

# **Report on the Components**

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**June 2007**

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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 syllabus 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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### Humanities (1939)

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## **GCSE Humanities 1939**

### **Paper 1**

#### **General Comments**

The examination appears to have been set at an appropriate level. Overall candidates were able to score marks appropriate to their ability and at the same time more able candidates were stretched. There was a good spread of marks between 10 and 70 marks. It was rare to find marks higher than 70.

#### **Section A**

The responses to the key concepts in the (a) questions are still patchy. These concepts are clearly shown in the specification and thorough preparation for them could enable many candidates to improve their scores. The (b) questions based around the source(s) are simple extraction questions requiring little response other than identifying the correct information from the source. Many candidates could be saved extensive, unnecessary writing if they were guided in this.

#### **Section B**

Performance was greatly enhanced when schools had used the mark scheme with students. They not only constructed more appropriate factual responses but there was clear evidence that more centres were placing increased emphasis on using the sources in the question to implicitly and, increasingly, explicitly, draw information for use in their answers.

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

##### **Section A**

##### **Q1 Citizenship**

a (ii) Active citizenship was often mistaken as an immigration issue.

b (ii) Many candidates identified that the failure was mitigated by those who did follow the Declaration of Human Rights but failed to use the figures from Document B.

c (i) and (ii) Many general responses which made Trade Unions and Employment Tribunals interchangeable. Employment Tribunals were often mistaken for ACAS. Too many candidates attempted to answer the questions only from the documents; they should be encouraged to use their own knowledge as well.

##### **Q2 Economic and Industrial Issues**

a (i) and (ii) Tertiary industry was much better known than e-commerce. A surprising number of candidates did not attempt a (ii).

c (i) and (ii) were generally not well answered. There was little evidence of knowledge and candidates frequently related the benefits in c (ii) to Britain rather than the company as the question required.

##### **Q3 Environmental Issues**

a (ii) and b (i) proved difficult for some candidates.

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c (i) and (ii) Common problems were candidates who wrote general answers on the global impact rather than the 'natural environment' and those who wrote two almost identical generic responses to both parts.

### **Q4 Religious and Moral Issues**

a (i) Many candidates failed to identify the link between creation and religion.

c (i) and (ii) The most common problem was writing about religions in general rather than religions attitudes to moral issues.

### **Section B**

There was a much better balance this year between the number of candidates who answered Question 5 and those who answered Question 6.

#### **Question 5**

There was a significant increase in the number of candidates who answered by referring to both sides of the question. There was pleasing use of the guidance to help them to structure their answers.

#### **Question 6**

Less popular than Question 5 but candidates who attempted it made better use of the sources in structuring their answers. Very few candidates had a clear view of the problems facing the Welfare State in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **GCSE Humanities 1939**

### **Paper 2**

#### **General Comments**

The wide ability range of the candidates entered for this examination was reflected in the wide spread of marks. The paper appears to have differentiated quite well by outcome given the full range of marks seen.

#### **Question A**

There is still evidence that candidates are not fully aware of the focus of this question.

#### **Question B**

Many centres are preparing candidates very thoroughly for this question. Unfortunately this can lead to formulaic answers which often do not refer to the topic set. Candidates should be encouraged to use what they have been taught but try to be more individual in their response and relate it specifically to the topic.

#### **Question C**

More candidates scored well on this question and there was a pleasing improvement in candidates responding appropriately to the skills being examined.

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

##### **Question A**

1 and 2: most candidates scored well.

3: few candidates appeared to understand the question. This seemed to be a centre-based effect.

4: probably the best answered question. Candidates picked up well on Transport 2000 but some made confused responses about the RTA.

5: candidates either scored well constructing a discussion of the merits of the documents or wrote generally about bias.

##### **Question B**

6: see General Comments

##### **Question C**

7: most candidates scored well.

8: some candidates offered the two figures but did not make the calculation.

9: this required a simple answer using the numbers in the document. Some candidates made lengthy written responses which scored less well.

10 and 11: these were seen by many candidates as interchangeable and the mark scheme accommodated this.

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12: an increasing number of candidates have been well prepared for the requirements of this question which is encouraging.

13: an increasing number of candidates are responding to the requirements of the mark scheme, but the prevalence of those who are still unaware of the need for balance makes it necessary to comment on this again.



## **GCSE Humanities 1939**

### **Coursework**

Overall this year the quality of moderation has improved with a noticeable reduction in centre scaling. The larger centres are, as one would expect, still the most effective at the moderation process, mainly because several individuals are involved in the process. Some small entry centres are excellent and deserve praise, others need to keep more closely to the criteria.

Successful centres have a tight, well defined and detailed coursework task. Weaker centres are still in the main trying to do coursework as an open-ended task with no real reference to methodology. Where the task is framed around a statement or hypothesis that can be interpreted in a range of ways candidates do much better.

As last year, the main thrust of this report is to reinforce the mantra that the methodology of the investigation is the investigation and that it does not play second fiddle to the actual content of the coursework. This course is unashamedly more about the how than the what. From an examining point of view, it is important to point out that being extremely flexible on content means the process by definition has to be very tight, otherwise it would be impossible to manage. Sloppy, woolly or uncritical application of methodology is the main cause of poor coursework marks. It is very difficult to award high marks where conclusions are not linked directly to the evidence collected by the candidate, or even better, attributed to the results of the investigation. Linked but unsubstantiated opinions held before, during or after the investigation cannot gain more than a level 1 in AO2C. Some centres still do not recognise that unlinked conclusions, however well expressed, do not score marks at all in this criteria.

It still unfortunately needs to be said that centres who insist any secondary information is correctly referenced, submitted in quotes or annotated, explaining their inclusion, tend to do better than those who allow, for want of a better description, modified cut-and-paste. This structure removes the feeling from the candidate that 'someone somewhere has written something better than me and I need to find it'. This wastes hours of candidates' time, searching the internet in particular. The recognition that what they have to say is not only worthy, it is in fact necessary is a very liberating idea for many. In terms of coursework construction, particularly the source lead ones, it is important to use contrasting or conflicting material. This can then be explored for potential bias in terms of opinion, vested interest or omission. Any coherent work of this nature moves rapidly up the AO3B criteria. It is important that the candidates write specifically to the marking criteria.

This year some of the long standing centres in particular added a few tweaks to their already successful coursework and opened up the mark scheme at each end of the spectrum. New centres are still producing a refreshing variation in their approach to the coursework. As always, any centres experiencing problems have been provided with a detailed analysis of the areas needing attention in the centre feedback report. Please use these and feel free to contact the Principal Moderator with any concerns. These are now cross-referenced and form an important part of the moderation process. It is very important to create a dialogue between moderator and centre prior to moderation, in order to iron out any lingering problems.

It is pleasing to note that distinguishing between reaching conclusions and evaluating methodology is improving overall. This was shown particularly at the C boundary with more candidates accessing the complex areas of the criteria. It is still worth stating that conclusions are basically what can be said about the results gathered. Evaluations are about the way the research was handled by the candidate and how this could be improved. In terms of the application of appropriate research methodology, please be aware that axiomatic statements like, 'I asked five questionnaires, I could have had a bigger sample' are not going to score very

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well. It is quite simply *should* not *could*. This can be doubly problematic as it affects scoring on both AO3A and AO3D. Candidates need to show they are familiar with the process of investigation and are able to express their understanding in some detail.

Thank you again for all the hard work and professionalism shown in an increasing proportion of the coursework submissions.

**General Certificate of Secondary Education**

**Humanities 1939**

**June 2007 Assessment Session**

**Component Threshold Marks (raw marks)**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Max Mark</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>
01	100	62	52	42	33	24	15	6
02	50	35	29	24	19	14	10	6
03	50	42	34	26	20	14	8	2

**Option Thresholds (weighted marks)**

	<b>Max Mark</b>	<b>A*</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>
Overall Threshold Marks	200	154	133	112	92	72	52	33	14
Percentage in Grade		1.65	7.16	14.95	20.20	21.00	17.48	10.23	5.43
Cumulative Percentage in Grade		1.65	8.81	23.75	43.95	64.95	82.43	92.66	98.09

The total entry for the examination was 2331.



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