



## **General Certificate of Secondary Education**

### **History 4045** *Specification B*

#### **Unit 1 40451**

## **Report on the Examination** *2010 examination – June series*

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# Unit 1

## Introduction

Candidates responded very well to the challenges of the new modular specification. The change in assessment objectives compared to the legacy specification with a greater concentration on knowledge and its use on the written papers, caused some problems for weaker students, but most were able to achieve positively in at least one topic area. The standard of answers was higher than expected and the predicted immaturity in the written work of what was a predominantly Year 10 entry did not materialise. There were very few rubric infringements: when they occurred this was normally weaker candidates attempting more than three topics. The numbering system caused no problems to students. All this is to the credit of teachers and their students.

The examination scripts displayed the different approach of centres to the new specification. The majority of Centres appear to have prepared their students for only three topics, giving them no choice in the examination. Less than 20% appear to have covered four topics. There was no apparent advantage to either approach.

When tackling the questions, students from several centres began with the extended writing question. Most of these then completed the topic with the source question and the 'describe' question, but others completed all three extended writing questions across their chosen three topics, then attempted all the source based questions and finished with the three 'describe' questions. All these approaches are acceptable as long as the students complete the paper. The 'describe' questions are probably the easiest to obtain marks, so it is a disadvantage for the candidates if this is a question they cannot attempt because of lack of time. This is clearly an issue for centres to discuss with their students.

## Questions

Topic 3 was the most popular followed by 2, 1, 4 and 5 with a minority attempting Topic 6, not all of whom appeared to have been prepared for it as answers went from very good to very poor. All the 'describe' questions were marked generously, candidates being awarded full marks for developed references to two or three relevant points.

### Topic 1

**01:** Most candidates restricted their answers to a description of the events on the fateful day in Sarajevo, often in great detail. These were rewarded at the top of level 2. Those answers which added some knowledge of the aims or activities of the Black Hand obtained full marks as did those which analysed the role of the Black Hand in planning and executing the assassination.

**02:** This question was not answered particularly well. Sensible inferences were often made about the source, but comments on the provenance were normally general explaining the source was biased as Britain was Germany's enemy. Few went on to analyse the timing of the postcard and what its purpose might be in 1914. Weaknesses in geography were shown by some who used Morocco to explain the Kaiser's desire to 'get Europe'. Another common mistake was to write generally about the causes of the war instead of focussing on the question – why Britain went to war. Knowledge used to obtain the higher levels was normally the Schlieffen Plan and the importance of Belgium

to Britain but others used their knowledge of the naval rivalry to challenge the view expressed in the question.

- 03:** Understandably these crises are considered in schools in relation to their contribution to the outbreak of war in 1914. The change of context confused some weaker candidates who insisted on commenting on the effect of the crises on the outbreak of war rather than the development of the alliances. More able students commented on the effect they had on the alliances, interpreting the word 'development' in various ways, all of which were acceptable and rewarded. More detailed knowledge was displayed on the Moroccan Crises than Bosnia. The most common assessments were based on the strengthening of the Entente powers and the weakening of the Triple Alliance with regard to Italy's commitment to it, but the strengthening of the relationship between Germany and Austria-Hungary.

## Topic 2

- 04:** Most found this a straightforward question and were able to obtain full marks by accurate detailed information. The most common errors were either to include much irrelevant material on the territorial settlement, reparations and war guilt, thus wasting valuable time, or to write in general terms about reducing their army etc.
- 05:** Comments on the provenance of this source were the best on the paper, many recognising the context of the election and therefore the likely purpose of the speech. Knowledge of Lloyd George's aims was less secure, though students were well informed on the aims of Clemenceau and Wilson, pointing out that Lloyd George was somewhere in between!
- 06:** There were some good explanations of the part played by the membership of the League in its demise, pointing out the effect of the absence of the USA, Germany and the USSR or the weakness of Britain and France after the war. Candidates often assessed this by referring to later failures of the League such as in Manchuria and Abyssinia and how the absence of the USA or the weakness of Britain and France could have affected its actions. There were many detailed descriptions of Manchuria which claimed that the failure of the League gave Mussolini and Hitler confidence, but not going on to develop what they did later to challenge the League.

## Topic 3

- 07:** The word 'how' in this question was interpreted in its broadest sense, so that answers which described the remilitarisation or explained how Hitler was able to achieve it were awarded at the top level. There were some good descriptions, but the most common answers referred to Hitler's gamble, the instructions he gave to his generals and why he was not opposed, mentioning Abyssinia and the attitude of Britain and France. Weaker answers tended to write mistakenly about Chamberlain and appeasement in general terms.
- 08:** Answers very rarely commented on the provenance of this source other than in simple terms. Candidates appeared to have difficulty with examining the source in the context of the situation for the Nazis in Germany in the 1920s and then using their knowledge to relate the aims expressed in the source with Hitler's policies in the 1930s. Too many restricted themselves to level 2 by writing in general terms about Hitler's aims in foreign policy without specific examples.

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- 09:** A few excellent answers went straight to the core of this question and assessed the changes in policy brought about by Hitler's occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1939 and then made a judgement on how this led to the outbreak of war by linking it to the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Most however felt that they had to relate the process of negotiations over the Sudetenland together with the Munich Agreement, simply adding that this ended with the occupation of Czechoslovakia which led to war. The best at least made the connection between Munich, the promises made to Chamberlain and the betrayal of March 1939. Attempts to explain and assess the Nazi-Soviet Pact were much better: many candidates clearly understood what Hitler and Stalin hoped to gain from the Pact and some went on to assess its part in the outbreak of war, the best ones linking it to the change in Chamberlain's policy after Czechoslovakia.

#### Topic 4

- 10:** It was very easy in this question to obtain full marks by naming a few members of each alliance and then commenting briefly on their aims. Sadly such accurate information was beyond some who wrote in general terms about alliances.
- 11:** Most answers were able to reach at least level 2 in this question by making simple inferences about the cartoon, normally based on the danger to France. Level 3 and above were more elusive: some were able to follow the knowledge route by displaying detailed knowledge of Potsdam and Stalin's expansion in the East after the war or putting forward alternative reasons for the Cold War by explaining the different ideologies or the nature of the Truman Doctrine. Too many simply listed other reasons without explanation and remained at Level 2. The best provenance comments were able to link the views of the cartoonist and the subject matter of the cartoon to his aims in producing it either as a warning to the West or to get more support for France.
- 12:** There were some good, well-informed answers to this question. Students were able to explain Stalin's motives in the Blockade and assess its dangers by relating it to the Cold War. Even the weakest candidates were normally able to give some description of the Airlift. Accounts of the Korean War were often too descriptive being more of narrative than an explanation or assessment. Those who did assess its part in the Cold War used knowledge of the global nature of the conflict or the risk posed by MacArthur's tactics in North Korea.

#### Topic 5

- 13:** Answers to this question were disappointing in view of the popularity of the subject matter. Some candidates ignored the context of the question and wrote irrelevantly about the Bay of Pigs and other background information. The most common responses that obtained full marks referred to a combination of the nature of Kennedy's blockade of Cuba, the exchange of letters and the final solution.
- 14:** This question was well answered both by commenting on the provenance of the source and by challenging the view expressed in the source using their own knowledge. The biased nature of the source was identified by most, the best of whom went on to explain that it was trying to blame the West for the Wall and thus justifying the Soviet Union. Knowledge of the reasons for the Wall in terms of the prevention of defectors and why they were defecting was used to disagree with the source.
- 15:** Although some students had difficulty in assessing the Hungarian Rising in the context of peaceful coexistence, this question was well answered. Common errors were to

confuse the U2 Crisis of 1960 with the part played by the U2 in the Cuban Missile Crisis which led to a discussion of the wrong crisis, or to describe the events without explaining or assessing their importance. In the U2 Crisis answers often explained the events and how it ended the Paris Summit, but did not go on to assess the importance of this. With the Hungarian Rising, there were good descriptions of Nagy's reforms which went on to explanation of why the Soviets took offence and in the best answers, assessment of the effect that it had on peaceful coexistence in terms of the Warsaw Pact countries and the West.

## Topic 6

- 16:** This question was also interpreted in its widest context and those students who wrote about why the Soviets withdrew were rewarded as long as their answer was based on the events of the war. This meant that marks were awarded for the explanation of how the events led to withdrawal. The most common responses concentrated on the Mujaheddin, guerrilla warfare and foreign help to Afghanistan.
- 17:** Candidates found this question difficult. Too many appeared unaware of the aims of Solidarity hence they tended to answer using general knowledge of conditions in Poland and the strikes of 1980 or general comments on the provenance. The question referred to Solidarity in the 1980s, but very few commented on the changing fortunes of Solidarity throughout the decade and how this may have affected their aims, restricting their answers to developing points in the source normally by making general comments on the trade union or the role of the Catholic Church in Poland.
- 18:** There were some impressive answers to this question from candidates who had good understanding of the policies of both leaders and were able to debate their relative importance relating their answers to the collapse of communism. On the whole, Gorbachev's policies were better known than those of Reagan, but there was a tendency to simply describe them rather than explaining the reasons for them or their effects and assessing their contribution to the collapse of communism. Surprisingly, very few referred to Gorbachev's later unpopularity in the USSR and the opposition that led to his resignation. Answers on Reagan tended to focus on his view of the 'evil Empire' and how he tried to establish American dominance over the USSR.

## Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.