

**2003 HSC Notes from
the Marking Centre
History Extension**

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Contents

Section I.....	6
Section II	7

2003 HSC NOTES FROM THE MARKING CENTRE HISTORY EXTENSION

Introduction

This document has been produced for the teachers and candidates of the Stage 6 course in History Extension. It provides comments with regard to responses to the 2003 Higher School Certificate Examination, indicating the quality of candidate responses and highlighting the relative strengths and weaknesses of the candidature in each section and each question.

It is essential for this document to be read in conjunction with the relevant syllabus, the 2003 Higher School Certificate Examination, the Marking Guidelines and other support documents which have been developed by the Board of Studies to assist in the teaching and learning of History Extension.

General Comments

In 2003, 2330 candidates attempted the History Extension examination. This was just short of a twenty-five per cent increase in the candidature from 2002. Although this increase meant that the candidate pool was less homogeneous than in 2001 or 2002 the overall standard, in what is a particularly demanding course, continues to impress the examiners. The quality and sophistication of responses at the top of the range was outstanding. Examiners did however note a continuing tendency for less able candidates to rely, in part or whole, on prepared responses. This was clearly evident in Question Two, but was also present in some parts of answers to Question One. Some candidates also appeared to have been unduly influenced by last year's question and, at times, used arguments and approaches better suited to 2002 than 2003.

Teachers and candidates are reminded that the best marks will always be awarded to candidates who engage with, argue and challenge the key issues of historiography raised by the questions. In other words candidates need to go beyond a 'cut and paste' of prepared comments and use their knowledge of the historians and the Case Study to construct an argument, defend that argument and effectively challenge alternative points of view. Evidence of thinking is always rewarded. In 2003 this required a clear focus on the aims and purposes of history and on the constant reinterpretation of history.

Candidates should never assume that either the nature of the paper or the questions will be predictable. The Examiners can draw from a range of areas within the syllabus. The syllabus therefore, and not past papers, should be the primary focus of candidates preparing for the 2004 History Extension examination.

The examination required candidates to answer two questions in two hours. In Question 1: Issues of Historiography, the candidates were required to identify key historiographical issues from an unseen source and link or integrate these in a discussion about the aims and purposes of history. Question 2 required the candidates to address two areas of historical debate from their chosen Case Study, with a focus identified in a 'stem' quotation about 'Historians constantly reinterpreting the past'.

History Extension is an exciting and intellectually demanding examination of the evolution of the way history is studied and recorded over time. Teachers therefore need to be aware that candidates

must go beyond a narrative or description of the events or content in any of the areas of study. Better candidates are clearly identified by their capacity to do more than just identify interpretations of history or areas of debate – they offer assessments of them.

Teachers are again reminded that there are real advantages to be gained from seeing the content and skills associated with both parts of the examination paper (Question 1 and Question 2) holistically. In argument and analysis, ideas and examples that might arise in preparation for Question 1 can be useful when addressing parts of the debates contained in the Case Studies. This does not mean duplicating content. It does mean using the concepts and understanding developed in a study of historiography when dealing with Case Studies.

Teachers and candidates should also be aware that examiners may ask questions that address the syllabus outcomes in a manner that requires candidates to respond by integrating their knowledge, understanding and skills developed through studying the course. This reflects the fact that the knowledge, understanding and skills developed through the study of discrete sections should accumulate to a more comprehensive understanding than may be described in each section separately.

Section I

Question 1

The question required candidates to identify key issues from a Source adapted from *History as Art and as Science* by H Stuart Hughes and use it and other sources to evaluate the aims and purposes of history.

The very best candidates addressed the key issues raised by the Source provided, and evaluated aims and purposes. In doing so, they made clear links to the Source, and integrated it with their own sources and an evaluation of the aims and purposes of history.

Better responses were sophisticated, coherent, complex and critical. They did more than identify and describe the views of aim and purpose offered by other sources – they offered an assessment of them and conceptualised the historians and their arguments in the light of the Source provided and historiographical discourse in general.

Candidates are again reminded of the need to carefully select their sources in response to the demands of the question. Not all sources are equally apt. The selection of sources should be linked to the evaluation required by the question and to the key issues raised by the Source provided.

Teachers are therefore advised to teach a variety of sources and consider them within a conceptual, rather than a chronological, framework. This variety will allow candidates the best possible range of sources to draw on in the examination.

Poorer responses did not evaluate the key issues, nor did they deal with the most appropriate of their own sources. Many of these candidates produced a prepared response in terms of their sources that were not always linked to the focus of the question or integrated with the key issues presented in the source provided.

Section II

Question 2

Responses to all 24 Case Studies were presented in the 2003 Examination. The two most popular Case Studies in each area were:

Ancient:

- Thucydides
- Tacitus

Medieval and Early Modern:

- Elizabeth
- Crusades

Modern:

- JFK
- Appeasement

Australian:

- Convict Women
- Origins of the First Australians

JFK was by far the most popular option and was almost double the size of the next largest option which was Elizabeth, just ahead of Appeasement.

With the exception of Napoleon that attracted 145 candidates and the Case Studies listed above, none of the others attracted more than 70 candidates. The average number of candidates per Case Study across the remaining Case Studies was approximately 25. The smallest Case Studies were Confucianism and Origins of Rome with 2 each.

Although the question was generic in nature to cater for the 24 different Case Studies, it did require a coherent, sophisticated, complex and critical analysis of two areas of historical debate. The use of a ‘stem’ quotation provided a clear discriminator because it required students to assess the selected areas of historical debate in light of the quotation.

The better responses addressed the focus of the question presented by the quotation that ‘Historians constantly reinterpret the past’. These responses used a range and variety of historians drawn from different time periods and representing differing points of view. The better responses also clearly addressed the TWO areas of historical debate specified in the syllabus and required by the question. The need for clarity in, and development of, this focus cannot be over-emphasised.

The stem quotation with its focus on ‘constant reinterpretation’ meant that candidates who developed their response around a variety of viewpoints were clearly advantaged.

It was a notable feature of the 2003 exam that many candidates addressed issues such as:

- What are the debates?
- Who are the historians?
- What are the purposes of history?
- How has history been constructed and recorded?
- How and why have approaches to history changed over time?

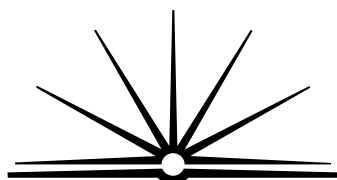
Some less able candidates in the JFK Case Study appeared to rely almost exclusively on a single source that reviewed and summarised for them the debates and some of the key interpretations in a textbook-style approach. They were not helped when this was often translated into a limited and narrative, survey-style examination response.

In Case Studies drawn from areas previously examined in old 3 Unit Courses, some candidates were disadvantaged because they continued to rely on a technique and style of response more appropriate to old 3 Unit Courses.

History Extension

2003 HSC Examination Mapping Grid

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
Section I			
1	25	Issues of Historiography	E1.1, E2.2, E2.3
Section II			
2	25	Historical Issue	E1.1, E2.2, E2.3



B O A R D O F S T U D I E S
NEW SOUTH WALES

2003 HSC History Extension Marking Guidelines

Section I

Question 1

Outcomes assessed: E1.1, E2.2, E2.3

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presents a well-structured text that provides a detailed, coherent, logical and complex argument supported by reference to the Source and other sources• Clearly identifies key historiographical issues from the Source to illustrate how a variety of historians have interpreted the aims and purposes of history• Provides a clear, sophisticated and critical judgement about the aims and purposes of history	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presents a well-structured text that provides a detailed, sound and coherent argument supported by reference to the Source and other sources• Identifies historiographical issues from the Source to illustrate how a variety of historians have interpreted the aims and purposes of history• Provides a clear judgement about the aims and purposes of history	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presents a well-structured text that provides a coherent argument supported by reference to the Source and at least one other source• Limited identification of historiographical interpretations of the aims and purposes of history• Includes some judgement about the aims and purposes of history	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presents an argument supported by some reference to the Source and at least one other source• Identifies an interpretation from the Source provided• Presents a description of the aims and purposes of history	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develops little or no argument relating to the Source• May identify an interpretation from the Source• Makes some reference to the aims and purposes of history	1–5

Section II**Question 2***Outcomes assessed: E1.1, E2.2, E2.3***MARKING GUIDELINES**

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presents a sustained, coherent and complex judgement of the differing interpretations from the two areas of debate• Clearly identifies two areas of historical debate highlighting the differing interpretations and closely linking these to the quotation• Presents a sophisticated, balanced and critical treatment of two areas of historical debate from the chosen case study	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presents a sustained and coherent judgement of the differing interpretations from the two areas of debate• Identifies two areas of historical debate referring to the differing interpretations and linking these to the quotation• Presents a balanced treatment of two areas of historical debate from the chosen case study	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presents a limited judgement about differing interpretations from the two areas of debate• Identifies two areas of historical debate with an attempt to link these to the quotation• Some attempt to provide a balanced treatment of two areas of historical debate	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presents a description of two areas of historical debate in the case study• An identification of some historical debate• Limited attempt to give a balanced treatment of the issues	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presents an extremely limited response restricted to either description or nominal reference to historical debate	1–5