Labour governments of 1974-79 was social policy, namely racial discrimination and gender inequality. Although, racism had been legally addressed and made illegal under the Labour government of 1964-70, enforcement ~~failed to~~ was ~~was~~ lacked effectiveness. This was significantly improved ~~to~~ through the Commission for Racial Equality, introduced under the Race Relations Act 1976. The significantly lower proportion of women in the workforce, compared to men, was combatted with the Employment Protection Act in 1975, which meant that women became ~~entitled~~ entitled to equal access to jobs and equal treatment in the workplace, as well as addressing both direct and indirect forms of sexism. The Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 encouraged women to work even



more as it ~~gave~~ provided women with the legal right to statutory maternity leave, with pay.

However, only 50% of women were eligible for this, so it was less successful. Despite this, social

policy was still the least severe

issue as it was quite easily improved through simple acts of legislation, unlike economic or industrial issues. It ~~also did~~

~~not contribute to~~ it was also ~~an~~ unlikely ~~not a significant~~

factor ~~or so~~ in this government's downfall, unlike industrial

relations which arguably led directly to their downfall.

### Question 3\*

3\* 'Scandal and sleaze were the most important reasons for the defeat of Major in 1997.' How far do you agree? **[20]**

This was a slightly less popular question, although candidates who chose this question tended to produce well-written and analytical responses. One issue noted for some candidates was a lack of understanding of scandal and sleaze, meaning that responses were partial, even where other factors were more well known. Good candidates were able to contextualise these scandals, with the 'Cash for questions' scandal as well as a number of personal scandals contrasted against the Conservative 'Back to basics' campaign. Other factors that were well known included the rise of Tony Blair and New Labour, divisions within the Conservative ranks and their economic performance.

#### Misconception



Several candidates referred to John Major's own extra-marital affair with Edwina Currie, although this was not revealed until after he had fallen from power and so didn't contribute to the downfall of his government.

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