

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y103/01 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 is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

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

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

Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

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Paper Y103 series overview

Y103 is the British period study and enquiry paper focused on 'England, 1199-1272'. It is comprised of a source-based study (Section A/Question 1) and an essay question (Section B/Questions 2 and 3).

To achieve marks in the highest level for Section A, candidates need to be able to evaluate the four sources provided, using the provenance of each and detailed knowledge of the relevant historical context in a balanced way. Candidates will engage with the sources considering the question, providing a supported analysis of each one. There will be very good focus on the question throughout the response and a convincing and relevant judgement will be offered on the issue in the question (i.e. how far the sources support the given view) rather than on the broader topic.

For Section B, to achieve marks in the highest level, candidates need to provide a response that has a consistent focus on the question throughout, includes a clear and sustained line of reasoning, is based on analysis and evaluation of detailed knowledge and understanding, and which provides a developed judgement that is related to the question.

In general, candidates performed well on Section A. This may be attributed to a good level of knowledge of the historical context – in particular, the disputed election at Canterbury. Knowledge of provenance was less developed, but candidates were able to contextualise A and B in particular by using biographical information relating to the authors. Many candidates were able to form a judgement on the issue in the question (the extent to which the sources supported the issue). Many candidates also effectively addressed the question in Section B. Question 3, in particular, was answered well, with candidates showing good knowledge and understanding of the factors that contributed to de Montfort's downfall.

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"> • demonstrated sound knowledge and understanding of the period • engaged effectively with sources in Section A, using provenance and knowledge of the historical context to analyse and evaluate each one • demonstrated an ability to analyse knowledge in light of the question in Section B and to evaluate the relative significance of factors in relation to that question • made clear and convincing judgements in responses in both sections, based on sound knowledge and understanding of the period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • possessed only limited knowledge and understanding of the period • explained rather than analysed and evaluated the sources in Section A • did not properly engage with the provenance of the sources in Section A • explained factors in Section B, with less detailed knowledge, rather than analysed them in light of the question • provided only limited judgements or broader views on topic areas in their responses relating to both sections - or omitted judgements entirely.

Section A overview

In this section, candidates need to engage with the four sources provided in order to assess the extent to which each one supports the view that King John was responsible for the quarrel with Innocent III. It is important that candidates evaluate the sources using provenance and knowledge of historical context. The level and mark awarded is ultimately determined by the quality of these comments. Where provenance is less developed, it is more difficult for responses to be placed into the higher levels.

Question 1

King John 1199–1216

- 1 Using these four sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that King John was responsible for the quarrel with Innocent III. [30]

Candidates, in general, demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of the events referred to in the sources. Details of the dispute at Canterbury were often well known, with many candidates able to discuss the sequence of events alluded to in Sources A and B. Candidates were aware of the importance of precedent: John's predecessors had traditionally had their own way when it came to episcopal appointments and therefore the king was not (in his eyes) doing anything wrong. Candidates were also aware of Stephen Langton's background, in particular his association with Philip Augustus, which made him such an unpalatable candidate to John. Less was known about Innocent III and his papacy, with many candidates treating him simply as the king's antagonist. Responses that were awarded the highest marks were able to explain why the pope's aims clashed so forcibly with the king's. Only some candidates were aware of the king's relationship with Simon Langton.

Many candidates were able to discuss the provenance of the sources. Gervase of Canterbury (Source A) was handled most effectively, with candidates pointing to his connections to Canterbury. Roger of Wendover (Source B) was not as well known, with some candidates confusing details of his monastic background. Sources C and D, as texts written by John and Innocent, needed more contextual knowledge in order to be evaluated more fully. Some candidates linked the date of each one to events in the future, such as the interdict. Others handled C (Innocent's letter) less effectively by arguing that it was private correspondence seen only by the king. However, the correspondence of elite churchmen in this era would not have been 'private' in this sense.

Responses that were given marks in the higher levels made use of both provenance and knowledge of the historical context in order to evaluate the sources (see Exemplar 1). These responses also included a focused judgement at the end, often with interim judgements within the response which linked the discussion to the question.

Reaching a judgement

In order to move into the higher levels of the mark scheme, candidates need to include a judgement focused on the key issue in the question. This key issue is not the broader topic area of the question but the extent to which the sources provided support the notion in the question.

Exemplar 1

		Source A argues that John was responsible, due to mistreatment of the clergy. Source A argues the election of the king's option, John de Gray "had been imposed by the king using force and so his election was void".
		We know John had used force against electors previously, in Armaagh 1203, so this claim seems persuasive. Moreover, the use of force against the clergy is supported by source B, which is "banishing the monks from Canterbury", which we know happened in 1207, under the watch of two, known-robust, royalists, Falk de Cantilupe and the Sheriff of Kent.
		Thus, that the election dispute was both caused by, and exacerbated by John's mistreatment of the clergy seems persuasive. However, this source is undercut for two reasons.

Firstly, as a monk from Canterbury, Genaise of source A would be likely to place blame on John, given his banishment of them. Moreover, the fact that his blame is not unequivocal, with the monks lying to the king about having elected their sub-prior Reginald, shows that even those greatly against John could not blame him entirely, suggesting he was not responsible. Secondly, this is not a convincing argument for the cause of the quarrel, with ~~the~~ the king still appealing "to Rome" and mistreatment of clergymen, as in Armagh 1203, not automatically resulting in an Interdict. Thus, mistreatment of clergy does not suggest John was mostly responsible for the quarrel with Innocent III.

Finally, source C argues that a lack of "consideration" towards the Pope caused the quarrel. In John's refusal to allow Stephen into the country in 1207, and publication of source D as an argument against the papacy, it is certainly true that John did "lessen [their] dignity". However, this is not a persuasive

argument. Firstly, as a letter from Innocent directly to John, it would be unlikely the Pope phrased his "dignity", and named his reasons as "involuntary". Alone, the source is therefore questionable. Secondly, given John's excuses were not "involuntary", with Langton an unknown, friend of the king's enemy, and thus his election a violation of kingly rights, it seems John was not responsible, but Innocent's choice in the first place. Thus, it is more convincing John was not responsible.

In conclusion, the sources largely support the view John was not responsible for the quarrel with Innocent. Source A, whilst supported by evidence, shows the election of an unacceptable candidate by the pope, contrary to kingly authority to be responsible. Indeed, such a view is later supported by Langton's involvement in drafting Magna Carta against the king, showing John as fully justified in his ~~of~~ lack of accepting the pope's choice. Moreover, the arguments of

		sources A and C neither outweighs
		such claims, nor provide convincing
		reasons as to why John should have
		allowed the election. Thus John
		was not responsible, because Innocent's
		choice was untenable.

In Exemplar 1, the candidate has used both provenance and knowledge to evaluate the sources. The extract contains interim judgements which link directly to the question and a final judgement which is focused on the key issue (the extent to which the sources support the statement in the question).

Section B overview

In Section B, to achieve a mark in the highest level, candidates need to provide a focused response to one of the two questions, providing a clear and consistent line of reasoning, based on analysis and evaluation of relevant knowledge, and understanding, which reaches a convincing judgement. Many candidates provided detailed explanation of key factors but found it more difficult to provide a clear and consistent line of reasoning. Some responses also lacked a convincing judgement that was related to the question.

Question 2*

England 1216–1272

2* How effective were the reforms of 1258–1259 in providing solutions for the problems facing central and local government?

[20]

This question was not as popular as Question 3. While a few candidates provided very strong responses to this question, many offered only narrow responses that did not effectively address the different ways that the reforms tackled the problems facing central and local government (see Exemplar 2).

In some responses, the distinction between central and local government was less clear. The Provisions themselves were reasonably well known, but knowledge of the problems was not always well developed. Many candidates focused on the king's favouritism and the financial difficulties it caused. At a local level, candidates were aware of sheriffs' abuses of their power and the impact of the reforms in addressing this problem. Few candidates discussed the impact of the reforms on the peasantry or the impact of the justices in eyre. Attempts to address the ineffectiveness of the reforms, by considering, for example the resistance of Edward, were less developed. Candidates needed to address a range of factors in order to reach the higher levels of the mark schemes.

Similarly, in these levels, the relative effectiveness of these reforms should be addressed through careful evaluation of the impact of each reform on the problems. A clear judgement on the issue in the question ('how effective' were the reforms in providing solutions to these problems) is also needed in the conclusion.

Exemplar 2

However, by 1261, the Pope had annulled the provisions of Oxford, claiming them to be unjust and against the concept of the divine right of kings. This led to Henry being able to reclaim his lost power later in 1261, making the provisions of Oxford near enough defunct. This shows the inefficiency of the reforms due to the ease at which Henry was able to reverse them.

Despite this, the provisions were effective in dealing with the problem that foreigners posed to central government. There had been fears among the nobility in England that the Lusignans were holding too much power and influence over the king, and this fear was not unfounded. The Lusignan faction held many offices in the ~~the~~ realm, and were able to

		influence the King due to their
		Patronage. It was because of these
		reforms that the Lusignans were
		driven out of London to Winchester
		, and eventually fled from England,
		back to France. This, therefore,
		shows the provisions being effective
		as they dealt with an issue of
		the time.
		To conclude the provisions and
		reforms were 'only somewhat effective
		due to the ease at which
		they were removed, however they
		still achieved some of their aims

In this extract, the candidate has provided a less developed explanation of one factor. It refers only in a general way to the reforms. The conclusion lacks a clear judgement, with only a view provided on the effectiveness of the reforms without any substantiation.

Question 3*

3* 'Lack of support was the main reason for the downfall of Simon de Montfort.' How far do you agree?

[20]

This question was significantly more popular than Question 2. Candidates knew the topic well, with many responses beginning with a detailed explanation as to the reasons for de Montfort's lack of support, notably his arrogance and the way he enriched himself and his own family. Some candidates went further here by drawing a comparison between de Montfort and Henry III himself, mentioning, for example, some of the reasons for the outbreak of the baronial rebellion. De Montfort's dwindling support as the confrontation at Evesham loomed was charted in many responses, with candidates pointing to the growing reputation of Edward as another reason for the disaffection of de Montfort's supporters. Some candidates also highlighted de Montfort's lack of support further down the social hierarchy, with many knights and burgesses having turned against him. Reasons for his unpopularity included the lack of 'real' reform and de Montfort's treatment of Henry and Edward.

Other factors discussed by candidates included Henry's own activity in working against de Montfort and the martial prowess of Edward. As noted above, knowledge of these factors was often quite detailed. Candidates were, in general, able to explain these factors confidently. Many responses included at least partial analysis and evaluation, as candidates attempted to assess the relative significance of each factor. Where this was combined with a line of reasoning and judgements, within the response and in the conclusion, candidates achieved marks in the highest level.

Reaching a judgement

To reach the higher levels of the mark scheme, candidates need to include a judgement focused directly on the key issue in the question. This judgement needs to reflect the line of reasoning in the response and it should be expressed clearly.

Exemplar 3

		<p>The role of Lord Edward, the most important militarily and diplomatically was ^{also more} less important than lack of support. Militarily, Lord Edward was key at Evesham: he trapped Montfort on the western bank of the River Severn, killing all those who tried to bring reinforcements to him. So too did he steal Montfortian banners from Kenilworth Castle, lulling Montfort into a false sense of security by pretending to be an ally. In this way, Lord Edward was instrumental in Montfort's downfall as he was key in bringing about his defeat at Evesham.</p> <p>Diplomatically, too, Lord Edward was also important, as he brought about Montfort's lack of support. In 1263, he won over several Marcher lords (e.g. John de Warenne and Henry of Almain) by bribery, thus reducing Montfort's support drastically and lowering the number of those who fought for him at Evesham. He also came to represent a political middle ground: although he was royal, he also</p>
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3	<p>supported the expulsion of foreigners, swayed by the fact that he represented both royal legitimacy and reform, figures like De Clare and Mortimer joined Lord Edward in 1265. Thus, once more, whilst lack of support was important, it was not as important as the role of Lord Edward, who both brought about said lack of support and engineered royalist success at Evesham. Moreover, it is clear that lack of support was not sufficient cause for Montfort's failure in and of itself, as he managed to secure victory at Lewes despite being outnumbered 2:1 by royalist forces. Thus, it would not be accurate to say that lack of support was the main reason for Montfort's downfall.</p>
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To conclude, lack of support was not the main reason for Montfort's downfall. Although it was significant, it was caused by other more important factors, such as his lack of royal legitimacy and Lord Edward. Moreover, Montfort's success at ~~Edenham~~^{Lewes} indicates that success was possible even with minimal support. It was Edward's leadership and the defection of de Clare to the royally legitimate side that brought about Montfort's downfall.

In Exemplar 3, the candidate uses detailed knowledge to explain the factor. There is an attempt to argue by addressing its relative importance before reaching a judgement. The response provides a final judgement that addresses the key issue in the question. It was marked in Level 6.

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