

A LEVEL

Moderators' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y100/01/02 Summer 2022 series

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Introduction

Our moderators' 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. 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.

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](#).

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General overview/Introduction

The topic-based essay brings together skills which candidates have been deploying in the examined units and should not be seen as something totally different from other opportunities to show key historical understanding:

- AO1 understanding different interpretations and using knowledge to support argument and judgement. The questions candidate choose should offer the chance to analyse and weigh different explanations. For example, about whether the Holocaust was planned from the start of the Nazi regime or arose because of the circumstances of war. This is also a requirement in essays on Papers 1 and 2. But the depth will be greater in the longer coursework essay.
- AO2 analysing and evaluating primary evidence. This is also required in Paper 1 and the way that sources are evaluated is the same – by considering provenance and using knowledge. But here the choice of sources is up to the candidate and the evaluation is integrated into an essay.
- AO3 analysing and evaluating secondary sources by the application of knowledge. This is an extension of the requirement in Paper 3 where two contrasting interpretations must be explained and assessed. But, again, candidates must choose their own sources and assess and, again, the evaluation is integrated into an essay.

Key point call out

Candidates should use the skills they have developed and make sure that what is expected in other papers is demonstrated in the topic-based essay. They must be sure to make judgement the core of the essays, assessing different interpretations and making clear judgements about both primary and secondary sources. This is not a separate 'project' but a chance to bring together the historical skills developed in the course as a whole.

The different assessment objectives should be marked separately, and it should not be assumed that a good mark for AO1 which is testing essay skills must mean equally good marks for AO2 and AO3. There must be sustained supported evaluation for this to be justified and marking should look careful to see where and how primary and secondary sources are being evaluated. The essay should not just be assessed as a whole but the different elements should be considered.

Questions should allow candidates access to all levels in the different assessment objectives. It is very important that candidates should understand the possible debate in their chosen question and be able to access appropriate source material to show their analytical and evaluative skills. Candidates should ensure they really understand the implications of their chosen question or have enough appropriate source material.

Candidates who did well generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • made sure that they answered their own question and that the interpretations they considered were relevant. The focus on the issue in the question was maintained throughout • analysed and evaluated a range of relevant primary sources which were directly related to the question. There was enough explanation of the source to make clear what it was saying about the issue • offered evaluation of primary evidence which used understanding of both provenance and knowledge to make a secure judgement • analysed historians' views with appropriate referencing so that their interpretations were clear and could be assessed • tested historians by applying knowledge precisely and effectively and not merely by juxtaposing other views. • offering a clear line of argument, interim judgements and a coherent conclusion which followed from the critical analysis in the essay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some lost sight of the question, for example, asking how far the US was to blame for the Cold War must involve a focus on the US and should not be a general survey of causes of the Cold War • they did not offer clear judgements about their chosen primary sources or merely used untested primary evidence to support arguments or to convey information • they did not include sufficient relevant primary evidence and relied on simple comments on provenance ('Himmler was a leading Nazi so his view is reliable. '; This is a newspaper so it will be telling the truth') • relied on short quotes rather than explaining both primary and secondary sources and used references or short extracts to establish facts, not to explain interpretations. (As K. Feiling says, Chamberlain visited Hitler twice in 1938.) • offered contradictory judgements and did not bring together the main thrust of the essay in a coherent conclusion.

Most common causes of centres not passing

- candidates offering responses which were descriptive with limited sustained consideration of different views
- writing irrelevant material or relying on unsupported assertions and generalisations
- not including much primary evidence of an appropriate kind
- relying on general interpretations or views without considering named historians
- giving short and undeveloped essays which showed limited evidence of key historical skills.

Common misconceptions

That this is a researched project on a topic rather than a response to a specific question.

That the use and assessment of sources can be implicit without specific reference to both types of evidence, properly referenced.

That knowledge as such will be rewarded independent of its deployment in argument or its use in assessing evidence.

That primary evidence should mainly be used to support arguments or to test historians without being specifically evaluated.

That topics covered at GCSE will automatically be a good basis or more advanced work.

Avoiding potential malpractice

Making sure that work is truly independent and that if the same question is chosen by more than one candidate that the evidence of their research shows that it has been tackled independently.

Avoiding candidate reliance on teacher input so that similar points are made, and similar sources used by groups of candidates.

A research log is a valuable tool by which candidates record progress and can demonstrate their individual engagement with a topic. This is not an OCR requirement but might be considered as good practice.

Helpful resources

[Guide to marking video, and accompanying tips document, including an annotated script.](#)

[The official Y100 guide](#) is also in the Assessment section of the History pages of our website.

More generally

Examiners' reports, and exemplar scripts with commentaries in the [Assessment section of the History pages of our website](#) (material from more recent series requires an Interchange login).

[Coursework Workbook History Unit Y100 Nicholas Fellows and Mike Wells Hodder 2018](#)

Additional comments

Centres marking Y100 are recommended to start with AO1 and establish an appropriate level and then move to consider AO2 and AO3 and judging whether the evaluation is 'excellent, very good, good or whether there is just some evaluation or whether it is limit or even whether there is none. Annotating in terms of the assessment objective mark scheme is helpful to ensure realistic assessment.

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