



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2012**

Humanities

40703

(Specification 4070)

Unit 3: Humanities Investigation

Report on the Examination

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GCSE Humanities Unit 3 – Humanities Investigation

General

This is the second year of submission of work, carried out by students, under controlled conditions. Once again it is evident how conscientiously centres have applied the specification requirements to this type of assessed work.

Moderators saw a broad cross section of samples, which included all seven of the titles listed for submission in 2012. The most common however, were taken from the themes of 'The Holocaust', 'National Parks' and 'Multi-culturalism' set questions. Students appeared to achieve effectively across all titles and there were many examples of high quality Humanities work. Moderation once again focused on the Assessment Objectives: ie the students' capacity to investigate, apply and communicate their understanding of their chosen title and their ability to present effective analysis and evaluation.

Centres appeared to have responded well to advice in last year's report which commented on how some students failed to work closely to the wording of the set task. This was far less evident in the sampling this year. Students are able to access higher mark levels if the work they carry out is directly and specifically focussed on the question, as it ensures that the evaluation and analysis is relevant to the title.

There were some students, this year, who were disadvantaged because the focus of their work was too narrative in style and prevented them from evaluating the question and achieving an argued conclusion. This was most evident for the title 'Why was there a holocaust in Europe?'. A small minority of students did not address the key word 'Why' and missed a vital perspective on the question.

Centres are reminded that, for moderation, it is necessary to provide the students' research materials which they have taken into the controlled assessment along with their scripts. This was not as consistently applied as is necessary and prevents moderation achieving the full context of the sampled work. Sometimes students must have been disadvantaged by the bulk of materials that they took into the assessment. It is sensible that they have a manageable amount of student-produced materials to use effectively to complete the task. It is also important for centres to provide information on the guidance given generically to all students as well as details as to how internal standardisation is carried out. It is important that centres inform moderators of the amount and extent of help provided to individual students. The use of scaffold frameworks to help students should be limited to initial support and must not be available to students under controlled assessment conditions.

The work presented in the final write-up of the controlled assessment must be produced by the student under controlled conditions. Materials downloaded from the internet are not acceptable, nor are photos, maps, graphs, etc from the same source. Some students referenced such materials as appendices in their work whilst some cut and pasted such materials directly into their work. Although this involved a small number of students and centres, it is important that the spirit of the controlled assessment is applied consistently. Students prepare in advance and use their own work to support them in the controlled environment.

It is worth reinforcing to students the content of the mark scheme by which their work is assessed, as this will give them the confidence to focus on the skills to access the higher marks. Centres may wish to share with students examples of work at certain mark levels as agreed from standardisation meetings.

Source evaluation was generally a weaker area, too often very descriptive and with little comment on the origin of the source, its content and reliability. In some cases it was evident that students were working from set sources but that the copy of these had not been sent with the samples.

Bibliographies continued to be very varied; some were obviously well done prior to the task whilst others were hastily and scantily added at the end. It is important that they are a true representation of research undertaken, as they are a guide to moderators in considering the validity of credit given by the centre for investigation skills. Students should beware of referencing internet sites such as Wikipedia.

Centre administration was generally thorough and it is very helpful when large centres provide a rank order with the centre marks, which makes selecting samples more efficient. Centres are reminded that if they are entering 20 or fewer students they should send the whole sample directly to their named moderator. In addition it is worth reminding colleagues that materials sent for moderation should not be inside plastic wallets or bulky folders.

Annotation was generally good and helpful. Some teachers relied on just a summative comment on the documentation or on their own attached mark sheet, which is acceptable but does not wholly make clear where certain levels were 'hit'. In a few cases, there was no evidence of any annotation about the work or on the work other than the final mark. Standardisation was apparent in most centres and in a large centre this is vital, as consistency across a big sample is essential. It is important to include on the Centre Declaration Sheet that standardisation was carried out.

Once again, centres are thanked for the effective implementation of the controlled assessment component and are recommended to apply the suggestions above as they prepare future students.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.

Converting Marks into UMS marks

Convert raw marks into Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) marks by using the link below.

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion