

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y101/01 Summer 2022 series

Contents

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Paper Y101 series overview | 4 |
| Section A overview | 5 |
| Question 1 | 5 |
| Section B overview | 9 |
| Question 2* | 9 |
| Question 3* | 12 |

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

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](#).

Would you prefer a Word version?

Did you know that you can save this PDF as a Word file using Acrobat Professional?

Simply click on **File > Export to** and select **Microsoft Word**

(If you have opened this PDF in your browser you will need to save it first. Simply right click anywhere on the page and select **Save as . . .** to save the PDF. Then open the PDF in Acrobat Professional.)

If you do not have access to Acrobat Professional there are a number of **free** applications available that will also convert PDF to Word (search for PDF to Word converter).

Paper Y101 series overview

Y101 is a British period study and enquiry paper focused on 'Alfred and the making of England, 871-1016'. It is comprised of a source-based study and an essay question.

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 engage with the sources in light of the question, providing a supported analysis of each one. There needs to be focus on the question throughout the answer and a convincing and relevant judgement offered on the issue in the question.

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

In general, candidates performed better on Section B than on Section A. Knowledge of provenance, in relation to Section A's Question 1 was often limited. Candidates also found it more difficult to provide an appropriate judgement when answering Question 1, with many responses culminating in a summary of comments made earlier on in the response. However, many candidates were able to relate the content of each source, particularly A and D, to the question. For Section B, many candidates were able to provide quite detailed explanations of key factors. Analysis, however, was often quite limited, and some candidates found it difficult to express a clear and consistent line of reasoning.

| 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 the sources, 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 answers 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 • did not properly engage with the provenance of the sources • explained factors in Section B, with less detailed knowledge rather than analysed them • provided only limited judgements or broader views on topic areas or omitted judgements entirely. |

Section A overview

In this section, candidates needed to engage with the four sources provided in order to assess the extent to which each one supported the view that King Alfred faced serious problems in the governance of England. It is important 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 answers to be placed into the higher levels.

Question 1

Alfred the Great

- 1 Using these four sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that King Alfred faced serious problems in the governance of England. **[30]**

Candidates were, in general, able to demonstrate good understanding of the content of each of the four sources. Knowledge of the practice of governance, for example, including the significance of ealdormen and reeves (Source A) was well known, as was the importance of the king's law code (Source B), with many candidates referring to the influences on it, such as Mosaic Law. Candidates were also aware of the evolving judicial system (Source C) and its importance to the king's notion of Christian society. Some even commented on the place of bishops within the king's conception of society (Source D), noting Alfred's keen interest in the spiritual sustenance of his people, as reflected in his translation of Gregory the Great's *Cura (or Regula) Pastoralis*. Knowledge of the historical context, therefore, was often quite effective.

Candidates did less well when attempting to handle provenance. Comments on provenance were often less developed (see Exemplar 1). Asser (Source A), as an author, was well known. Many candidates argued in favour of the reliability of Asser's view here, since he usually wrote in praise of the king. Comments on the provenance of B were more limited, with many candidates noting that its view was valid simply because the king was the likely author. Others were able to link discussion of the influences on his law code to its provenance, which was usually more effective. The provenance of C and D, both written by later authors, was handled less effectively. Candidates, in general, knew comparatively little about the authors or the works from which they were taken. Less is known about Simeon of Durham (Source D), but more might have been said about the post-Conquest context of Durham in which the work was written. In relation to Florence's chronicle, its links to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle might have been discussed. In a few responses, candidates were able to make a general point about both sources related to the sentimental view of Alfred and the Anglo-Saxon past in post-Conquest chronicles.

Not all candidates included a judgement related to the key issue in the question in their answers. Some provided summaries that reflected comments made earlier on in their answers as they discussed the content of each source. Others provided a more general view related to the broader topic area without referring to the sources.

Exemplar 1

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>around the Ealdormen & reeves. It can also be viewed as true due to it being written at the time and written by someone close to King Alfred.</p> |
| | <p>Source B is written in 895 during Alfred's reign meaning that it had access to first-hand accounts of the problems. It was written by King Alfred meaning that it shows his thoughts directly. meaning It was written in 895 during the latter half of his reign, during his own consolidation & improvement of his kingdom, through his lawcodes, burh construction & learning renaissance. Source B somewhat agrees with the statement as it implies that there were problems there with it saying to 'Judge very fairly', and to 'Never take bribes,' implying that this had been a problem before. King Alfred also states other the issues & by stating 'that he should judge no man as he would not himself be judged' implies meaning that judges should judge how they would want to be judged. This source somewhat agrees with the statement as it implies ^{implies} about the problems faced, but can be viewed as true due to it being in a law code meaning it had no opinion directed onto it.</p> |
| | <p>Source C is written 200+ years after Alfred's reign meaning it relied on 2nd hand sources making it being based on an interpretation of an event rather than the actual event. It was written by a church official meaning it has no personal bias to</p> |

Alfred meaning it ~~was~~ ^{gives} an unbiased view which could see all evidence at one time. Source C ~~shows somewhat~~ mostly agrees with statement as it states that Alfred 'reproved the judges for inexperience & ignorance', implying that this was a common problem. It also states King Alfred's words had the desired effect of '[devoting] all their power to the study of justice'. It can be implied that it had become a serious problem due to the threat of '[resigning] their offices'. Source C is mostly agrees with the statement as it states the problem King Alfred had, & shows the severity of it with the threat of '[resigning] their offices' if they didn't conform.

Source D is written 200+ years after Alfred's reign meaning it relied on second hand sources, however it would have an ~~truthful~~ ^{truthful} aspect due to ~~the~~ no need to please King Alfred. It was written by a church official meaning that it was a book of learning rather than profit motivated allowing for a factual viewpoint. This source agrees with the statement due to its clear stating of King Alfred's problems ~~with~~ with Alfred's ministers 'not [following] him'. This would cause Alfred problems due to the zero change at local level undermining his governance. It also states that he had 'admonish the pastors' due to the severity of problem, it also states Alfred's mind being 'frequently distressed' by this. Source D agrees with the statement as it states Alfred had

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | with the bishops & shows the damage it had with him [administering] the pastors; & the how 'frequently distressed' he was. |
| | | Overall, the Source agrees with King Alfred facing serious problems in the governance of England, with Sources A showing & D showing the problems of the implementation of his governing & Sources B & C showing the problems of the judicial system and its ignorance of learning. This shows that the sources agree that King Alfred faced serious problems in the governance of England. |

In Exemplar 1, provenance is less developed. For example, the authors of C and D are simply referred to as 'church officials'. It is also noted that both were written '200+ years' after Alfred's reign; there is no real attempt at contextualising each source. There is a less developed judgement in the final paragraph and the response was marked in Level 4.

Using provenance

Candidates need to offer detailed comments on the provenance, placing the sources in context, in order to reach the higher levels of the mark scheme.

Reaching a judgement

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 to the notion in the question.

Section B overview

In Section B, 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 fairly detailed explanation of key factors but found it more difficult to provide a clear and consistent line of reasoning. Some answers also lacked a convincing judgement that was related to the question.

Question 2*

The Making of England 899–1016

2* How seriously was the power of Edward the Elder challenged by his enemies?

[20]

This question was significantly more popular than Question 3. In general, candidates knew the topic area well. The challenge presented by Æthelwold, for example, was usually presented first, as the most serious one faced by Edward, but some candidates confused their relationship. Many candidates argued that although Æthelwold, at times, presented a serious challenge to Edward, it was ultimately much less significant overall, since he was eventually killed in battle.

Other challenges candidates commented on included the potential threat from the Welsh and Scots, which was usually deemed to be less serious, the Vikings, both militarily and culturally, which Edward was ultimately able to withstand, and the potential threat from Mercia.

In explaining the way Edward dealt with these threats, notably the Vikings, candidates referred to the construction of burhs and the successful organisation of defence. Knowledge of these factors was often quite detailed but some candidates found it more difficult to make effective use of this knowledge in order to address the question directly (see Exemplar 2).

Candidates needed to analyse the knowledge included in light of the question and evaluate the relative seriousness of each factor in order to address the question properly. Candidates that did this found it easier to form a convincing judgement at the end of the essay.

Exemplar 2

| | |
|---|--|
| 2 | <p>Throughout Edward's reign from 899-924, his enemies posed serious and minor threats to his power. At the beginning of his reign, Aethelwold was his biggest threat to power, causing large dynastic issues for Edward's rule. Raegnald and Sihtric were furthermore enemies that posed a threat to Edward's power, as well as finally the Danes, and the other British kings within Britain</p> |
| | <p>After Alfred's death in 899, Edward faced serious dynastic issues caused by his cousin and enemy, Aethelwold. Premogeniture did not exist during this time, meaning that Edward was not the clear successor to the throne. Aethelwold had the support of half of Wessex's nobility, regardless of Edward's marriage to Aethelred in 901 in attempt to increase support from Wessex. Edward was unable to stop Aethelwold from capturing the wealthy royal estate of Wimbourne in 899, giving power to Aethelwold, and threatening his power further. Even after beating Aethelwold in the civil war (899-908) and at Badbury Rings, Edward was unable to eradicate the threat of Aethelwold. After Aethelwold's defeat at Badbury Rings, he was forced to flee to Northumbria, however, here he gained mass support, with</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>experienced Danish warriors joining his army, and challenging Edward's power immensely. However, Athelwold's threat to Edward was ultimately over at 903, as he was killed during the battle of Merton, much to Edward's fortune.</p> |
| | <p>Raegnald and the Norse-Irish also posed a threat to Edward's power through raids and heightened tension. Raegnald emerged as a strong Norwegian leader after 913, when he was expelled from Ireland and arrived in England. Raegnald began raiding, however this did not threaten to undermine Edward's kingdom, and therefore arguably did not challenge his power. Raegnald captured Northumbria in 919, making him King of Northumbria. Whilst this did create tension within England, it ultimately made Edward's capturing of the Danelaw Southern Danelaw and East-Anglia much easier, therefore Raegnald was not a huge threat to Edward, and may have even submitted to him in 920 at Bakewell. Culturally however, Raegnald did pose a threat, as the Christian, Anglo-Saxon culture endorsed by Edward was challenged by an pagan culture; as seen in the placename Grimby and on the Gosforth cross, which includes pagan inscriptions.</p> |
| | <p>Finally, the other British kings and rebels also opposed Edward's power to an extent.</p> |

In Exemplar 2, a Level 4 response, the candidate has explained two important factors without much analysis. Direct links to the question are therefore less effective.

Question 3*

3* 'The cultural revival under Aethelred was the main achievement of his reign.' How far do you agree?

[20]

Fewer candidates answered this question. Those that did argued that the cultural revival or Æthelred's promotion of law codes was his main achievement. Candidates would often focus on the work of Archbishop Wulfstan as evidence of the cultural revival; few responses included discussion of the work of the monastic reformers, an omission which suggested that candidates distinguished religious affairs from culture, a distinction that would not have been recognised at the time.

Other 'achievements' included, as noted above, law codes, which were used by Æthelred's successors, the strong coinage of Anglo-Saxon England, and the kingdom's administration. The latter two factors represented achievements that were, in general, not attributed to Æthelred; they were the work of his predecessors. As in Question 2, candidates could recount this knowledge but found it more difficult to shape into a line of reasoning (see Exemplar 3). As noted, more effective analysis and evaluation is needed in order to do this, in which the factors are linked to the question more directly. Judgements tended to be stronger in responses to this question than in those for Question 2, with many arguing in favour of the statement in the question.

Exemplar 3

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>have altered their behaviour so that they no longer undermined religion and avoided punishment from God. Without 'immoral behaviour,' England would begin to live according to how Christian teachings dictate depicted which would have led to a decrease in crime and the increase of the influence of religion. Therefore, it can be argued that cultural revival was the main achievement in Aethelred's reign because sermons changed the way the English lived which mostly benefited their fight against the Vikings as they were informed of of how to deal with them.</p> |
| | <p>On the other hand, I disagree that cultural revival under Aethelred was the main achievement of his reign because, arguably, the law code was the main achievement. Aethelred's law code used laws to strengthen the role of the church in England. For example, it taught religious figures how to conduct themselves as well as stating that if people followed a moral code of conduct, God would offer them protection in his fifth law code. This improved the culture of England and led to a decrease in crime so people would receive God's protection. The law code also boosted trade and, hence, the Saxon economy. For example, it improved shipping to allow goods to move freely in and out which was would improve Saxon economy with increased trade so the strength of England as a country would improve with as the country got richer with more trade agreements. Therefore, I disagree with the statement and argue the law code was the main achievement because it reformed the law to make things fairer and more efficient which overall led to more peace peace and stability in the Kingdom.</p> |
| | <p>I also disagree with the statement and argue treaties against the Vikings under Aethelred was the main achievement of his reign. For example,</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | | the treaty of 991 between Aethelred and Richard the Duke of Normandy. |
| | | They both agreed not to allow the Vikings to use their territories as bases |
| | | to launch raids on one another. This treaty against the Vikings reduced |
| | | the power of the Danes because they were restricted as to where they can |
| | | use as bases to launch raids because they could no longer exploit |
| | | Normandy to gain an advantage over Aethelred. This also gave Aethelred |
| | | a defensive advantage as limited Viking bases meant Aethelred did |
| | | not need to waste many resources fortifying many Viking access points. |
| | | The treaty of 991 only strengthened Aethelred after Aethelred's marriage |
| | | to the Duke's daughter Emma in 1002. |
| | | |
| | | Overall, I disagree with cultural revival under Aethelred being the |
| | | main achievement of his reign because it neglects the importance |
| | | of Aethelred's law code and his agreements with other regions which |
| | | were all arguably significant to the achievements of Aethelred's reign. |

In this extract, there is less developed explanation of several factors leading to a basic view, in the final paragraph, which relates to the question.

Supporting you

Post-results services

If any of your students' results are not as expected, you may wish to consider one of our post-results services. For full information about the options available visit the [OCR website](#).

Keep up-to-date

We send a weekly roundup to tell you about important updates. You can also sign up for your subject specific updates. If you haven't already, [sign up here](#).

OCR Professional Development

Attend one of our popular CPD courses to hear directly from a senior assessor or drop in to a Q&A session. Most of our courses are delivered live via an online platform, so you can attend from any location.

Please find details for all our courses on the relevant subject page on our [website](#) or visit [OCR professional development](#).

Signed up for ExamBuilder?

ExamBuilder is the question builder platform for a range of our GCSE, A Level, Cambridge Nationals and Cambridge Technicals qualifications. [Find out more](#).

ExamBuilder is **free for all OCR centres** with an Interchange account and gives you unlimited users per centre. We need an [Interchange](#) username to validate the identity of your centre's first user account for ExamBuilder.

If you do not have an Interchange account please contact your centre administrator (usually the Exams Officer) to request a username, or nominate an existing Interchange user in your department.

Active Results

Review students' exam performance with our free online results analysis tool. It is available for all GCSEs, AS and A Levels and Cambridge Nationals.

It allows you to:

- review and run analysis reports on exam performance
- analyse results at question and/or topic level
- compare your centre with OCR national averages
- identify trends across the centre
- facilitate effective planning and delivery of courses
- identify areas of the curriculum where students excel or struggle
- help pinpoint strengths and weaknesses of students and teaching departments.

[Find out more](#).

Need to get in touch?

If you ever have any questions about OCR qualifications or services (including administration, logistics and teaching) please feel free to get in touch with our customer support centre.

Call us on
01223 553998

Alternatively, you can email us on
support@ocr.org.uk

For more information visit

 **ocr.org.uk/qualifications/resource-finder**

 **ocr.org.uk**

 **/ocrexams**

 **/ocrexams**

 **/company/ocr**

 **/ocrexams**

We really value your feedback

Click to send us an autogenerated email about this resource. Add comments if you want to. Let us know how we can improve this resource or what else you need. Your email address will not be used or shared for any marketing purposes.



I like this



I dislike this

Please note – web links are correct at date of publication but other websites may change over time. If you have any problems with a link you may want to navigate to that organisation's website for a direct search.



OCR is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge.

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored. © OCR 2022 Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England. Registered office The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8EA. Registered company number 3484466. OCR is an exempt charity.

OCR operates academic and vocational qualifications regulated by Ofqual, Qualifications Wales and CCEA as listed in their qualifications registers including A Levels, GCSEs, Cambridge Technicals and Cambridge Nationals.

OCR provides resources to help you deliver our qualifications. These resources do not represent any particular teaching method we expect you to use. We update our resources regularly and aim to make sure content is accurate but please check the OCR website so that you have the most up to date version. OCR cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions in these resources.

Though we make every effort to check our resources, there may be contradictions between published support and the specification, so it is important that you always use information in the latest specification. We indicate any specification changes within the document itself, change the version number and provide a summary of the changes. If you do notice a discrepancy between the specification and a resource, please [contact us](#).

You can copy and distribute this resource freely if you keep the OCR logo and this small print intact and you acknowledge OCR as the originator of the resource.

OCR acknowledges the use of the following content: N/A

Whether you already offer OCR qualifications, are new to OCR or are thinking about switching, you can request more information using our [Expression of Interest form](#).

Please [get in touch](#) if you want to discuss the accessibility of resources we offer to support you in delivering our qualifications.