

GCSE

Edexcel GCSE Examiner Report

History A (1334)

Summer 2007

GCSE

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1334 Modern World History 2007

Paper One Report

General comments

This year saw the introduction of a dedicated answer booklet for use with e-pen marking. The format of the booklet is similar to that of Paper Two which is now in its third year of e-pen. However, it is evident that many centres were unaware of this change and consequently candidates experienced problems with the layout and the mechanics of responding. At all times in the process of marking and awarding, these issues have been taken into account and all efforts have been made to ensure that candidates have not been disadvantaged.

Performance overall continues to improve and it is clear that candidates are well prepared for the demands of this paper. The following report looks at each sub-question and in most cases tends to highlight those areas where candidates experienced issues.

As has been pointed out in previous reports, the scaffolding continues to be well received by the candidates. It is worth quoting from the 2005 Report -

'The 'pegs' are used effectively as a sound guide to sequencing the response - indeed, candidates do need to realise that in a question covering a given period, the scaffolding presents them with a plan. Examiners did report that more candidates were prepared to broaden the responses beyond the scaffolding.'

A1: The Road to War; Europe 1870-1914

Question 1

(a)(i) Few got to the imperial underlay of the formation of the Anglo-Russian Entente. Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet figured in only a minority of answers while the dominant theme was a misplaced sense of common hostility to Germany.

(a)(ii) Most responses discussed the idea of Austro-Hungarian annexation, but did not always develop the background to this so far as such salient countries as Serbia, Turkey and Russia were concerned and hence failed to draw out the sense of crisis which the question required.

(a)(iii) There was confusion on occasion between 1905 and 1911, with several references to the significance of Algeciras; few really developed the sense of change by references to Anglo-French and Anglo-German relations stemming from the events of 1911-12.

(a)(iv) Most candidates knew the line-up of belligerents in the first and second wars, though they were less secure on the treaties that followed each of them and of the diplomacy that underscored those treaties. Bulgarian misfortunes were usually indicated but the emergence of Albania was rarely mentioned.

(b)(i) Responses were sometimes rather thin here. While the Dreikaiserbund was often mentioned (though not particularly well sustained), it was often surprising that the immediate impact of the Treaty of Frankfurt was given minimal coverage and its fruitful potential for a good answer largely by-passed. Few got to the 'war in sight' crisis, which might have made a concluding point for the answer.

(b)(ii) Responses here were more rounded and better informed than in bi. However, the focus did sometimes tend to drift to 'how' rather than 'why', albeit with implicit relevance to the question's theme. Candidates tended to be stronger on the earlier than the later years of the period and the focus on the Balkan crisis of the mid-1870s was often competently incorporated into the answer, with informed material suitably angled.

The Dual and Triple Alliances were often alluded to adequately though there could have been sharper definition. Discussion of the Reinsurance Treaty and the Mediterranean Agreements was rather thin.

Question 2

(a)(i) It was disappointing that too many failed to detect the intrinsic ideological rationale for the Dreikaiserbund. In some instances, candidates wandered into loose and poorly developed diplomatic comments.

(a)(ii) Most answers did get to such basic concepts as the cultural harmony between Germany and Austria, while setting this in a helpful Balkan background; but supportive material - on the latter in particular - was not as firmly rooted in the diplomacy of the 1870s as it might have been.

(a)(iii) Responses were often thin and disappointingly imprecise. A 'key features' question does require specific references and practical knowledge of the extent of the German Empire in the late nineteenth century was lacking, with few references found to specific areas of Africa, let alone to South-East Asia and China.

(a)(iv) Here naval rivalry tended to dominate to the exclusion of other features. There were some who commented on the challenging attitude of the Kaiser and on the events in South Africa.

(b)(i) As in Question 1, the narrative of events, often with useful pointing to reasons, was quite strong on the late 1870s. It was less so on the 1880s, with few- and they were thin - references to the Balkan Crisis of 1885, while the interference of the Great Powers was also less well supported and developed in the early twentieth century.

(b)(ii) The specific references to each of the two Moroccan Crises may have assisted towards a sharper and more accurate focus, thus avoiding the confusion of 1a(iii), nevertheless, as so often in this section, the degree of practical support was not as well developed as it might be.

A2: Nationalism and Independence in India, c. 1900-49

Question 3

(a)(i) Most answers recognised the early twentieth century context of the question, developing often with fair purpose the themes of Bengal division and limited concessions to Indian opinion.

(a)(ii) While answers here often developed the idea of Indian wartime military contribution, economic progress and the growing importance of Congress, the wider context was usually ignored. Thus there were few references to the 14 Points.

(a)(iii) Most correctly identifies the Rowlatt Acts and were able to give useful key features of them.

(a)(iv) Here the diplomatic background was often ignored, thus depriving answers the strength that might lift them to Level 3. However, while the relevant progress in the Indian-sub-continent was often usefully sketched, it was surprising that some candidates neglected Amritsar in their answer.

(b)(i) Most candidates followed the scaffolding points. However, Gandhi's role was often seen too generally and not specifically enough and only a minority of answers developed the point about the outbreak of war.

(b)(ii) Responses were quite well informed, especially in the case of Bose. Candidates usually knew much about him and were able to provide a good context for his importance in moves towards self-rule. While answers on the Labour Government and Mountbatten were less thorough, most candidates were able to detect their significance.

Question 4

(a)(i) Most answers detected the lack of consultation as the key reason, but did not always develop this point well in the constitutional context which thus made the Viceroy's actions inappropriate.

(a)(ii) There was occasional confusion in some minds as to what the Cripps Mission proposed, just as there was similar confusion in bii later on the proposals of the Cabinet Mission. Some responses were excellent producing precise knowledge and well contextualised reasons, but others just wrote vaguely about independence and partition, with little practical linkage.

(a)(iii) There was also a similar lack of specific references here, where candidates did not always link 'Quit India' to the 1940s and was seen as similar to Gandhi's earlier campaigns, rather than as a specific feature in the context of wartime India.

(a)(iv) Answers were usually well focused on the subject matter and while some were replete with detailed information that well fitted the 'key feature' requirement, others were deficient with partial and loose material only.

(b)(i) The predominantly constitutional focus of bi was either not detected or developed adequately by many candidates. Material on the salient stages of 'change' - such as those given in the scaffolding - was often not sharp enough or precise enough, with too many candidates confusing in particular the changes of 1909 with those of 1918 and 1919. Few went back to 1900 to commence their answers and in the latter part, the Simon Commission was not well developed. These criticisms having been made, it is fair to say that there was a good number of competent, focused and informed answers to this question.

(b)(ii) Of the three choices, the first and last were more successfully undertaken.

Principal Examiner's Report

GCSE History 1334/02 June 2007

General comments

The question paper seemed to present a fair challenge to the candidates. It elicited the full range of responses. There were few rubric offences although timing remains an issue with some candidates struggling to complete part (d) of their second question.

Some candidates sensibly planned their answers, especially to parts (c) and (d) and there was a strong correlation between planning and high marks. On the other hand, some produced over long plans and failed to complete the last question.

In addition, candidates need to be more aware of the individual mark tariffs. For example, some wrote far lengthier answers for the utility question (c), (worth 8 marks), than their responses to (d), which carries 12 marks.

Although candidates need to understand and apply nature, origins and purpose in evaluating sources, it is only necessary for sub-question (c). Far too many answers to the other sub-questions placed a heavy and unnecessary emphasis on these particular source skills. For example candidates went through the nature, origins and purpose of the source for part (a), for which they receive no credit, and then began to look for inferences.

Finally there are still many formularic type answers especially for (c) and (d) which stifle initiative. In (c) candidates sometimes mechanically go through the origins, nature and purpose of each source without directly relating them to the idea of utility. For (d) they trawl through each source in turn explaining whether it agrees or disagrees with the interpretation. Many who do this are capable of more focussed and imaginative answers.

Sub-question (a)

Most candidates are now making inferences, in some cases multiple inferences, and judgements and displaying sound comprehension of the source. Many achieved a good Level 2 mark. A substantial minority of candidates continue to provide unnecessary lengthy comments on the provenance of the source. There were especially strong answers to B1, B2, B4, B5 and B6. The better answers usually begin with 'This source suggests'. A small number of candidates either summarise the source or copy it out word for word.

Sub-question (b)

This is the most improved question with many candidates, who understood the mechanics of cross-referencing, scoring well on this question and an increasing number able to judge the extent of support to reach Level 3. They directly compared and contrasted C with A and C with B, using evidence from each source to back up their comparison, and then came to a reasoned conclusion about the extent of corroboration. Indeed, candidates who began with an analysis of Source C, generally produced better cross referencing answers.

There were especially strong answers to B1, B3, B6 and B7. For B1 many explained the differences between A and C, especially in the perceived popularity of Nicholas II, and the strong similarities between Sources B and C but also some similarities between C and A in his lack of preparation to be Tsar. In B5 candidates explained strong differences between C and A and similarities between C and B although a number spotted the more subtle similarity between C and A as a result of the last sentence in A about the change of weather.

Nevertheless cross-referencing still causes difficulties to surprisingly many candidates. Even strong candidates gave lengthy descriptions of each source in turn before beginning to cross-reference. Some simply described each source and then made a broad brush statement such as 'Source C supports Sources A and B'. Others compared Source A and B and were given no credit. Again, a number of candidates made lengthy and generally irrelevant comments on the provenance of the sources.

It should be stressed that candidates do not have to identify similarities and differences to reach Level 3. They do, however, have to make some judgement on the extent of support between the three sources.

Sub-question (c)

On the whole candidates seemed to show a greater understanding of the issue of utility with the best answers focusing immediately on utility and making strong reference to the nature, origins, purpose and content of the source and evaluating utility in the context in which the source was produced. Such candidates made maximum use of provenance and generally produced a balanced evaluation, explaining the value and limitations of each source in relation to the question set.

For example there were some very perceptive comments on the value and limitations of the cartoon, Source D in B2, the letter from the German soldier, Source D in B5, the recollections of the white officer, Source E in B6 and the evidence of the Agency worker, Source D in B7.

Again, however, there are weaknesses. A substantial number of candidates lose sight of utility and become bogged down in summarising the contents of each source and comment on the significance of the event described in the source, rather than the source itself. Reliability rather than utility remains the thrust of a number of answers. Not enough candidates make effective use of nature, origins and purpose with reference to utility. When applied, it was often mechanistic with learnt responses such as 'photos cannot lie', 'it was written by an eyewitness and must be useful' or generalised comments about primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are invariably seen as far more valuable than their secondary counterparts.

For example the photographs, Source D for B6 and Source E for B7 were useful because 'the camera can never lie' or were of no use because 'it was only a moment in time'. Candidates often failed to comment on key aspects of the provenance of the sources such as Source E, in B2, Lloyd George, a member of the government and for Source E in B5, an official Soviet photograph.

A substantial minority of candidates still confuse reliability with utility. Indeed candidates cannot score above top level 1/3 if the whole thrust of the answer is reliability. In addition some still believe propaganda sources e.g. Source D in B2 and Source E in B4, are of no use.

Sub-question (d)

A wide variety of responses to this question. Some candidates successfully integrated own knowledge with confident use of the sources to make balanced judgements. On the other hand, at the other extreme, there was the usual trawl through the sources often with little direct relevance to the question set.

A number of responses relied exclusively on the sources or own knowledge and could not be credited higher than half marks. Reliance on the sources is understandable. What is surprising, is those candidates who display excellent own knowledge and yet make no reference at all, even implicitly, to any of the sources!

Candidates need to use the sources to stimulate their own knowledge. Indeed the stronger answers often begin with Source F and use this to stimulate own knowledge. For B1 Source F suggested the plight of town workers, peasants and ethnic minorities. Source F for B3 made reference to the importance of other Alphabet Agencies whilst Source F for B5 encouraged candidates to refer to the Hitler's mistakes as well as the D-Day landings. Source F should stimulate alternative evidence and arguments.

Centres should note that to reach Level 3 candidates do not have to integrate the sources with own knowledge or give a balanced answer. Developed explanations which show confident use of the sources together with precisely own knowledge, agreeing or disagreeing with the interpretation, satisfy the criteria for Level 3. However to reach Level 4 there needs to be a direct focus on the key issues of the interpretation and a balanced, sustained argument.

General

The overall standard of coursework presented for moderation remains very high and teachers are to be congratulated on the degree of effort and hard work that they had put into preparing students and completing assignments. Most centres use Edexcel-designed assignments and this has proved extremely useful in standardisation between widely different units.

Administration

Many centres still appear to be unaware of the need to complete Candidate Authentication Sheets. Moderators are required to chase centres for these and this can lead to delays and difficulties in the moderation process.

- Centres are requested to ensure that the following documentation is included in the sample sent for moderation:
- All samples requested and the work of the highest and lowest scoring candidates. Where a requested sample is unavailable, perhaps because the work was lost or not completed, a replacement may be sent.
- In the case of lost work, Edexcel must be informed as soon as possible. A note to the moderator is not sufficient.
- Coursework Authentication Sheets and Coursework Front Sheets for all candidates whose work is included in the sample.
- Copies of the assignments used by all candidates. I.e., if different classes have completed different assignments, all should be included. Mark schemes should also be included.

- The classwork notes of one candidate, which is required to prove that the assignments were taught in school
- The yellow copy of the OPTEMs or the computer printout of candidates and marks

Moderation

Most moderators were able to approve centre marking and consequently made no changes to marks. However, in the case of a small number of centres marking was judged to be inaccurate. There were two principal reasons for this.

1. Centres had failed to carry out internal standardisation and consequently candidates' work had been marked to different standards.
2. Levels 3 and 4 had been awarded rather too easily. It is not possible for either level to be awarded unless the whole answer fits the descriptor. Neither level can be awarded on the basis of a paragraph or section of the answer.

Moderators also encountered two other problems in moderation. Firstly, there are isolated cases of centres which are allowing candidates to hand in draft assignments, which are then marked, annotated and then returned before a final version is produced. This is not permitted. All history coursework assignments must be the unaided work of candidates. Unfortunately, several schools, which have provided unfair assistance to candidates, have been identified in recent years and these will be monitored carefully in the future.

Secondly, some centres have disregarded the word limit to such an extent that moderators have complained at the extra demands being made upon them. In 2007, there were assignments running to more than 10,000 words and, in some cases, the majority of candidates had written at that length.

The wording of the level descriptors in both objectives clearly states that at Level 3 own knowledge should be 'selected' and at Level 4 'precisely selected'. Therefore, in allowing students to write at exorbitant length, centres are not meeting the requirements of the higher levels. In addition, centres which do not require candidates to keep within the word limit, allow them an unfair advantage because they can express themselves more fully. Centres which are more rigorous are therefore imposing a handicap on their candidates which other centres are ignoring.

As a consequence, assignments which are of more than 2,500 words will not normally be credited with a Level 4 mark nor with a top Level 3 mark. It is likely that the highest mark that will be awarded for such assignments will 40 out of 50.

All centres are requested to encourage candidates to observe the word limit and not allow candidates to write more than 2,500 words per assignment.

Statistics

1334 Overall Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Overall subject grade boundaries	100	74	65	56	48	40	32	24	16	0

1334 Paper 1 Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A	C	F
Paper 1 grade boundaries	90	53	38	17

1334 Paper 2 Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A	C	F
Paper 2 grade boundaries	60	42	31	17

1334 Paper 3 Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A	C	F
Paper 3 grade boundaries	100	73	54	25

3334 (Short Course) Overall Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Overall subject grade boundaries	100	73	63	53	43	34	26	18	10	0

3334 Paper 1 Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A	C	F
Paper 1 grade boundaries	90	53	38	17

3334 Paper 2 Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A	C	F
Paper 2 grade boundaries	50	36	27	12

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