

Principal Examiner Feedback

May 2009

GCE

GCE O-Level History (7263) Syllabus C

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Contents

1. General Comments	04
2. Sections A - D	05
3. Statistics	07

**GCE ORDINARY LEVEL HISTORY:
7263 EUROPEAN HISTORY
REPORT ON EXAMINATION, MAY 2009**

General Comments

The examination seemed to work well for those candidates who had prepared thoroughly. As in previous years, it was noticeable that most candidates preferred the questions in Sections C and D and generally scored better.

Most candidates offer at least one of the documentary questions and although there is evidence of a slight improvement, many are still not comfortable with evidence skills. Sub-question (a) will always be concerned with comprehension of and, perhaps, also some inference, from a source. Candidates are being asked to say what they can tell from a source. Developed statements will be awarded with the maximum 3 marks. Question (b) may well ask candidates to cross-reference the two sources, again for a maximum of 3 marks such as 1(b). They must show evidence of direct comparison between the two sources and explain similarities and/or differences.

Question (c) will often ask about the reliability or usefulness of a source. These questions will attract four marks. In answering these questions, candidates will be expected to make use both of the information given about the source and also the information given in the source. For example in question 25 candidates were asked to evaluate the reliability of Poster B. It is reliable because it provides evidence of Nazi views of the role of women. The Nazis did promote the traditional role of women. However, it is less reliable because it gives an exaggerated, idealised image of women.

Questions (d) will always require candidates to make use only of their own knowledge in answering a question which relates directly to the subject matter of the sources. It will always be the highest weighted question at 10 marks. The focus is often description and evaluation (question 17). In the latter case, candidates should attempt to give more or less equal weight to the two parts of the question.

In terms of the essay questions candidates can improve in several areas. There will always be an element of evaluation in every question. Candidates need to focus on this aspect and avoid pure description. Too many candidates lack precise information, especially about chronology, and do not always address the main theme of the question.

Finally, in general terms, comments on examination technique. The majority of candidates completed five questions. However, some show inconsistency in their choice of questions and occasionally opted for topics for which they had little knowledge and understanding. Again, more comprehensive preparation and revision is essential. A few showed a serious imbalance in the length of their answers. The first two essays well developed and the next three far too brief. Remember successful candidates produce five consistently written answers. The quality of the last answer can be crucial in determining the grade achieved by the candidate.

Section A

This section was not popular with questions answered by generally weaker candidates. A handful of students answered questions 1 and 3.

Section B

This section was not popular with the exception of questions 11 and 15. There were strong answers to question 11, especially Sun Yat-sen, the Warlords and the Long March. For 15 (a) a number of answers started well before 1945. Parts (b) and (c) were generally well answered.

Section C

A very popular section.

17. Generally well answered except for Part (d) where some candidates confused Black Power with the court cases of the 1950s and the activities of MLK.
18. Excellent answers to all three sections especially (b)
19. Most popular question and very strong answers to all three parts, especially the Alphabet Agencies and reasons for opposition.
20. Generally sound answers to all three parts.
21. No answers.
22. A number of generally sound answers.
23. Quite popular and well answered, especially part (a).
24. No answers.

Section D

Another popular section especially questions 25, 28, 29 and 30.

25. Strong answers especially to parts (a) and (d) although a few candidates focused on Hitler's general methods of control rather than the young for section (d).
Quite popular and well answered, especially parts (a) and (b)
26. All three sections were well answered.

27. Generally well answered although some candidates wrote at length about Mussolini's political policies for part (b).
28. Popular and well answered especially on the Civil War and the Five-Year Plans.
29. Very popular and well answered.
30. Strong answers to part (b) but less confident in (a) in which candidates often focused on the years before 1949.
31. No answers.
32. A handful of weak answers.

Statistics

Grade	Max Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
Raw boundary mark	100	62	50	38	33	25	0

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