



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2012**

History B

40454

(Specification 4045)

**Unit 4: International Relations: Conflicts and
Peace in the Twentieth Century**

Report on the Examination

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40454 20th Century Depth Studies

Introduction

There was a small but mixed entry for this specification. It consisted of small numbers of students from many schools and a few schools with normal entry levels, but the entry covered the whole of the ability range. The only difference between this examination and the full course (40451) is the second question on each topic. Consequently, this report will concentrate on these questions. Comments on how the other questions worked in the examination can be found in the report on the full course.

Questions

The popularity of topics was different from the full course and a change from last year. Answers to Topic 6 were in single figures and attempts at all other topics were reduced from last year, apart from Topic 1 where there was a significant increase in the number of answers. The most popular topic attempted was Topic 2, followed by Topics 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6. In the questions unique to this course, questions 14 and 11 produced the best overall responses, while 02 and 17 the weakest.

Topic 1

02

Answers to this question were mainly weak consisting of a few simple points, normally about alliances in general with little focus on the Entente. The best answers were able to explain the nature of the Entente and how it was strengthened by the Moroccan Crises, sometimes going into detail about the military and naval agreements made by Britain and France after the two Moroccan Crises.

Topic 2

05

Students who were aware of Wilson's Fourteen Points answered this question well, often giving developed explanations of the purpose of the League of Nations, or even making comments on secret treaties and why Wilson wanted to ban them. Too many answers made vague comments about Wilson's idealism, with little attempt to explain or develop this and remained at Level 1.

Topic 3

08

Chamberlain's policy of appeasement is a central theme of the late 1930s yet very few students appeared to be able to explain the rationale behind it, or give details of Chamberlain's meetings with Hitler in 1938 culminating in the Munich Agreement. Consequently, most of the answers to this question remained in Level 2 either for making a few general undeveloped comments on the subject or giving some explanation of the Munich Agreement. Only a few had the breadth of knowledge and understanding to proceed to Level 3.

Topic 4

11

A straightforward question which rewarded students who possessed detailed knowledge of the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan. There was the usual confusion between the two, but most able students obtained at least Level 2 by displaying a general understanding of their aims, often going on to Level 3 by placing the Truman Doctrine into the context of the help given to Greece and Turkey, and explaining Marshall's argument that poverty bred communism.

Topic 5

14

This topic is often confused by students with Nagy's reforms in Hungary, but answers to this question were often fully informed about Dubcek's reforms and able to explain the alarms caused by the Prague Spring in both USSR and its satellite states. In this way, the Soviet response to it was explained rather than simply described and consequently rewarded at Level 2 or Level 3.

Topic 6

17

Unfortunately, there were no serious attempts at this question, three quarters of those who attempted it scored zero.

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