

**2007 HSC Notes from
the Marking Centre
History Extension**

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Australia

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Fax: (02) 9367 8484
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2007 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 contains comments on candidate responses to the 2007 Higher School Certificate examination, indicating the quality of the responses and highlighting their relative strengths and weaknesses.

This document should be read along with the relevant syllabus, the 2007 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 2007, 2149 candidates attempted the History Extension examination.

Top-range responses for both questions were notable for their sophistication, logic and clarity. Nevertheless, some candidates 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 provided.

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 role of the historian and the purposes of history. In better responses, candidates did more than describe, assert or affirm – they constructed arguments. In this way they displayed critical and sophisticated thinking within the context of historiography.

Candidates and teachers are reminded of the need for a close reading of the History Extension syllabus and the use of the language contained in that document.

Teachers and candidates are once again reminded that the examiners can draw from a range of areas within the syllabus. The syllabus and not past papers should therefore 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 2007 will be repeated in 2008. History Extension is about historiography – approaches to history and modes of historical thinking. The best preparation for the exam therefore consists of refining the skills of debate, analysis and argument, rather than memorising and preparing to regurgitate a body of facts or assertions.

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 another.

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.

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

It was not necessary for candidates to have studied the historian used in the Source. Candidates were to make close reference to the ideas, perspectives and arguments contained in the Source, as the basis for their argument evaluating the role of the historian in the construction 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 historian and the construction 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 offered evaluations of 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 evaluation and argument 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.

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 or 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

The best responses provided an extensive, critical and sophisticated application of the interpretation offered in the passage. The use of the quotation in the question meant that it was not possible for candidates to resort to prepared answers. Engagement with the question was paramount.

In the 2007 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

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 past. The use of the quotation 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 quotation.

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 of focus and integration of historical debate 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 relied 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.

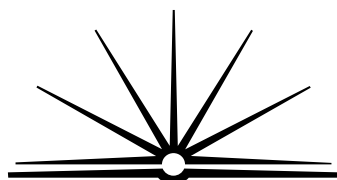
In Case Studies drawn from areas previously examined in old 3-Unit courses, some candidates were disadvantaged because they continued to rely on content, technique and a style of response more appropriate to old 3-Unit courses. Nevertheless, it is clear that there has been a notable improvement in responses 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.

It was noted that a number of candidates offered abbreviated responses to Question 2 and that they had evidently spent more time finalising their response to Question 1. To repeat the point made earlier – both questions are of equal value and the best overall result can be obtained by allowing sufficient time for both.

History Extension

2007 HSC Examination Mapping Grid

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



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

2007 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 pertinent historiographical issues raised by Munslow regarding the role of the historian in the construction of history• Presents a sophisticated, complex and critical judgement about the role of the historian in the construction of history supported by close reference to the Source and at least TWO other sources• Provides a perceptive, sustained and complex argument in a well-structured, integrated and sophisticated response	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies relevant historiographical issues raised by Munslow regarding the role of the historian in the construction of history• Presents a clear and reasoned judgement about the role of the historian in the construction of history supported by substantial reference to the Source and at least TWO other sources• Provides a coherent, substantial and a well-developed argument in a well-structured and integrated response	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies some historiographical issues raised by Munslow regarding the role of the historian in the construction of history• Presents a discussion about the role of the historian in the construction of history supported by some reference to the Source and at least TWO other sources• Provides a relevant discussion in a well-structured response	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies at least ONE historiographical issue raised by Munslow regarding the role of the historian in the construction of history• Makes comments about the role of the historian in the construction of history with limited reference to the Source and refers to at least ONE other source• Presents a description in a structured response	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May identify an historiographical issue regarding the role of the historian in the construction of history• Displays little or no understanding of the role of the 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 insightful, critical and sophisticated judgement of Bickerton's statement as it applies to the selected area/s of debate Demonstrates extensive knowledge and sophisticated understanding of at least ONE area of debate from the chosen case study Presents a sustained, complex and sophisticated argument in a well-structured and integrated response 	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a clear and detailed judgement of Bickerton's statement as it applies to the selected area/s of debate Demonstrates substantial knowledge and well-developed understanding of at least ONE area of debate from the chosen case study Presents a substantial and coherent argument in a well-structured and integrated response 	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a sound discussion of Bickerton's statement as it applies to the selected area/s of debate Demonstrates a sound knowledge and some understanding of at least ONE area of debate from the chosen case study Presents a relevant discussion in a structured response 	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May provide a limited discussion of Bickerton's statement as it applies to the selected area/s of debate Demonstrates limited knowledge and limited understanding of at least ONE area of debate from the chosen case study Presents a description or limited discussion 	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides little or no understanding of Bickerton's statement as it applies to the selected areas of debate Demonstrates little knowledge of the chosen case study Makes isolated observations on the case study 	1–5