

**2006 HSC Notes from
the Marking Centre
History Extension**

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Contents

General Comments.....	5
Section I.....	7
Section II	8

2006 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 2006 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.

This document should be read along with the relevant syllabus, the 2006 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 2006, 2335 candidates attempted the History Extension examination.

The 2006 examination paper was accessible and successful in discriminating between candidates.

Top-range responses for both questions were notable for their sophistication, logic and clarity. Nevertheless, examiners reported that some candidates, albeit a decreasing number, relied on prepared answers and often structured their responses in terms of questions from previous years. This was more evident in Question 2, but was also present in some parts of answers to Question 1. Candidates should be aware that it is important to use a range of historians and to use them as the question requires, in terms of the historical debates, context and methodology. Candidates are also advised to consider carefully the implications and focus of the questions and to use historians that are most appropriate in terms of the Source.

Better responses used historians, debates and arguments that engaged directly with the key issues of historiography raised by the questions, using their knowledge of the historians, the Case Study and the debates to make judgements about the purposes of history and to analyse views on how historians use and interpret facts. In better responses, candidates did more than describe, assert or affirm, they constructed arguments. In this way they displayed critical thinking within the context of historiography.

Some candidates used terminology more appropriate to literary criticism than History Extension. Candidates and teachers are reminded of the importance of a close reading of the language of the History Extension syllabus.

Teachers and candidates are reminded that the examiners can draw from a range of areas within the syllabus. The syllabus and not past papers therefore should be the primary focus when preparing for the History Extension examination.

It should not be assumed that the pattern or style of question used in 2006 will be repeated in 2007.

The examination required candidates to answer two questions in two hours. Since each of the questions is of equal value, it is important that candidates are careful in their allocation of time and avoid devoting too much time to one question to the detriment of the other. This year Markers noted that some candidates had apparently devoted more time to Question 1 to the detriment of Question 2

The History Extension course is an examination of the evolution of the way history is constructed and recorded over time. Teachers and candidates must go beyond a narrative or description of the events or content in any of the areas of study. Better candidates could do more than just identify interpretations of history or areas of debate – they offered analysis and made judgements. Above all, they engaged with the specific demands of the question.

It was evident in the 2006 examination that there are real advantages to be gained from seeing the content and skills associated with both parts of the examination paper holistically. The ideas, arguments and analysis associated with Question 1 can be useful when addressing aspects of the debates contained in the Case Studies. In addition, issues of historiography raised in preparation for Question 1 can be applied, in some instances, in dealing with the Question 2 Case Studies. Historiography and the key ideas and concepts outlined in the syllabus should be integrated across the whole course; an understanding of the issues of historiography and its concepts can be utilised when answering Question 1 and/or Question 2. This does not mean duplicating content. It means using the concepts and understanding developed in a study of historiography when dealing with Case Studies.

Teachers and candidates should 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. A comprehensive grasp of the syllabus Key Questions is expected of candidates in this course.

Section I

Question 1

Question 1 required candidates to evaluate the perspectives offered in the Source *History Here: a View from Outside*, an extract from Inga Clendinnen's 2003 Premier's History Awards Address. Candidates were asked to compare and contrast the interpretation of the purposes of history offered in the Source with the views of at least two other historians and in doing so, to make a judgement about the value of those viewpoints. It should be noted that, as was the case with Question 1 in 2005, it was not necessary for the candidates to have studied the historian used in the Source. As the question clearly stated, candidates were to use the Source, in other words the ideas, perspectives and arguments contained in the Source, as the basis for their judgement about the value of viewpoints about the purposes of history. A close engagement with the Source, rather than a general consideration of the work of the historian, was required to make a sophisticated judgement about the purposes of history.

Better responses offered complex, sustained and critical analysis of the opinions offered in the Source. They did more than identify and describe the viewpoints offered by other sources – they made judgements about them.

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

A range and variety of sources should be considered within a conceptual, rather than just a chronological, framework. This variety will allow candidates the best possible range of sources to draw on in the examination. Better responses were structured around the pertinent historiographical issues about the purposes of history identified from the Source.

Weaker responses described rather than evaluated the viewpoints and did not deal with the most appropriate of their own sources. Many of these responses were prepared answers with discussion of sources not always linked to the focus of the question nor integrated with the viewpoints presented in the Source. Many of these responses were structured in terms of past questions.

Some weaker responses also tended to rely on a single class text that summarised and interpreted the historians for them, substituting the author of the text for the historians and their approaches to history.

Section II

Question 2

This question required candidates to analyse a passage containing a short interpretation of *What is History?* and how historians work, in the light of one area of debate within their chosen Case Study. The best responses provided an extensive, critical and sophisticated application of the interpretation offered in the passage. The use of the passage in the question, in this way, meant that it was not possible for candidates to resort to prepared answers. Engagement with the question was paramount. In the 2006 examination, responses covered almost all of the Case Studies represented in the syllabus. The two most popular Case Studies in each area were:

- Ancient
 - Tacitus
 - Thucydides
- Medieval and Early Modern
 - Elizabeth
 - Crusades
- Modern
 - JFK
 - Appeasement
- Australian
 - Convict Women
 - Origins of the First Australians

JFK remains by far the most popular option, almost double the next largest option. The next largest option was Elizabeth, closely followed by Appeasement.

With the exception of 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.

Although Question 2 was generic in nature to cater for the 24 different Case Studies, it required a sustained, sophisticated and critical assessment of how historians work, use facts and interpret. The use of the passage as part of the question provided a clear discriminator because it required candidates to analyse an area of debate in the light of the interpretation offered in the passage.

There were outstanding responses from all of the Case Studies. These responses used a range of historians representing the debates, different methodologies and differing points of view. The better responses also clearly integrated the historians and the area of historical debate specified in the syllabus and required by the question. The need for clarity in, and development of, this focus and integration cannot be over-emphasised. Candidates who developed their response around the context, methods and attitudes of a range of historians were clearly advantaged.

Some of the weaker responses that addressed the JFK Case Study appeared to rely almost exclusively on a single source that reviewed and summarised the debates, the historians and some of the key interpretations for them. There were candidates in this group who substituted the author of this textbook-style summary for one of the historians directly involved in the debates about JFK. As a result, these candidates often offered limited narrative, survey-style responses.

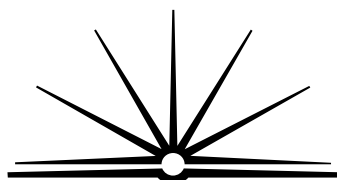
Candidates should be aware that they must choose their Case Studies and the debates related to them from those set out in the syllabus and not invent or adapt Case Studies or debates. Beyond that, they should select their historians and sources for the Case Studies with care. A range of historians and interpretations should be chosen.

In Case Studies drawn from areas previously examined in old 3-Unit courses, some candidates were disadvantaged because they continued to rely on content, technique and a style of response more appropriate to old 3-Unit courses. Nevertheless, it is clear that there has been a notable improvement in responses from candidates engaged in these Case Studies. Some of the best responses came from these Case Studies when candidates addressed more than the content and went to the key issues of the perspective, method and context of the historians.

History Extension

2006 HSC Examination Mapping Grid

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
Section I			
1	25	What is history?	E1.1, 2.2, 2.3
Section II			
2	25	Case study	E1.1, 2.2, 2.3



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

2006 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">• Identifies comprehensively the pertinent historiographical issues Clendinnen raises regarding the purposes of history• Compares and contrasts Clendinnen's interpretation and those of at least TWO other historians in a sophisticated, complex, sustained and critical analysis• Provides a perceptive judgement and a complex argument in a well-structured, integrated and sophisticated response.	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies a range of historiographical issues Clendinnen raises regarding the purposes of history• Compares and contrasts Clendinnen's interpretation and those of at least TWO other historians in a substantial and sustained analysis• Provides a coherent judgement and a well-developed argument in a well-structured and integrated response	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies some historiographical issues Clendinnen raises regarding the purposes of history• Compares or contrasts Clendinnen's interpretation and those of at least ONE other historian in a reasoned discussion• Provides a relevant judgement of the purposes of history in a well-structured response	11–15



Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies at least ONE historiographical issue Clendinnen raises regarding the purposes of history• Identifies an aspect of Clendinnen’s interpretation and refers to at least ONE other historian• Presents a description of the purposes of history in a structured response	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May identify an issue Clendinnen raises regarding the purposes of history• Displays little or no understanding of Clendinnen’s interpretation or that of any other historian• Offers isolated observations	1–5

Section II

Question 2

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

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides an extensive critical and sophisticated application of the interpretation offered in the passage to the area/s of debate selected for discussion• Presents a sustained, complex, and sophisticated analysis of the interpretation offered in the passage in a well-structured and integrated response• Demonstrates extensive knowledge and sophisticated understanding of at least ONE area of debate from the chosen case study	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides an extensive application of the interpretation offered in the passage to the area/s of debate selected for discussion• Presents a substantial, coherent and relevant analysis of the interpretation offered in the passage in a well-structured and integrated response• Demonstrates substantial knowledge and sound understanding of at least ONE area of debate from the chosen case study	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides a sound application of the interpretation offered in the passage to the area/s of debate selected for discussion• Attempts an analysis in a structured response• Demonstrates sound knowledge and some understanding of at least ONE area of debate from the chosen case study	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May provide some application of the interpretation offered in the passage to the area/s of debate selected for discussion• Presents a description or limited discussion• Demonstrates some knowledge and limited understanding of at least ONE area of debate from the chosen case study	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Little or no application of the interpretation offered in the passage to the area/s of debate selected for discussion• Isolated observations on the case study• Demonstrates little knowledge of the case study	1–5