

History C (British Social & Economic History)

General Certificate of Secondary Education **GCSE 1936**

Reports on the Components

June 2010

1936/R/10

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This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

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1936/11-14 Paper 1

General Comments

The overall performance of candidates was in line with that of previous years. Generally candidates were well prepared for the demands of the paper and there were many good, well constructed answers. Medicine was the most popular option followed by Women and Poverty. Only a very small number of candidates was entered for the Trade Union Option.

The candidates who achieved the most marks were those who had read the questions carefully and were able to differentiate between questions that required a descriptive response, such as part a) questions, and those that required a more evaluative answer, such as the questions in part c).

A small minority of candidates wrote largely narrative answers without relating the facts to the question. Answers such as these were awarded a mark in the lower levels. Some good candidates, whilst achieving the higher levels, failed to achieve maximum marks because they did not sustain their argument or challenge the hypothesis in the question.

There were very few rubric infringements.

Section A

Candidates have to answer either Question 1 or Question 2. Question 1 proved to be a more popular choice than Question 2. Good answers were seen to Question 1a) with many candidates able to make inferences from the source supported by details from the source and/or contextual knowledge. Weaker candidates did not refer directly to the source and wrote general, often lengthy, answers about enclosures including who suffered and who gained from enclosure. Similar comments apply to question 2a), where weaker candidates saw the question as an opportunity to write generally about the growth of railways. Responses to questions 1b) and 2b) were generally good.

Candidates, over the years, have become very well prepared to answer the part c) sufficiency questions and there were several responses gaining credit in the highest levels.

Section B

Candidates choose one question from this section and as in previous years question 3 on agriculture proved to be the most popular choice with a majority of candidates achieving more than 15 marks out of 20 for the question.

The small number of candidates who attempted Question 4 gave good answers to parts a) and b) but often confused spinning and weaving developments in part c) and responses such as this remained in the lower levels.

Too few candidates attempted question 5 to make any meaningful comments.

Question 6a) was well done but candidates often struggled to give detailed explanations of why Bridgewater and Wedgwood financed the building of canals in their responses to part b) and answers to part c) often included detailed explanations of the foundation of the roads rather than explaining the impact of the road builders.

Section C Thematic Studies

Medicine, Surgery and Health c.1750-c.1990

All parts of the compulsory question 7 were well answered.

Question 8 was on 19th century medicine and proved to be more popular than question 9 on 20th century medicine, which was generally poorly done as candidates' knowledge on this period tends to be limited; this often resulted in their responses becoming very generalised.

Poverty c.1815-c.1990

Question 7a) was well done. Candidates found part b) challenging and either wrote about "why" they were opposed to the New Poor Law rather than "how" they opposed it. Others wrote about the wrong period by including details on The Jarrow March. Responses to 7c) were good. Questions 8a) and 8b) were generally well done but some candidates struggled to explain the causes of poverty in part c) and thus gained little credit. The few candidates that answered question 9 were well prepared and usually gained credit in the higher levels.

Trade Unions and Working Class Movements c.1800-c1990

As only 9 candidates were entered for this option it is not possible to provide any feedback of trends within answers.

The Changing Roles and Status of Women c.1840-c.1990

Some students got the incorrect message of the cartoon in question 7a) and therefore gained no credit. Responses to the other parts of the question were good. Question 8a) was well done but weaker students wrote about the 20th century and the effects of the First World War in part b) and thus gained no credit. In response to question 8c) most candidates were well versed on the legal changes made to the position of women in the second half of the nineteenth century and thus were awarded a mark in level 3 but few were able to explain the limitations. Few candidates tackled question 9 but those that did generally did well.

1936/02 Paper 2

General Comments

The overall performance of candidates was in line with that of previous years. Generally candidates had a good knowledge of the condition of working class housing in the first half of the nineteenth century and the efforts of central government, local councils and individuals to improve the conditions.

Weaker candidates often spent most part of their answers summarising the content of the sources. Answers such as these remained in level 1. Stronger candidates used their contextual knowledge relevantly, cross referenced with other sources where appropriate and used their skills of analysis in order to gain credit in the higher levels.

Question 1

Many candidates were well briefed on back to back houses and were able to effectively make inferences from the surface features of the source and explain living conditions in these houses, thus gaining credit in level 3.

Question 2

Candidates were generally well prepared on the work of Titus Salt and were able to explain Source B using their contextual knowledge thus receiving credit in level 4. Candidates found it more difficult to explain the context of Source A, and the responses were often limited to a simple description of the source.

Question 3

This question differentiated very clearly between the stronger and weaker answers. Most candidates were able to give a valid unsupported inference, for example the message was that the water was polluted, and were able to support the message with evidence from the source. However it was only the stronger candidates that were also able to support their answer with contextual knowledge and thus gain credit in level 4.

Question 4

Good answers to this question were characterised by an explanation of the reasons why sewers were built yet at the same time realising that there were objections to council involvement in public health especially in relation to the increasing costs for the ratepayers.

Question 5

This question was generally well answered by candidates who were familiar with the ideas of George Cadbury, whose houses are shown in the photograph and who were able to cross reference Source F with Source B. Strong candidates were also able to evaluate Source E by explaining that despite Acts of Parliament such as the 1875 Public Health Act there still remained houses unfit for human habitation.

Question 6

A minority of candidates were still unprepared for this question and made no direct reference to the sources. They wrote at length about the poor living conditions that some of the people lived in without making their answer relevant to the question. Answers such as this remained in level 2. A number of other candidates wrote one sided answers using Sources A, C and E to explain that living conditions had not improved. However there were still many candidates who were aware that they had to use the sources to both support and challenge the hypothesis.

1936/03 Coursework

Administration

In this final year of coursework, moderation proceeded smoothly as ever, even though there was a fall in candidate numbers this year. Centres coped well with the demands of OCR's deadlines and the vast majority of MS1 forms were received by the due date. This assisted moderators in sending requests promptly to Centres for coursework samples. As a result, moderators received coursework samples in good time to carry out the moderation. Details of assignments and mark schemes enclosed with samples ensured that moderators had all the required information at their disposal.

Assignments

As in previous years, almost all Centres used the assignments laid out in OCR's Coursework Guide. Many Centres continue to develop these exemplar assignments further as it is a number of years now since these assignments were first designed.

Marking and the use of mark schemes

With regard to the marked assignments, very few adjustments were necessary again this year, suggesting that Centres have continued to be confident and familiar with the requirements and demands of coursework. Most Centres continue to accurately mark in line with the accompanying mark schemes and OCR's standards. Teacher annotation continues to assist the moderation procedure considerably.

Centres should be sincerely thanked for all the hard work that has gone into the very successful operation of Social and Economic History coursework over the past 22 years and it is with a very heavy heart that we say goodbye to such a successful and truly British history course!

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