



**General Certificate of Education
January 2011**

History 40451

**Unit 1 International Relations: Conflict
and Peace in the 20th Century**

Report on the Examination

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Unit 1

General Comments

The entry to this examination was greater than anticipated consisting of some candidates who were clearly trying to raise the grade they obtained last June by re-taking the examination and those who were entering for the first time. Clearly several centres felt that this time of year was better than last June for their candidates and entered entire cohorts. Consequently the examination attracted the full range of ability.

The response to the 'describe' questions was weaker than last June. The other two questions were answered similarly, though in some of the bullet point questions, one bullet point was often known much better than the other. In the source based questions, the evaluation of provenance still proves too difficult for some and many appear to ignore it, achieving level 3 by simply supporting their answer with specific, detailed knowledge.

Questions

The most popular topics were 3, 2, 1, 4, 5 and 6 which was exactly the same as last June. In the describe questions, the best overall answers were in response to questions 01 and 13, the one that produced the weakest average response was question 04. The best overall responses to the source based questions were to 14, the weakest to 08 and in the essay questions the strongest overall responses were to 18 but there was very little difference in the overall answers to all the essay questions.

Topic 1

- 01** Many answers showed good knowledge of the details of the Agadir Crisis normally concentrating on the rivalry between Germany and France in Morocco and the situation in 1911 which led to the German action. Some dealt with the reaction of Great Britain and the final settlement of the crisis. The most common error was to confuse the crisis with 1906: the Kaiser's entry on a white horse and Algeçiras cropped up irrelevantly in many answers.
- 02** Inevitably, mention of the assassination in the question led to a number of candidates describing the event. Better answers were able to evaluate the provenance of the source by commenting on Hötendorf's likely purpose as a military officer and leader of the war party. Many used their knowledge of the Bosnian Crisis, the German 'blank cheque' to Austria-Hungary and details of the ultimatum sent by Austria-Hungary to Serbia after the assassination, to support their argument. Some had a very clear understanding of the complexities of the Slav problem in 1914.
- 03** The purpose of this question was to allow students to compare Britain's obligation to the Entente with their obligation to Belgium. They were expected to do this by examining the terms of the Entente and how Britain's commitment to France developed in the years 1904-1914 together with the nature of the Schlieffen Plan and how that affected Britain's agreement to defend the security of Belgium. Answers on the Entente proved to be very weak, some confusing it with the Triple Alliance, many claiming it was a military alliance in which Britain promised to go to war if France was invaded by another power. Those who achieved high marks on the Entente showed how a colonial agreement developed

and included the military discussions of 1907 and the naval agreement which followed Agadir to explain Britain's commitment to France. Others examined it from the point of view of Germany and explained how it affected German foreign policy. Knowledge of the Schlieffen Plan was much better but only the better answers assessed why the invasion of Belgium was important to Britain.

Topic 2

- 04** Surprisingly this was confused with the Manchurian Crisis by some. Some of those who got the right crisis could not resist explaining Mussolini's reasons for the invasion and giving details of the events. The majority restricted themselves to the action taken by the League normally concentrating on the sanctions policy and which goods were forbidden and which were exempt and going on to explain why they were omitted and why the Suez canal was not closed.
- 05** Most candidates succeeded in understanding the cartoon and making sensible inferences from it. Knowledge was normally used to challenge the view usually by reference to the absence of various powers from the League. If the powers were simply named, the answer qualified for Level 2, if how their absence weakened the league was explained then they achieved Level 3. Evaluation of the provenance proved to be more difficult: those who achieved Level 3 following this route mentioned the likely audience of the source and commented on its message in 1920.
- 06** Answers to this question produced much irrelevant information on the respective aims of the 'Big Three' at the Paris Peace Conference and the military terms of the Treaty of Versailles. Clearly a number thought that reparations included the reduction in arms and wrote at length on that. Those who answered correctly were often satisfied by listing the land lost by Germany without explaining why this made them angry other than because 'it made their empire smaller'. Reparations were normally explained much better and many were able to link it to the ruin of the German economy, often making a connection between this and the raw materials lost in the land settlement with positive examples such as the Saar and Alsace Lorraine.

Topic 3

- 07** This question polarised the responses of candidates: many were awarded full marks and many clearly confused it, normally claiming that it was a Pact to split Czechoslovakia and led to war because Hitler invaded the USSR. Answers that obtained full marks normally referred to knowledge of the terms of the pact, why it shocked the world and the attitude of Britain and France to their attack on Poland. Several were rewarded for explaining why Hitler and Stalin signed the pact and what they were expecting to gain from it.
- 08** This was answered well by those who used their knowledge of the Sudeten Crisis and explained Chamberlain's motives for appeasement to challenge the view. Knowledge of events after Munich and the views of Churchill were less well known, though some cleverly related their answer to the previous question and argued sensibly that one of the main results of Munich was the Nazi-Soviet Pact because the Soviets were angry at being left out of the Munich Conference. Those who were able to evaluate provenance to Level 3 usually commented on the unpopularity of Churchill's views in the country so they were personal and aimed at gaining support by convincing others of the futility of appeasement.

- 09** These two events were well-known and the question was answered well. The most common error was to mistake the context of the question and concentrate on how the events contributed to the outbreak of war rather than comparing their success for Hitler. The normal way of attempting to judge the relative success was by relating what Hitler achieved to his aims in foreign policy. This produced very good answers from those who analysed his aims and related them to the events, but all too often the answers consisted of an explanation of his aims and then a statement that he achieved them by the Rhineland and Anschluss because they overturned Versailles. Anschluss was often taken to be his greater success because candidates claimed he achieved *lebensraum*.

Topic 4

- 10** There were some good descriptions of the Korean War; clearly the introduction to the question led most candidates in the right direction. Some unfortunately did ignore MacArthur in their responses, but most were able to comment on several aspects of the achievements of the UN army in his command. Answers normally focussed on issues such as: the Inchon landings; the 38th parallel; advance into North Korea to the Chinese border; the intervention of China; MacArthur and the atom bomb; reasons for his dismissal.
- 11** Many answers challenged the source by displaying precise knowledge on the Airlift and explaining why the Blockade had been implemented which gained them Level 3. Those who achieved Level 3 by evaluating the provenance normally placed the source into the context of the Cold War and explained the nature and aims of the government in the USSR at the beginning of the Cold War.
- 12** There were some good answers to this from candidates who were well-informed about the deterioration in the relationships between the three leaders at Potsdam, explaining it normally in terms of Truman's secrecy about the atom bomb or Stalin's policy in the East and how it contradicted what had been agreed at Yalta. The Truman Doctrine was sometimes confused with the Marshall Plan, but intelligent answers linked the two together and explained why Stalin was alarmed by them. Judgement was achieved by a few in their answers by using the Truman Doctrine to assess Potsdam and reaching a conclusion on which was the more important cause based on this.

Topic 5

- 13** There was some confusion between Nagy and Kadar in a few answers which were clearly misled by the introduction and considered that the rioting ended because the Soviet army had ended it. There were also descriptions of the riots in Hungary which were referred to in the introduction, but most candidates were able to write relevantly about details such as Nagy's reforms, the effect of his suggestion to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact, the reaction of the Hungarian people to the Soviet invasion and their fate and the fate of Nagy.
- 14** Candidates showed good understanding of the source and made good inferences from it, several commenting on the different expression on the face of Khrushchev compared to the other leaders. Knowledge of the crisis and its effect on the Summit was usually sound and well deployed to explain the source, though there was some confusion with the shooting down of the U2 over Cuba. Some answers intelligently offered alternative results of the Crisis by linking it to a reason for the Berlin Wall. Evaluation of provenance was particularly weak on this question: candidates appeared to struggle to understand that a British cartoon should be critical of the USA.

- 15** More accurate knowledge was displayed on the Berlin Wall than the Prague Spring: though inevitable there was confusion with the Berlin Blockade and the Hungarian Rising of 1956. Most answers showed the ability to explain both, normally in terms of the prevention of defectors and spies in the case of the Wall and the reasons for the Soviet reaction to the Prague Spring. Assessment of the threat to peace of the two events was rare.

Topic 6

- 16** Answers to this question often focused on events in Eastern Europe in general and credit was given to any reference to the opening of the border and the effects of Gorbachev's policies, as well as to events surrounding the end of the Wall including the role of the people of Berlin and the attitude of troops to these events in November 1989.
- 17** Most answers disputed the statement explaining the contribution of Gorbachev and his policies. Those who accepted it were able to explain the effects of Reagan's policies on the Soviet economy and how they forced the USSR to adopt an alternative approach. Another valid approach by a few was to compare the contribution of Reagan with that of other American Presidents, in particular Carter and Nixon. Candidates who recognised the timing of the statement were able to make appropriate provenance comments on the normal content of obituaries, especially when done by allies.
- 18** There were some good assessments of the war in Afghanistan in this answer from candidates who were able to link the war with the collapse of the USSR by explaining the effect it had on the Soviet economy and the Red Army. Solidarity proved to be more difficult with answers tending to concentrate on explaining the rise of Solidarity in the early 1980s to the exclusion of the elections at the end of the decade and the contribution this made to the decline of 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.