

**GCSE**

**History A (Schools History Project)**

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J415**

**OCR Report to Centres June 2015**

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

OCR is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

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.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

© OCR 2015

## CONTENTS

### General Certificate of Secondary Education

### History A (Schools History Project) (J415)

#### OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
A953 History around us / Modern world study controlled assessment	4
A954A/11 Study in Development and Study in Depth: with Elizabethan England	6
A954B/12 Study in Development and Study in Depth: with Britain, 1815–1851	10
A954C/13 Study in Development and Study in Depth: with the American West, 1840–1895	11
A954D/14 Study in Development and Study in Depth: with Germany, c.1919–1945	16
A955A/21 Historical Source Investigation: A Study in British History: Public Health in Britain 1800–1914	21
A955B/22 Historical Source Investigation: A Study in British History: Protest & Reaction in Britain 1800–1914	23

## **A953 History around us / Modern world study controlled assessment**

### **General Comments:**

The challenges faced with the “strengthened GCSE” were largely successfully met by the majority of centres and consequently there were plenty of examples of excellent work from candidates. Over 80% of centres provided the templates to confirm the suitability of the teaching programmes, tasks and resources, which in turn was matched by these centres dealing with the word count and new mark scheme. Some of the centres who had not sought approval were also fine, but performance here was patchier. Many moderators noted improved administration by centres and this was helpful. The most consistent omission was the sources used by candidates, which can make it difficult for moderators to really appreciate the case a candidate is developing.

There is still a fairly even split between the two options, but the Modern World Studies seemed to work particularly well with the generic task for this year. The limit on words appears to have had a positive impact on the focus of the candidates producing a better and more analytical answer. Very few centres still cling to the narrative account with only the conclusion addressing the question directly. History Around Us questions often worked best when they had a reasonably short time focus, in the same way the Modern World Study does. Hill forts and some Roman sites worked extremely well.

The new mark scheme worked well, although the way it was applied did vary slightly from centre to centre, hence the need for moderation. However, as a first run through, it worked well. Most centres followed the suggestion that candidates continue to see the task holistically and try to answer the task applying sound historical method. This allows the centre to identify where the candidates met the three assessment objectives. In most cases, the specific assessment objectives actually seemed to make centres more confident in both the marks they gave and where there was evidence to support that outcome. There did seem to be a side product from the new mark scheme, that there was greater realism in respect of the top marks, with far fewer marks of 50/49, which was a greater reflection of the candidates than has been the case in previous years. Many candidates in the middle mark range also seemed to benefit from the emphasis on word count, as here, when more was written, it rarely had a clear focus.

In conclusion the majority of centres appear to have handled the changes well, with many actually making positive use of the differences from previous years.

### **Comments on Individual Questions:**

#### **Option One History Around Us**

There were plenty of castle sites used, and mostly they worked well, although really long time frames made it a challenge to properly analyse the importance of the site through the entire period. This also tended to be the option where candidates found it most difficult to maintain the focus on importance. The use of the template was useful in raising issues that appeared in some centres’ teaching programmes and tasks. Already for next year, there has needed to be some consideration of evidence that allows candidates to access the “local” aspect of importance. This is better done now, rather than realising gaps in evidence as the assessment is being done. Once again, the opportunity to highlight the benefits of a short mock paper cannot be missed. The chance to provide useful feedback to push the candidates into good habits brings massive gains when done properly.

The second most popular area of study for the History Around Us revolved around the Industrial Revolution where evidence seems to be helpful and again, there is a natural limit on the time period being considered. The great element of the moderating process however is the range of different sites and periods covered which means it never gets boring.

**Option Two**  
**Modern World Study**

Once again the word count appears to have had a positive influence on a number of centres, as they have managed to focus the work more effectively to allow the candidates a chance to achieve the necessary level of analysis within the word limit. In both options, the quality of source use appeared to rise, with the best centres providing the candidates with plenty of different types of resources to select and deploy from. One or two centres still feel the need to constrain the candidates with outlines. These certainly hold back the brighter candidates and also fail to force the weaker candidates to address the question head on.

Ireland and various versions of the terrorist situation were popular and the generic task seemed to be applied well. Again, there was good selection of events and movements, or geographical limitations which allowed candidates to manage their efforts more successfully. The notion of bringing the study into the present (or at worst, recent past) now seems to be well established. Whilst a few centres still insist on evaluating evidence in a formulaic manner, many more allow candidates to make positive observations and use evidence in combinations to stress points. The suggested fifty year period of study is a notable benefit to centres who apply it.

# **A954A/11 Study in Development and Study in Depth: with Elizabethan England**

## **General Comments:**

Entry numbers for the Elizabethan option fell slightly on last year.

Many candidates found some of the changes to the paper, required by the strengthening of the specification, a challenge, particularly in source based questions where they were asked to test a source against a hypothesis. This tended to result in either candidates focusing on the content of the source and making little use of contextual material to support their conclusions, though often correctly attempting to evaluate the provenance of the source in the process. Alternatively, candidates ignored the source and wrote about the issue which was the subject of the hypothesis.

A more successful approach to this type of question would be for candidates to use their contextual knowledge to explain both sides of the argument and to utilise an evaluation of the source to help them form a conclusion. So, for example, answers to Qu1 (b) might provide evidence of medical development in the given period, explain how this might be seen as progress and consider whether Rossignol's article was representative of views at the time.

A clear understanding of progression and notice taken of the dates given in the questions is important for successful answers. A number of the questions in this year's paper specified particular periods of time to be referenced in the answers. Candidates who gave examples outside these dates were unable to access the higher levels of marks. This was particularly noticeable on the 'factor' questions, such as Qu 4 (b), where examples of war affecting medical development should have been selected from between 1800 and 1918. Many candidates used Pare, which did not qualify for a valid example.

Best practice for successful answering of the structured essay questions was seen when candidates used the 'This was important because.....' or 'This resulted in failure because.....' formula for commenting on the information they had selected. Candidates should be aware that lengthy descriptions of a topic may have little value without this clinching comment. There was clear evidence of the Point, Explain, Example, Link approach among stronger answers.

## **Comments on Individual Questions:**

### **Section A: Development Study**

#### **Medicine Through Time**

##### **Question No.1.**

Part (a) was generally well answered with many candidates understanding the sources and being able to explain both the natural and supernatural approaches to medicine.

Basic level answers could recognise the supernatural element and the link to the Four Humors. Mid-range answers began to explain the way these ideas operated in practice. Top level answers were able to relate the two ideas and explain how they were relevant to the Middle Ages. Many candidates successfully argued how little progress or understanding was shown in both sources.

Part (b) answers were less successful in handling all the elements required by this question. Most candidates were able to pick up the reference to the Germ Theory and successfully use this to challenge the hypothesis, often supplementing this successfully with additional knowledge about medical progress in this period. However far fewer gave evidence of lack of progress, beyond the opposition shown in the source and the majority did not attempt to use the provenance of the source as part of their answer.

### **Question No.2.**

This was the most popular optional question. Part (a) was generally well approached with good knowledge of mummification and cleanliness, with some specific knowledge of the role on individual gods. Weaker answers failed to link information on religion to medical developments, or wrote about Egyptian approaches to medicine, without explaining any connection to religion.

Part (b) answers tended to focus on the Greek ideas rather than explain why they had been adopted by the Romans, though the role of Galen in linking the two civilisations was generally understood, as was the use of the Library at Alexandria. Many answers identified a possible reason (conquest of Greece, need of a strong army, use of Greek doctors) but did not expand on this to link the factor to use of Greek ideas.

Answers to part (c) generally focussed on the way progress had been prevented rather than looking at both sides of the argument, which is essential in these questions. Candidates were obviously comfortable with the concept of the church adopting Greek ideas but tended to identify examples of individuals making progress as a result of Greek ideas rather than explain.

### **Question No.3.**

Part (a) Some answers related to surgery in the Middle Ages rather than focussing on the treatments in hospitals.

Part (b) was not well answered as the question asked only for the ways in which the church had helped medicine, but many candidates wrote at length about the ways in which the church had hindered medicine. There were a lot of general answers with many answers only reaching a basic identification level.

Part (c) Although this question was set in a clearly defined period, many answers did not make use of the specific subject matter required. Candidates were expected to evaluate the work of Pare, Vesalius, Harvey et al. for immediate impact. The immediate contribution of Pare was well explained and evaluated, but many answers did not achieve the highest levels as they did not explain the factors holding back other developments.

### **Question No.4.**

Part (a) showed much knowledge of the problems of surgery but specific knowledge of the attempts made rarely went beyond laughing gas and alcohol. A number of candidates used Simpson's work as part of their answer, although the question states the period required was 'before Simpson'.

Part (b) also required candidates to select examples from within a relatively narrow time period (1800 to 1918). Although Florence Nightingale's work in the Crimea and the rivalry between Pasteur and Koch were correctly selected by many, far many more candidates attempted to use Pare's work in this answer, possibly due to the reference to war as a factor.

Many candidates explained the importance of the NHS for part (c), though there was some confusion with the National Insurance Act. Good answers also selected appropriate alternative 20<sup>th</sup> Century developments such as penicillin, developments in surgical techniques and

treatments for terminal illness e.g. cancer. Top level answers were able to explain possible links between these ideas and weigh up the degree of change.

## **Crime and Punishment Through Time**

### **Question No.5.**

In question (a) most candidates were able to interpret the sources and form a valid judgement about law enforcement but very little contextual knowledge was given in support of their answers and therefore they gained only mid-range marks. Better answers recognised the significance of the date in the development of an effective police force and used that information to draw relevant comparisons between the sources.

On question (b), the same issues were found here as with Qu 1(b). Candidates based their answers on the content of the source and made little use of knowledge of the development of the new police force to explain success or lack of success. Very few commented on the purpose of the source as part of their answer and so answers rarely gained top marks.

### **Question No.6.**

Part (a) was well answered with sound knowledge of Roman methods of law enforcement in most answers. However, part (b) was not well answered. Many candidates wrote about the royal or church courts or simply explained the way trial by ordeal was carried out. Little knowledge was shown of the operation of manorial courts or their function within the medieval legal system.

In comparison, part (c) produced some excellent answers. Candidates used a range of knowledge of both centuries to support their argument and many were able to come to a supported conclusion. Weaker responses incorrectly placed punishments in either century, though the Bloody Code was well known and frequently correctly used.

### **Question No.7.**

Part (a) was well answered – a high level of knowledge was used in these answers to explain the ways witches were trialled and punished, with sound understanding demonstrated.

On part (b), weaker answers used general information without specific factual examples to explain why people believed in witches. Many mid-range answers made good use of religious changes and beliefs. Some candidates were aware of the influence of published works, though very few correctly named James I as the author of a book on witches (although the fact that a king had written a book was frequently stated).

Candidates found the remit of part (c) difficult to respond to. Many just wrote about how women's position had changed over time but didn't consider what aspects had remained the same. These answers, though frequently very long and detailed, were self-limiting as they only approached one side of the question. A large number of candidates did not take note of the dates in the question and attempted to use the suffragettes as examples of change. Answers which did attempt to comment on aspects of women's roles which had remained the same were lacking in factual support.

### **Question No.8.**

Candidates responded well to part (a) – many chose wisely, with Robert Peel, Elizabeth Fry and William I being popular choices. Candidates responded in a detailed manner about their selected individual. Similarly, most candidates could explain how war had changed crime and/or punishment. Weaker answers were not specific though most could identify an area affected. Stronger answers specified particular wars and spoke in detail about specific crimes which had



taken place or specific laws which had resulted. The changes in approach to conscientious objectors was a popular example.

Answers to part (c) were well produced. Candidates were well versed in the use of trial by ordeal, effects of the Tudor period and effects of the Civil War as examples of religion affecting crime and punishment. Examples on the Government side were more generalised, though many made use of the Bloody Code again. There were some interesting conclusions drawn, particularly using the argument of nature of society over time.

## **Elizabethan England**

### **Question No.9.**

Part (a) produced many good answers with candidates using sound contextual knowledge to explain why the debate was taking place at that time. Candidates spent some time in response to part (b) describing the surface details in the source before going on to explain that it was a warning to people to be careful when vagrants are in the area. Very few managed to get through to the suggestion that there was strong disapproval of vagrants and they should be punished harshly. In part (c) there were many good answers outlining the causes of poverty in Elizabethan England. The better candidates were then able to focus on what they considered to be the main cause of that poverty.

### **Question No.10.**

This question was less popular than Question 11 and the answers were generally not as good. In part (a) candidates were a little vague about how the Privy Council helped Elizabeth to govern England. Many did not get beyond the suggestions that they offered her advice and helped her deal with Mary Queen of Scots. Part (b) produced better answers with candidates offering sound, well-reasoned arguments for Elizabeth visiting different parts of England. In part (c) candidates were strong on the importance of propaganda: portraits, medals and miniatures all featured in some of the answers. They were not quite so strong on the role of force and few ventured beyond giving a brief account of the Armada success.

### **Question No.11.**

Part (a) produced a variety of good answers with candidates able to provide a wide range of reasons explaining why Essex became such a problem for Elizabeth. Part (b) was also well answered with plenty of contextual knowledge being used to explain why the theatre was seen as a problem by different groups in society. Part (c) produced some very detailed answers explaining why Mary Queen of Scots was such a problem. However, only the better candidates were able to go on and form a judgement about how far Mary was a problem because Elizabeth didn't deal with her very well.

## **A954B/12 Study in Development and Study in Depth: with Britain, 1815–1851**

### **General Comments:**

The first run through of the strengthened GCSE saw a few surprises, but generally candidates coped well. In the Development Study, especially with interpretation questions involving sources such as 1b. and 5b, there was a measure of difficulty balancing the demands of the question to consider the interpretation in context and through the specific aspects of the source. The first question on the Development Study featured only two questions, which seemed to work well, as candidates like to throw a lot of effort into these tasks.

### **Comments on Individual Questions:**

#### **Question No.**

9a. The message question was not tackled especially well. There seemed to be a problem reaching the full message, using both the source and contextual understanding.

9b. Candidates challenged the interpretation reasonably well in respect of the child labourers, their families and factory owners. The relationship to the MP in the source, and the reformers were more likely to be overlooked.

9c. Many candidates at least saw the purpose behind this source. Some struggled to pull message/purpose together with context, but relatively large numbers recognised the specific purpose related to 1842.

Question 10 was the less popular option.

10a. Most candidates had some idea of actions of the government following Peterloo. Some did little more than the Six Acts, others knew great detail.

10b. Again a well answered task. Many explained the role of fear of revolution together with various weaknesses of the existing government.

10c. Produced a fairly typical c. part answer here. Candidates struggled to explain ideas for both sides of the argument.

11a. Lots of candidates knew why Navvies were unpopular. Some wasted time giving all aspects about the Navvies.

11b. There was some tendency amongst even quite good candidates to describe general reasons for railway building rather than the specific railway between Manchester and Liverpool. However, there were some very strong answers featuring lots of valid material.

11c. The only c. part question in which candidates seemed to comfortably produce explanations for both sides of the argument.

## A954C/13 Study in Development and Study in Depth: with the American West, 1840–1895

### General Comments:

This is a new examination with more demanding questions and greater emphasis on contextual knowledge. Many candidates were well prepared for this examination and coped with these new demands. Some candidates struggled and this resulted in them not attempting to answer specific questions. Some candidates completely misinterpreted questions and wrote answers containing detailed, but irrelevant, contextual knowledge. Some candidates struggled with chronology especially the difference between the 18<sup>th</sup>; 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. There was very little evidence that candidates did not have time to complete the examination.

General advice for teachers and candidates:

- Encourage candidates to make a note of key terms in the question. Some candidates struggle with negative phrases e.g. little development, prevented progress, little impact, unchanged and ineffective. Candidates require more practise with this style of questioning.
- Encourage candidates to make a quick plan for each question part. This should help candidates to understand the demands and time-span of the question.
- When planning part c) questions in particular, encourage candidates to argue both points of view – success/failure; useful/not useful; little development/development; prevented progress/led to progress; little impact/great impact; harsher/less harsh; improve/did not improve; disappointing/not disappointing; unchanged/changed; ineffective/effective etc.
- Revision activities should also focus on question selection. Does the candidate understand what is involved in all three parts of an ‘essay’ question? Which question do they feel most confident about?
- **Revision activities should also focus on chronological patterns over time e.g.**  
Pre-historic times to the Medical Renaissance  
Crime and Punishment in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries

### Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Medicine Through Time

- 1a) Generally candidates coped well with is question. They used both sources and knowledge to explain how Source A showed that the ideas of Galen/Hippocrates/4 Humours/Opposites continued to be used in the Middle Ages and how Source B showed the role of religion in explaining beliefs about the causes and treatment of disease. Some candidates went on to make links between the two sources.
- 1b) The complexity of this question proved challenging. The most successful candidates broke the question down into three key areas to explain:
- Explanation A – a correct interpretation of Source C as showing little development in ideas about disease because the writer is sceptical about the work of Pasteur.
  - Explanation B – showing how there has been development in ideas about disease since the Middle Ages. This could be achieved in a variety of ways e.g. by seeing Pasteur’s work as a turning point leading to future developments; by showing progress before the Germ Theory.
  - Explanation C – showing that there was little development in ideas about disease since the Middle Ages. This could be achieved in a variety of ways e.g. by showing how old ideas continued over time; how people believed old ideas and were unwilling to accept new ones like Pasteur’s Germ Theory; how new ideas about disease did not necessarily lead to progress in Public Health.

Less successful candidates will have covered fewer of these explanations or mis-interpreted Source C as showing progress or belief in supernatural causes of disease.

- 2a) This question allowed candidates to describe how religion both helped and hindered medicine in Ancient Egypt. The process of mummification needed to be linked to medicine for it to score more than one mark.
- 2b) Candidates were familiar with this style of question and were often able to use a comprehensive range of knowledge to explain multi-causal reasons such as: the Roman conquest of Greece; the popularity of Greek doctors in Roman times; the significance of Hippocrates and Galen etc.
- 2c) There was a wide range of responses to this question. A concise plan certainly helped some candidates to focus on Greek ideas preventing progress and Greek ideas encouraging progress between the Romans and the Medical Renaissance. The impact of Greek ideas in Roman times was allowed. Some candidates were stronger on one side of the argument than the other – but sometimes commenting on progress not relating to Greek ideas. This earned them less credit.

There were indications of this type of question in the specimen paper. A useful revision strategy may be the construction of time-lines illustrating key themes across periods.

- 3a) Fewer candidates attempted question three. This was a familiar style of question on a less familiar topic. Candidates were able to apply knowledge of Medicine in the Middle Ages to treatments in Medieval hospitals e.g. treatments based upon the four humours, religious treatments performed by priests etc. This led to a good range of responses.
- 3b) This was also a familiar style of question but limited to the church helping the development of medicine. Answers (or parts of answers) that concentrated upon the church hindering medicine were not given credit. Successful candidates used a comprehensive range of knowledge to explain the role of the church in running Medieval hospitals, the role of monasteries and the role of the church in preserving the works of Galen and Hippocrates.
- 3c) Candidates responded to this question a little better than 2c), perhaps because they are familiar with arguing the relative strengths of Vesalius and Harvey's long-term impact compared with Paré's more immediate impact on the health of wounded soldiers. Some candidates were stronger on one side of the argument than the other – sometimes commenting on other factors that had an impact on the way patients were treated. This earned them less credit.
- 4a) It is important that candidates are clear in their minds about what the question is asking. Some candidates did well on this question. Others did badly because they wrote in great detail about Simpson and chloroform when the question asks them to describe methods used before Simpson. Developments on the use of ether, laughing gas, rapid surgery and the accidents it caused allowed candidates to achieve high marks. Knocking a patient out received one mark but no bonus marks for "if he woke up he was knocked out again so that he would not feel any pain".
- 4b) Once more candidates need to be clear on the demands of the question especially as this question was limited to the period from 1800 to 1918. Too many candidates received no credit for detailed answers on Paré and Penicillin. Many candidates did receive credit for explaining how: the Crimean War helped nursing; the Franco-Prussian war helped the search for new vaccines; the Boer War led to health reforms; and World War One had an impact on blood transfusions and plastic surgery.

- 4c) There were some very good answers to 4c). Some candidates, however, confused the National Health Service with the Health Reforms of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the Liberal reforms of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Too many candidates produced an alternative argument based upon progress in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century not the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

### **Crime and Punishment**

- 5a) Most candidates handled the sources well and used surface information to explain the different impressions. Too often contextual knowledge was lacking. More successful candidates used knowledge to compare training, organisation, pay, the changing nature of towns and the impact of Peel's reforms to explain why the sources gave different impressions.
- 5b) Less successful candidates relied on the source to show success or the unpopularity of the police (based on the expressions of the people watching). The most successful candidates broke the question down into three key areas to use knowledge to evaluate both the source and the interpretation:
- Explanation A – evaluates the source as a form of propaganda to promote the police.
  - Explanation B – uses knowledge to explain the successes of the police force e.g. in dealing with the threat and fear of revolution; the impact of policing on the crime rate; the spread of policing to other parts of the country.
  - Explanation C – uses knowledge to explain the failings or unpopularity of the police force e.g. the poor quality of early recruits; the failure of police techniques in the hunt for Jack the Ripper
- 6a) Candidates who chose this question to answer had good knowledge and performed well. Examples are given in the mark scheme. A wide range of examples of the ways in which the Romans kept law and order was allowed.
- 6b) Less successful candidates produced very generalised answers or used knowledge not related to medieval manor courts. Successful candidates included examples based upon local juries for local people and the use of trial by ordeal if the jury could not reach a decision. Answers could be developed to make links e.g. to tithings.
- 6c) Less successful candidates were confused over which punishments were used in which centuries – see earlier comment about use of time-lines in revision. Knowledge of suffragettes was less valid. Most candidates used sound knowledge to explain one side of the argument but were often weaker on the other side. Successful candidates made comparisons between the Bloody Code and prison conditions and punishments in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Valid knowledge of transportation could be applied to either century.
- 7a) This was a very popular question. Less successful candidates wrote about how witches could be identified rather than how they were questioned or punished.
- 7b) This style of question seemed familiar to most candidates and many produced multi-causal answers based upon comprehensive knowledge. Successful candidates produced a wide range of explanations e.g. the influence of James I; the impact of the uncertainty caused by the Reformation; the chaos caused by the Civil War and the impact of bad harvests.
- 7c) Candidates were less successful with this question. Detailed knowledge about the Suffragettes or the Match Girls Strike was rarely valid. Successful candidates focused on laws relating to the ways women were treated in marriage; divorce and different punishments for women compared to men.
- 8a) Most candidates produced a wide range of very good answers to this open ended question.

- 8b) Most candidates produced a wide range of very good answers to this open ended question.

Less successful candidates wrote about Peterloo, demonstrations and riots.

- 8c) Most candidates produced a wide range of very good answers to this open ended explanation. Less successful candidates struggled with the impact of religion on crime and punishment.

### The American West

- 9a) Less successful candidates used information from the source to explain why this homesteader found conditions on the Plains disappointing. Most candidates used a wide variety of contextual knowledge to support the interpretation. More successful candidates also commented on why some homesteaders would not be disappointed e.g. freed slaves looking for a new life; opportunities presented by the Homestead Act etc. A very few candidates also went on to evaluate the letter based upon provenance or typicality.

- 9b) Less successful candidates demonstrated limited knowledge and used details in the picture to show why the source was useful e.g. it was useful because it showed what a tipi was like. Better evaluations used knowledge to show how it was not useful due to conditions on the Plains or how the attitudes of the Indians were not like those shown in the picture. AND/OR it was useful to show; how Americans in the East viewed the Plains; the clash of two societies; the ways in which Americans promoted Manifest Destiny etc.

- 9c) This source proved problematic for some candidates, yet its purpose is quite simple: to get freed slaves to move to Kansas where they would be safe from persecution. Details from the source can be linked to this as can a wide variety of contextual knowledge relating to Manifest Destiny. The development of Kansas as a State (it became a State in 1861 but candidates were not expected to know that); Kentucky being a former slave State whereas Kansas was not are just some examples that candidates used.

Unfortunately a significant number of candidates simply chose not to attempt the question. Some candidates assumed coloured people were Indians or Mormons but got some reward for using contextual knowledge of the time. It is better to have a go at a question rather than write nothing.

- 10a) This was a familiar form of question and most candidates produced a valid range of answers.

- 10b) This was another familiar form of question and most candidates produced at least one explanation based upon sound knowledge of the harsh conditions or vastness of the Plains. Some candidates broke the phrase “Great American Desert” down into three parts and this tended to be a mistake (although it could be achieved based on vastness, and the American belief they owned everything even in the 1840s) because they went on to explain how the Americans wanted the Plains, had taken over the Plains, even owned the Plains before the Indians did.

- 10c) Candidates need more practise with negative phrases. Less successful candidates struggled with the concept that government policies towards the Plains Indians were **unchanged**. Others wrote about government policies towards the Plains and focused on Manifest Destiny, Homestead Acts and the building of the railways. Once more a significant number of candidates did not attempt this part of the question.

More successful candidates were able to use sound knowledge to produce one side of the argument – usually based upon the idea that government policies changed over time. The most successful candidates went on to add a more generalised explanation that government policies stayed the same as they were based on Manifest Destiny; taking

land off the Indians; the belief the Indians were savages and needed to be turned into Americans; the consistent use of the reservation policy. Some candidates even differentiated between general aims and specific policies.

- 11a) This proved to be a popular question and most candidates produced a very good range of valid responses.
- 11b) This form of question was familiar to most candidates. Candidates were able to apply a wide range of knowledge to produce at least one explanation of the importance of the railroad to the American West. There were many interesting explanations based upon the impact on the cattle industry; fulfilling Manifest Destiny; impact on law and order; impact on the Indian way of life and the impact on the growth of towns.
- 11c) Candidates were familiar with the idea of law and order being ineffective and often produced a sound and varied range of knowledge to support this. Many candidates found it more difficult to explain how law and order could be seen as effective. The most successful candidates did both – usually by explaining effectiveness over time. A few candidates chose an alternative route by explaining that the ineffectiveness of law and order could not be completely trusted due to the impact of dime novels – this was a valid approach.

## **A954D/14 Study in Development and Study in Depth: with Germany, c.1919–1945**

### **General Comments:**

Entry numbers for the Germany option increased on last year.

Many candidates found some of the changes to the paper, required by the strengthening of the specification, a challenge, particularly in source based questions where they were asked to test a source against a hypothesis. This tended to result in either candidates focusing on the content of the source and making little use of contextual material to support their conclusions, though often correctly attempting to evaluate the provenance of the source in the process. Alternatively, candidates ignored the source and wrote about the issue which was the subject of the hypothesis.

A more successful approach to this type of question would be for candidates to use their contextual knowledge to explain both sides of the argument and to utilise an evaluation of the source to help them form a conclusion. So, for example, answers to Qu1 (b) might provide evidence of medical development in the given period, explain how this might be seen as progress and consider whether Rossignol's article was representative of views at the time.

The recognition of important dates in cartoons was a positive improvement, particularly on the sources in the Germany Option. This assisted candidates in selecting valid supporting material and resulted in successful evaluation of purpose and message.

A clear understanding of progression and notice taken of the dates given in the questions is important for successful answers. A number of the questions in this year's paper specified particular periods of time to be referenced in the answers. Candidates who gave examples outside these dates were unable to access the higher levels of marks. This was particularly noticeable on the 'factor' questions, such as Qu 4 (b), where examples of war affecting medical development should have been selected from between 1800 and 1918. Many candidates used Pare, which did not qualify for a valid example.

Best practice for successful answering of the structured essay questions was seen when candidates used the 'This was important because.....' or 'This resulted in failure because.....' formula for commenting on the information they had selected. Candidates should be aware that lengthy descriptions of a topic may have little value without this clinching comment. There was clear evidence of the Point, Explain, Example, Link approach among stronger answers.

Candidates would do well to remember that explanations of ideas which do not contain specific factual references (names/ discoveries/ developments etc) are less successful than those which do display such knowledge. Equally answers which are extended to judge a development, by its importance in time or for changes it caused, score more highly than those answers which just describe a development.



## **Comments on Individual Questions:**

### **Section A: Development Study**

#### **Medicine Through Time**

##### **Question No.1.**

Part (a) was generally well answered with many candidates understanding the sources and being able to explain both the natural and supernatural approaches to medicine.

Basic level answers acknowledged the supernatural element and the link to the Four Humors. Mid-range answers began to explain the way these ideas operated in practice. Top level answers were able to relate the two ideas and explain how they were relevant to the Middle Ages. Many candidates successfully argued how little progress or understanding was shown in both sources.

Part (b) answers were less successful in handling all the elements required by this question. Most candidates were able to pick up the reference to the Germ Theory and successfully use this to challenge the hypothesis, often supplementing this successfully with additional knowledge about medical developments in this period. However far fewer gave evidence of lack of progress, beyond the opposition shown in the source and the majority did not attempt to use the provenance of the source as part of their answer.

##### **Question No.2.**

This was the most popular optional question. Part (a) was generally well approached with good knowledge of mummification and cleanliness, with some specific knowledge of the role on individual gods. Weaker answers failed to link information on religion to medical developments, or wrote about Egyptian approaches to medicine, without explaining any connection to religion.

Part (b) answers tended to focus on the Greek ideas rather than explain why they had been adopted by the Romans, though the role of Galen in linking the two civilisations was generally understood, as was the use of the Library at Alexandria. Many answers identified a possible reason (conquest of Greece, need of a strong army, use of Greek doctors) but did not expand on this to link the factor to use of Greek ideas.

Answers to part (c) generally focussed on the way progress had been prevented rather than looking at both sides of the argument, which is essential in these questions. Candidates were obviously comfortable with the concept of the church adopting Greek ideas but tended to identify examples of individuals making progress as a result of Greek ideas rather than explain.

##### **Question No.3.**

Part (a) Some answers related to surgery in the Middle Ages rather than focussing on the treatments in hospitals.

Part (b) was not well answered as the question asked only for the ways in which the church had helped medicine, but many candidates wrote at length about the ways in which the church had hindered medicine. There were a lot of general answers with many answers only reaching a basic identification level.

Part (c) Although this question was set in a clearly defined period, many answers did not make use of the specific subject matter required. Candidates were expected to evaluate the work of Pare, Vesalius, Harvey et al. for immediate impact. The immediate contribution of Pare was well explained and evaluated, but many answers did not achieve the highest levels, as they did not

explain the factors holding back other developments.

#### **Question No.4.**

Part (a) showed much knowledge of the problems of surgery but specific knowledge of the attempts made rarely went beyond laughing gas and alcohol. A number of candidates used Simpson's work as part of their answer, although the question states the period required was 'before Simpson'.

Part (b) also required candidates to select examples from within a relatively narrow time period (1800 to 1918). Although Florence Nightingale's work in the Crimea and the rivalry between Pasteur and Koch were correctly selected by many, far many more candidates attempted to use Pare's work in this answer, possibly due to the reference to war as a factor.

Many candidates explained the importance of the NHS for part (c), though there was some confusion with the National Insurance Act. Good answers also selected appropriate alternative 20<sup>th</sup> Century developments such as penicillin, developments in surgical techniques and treatments for terminal illness e.g. cancer. Top level answers were able to explain possible links between these ideas and weigh up the degree of change.

### **Crime and Punishment Through Time**

#### **Question No.5.**

In question (a) most candidates were able to interpret the sources and form a valid judgement about law enforcement but very little contextual knowledge was given in support of their answers and therefore they gained only mid-range marks. Better answers recognised the significance of the date in the development of an effective police force and used that information to draw relevant comparisons between the sources.

On question (b), the same issues were found here as with Qu 1(b). Candidates based their answers on the content of the source and made little use of knowledge of the development of the new police force to explain success or lack of success. Very few commented on the purpose of the source as part of their answer and so answers rarely gained top marks.

#### **Question No.6.**

Part (a) was well answered with sound knowledge of Roman methods of law enforcement in most answers. However, part (b) was not well answered. Many candidates wrote about the royal or church courts or simply explained the way trial by ordeal was carried out. Little knowledge was shown of the operation of manorial courts or their function within the medieval legal system.

In comparison, part (c) produced some excellent answers. Candidates used a range of knowledge of both centuries to support their argument and many were able to come to a supported conclusion. Weaker responses incorrectly placed punishments in either century, though the Bloody Code was well known and frequently correctly used.

#### **Question No.7.**

Part (a) was well answered – a high level of knowledge was used in these answers to explain the ways witches were trialled and punished, with sound understanding demonstrated.

On part (b), weaker answers used general information without specific factual examples to explain why people believed in witches. Many mid-range answers made good use of religious changes and beliefs. Some candidates were aware of the influence of published works, though very few correctly named James I as the author of a book on witches (although the fact that a

king had written a book was frequently stated).

Candidates found the remit of part (c) difficult to respond to. Many just wrote about how women's position had changed over time but didn't consider what aspects had remained the same. These answers, though frequently very long and detailed, were self-limiting as they only approached one side of the question. Answers which did attempt to comment on aspects of women's roles which had remained the same were lacking in factual support. A large number of candidates did not take note of the dates in the question and attempted to use the suffragettes as examples of change.

#### **Question No.8.**

Candidates responded well to part (a) – many chose wisely, with Robert Peel, Elizabeth Fry and William I being popular choices. Candidates responded in a detailed manner about their selected individual. Similarly, most candidates could explain how war had changed crime and/or punishment. Weaker answers were not specific though most could identify an area affected. Stronger answers specified particular wars and spoke in detail about specific crimes which had taken place or specific laws which had resulted. The change in approach to conscientious objectors was a popular example.

Answers to part (c) were well produced. Candidates were well versed in the use of trial by ordeal, effects of the Tudor period and effects of the Civil War as examples of religion affecting crime and punishment. Examples on the Government side were more generalised, though many made use of the Bloody Code again. There were some interesting conclusions drawn, particularly using the argument of nature of society over time.

#### **Germany 1919 – 1945**

#### **Question No.9.**

In answering part (a) there were many strong answers in response to the source with sound knowledge of the context put to good use and, as a result, marks were high. A good number of candidates made effective use of the date of the source and were able to relate their answers specifically to 1933, referencing the Election or Article 48 as direct motivating factors for the publication of the source.

A large number of candidates correctly identified the source in part (b) as relating to the Night of the Long Knives and were able to suggest a valid sub-message but relatively few made good use of the provenance to explore why it had been published in a British newspaper, in order to explain the main message of foreign concern over Hitler's action. Weaker candidates tended to assume that it had been published on Hitler's behalf.

In Part (c) the source was well understood and produced many well thought out responses. Most candidates acknowledged the role of Goebbels and made good use of the content of the source, related to their knowledge of the anti-semitic policies of the Nazis and the effect on the German people.

#### **Question No.10.**

This question tended to be answered better than question 11. Most candidates knew enough information on the Kapp Putsch to gain full marks though some of the weaker candidates confused the event with the Munich Putsch. Also, some candidates took the opportunity to write solely about events which followed the putsch rather than during.

Answers to part (b) tended to be narrative rather than analytical, with many candidates telling the story of the main events of the Munich Putsch and challenging the question to produce evidence

of success rather than reasons for failure. These were often written on at length but to little value given the demands of the question. Part (c) was well answered, as many candidates are familiar with the subject matter. Weaker answers tended to take a narrative tone, but on the whole this was the best-answered part of any of the structured essays, with some high level thinking shown in relation to Stresseman's actions. Unfortunately, date again presented an issue as many candidates began their answers with sections relating to the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, which was not directly relevant. It would be beneficial for candidates to be able to select information rather than going for a 'one size fits all' approach. A number of candidates chose to present material more focused on the rise in popularity of the Nazis rather than the popularity or otherwise of Weimar.

**Question No.11.**

Part (a) produced a varied response. Hitler's policies towards the Catholic Church were well known but there was a tendency to generalise about actions, which were taken purely as part of the Reich Church. On 11(b) answers frequently focused on a single point, with much explanation, with a second reason added as an aside rather than a fully explained point. There was good knowledge of the Aryan race and the way this was pursued, also of the Thousand Year Reich. Answers relating to the army were less well supported.

11c produced a wide range of responses; candidates who had been well prepared gave well-balanced answers, with detailed references to Autarky and the Four Year Plan, frequently with sound balanced conclusions. Unfortunately, there were many candidates who were unprepared for specific knowledge on this area and many answers drifted off topic into general points about Hitler's policies before coming to power. Many candidates appeared unsure of the meaning of 'economic', even amongst those who answered well on other sections of the paper, hence answered this question from a 'were Hitler's policies successful?' standpoint.

# **A955A/21 Historical Source Investigation: A Study in British History: Public Health in Britain 1800–1914**

## **General Comments:**

This was the first examination of the ‘strengthened Specification’ introduced for first teaching in September 2013. There was pleasing evidence that the majority of the candidates had been well prepared for the examination, in particular, in terms of their contextual knowledge of the period 1800-1914 and developments in British Public Health. Most Centres have clearly used the support that has been made available by OCR to consider the implications for teaching of the changes in approach heralded by the new specification.

## **Comments on Individual Questions:**

### **Question No.1**

This was perhaps the least well-answered question. Some candidates misinterpreted the source by suggesting that the MP was showing his concern for Public Health by demanding an inquiry into the causes of cholera. Even more able candidates did not always read between the lines to recognise that the MP was more concerned about the quarantine on trade than the health of the people. Valid interpretations of this kind were rare, but when backed by contextual knowledge and good source use, top marks were available. Most candidates explained ways in which the source was useful. They wrote about how the source demonstrated a lack of understanding about the causes of cholera, and often linked this with their knowledge that the source pre-dated Snow’s work, or Pasteur’s germ theory. Those who went on to explain that the source said nothing about general living conditions (citing back-to-back housing and overcrowding due to industrialisation) scored well in Level 4.

### **Question No.2**

This was answered well by significant numbers of candidates. Most knew about the non-compulsory nature of the 1848 Act. They were able to point to details in the cartoon to support the interpretation that the Act was a failure; some candidates had clearly come across the source in their general reading, and they talked about ‘pearls before swine’ and the fact that the ‘swine’ represented aldermen. This went beyond the details in the source, and could often be rewarded as contextual knowledge. Fewer candidates explained the limitations of the source in supporting the interpretation; the fact that it was published in the same year as the Act, which hardly gave time to measure the impact of an Act whose impact was to last at least for six years, and which led to changes in a number of towns and cities where it was taken up by local government. A small number of candidates confused Lord Morpeth with Edwin Chadwick.

### **Question No.3**

Questions which require an explanation of why two sources disagree or are different often lead candidates into the trap of writing at length, describing the sources and concluding ‘so they are different’. This question was no exception. Few candidates successfully explained the different purposes of the authors of the two sources. There were some general assertions about Source C being from a newspaper, and so it was biased. The provenance of Source D was used to greater effect, with more candidates able to explain that Booth was a philanthropist who was highlighting the appalling living conditions because he believed government intervention was necessary. The mark scheme allowed such answers to access Level 4. There was plenty of relevant contextual knowledge, especially about Disraeli’s reforms, the 1867 Reform Act, and

Pasteur's germ theory, but such knowledge was not always deployed to address this particular question. Top level answers were usually achieved by explaining why the two sources, though different, could both be true. There were some sophisticated answers which achieved this by explaining that the changes described in Source C did not have the same impact everywhere, and that legislation like The Artisans' Dwellings Act did not lead to slum clearance immediately. Indeed, as was pointed out by a small number of candidates, the clearance of the old slums often gave rise to new ones, as the poorest inhabitants were displaced and new housing was reserved for the slightly better-off. Source C was published at a time of great imperial pride, and national rivalries were increasing in Europe. The exhibition described in this source was an opportunity for the British Government to showcase its achievements with the aim of increasing exports, or reinforcing national pride. However, the purpose of this source was not explained by many candidates.

#### **Question No.4**

This was answered well. There was impressive contextual knowledge on display. Many candidates knew about 'New Liberalism' and the threat of the Labour Party to Liberal fortunes. Candidates wrote about the changing political climate since 1867. They used their knowledge of the political context to explain the purpose of this source. Some candidates had the mistaken belief that the poster was an election poster; it was published in 1911 AFTER the two General Elections in 1910. However, the Liberals were keenly aware of the need to drum up support for their policies because of the continued widespread opposition that they attracted. The best answers were able to focus on the specific opposition to the National Insurance Act. They were able to write about the opposition of the Conservatives, who objected to the idea that the wealthy should pay into a scheme which would make the working classes develop a 'dependency culture', or the opposition of the Labour Party who believed the reforms did not go far enough. These were answers of the highest quality.

#### **Question No.5**

The number of candidates who treated this question like the traditional source based question 6 was pleasingly few. Most candidates had clearly been briefed about the need to construct an argument using their knowledge of the period as a whole, with sources deployed to support such arguments. Answers spanned the entire range of marks, with a pleasing number of candidates achieving Level 6. All candidates now have the opportunity to show their contextual knowledge and write substantiated explanations in response to a theory or proposition. It is no longer sufficient to 'trot through' the sources and say whether they agree or disagree. Candidates have to get to grips with a 'proper' historical issue and write detailed and relevant answers. On the strength of this year's evidence, centres have made an encouraging start in dealing with the increased demands that this puts on their candidates.

## **A955B/22 Historical Source Investigation: A Study in British History: Protest & Reaction in Britain 1800–1914**

### **General Comments:**

This was the first sitting of the strengthened History GCSE. The main change to the Historical Source Investigation paper was a reduction from six to five questions and more of a focus on the key skills of recall, selection, use and communication of both knowledge and understanding. This was achieved on this paper in two ways. Firstly, Questions 1-4 were asked in such a way to ensure that strong knowledge of the historical context of the sources was required to produce a good answer. Secondly, Question 5 had a focus on primarily contextual knowledge and demanded knowledge of the whole period 1800 - 1914. Broadly speaking, the majority of candidates had been well-prepared for the changes: clearly many had thoroughly revised the period and were able to place the sources in the correct context. However, there was a significant minority of centres who seemed unaware of the changes, which was surprising.

The clearest way of seeing the changes is the instruction for each of the five questions on this paper which now reads 'Use your knowledge and the sources' – a clear reversal from the instructions under the previous specification. This is a clear indication of what examiners are looking for. Whilst there is more of a need to accurately use knowledge, the need for direct reference to the sources they have been presented with remains and we expect to see quotes / descriptions to support points being made in answers.

A lack of preparation for the strengthened specification was particularly apparent on question 5 where a number of responses went through sources A to F and whether they agreed or disagreed with the interpretation without a hint of contextual knowledge. These responses were at best level 2. That said, it was also clear that many centres had prepared their candidates really well as demonstrated by the strong historical knowledge and sophisticated understanding that was displayed. At the highest levels, question 5 provided an array of insightful and thoughtful responses where the interpretation was debated with excellent contextual knowledge and a thorough analysis of the sources. These answers were a joy to read and thoroughly deserved a level 6 mark.

Finally, in amongst the changes to the Assessment Objectives and the number of questions on the paper – there is one key piece of advice that remains constant and that is to answer the question asked rather than the question candidates would have liked to have been asked or for candidates to write down everything they know about a topic. This particularly applied on question 2 this year where a number of candidates filled up their answer books on the Rebecca Rioters without ever going near answering the question about the usefulness of the source. Whilst examiners do look to credit all accurate deployment of knowledge, it is hard to do so when the question remains unanswered. An obvious but worthwhile question for candidates to ask themselves (both in practice and in the exam) is 'Can I work out the question from my answer?' As in previous years' feedback, using key words from the question should help keep a focus on the question that they need to be answering.

## Comments on Individual Questions :

### Question 1

Establishing the author's purpose for both sources A and B was crucial for candidates to access the higher levels. It may be helpful to centres to consider what 'purpose' is as a number of candidates state 'the purpose was to ...' and actually do little more than describe the message. In specific terms, the purpose is the 'Intended Impact' of the source: what is the author trying to do. No source is useless: every source was produced for a point. Therefore candidates need to consider what this point was – what was the outcome that the author was looking for? Strategies such as NOPA (Nature, Origin, Purpose, At that time) may well be beneficial in helping candidates understand what the demands of this paper are: in particular, the need to convey that they can set the source in its context to establish what impact the author wanted to achieve.

With specific reference to this question, the two sources were depicting groups of protesters in completely different ways. Nearly all candidates managed to pick out the message of Source A – that the Luddites were dangerous and violent: and many also were able to identify key parts of Source B on the Tolpuddle Martyrs. This meant that nearly all candidates achieved at least a level 2. For a level 3 and above, there was the need to use contextual knowledge as to why the Luddites and the Tolpuddle Martyrs were shown as they were. References to people losing their jobs to machines, areas of the country such as Nottinghamshire and the reaction of the government with the Frame Breaking Act of 1812 were all rewardable for Source A. There was more of a mixture with deployment of contextual knowledge for Source B; though when it was done well it was done very well indeed. These candidates described the cause of the Martyrs with great alacrity: in particular the swearing of the Navy Oath leading to their transportation. That said, the question does require a focus on 'Why' and level 4 and 5 answers needed to go beyond context and message and look at the purpose: what was the intended impact? Fewer candidates identified this for Source A: Source B (to show support for the Tolpuddle martyrs because they did not use violence or because the author wanted to convey that it was a worthy cause) was the more successfully identified purpose. Both sources needed to have identified message, purpose and accurate deployment of knowledge to reach level 5.

### Question 2

This question was clearly focused on utility and required candidates to consider the usefulness of the source with reference to their contextual knowledge. The majority of candidates could infer from the source that the Rebecca Rioters used violence, but there was the opportunity for specific examples, such as against Tollgates, that would move them into a higher level in the mark scheme. Most candidates were stronger in being able to deploy contextual knowledge as to why there were limitations in the source as evidence about the Rebecca Rioters: for example the fact that the Rioters dressed up as women or were also protesting against Church Tithes. Top-level answers were characterised by accurate use of knowledge and direct reference to the source to demonstrate the usefulness and limitations of the source but crucially using different contextual knowledge for each side so showing deeper knowledge and understanding of the Rioters.

### Question 3

This question was answered very well by nearly all candidates and most were able to show a very high level of supporting contextual knowledge. This was especially pleasing as the Match Girls Strike was a new topic for this paper. The points made above (question 1) about Intended Impact are just as relevant on this question. The majority of candidates were able to mention the poor working conditions in the Bryant & May factory which could be inferred from the source. However, to access level 4 and above there was a need to establish the Intended Impact for why the source was published which was not just telling people that the conditions are bad (that would be message). The Intended Impact that Annie Besant had in publishing the source in 'The



Link' newspaper was to bring about reform of the working conditions in the factory through support for the striking workers. This may serve as a useful example to demonstrate the difference between message and purpose for future candidates.

This question is also a good example of what examiners expect to see about contextual knowledge to place the source 'at that time'. Clearly, in the source, there is the mention of fines for 'dirty feet' or 'burnts': however, a majority of candidates were able to deploy their knowledge for other examples (for example: the use of red phosphorous which led to 'phossy jaw' or, impressively, that the girls were fined for toilet breaks which was not mentioned in the source). Where evidence is selected and accurately deployed then candidates will receive credit for this as part of the strengthened requirement for AO1.

#### **Question 4**

This question was accessed by all candidates but weaker ones tended to compare the content of the two sources with very little reference to the date required by the sources - both were from 1912. To that end, candidates that discussed the 'violent methods' and then made specific reference to Emily Davidson at the Derby in 1913 did not receive credit for this as the question was asking 'at that time' which was 1912. There is an expectation that knowledge must be used to help explain the context of the time: not just generally deployed. Few candidates made the link to March 1912 and the decision of Parliament not to proceed with the vote to allow women the vote and the resulting reaction of window smashing in London, specifically Oxford Street, Regent Street and Piccadilly. However those that did make the link with clear reference to the sources were awarded the top level. Most candidates were able to make reference to the actions of the Suffragettes (chaining themselves to Buckingham Palace / arson were the most common) to help explain the attitude towards the Suffragettes in source F and all but a handful of candidates were able to describe the view shown in source E. However, a focus must remain at all times on the question: those candidates that just described (in essence) the message of the two sources without any reference to attitudes of the time always remained in the lower levels.

#### **Question 5**

The final question is now asked in a very different way from the old-style question 6. Candidates are presented with an interpretation - in this case 'Protests did not have much support in the period 1800 - 1914' and being asked how far they agree with the interpretation, rather than how far the sources support it. This means the candidates should base their answer primarily on their knowledge and understanding and should develop and support their own arguments. As a starting point, candidates would do well to read the first line of each level descriptor in the mark scheme and understand that the focus of their answer needs to be on showing their knowledge of the period 1800 - 1914 alongside the use of a range of sources. As said in the introduction above, it is still necessary to use the sources in the question paper. They should be used to support the arguments being made. Candidates who only used contextual knowledge, or more commonly who went through all of the sources (as with the old question 6) one-by-one (or possibly even tried to group them into agree / disagree) with no reference to their own knowledge were unable to score higher than level 2.

The need for the deployment of strong contextual knowledge on this question is paramount and many candidates accessed the top levels of the band because they used knowledge 'beyond the paper' - with references to Peterloo and the Chartists most common. Candidates have the opportunity to really demonstrate not just their ability to form an argument but also a flair for History by using a range evidence - both contextual and the sources - to support their points.

At level 6, examiners are looking for a 'clinching argument' from the first sentence: characteristics of these responses - and there were a pleasing number- were that you knew the opinion of the candidate straight away. These answers rarely had a 'bolted-on' conclusion: instead the argument flowed from the start and was stuck to throughout their answer. They

always used examples of Protest and Reaction that were not on the paper and clearly showed an ability to construct a sophisticated answer that fully deserved full marks.

There were also a number of level 5 responses, where candidates tended to group the Protests into agree / disagree and then write a conclusion: the difference between a level 5 and a level 6 response was that for a level 5 candidate you did not know their opinion until the conclusion. It should be stressed that another feature of all responses above level 3 was the use of the sources on the paper. Candidates who superficially referred to a source with a phrase such as 'as shown in source A' are not really doing enough – examiners do need to see evidence direct from any source used as clear support for the point being made.

Finally, the unit overview produced by OCR for this strengthened specification says that 'The question carries 16 marks to reflect its challenge. This indicates that candidates should leave about 30 minutes for planning and writing the response'. Most candidates did ensure that, in length at least, this was their longest answer: however, some potentially good answers were left incomplete as candidates had clearly run out of time. That said, it was pleasing that all but a handful of candidates left this question until last which allowed them to consider all the sources in the previous four questions before making a decision on how to group them and how to use them as evidence in their answer to question 5. It is pleasing that the advice given previously to centres to advise candidates to leave the final question until last has largely been heeded.

**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
**1 Hills Road**  
**Cambridge**  
**CB1 2EU**

**OCR Customer Contact Centre**

**Education and Learning**

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: [general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk)

[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored

**Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations**  
**is a Company Limited by Guarantee**  
**Registered in England**  
**Registered Office; 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU**  
**Registered Company Number: 3484466**  
**OCR is an exempt Charity**

**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
**Head office**  
**Telephone: 01223 552552**  
**Facsimile: 01223 552553**

© OCR 2015

