

History

Advanced GCE **A2 7835**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **AS 3835**

Report on the Units

January 2010

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

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Chief Examiner Report

Two units were assessed this January in Historical Investigations and Themes in History. As the Principal Examiners have reported, the candidates' profile was atypical in so far as the vast majority were repeating at least one unit and most candidates were single entries. The drive and motivation necessary to succeed are strong determinants and these qualities may well account for the rise in the mean mark in 13 out of 16 papers. Only in the case of Roosevelt and Stalin (2589/14 and 17) and Modern Themes (2591/11 and 12) did candidates perform less well than the entries for January 2009 when, of course, there was a much larger candidature. Responses to questions on Philip II and Cromwell (2588/11 and 13) and Medieval Themes (2590/11) on the other hand produced significant improvements. Overall there was little work of very low quality and several examples of outstanding work. Although the majority of candidates scored modest marks, if they apply the advice contained in the following reports they will hopefully see an improvement should they re-sit these legacy papers in the final session in June.

UNIT	JAN 2009 Number of candidates	JAN 2009 Mean mark	JAN 2010 Number of candidates	JAN 2010 Mean mark
2587	238	51.5	22	53.7
2588/11	246	54.5	19	59.3
2588/12	290	55.5	62	57.6
2588/13	41	50.8	27	58.7
2588/14	118	56.2	8	59.6
2589/11	159	56.6	7	57.2
2589/12	156	51.7	47	56.3
2589/13	260	53.5	11	54.8
2589/14	418	58.0	42	53.9
2589/15	446	57.3	59	57.3
2589/16	738	52.0	50	54.8
2589/17	391	58.8	37	50.5
2590/11	59	65.7	18	71.0
2590/12	329	70.5	88	71.9
2591/11	833	68.3	212	62.7
2591/12	188	65.4	77	64.4

2587 - 2589 Historical Investigations

General Comments

There was a small entry for these papers and so detailed comment is not possible. Some impressive work was seen and little work of very low quality. The faults indicated in so many of these reports had not been entirely eradicated. Candidates continued to fail to focus on the Passages, preferring to write essays on the topics of the questions, but with minimal reference to the views in the Passages. These rarely achieved marks above Band IV. These were in the minority, however, with some kind of relevant comment on the Passages being made by most candidates with an attempt at evaluation. The essays were largely focused and few made no mention of historical debate. Most tried to assess the arguments of historians but did still deteriorate at times to classification of historians as Revisionist or Post-Revisionist or simply as biased (sic).

Some Centres failed to ensure that the necessary details on the cover of the answer booklet were filled in.

2587

There were 22 candidates, 8 answering on Charlemagne and 14 on King John. No letters of complaint were received about this paper.

Charlemagne

- 1 Generally this question was well answered. The debate on the decline at the end of the reign was well known. This did lead some candidates to stray away from the Passages. Some candidates argued effectively that the Capitulary did not necessarily prove that there was decomposition. Some examined the impact of the Coronation and suggested this had led to decline but needed more evidence to prove this and, again, this could take them away from the main focus. Most candidates concluded that the views in Passage D were the most convincing.
- 2 Candidates generally preferred this essay question to question 3 and were well prepared on this topic. Most candidates could list a range of factors and what discriminated most amongst them was how well they were able to rank the causal factors they cited. Some lacked supporting detail and some needed a clearer structure as the reasons were not well differentiated. The nature of Saxon culture and traditions was often seen as the main reason why Charlemagne found it so hard to overcome them, with his need to divert to deal with other problems as a runner up.
- 3 This was less popular and there were fewer strong answers. Weaker candidates wrote rather vaguely about Charlemagne's personality and did not focus on how his disparate Empire was held together. His army, Christianity or his administration were the other explanations offered but the popular conclusion was to agree with the question.

King John

- 4 This question was mostly well answered. Candidates found it straightforward to group the Passages with A and C set against B and D. Some candidates were determined to tell the story of the Canterbury election and so were not focused on the question. The reference in the largely hostile Passage A to the support John enjoyed was missed by most candidates and the implications of Passage D that John was not impressed with Innocent's earlier

actions were often not recognised. There was little knowledge of Innocent's reforming aims or his treatment of other rulers. King John largely had the sympathy of the candidates who felt he had right on his side.

- 5 This was a popular question but led to the usual problems on this topic. Some candidates did not notice that it referred only to 1204 and insisted on including material from later in the reign. Others wrote at length about the Angouleme marriage and its consequences. But there were answers which balanced the reasons for which John could be blamed, such as his treatment of leading figures, against the factors which were outside his purview, such as the ability of Philip Augustus and the structural difficulties in the Angevin Empire. They were quite equally divided as to which set of reasons they found most convincing.
- 6 There were no reports that this question had been attempted by any candidates.

2588

There were 118 candidates for this paper, 19 for Philip II, 62 for Elizabeth I, 27 for Oliver Cromwell and 8 for Peter the Great. No letters of complaint were received about this paper.

Philip II

- 1 Candidates seemed familiar with the relevant debate and used the wide range in the Passages as a way in to an equally wide range of contextual knowledge. Some, however, did little more than use the steers to the Passages. There are still candidates who think that Philip's dealings with the Netherlands were part of his foreign policy. In general Philip was seen as defensive on the grounds that he had little alternative given his resources.
- 2 This was the less popular of the essay questions. There were some well argued answers, which made good use of the range of material on which they could draw. Others tended to describe how Philip controlled mainland Spain rather than to assess the extent of his control. One or two focused almost exclusively on the Inquisition. Few asserted that Philip was fully in control.
- 3 This question was less well answered. Candidates saw the reference to the Netherlands and wrote all they knew on the causes of the Dutch Revolt without giving substantial consideration to the focus in the question. The new bishoprics were rarely mentioned, although Calvinist iconoclasm was familiar to most candidates. They concluded that Philip was largely motivated by religion, linked to his determination not to be deprived of his rights in his ancestral lands

Elizabeth I

- 4 Candidates welcomed this question and were ready to display their knowledge of the debate about why Elizabeth did not marry. Some were less prepared to look at the Passages in any detail or to give serious consideration to the factor in the question. There was some confusion about the various suitors and some assertion that Philip II was a meaningful candidate long after he had married elsewhere. Better answers argued that in the end Elizabeth had no alternative, but that she did have choices early in the reign. The Virgin Queen image was sometimes credited as important from the start of the reign. There was too much diversion into possible psychological factors, not mentioned in the Passages, and into discussion of contemporary views about the feminine role.
- 5 This was the less popular of the essays and some candidates missed the word successfully and simply wrote about how. This led to much description of methods of coping with the Puritans. The Puritan Choir made its usual appearance and sometimes in

the work of candidates who had not noted the date in the question. Some wrote about the Puritan threat rather than Puritanism. The inevitable definition of the term in introductions could be too lengthy and was rarely linked well to what followed. There was no clear cut conclusion but the problems the Puritans faced in the 1590s were usually less well explained.

- 6 This was a more popular question and the use of the word threat was welcomed by candidates. However, the emphasis in the question on the end of the reign was less well observed and some answers spent a disproportionate amount of time on the Settlement. There was good knowledge of the debate and factors such as the slow response of Rome, the problems facing seminary and missionary priests, Mary, Queen of Scots and the plots and the division among Catholics were all quoted as explanations. One impressive suggestion was that the Elizabethan government, notably Burghley in his Execution of Justice in England, was able to link Protestantism to patriotism in the face of Spain and depict Catholics as a Fifth column in England and this marginalised them. The conclusions varied as to which factor dominated and there were some good syntheses.

Oliver Cromwell

- 7 Candidates tended to paraphrase the Passages rather than to analyse them. There was a surprising lack of contextual knowledge, given that this is a well known area of debate. Where a judgement was reached, it was generally that Cromwell relied on Providence and once convinced it was God's will that he should decline the crown he did so. Passage B with its reference to army officers was not often well used as evidence for the factor in the question and Antonia Fraser was dismissed by some for her gender and her popularity. Opportunities for cross reference were freely available in these passages but not regularly taken up.
- 8 Candidates did not find it easy to say much about the factor in the question and moved on rapidly to the debate about how far Cromwell's military ability or his family connections led to his rise. Some reference was made to the Self-Denying Ordinance to show disunity but other evidence was thin and even the Parliamentary commanders were rarely named. It was the soldierly achievements which were generally seen as the key to Cromwell's rise.
- 9 This question was less popular, but those who answered it did have the necessary knowledge and sensibly defined some aims at the start so they had a means of measuring success. Good responses showed that within broad aims which were largely consistent, there were lesser aims which were not always so and there was distinct variety in methods. Healing and settling and godly reformation made their usual appearances.

Peter the Great

- 10 Most candidates were able to analyse the Passages reasonably effectively, but their focus was often on how serious the opposition was, rather than on its impact on Peter's aims. Most agreed that the opposition had a considerable effect but that Peter, nevertheless, went ahead regardless. Both Passages B and D saw Peter as an isolated and lonely figure but candidates did not share this relatively sympathetic view. The other points made by Passage D were rarely well developed.
- 11 This question was answered well and candidates did not fall into the narrative trap. There was more knowledge about Turkey and Sweden but few left Persia out entirely. The usual conclusion was that only against Sweden was there real success, which came at a tremendous price. Candidates were familiar with the debate and outlined the views fairly, with much less reference to schools of History than usual.

- 12** This question was much less well answered as detailed knowledge about the administration was lacking. Coverage of the economy was better. Few candidates made any analysis of the transformation. They discussed change but not the extent of the change. But there was at least one response which was fully focused on the issue of transformation and concluded that there were aspects which, comparing the start and end of the reign, were totally transformed.

2589

There were 253 candidates for this paper, 7 for Napoleon, 47 for Gladstone and Disraeli, 11 for Bismarck, 42 for Roosevelt, 59 for Lenin, 50 for Chamberlain and 37 for the Cold War. One letter of complaint was received about this paper.

Napoleon

- 1** Generally candidates found the Passages accessible and understood the debate they contained. There was plenty of contextual knowledge, although it was not always well applied to the Passages. Some misunderstood the thrust of B and thought it was critical of Napoleon and did not assess the usefulness of improvisation for a general. With regard to passage A the evidence put forward was rarely used critically.
- 2** Candidates needed to take time to consider what The French Revolution entailed and their essays became a 'this was good and this was bad' account of the domestic policy of Napoleon. Better answers were aware that in some respects, such as the ideal of liberty, Napoleon might have betrayed the Revolution, while remaining true to its tenets in other aspects such as equality.
- 3** Some candidates produced a list of the reasons for the downfall of Napoleon with little discrimination between them. This approach did not give them access to the higher mark Bands. Candidates explained why Napoleon failed in Russia but did not relate this failure to the overall picture of his eventual defeat. There were some less than accurate accounts of the battle of Waterloo. The factor in the question needed substantial coverage. The most popular conclusion was that the varied contribution made by Britain meant that the defeat of Napoleon could not be achieved without her.

Gladstone and Disraeli

- 4** Candidates were able to deal with the Passages effectively, and few resorted to describing their content. Some of the references which could have been expanded through contextual knowledge were missed such as divisions in the party, trade union legislation, tameness of our foreign policy. Candidates could explain the beer question and sometimes gave this undue prominence. Parts of Passage A were not used, notably our chief's restless spirit. On the whole, candidates were kind to Gladstone and blamed groups within his party or the appeal of Disraeli via the Manchester and Crystal Palace speeches to the middle classes and some of the working classes. One or two pointed out that this appeal represented a Conservative breakthrough to an extent even if it was not down to Tory Democracy.
- 5** This led to some very strong answers which contrasted the moral outlook of Gladstone with the more nationalistic views of Disraeli. But some answers failed to be precise as to what Gladstone's criticisms were. There was more coverage of colonial affairs than of the Eastern Question, about which there was some confusion showing its enigmatic nature is still felt. On the whole Disraeli's defence of maintaining British interests was not upheld and he was blamed for unwise appointments, jingoism, pandering to the queen and rash

actions like buying the Suez Canal shares. In contrast Gladstone represented the voice of reason.

- 6 Candidates needed to establish clearly just what Gladstone's aims were in Ireland in order to make much progress in their assessment. Instead many evaluated the success of the legislative programme. The 1870 Land Act was not well understood with candidates often asserting it gave the tenants the three Fs. But candidates who suggested a variety of aims, both political and humanitarian wrote successful and well informed responses.

Bismarck

- 7 Many candidates found the Passages challenging and fell back on discussing their general thrust, often relying quite heavily on the introduction provided. Some were confused about the issue of universal suffrage. Passage C proved to be more difficult as it embraced different ways of looking at the issue, although its main argument was that Bismarck had few genuinely liberal intentions. Candidates might not fully grasp this in the Passage, but it was the conclusion to which most of them came.
- 8 Candidates needed to discriminate between the factors instead of providing what amounted to a list. Those who did this were able to make effective judgements about the roles of military, diplomatic and economic factors and to show the linkage between industry and the army. This latter combination was the most popular explanation.
- 9 This question was less well done and some candidates preferred to answer their own question about Bismarck the Master Planner. The negative in the question confused some and the events of 1867-70 were not always well known. The events centred on the Ems Telegram were surprisingly misjudged.

Roosevelt

- 10 This question led to two different types of problem. On the one hand Passage A tempted candidates into a lengthy digression about why prohibition failed and the difficulties of enforcement. The Passages were thus neglected. On the other hand were candidates who used the material in the Passages but failed to move on to present any contextual knowledge or much evaluation. The irony in Passage A was not picked up by many candidates. There was also some reluctance to make a judgement as to whether prohibition was beneficial or not. But there were answers which engaged well with the evidence presented and reached a supported conclusion.
- 11 Candidates approached this question sensibly and usually were able to cover the whole period, which has not always been the case with this topic. Most gave a nuanced response, recognising that there were elements of interventionism in the 1920s and of isolationism in the 1930s. Most also had sufficient time to write fully about 1938-41, which has in the past often been neglected. This was a question where candidates were well informed and could use their knowledge relevantly and to reach a judgement.
- 12 This question was less popular and less well answered. Candidates often did not know enough about the policies of the Republican governments, or indeed, the names of Republican Presidents, although their lack of policies and actions in the face of the collapse was more regularly mentioned. Answers deteriorated into accounts of the events leading to the Wall Street Crash. Hoover was let off surprisingly lightly with candidates accepting his defence that factors beyond his control were to blame.

Lenin

- 13** Candidates were inclined to use the Passages to illustrate the sides of the debate on this topic, and were then faced by Passage B which was a balanced interpretation arguing that War Communism was more than a pragmatic response to a crisis and so did not fit the pattern. Contextual knowledge was often in short supply. Other candidates preferred to explain why the Reds won the Civil War. But there were some who really engaged with the debate and had a sound grasp of the arguments and Marxist-Leninist theory. Among these there were spirited conclusions that the purpose was to win the war and equally strong arguments that War Communism was all about ideology.
- 14** This question led to some of the best answers on the paper from candidates who had excellent knowledge and balanced the arguments about Lenin in this period in a sophisticated way. Again, the conclusions they reached were not all the same and strongly argued on both sides. But there were also some very weak responses from candidates who knew little about Lenin, although the fate of his brother was often mentioned as the driving force behind his actions, and wrote about the 1905 revolution, or the 1917 Revolutions, or Nicholas II.
- 15** This question was often answered effectively. Candidates had the necessary knowledge about the debates and about the events. Few wrote a narrative of 1917. But not all focused on the terms of the question and produced the usual list of reasons for the Bolshevik victory. However, there were some sound attempts to analyse the weaknesses of the Provisional Government and the intractability of the problems they faced. There were candidates who really wanted to write about Lenin's role in the revolution, but they did largely look at alternative explanations as well. A general conclusion was that it was the Kornilov episode and the Provisional Government's failure to deal effectively with the situation which was the trigger.

Chamberlain

- 16** This question led to a large proportion of answers which neglected the Passages in order to write an essay about the rights and wrongs of appeasement. Some of these did not even discuss the alternatives and their feasibility in any detail. Better answers used some effective cross referencing, for example Churchill's proposal in Passage A was evaluated in the light of his reputation in Passage B and of the uncertain quality of the Russian forces in Passage D. Of the Passages, Passage B posed some problems for candidates. There were better, focused answers which could evaluate the views in the Passages and reach a supported conclusion, usually that the alternatives to appeasement were not all that enticing.
- 17** Candidates did not always appreciate that the terms of the Treaty of Versailles were perceived as being harsh and some lacked knowledge and described the provisions of the Treaty. Some neglected the crucial words towards Germany and assessed British foreign policy in general, writing whole pages without any mention of Germany, often outlining the economic considerations shaping policy. The Locarno Treaties continued to be misunderstood by candidates. Few good answers were seen.
- 18** This question was handled quite effectively by some candidates who were aware of the debate about the declaration of war in 1939. These candidates were able to assess the factors such as rearmament, growing understanding of the limits of appeasement and a change in public opinion and often argue that Chamberlain was not forced into war but was moving that way on his own. Others suggested strongly that he was still seeking a way out and had to be pushed by Cabinet and Commons into the declaration and that his weak performance in the Commons was a sign of his incapability. But other candidates lacked

much detailed knowledge of the events of 1939 and did not give substantial coverage to the factor in the question.

Stalin

- 19** Some candidates tended to use the Passages to construct a narrative of the period which was not well linked to the question. Knowledge was thus added to support the context but not the argument. Others wrote essays on who was to blame for the Cold War with little use of the Passages. Passage A was misinterpreted by some who failed to note that Truman's view was not altogether accurate. Those candidates who did reach a conclusion generally argued that the view in the question was justified.
- 20** This question saw few good answers as candidates were puzzled by the term selfish. Some argued that the containment of Communism by the US was selfish without explaining why and contrasted this with the altruism of Marshall Aid. The economic benefits of the Marshall Plan for Europe and the US were rarely fully analysed. Schools of History figured here with one candidate introducing Post-Modernist to include a literary/philosophical dimension. The anti-American attitudes prevalent in previous years seem to be abating.
- 21** Candidates were not often well-informed about the factor identified in this question. There was little precise knowledge about Germany and much more about the delayed Second Front and other factors. There was little attempt to discriminate between the factors, apart from a minority of answers, a few on which argued effectively that the Allies were forced together and so were bound to fall apart and the immediate cause could be any subject on which they disagreed.

2590 - 2591 Themes in History

General Comments

As one might expect, the candidature of this penultimate legacy unit had an atypical profile. 97 candidates from 74 Centres entered Unit 2590 and 289 candidates from 187 Centres entered Unit 2591. The standard of performance ranged widely from excellent to very weak although on balance more candidates scored Band III and IV marks than Band I or II. Most candidates appear to have been repeat entries and their performance was probably a reflection of their degree of preparation. At the top end, points of continuity and change were identified and assessed, thematic and comparative approaches were adopted, and arguments were supported with relevant factual knowledge. Above all, these candidates focused their answers on the question set and showed an ability to use their knowledge flexibly. The topics which produced the best answers were Tudor rebellions in Unit 2590 and Ireland in Unit 2591. In general candidates entered for 2590 performed better than those entered for 2591.

As usual, weaker essays were characterised by a number of common features. Factual knowledge was often inaccurate or very vague, and some answers stopped short of the full period range. Events were narrated or arranged chronologically such that any attempt at synthesis was at best implicit. Points were often asserted without development or explanation, key elements of a question misinterpreted, and some candidates wrote answers to a pre-determined question. The weakest responses were on Russia and American Civil Rights in Unit 2591. The quality of written English was also a marked feature of the weaker answers. Sentences without main verbs, an absence of punctuation, the misspelling of proper names, and a lack of paragraphing were all too common.

Comments on Individual Questions: 2590

There is no report on questions that were answered by fewer than two candidates.

The Government of England 1066-1216

- 1 This question produced a clear differentiation between candidates with better answers who assessed the role of the Chief Justiciar alongside other developments and those with weaker responses which either gave a chronological narrative of the development of the office or else downplayed its importance. The best responses displayed depth and breadth of knowledge as well as real insight.
- 2 A disappointing set of answers. Few candidates addressed the question meaningfully and demonstrated a firm grasp of relevant terminology. Most essays struggled to understand and illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of feudalism, and offered very bland arguments concerning mercenaries.
- 3 One candidate only.

Crown, Church and Papacy 1066-1228

- 4 There were a handful of excellent essays which placed Innocent at the heart of the answer. They explained that this was the first time that the theoretical powers of the Church had been exercised against an English king, and in their argument explained the changes before and after 1213. Weaker responses were primarily descriptive, and often lacked real understanding of the topic.
- 5 The best responses considered the key factors and the extent to which they affected changes in the relationship, rejecting the idea of a steady decline. The other essays were narrative accounts with comments attached at the end.
- 6 This was only attempted by a small number of candidates, some of whom had little idea what was required. The other responses tended to concentrate on 'reasons why' without actually discussing which developments were being studied.

Rebellion and Disorder in England 1485-1603

- 7 There were several good answers to this question. Candidates who focused on an assessment of explanations scored well. Their essays usually dwelt on 'effectively' and provided analyses of different rebellions across the period. Weaker responses generally examined either government mechanisms for dealing with disorder or the weaknesses of rebellions.
- 8 The best essays were able to differentiate between short-term and long-term causes, and to analyse the role played by economic and social factors. They understood the multi-causal nature of many rebellions and contrasted political and religious issues with more markedly social and economic causes. Less strong responses ignored the 'trigger' aspect, while the weakest produced fairly generalised answers on causation.
- 9 This was the most popular question in the set and generally well answered. Most candidates challenged the premise, some even doubted whether there could be a 'typical' rebellion, but concluded that the Pilgrimage of Grace was probably the only one to combine features found in most other rebellions. Arguments were usually well supported and the best essays covered a wide range of examples. Weaker responses looked for typicality even where it did not exist.

England's Changing Relations with Foreign Powers 1485-1603

- 10 A popular question which produced a varied response. Good answers provided an assessment of the reasons; weaker responses listed the reasons or wrote an account of events without an assessment.
- 11 A handful of candidates attempted this question but few demonstrated a real ability to meet the key requirements. Most wrote a narrative with limited coverage of period and themes.
- 12 Most candidates agreed with the premise but their arguments were often limited in factual knowledge particularly for the later Elizabethan period. Knowledge of Henry VII and Henry VIII was generally sound.

The Development of Limited Monarchy in England 1558-1689

- 13 A disappointing response with few candidates adopting a thematic approach. The remainder were narratives of relations between the crown and parliament, generally with partial coverage of the period and with little or no attempt at a focused assessment.
- 14 Most candidates produced very poor essays. Some attempted to address the question assessing the two main groups but factual knowledge was surprisingly weak and at the lower end answers were characterised by assertion. Most candidates seemed to regard the Catholics as fairly harmless throughout the period, ignoring plots and alleged plots, while seeing the puritans as a serious threat.
- 15 No candidates.

Dissent and Conformity in England 1558-1689

- 16 Only one candidate.
- 17 Only one candidate.
- 18 The main weakness was an inability to address the question. Most candidates had some knowledge of the topic but their essays were largely unfocused.

The Development of the Nation State: France 1498-1610

- 19 No candidates
- 20 Only one candidate
- 21 Only one candidate

The Catholic Reformation in the Sixteenth Century

- 22 The best answers compared the Jesuits to other religious orders and identified those features that made the Jesuits more successful. Some candidates looked at the new orders; better responses also assessed the work of the older orders. The weakest essays were unfocused descriptions.
- 23 There were few good responses to this question mainly because most candidates were unable to demonstrate what the Council of Trent owed to Protestantism. Instead several essays described the aims and achievements of the Council in very broad terms and with little analysis.
- 24 A few candidates attempted this question. Most covered the main difficulties facing the Papacy and the best essays evaluated the problems rather than just describe them. Weaker responses wrote generally about the topic and failed to answer the question set.

The Decline of Spain 1598-1700

There were no candidates.

The Ascendancy of France 1610-1715

- 28 Candidates generally attempted a thematic approach. Surprisingly Colbert was underplayed whereas Mazarin and Richelieu were fairly well assessed.
- 29 Not particularly well answered. Answers were at best generalisations, lacking in depth and detail.
- 30 Only one candidate.

From Absolutism to Enlightened Despotism 1661-1796

- 31 There were several well-focused thematic responses if lacking in factual support. Other responses tended to be very disorganised.
- 32 Some candidates gave a thoughtful comparison which recognised that Catherine's reforms could be interpreted less clearly than those of Peter. The other respondents tended to produce a mainly chronological narrative.
- 33 There were no candidates

Comments on individual questions: 2591

There is no report on questions that were answered by fewer than two candidates.

Britain and Ireland 1798-1921

- 1 Most candidates dealt well with this question. Interestingly treatment of the 1912 Bill and its aftermath were often the weakest section of the essay. Some candidates regarded it as a pale shadow of the earlier bills or dismissed it altogether as relatively insignificant. Too many essays consisted of a catalogue of main events from 1798, each of which was labelled as a 'turning point'.
- 2 The least popular Irish question and not well answered. Answers broadly fell into two categories: those that wrote solely about the Famine and those that wrote very little about the Famine or any other aspect of the Irish economy. There was a marked absence of basic factual knowledge in many essays.
- 3 This question produced some competent responses. There was a tendency among several candidates to turn away from constitutional nationalism and focus on revolutionary movements or to produce imbalanced assessments of the period. Better answers produced good appraisals of O'Connell, Parnell and Redmond, and focused on the concept of 'failure'.

War and Society in Britain 1793-1918

There was only one candidate.

Poor Law to Welfare State 1834-1948

- 7 There was only one candidate.
- 8 There were few candidates. Answers tended to list the main Education Acts with little or no evaluation of explanations for government intervention during the period.
- 9 Candidates agreed with the statement although knowledge of social investigators was often at a premium and frequently described. Indeed some even omitted Chadwick and Beveridge.

The Development of Democracy in Britain 1868-1992

- 10 Candidates saw this question as an opportunity to offload any information related to 'the development of democracy' and some failed to focus sufficiently on the key elements concerning parliamentary changes. Knowledge of the Commons was generally better than the Lords but there were some decent essays.
- 11 The 'political abilities of party leaders' presented problems for some candidates either in respect of understanding the concept or of providing appropriate supporting details. Some examples of party leaders, such as Attlee and Thatcher, fitted uncomfortably with the thesis that they were mainly responsible for their party's electoral success. Candidates often had little factual evidence of general elections to link to their nominated party leader.
- 12 This question produced a mixture of responses. Better essays were able to assess the changes to women's political role and cite several relevant examples; weaker responses suffered from a lack of illustration beyond Margaret Thatcher.

The Development of the Mass Media 1896-1996

- 13 There was only one candidate.
- 14 The concept of 'change' was poorly handled by the few who attempted this question. Frequently there was no distinction made between tabloids, broadsheets, radio and television, and assessments of national crises were muddled.
- 15 The influence of America on television programmes was quite well done but most essays had a very narrow focus, often omitting the role of the BBC altogether and saying little about developments in newspapers and the radio.

The Changing Nature of Warfare 1792-1919

- 16 This question produced some high quality answers. Knowledge was often skilfully selected to make useful comparisons that ranged across the period. The role of allies was balanced against other factors, principally the part played by generals, weaponry, organisation and the quality of armies and navies. Weaker essays neglected the mid-century wars or knew little about allies and alliances.
- 17 The key to a good answer lay in linking knowledge of weapons technology to tactics employed on the battlefield. The best responses did this with a range of examples; weaker essays were vague on specific developments or did not tie changes in technology to battlefield tactics.

- 18** This question produced few high quality answers. The stumbling block was the concept of 'military decisions in war' which left some candidates confounded. A common response was to discuss how public opinion affected the outcome of war without referring to any military decisions taken during the war.

The Challenge of German Nationalism 1815-1919

- 19** This question was quite well answered. Candidates had little difficulty assessing each of the key protagonists, generally favouring Bismarck, but knowledge of William II was often thin. Many answers believed that the 1848 revolutions proved Metternich was unsuccessful at managing nationalism, ignoring the fact that for over thirty years he had effectively suppressed it. The best answers gave sound evaluations of each individual before reaching a consistent judgement.
- 20** A popular question that was well answered. Several reasons were assessed and key developments identified. Better essays avoided descriptions and narratives of the period and instead focused on explanations such as the role of romanticism, Bismarck, imperialism, and economic factors.
- 21** How best to balance the forces of German nationalism with those of Prussian and Bismarckian self-interest was often the key to a good answer. Some candidates questioned at what stage the concept of 'unity' became a viable reality; weaker essays worked their way through the main economic, political and military events of the period. Most candidates, however, overlooked the constitutional dominance of Prussia in the Empire after 1871.

Russian Dictatorship 1855-1956

- 22** Some candidates agreed with the premise; most did not. The main weakness in many answers was a failure to focus on 'transform' and instead to write about any changes that occurred during the period. Several candidates tried to cover all rulers in the period and therefore lost focus on the need to evaluate 'transform'. Lenin was surprisingly poorly assessed and most essays gave a lot of attention to Alexander II's Edict of Emancipation and Stalin's Five Year Plans. Better candidates were able to develop answers around the long-term influence Lenin had on Russia and make comparisons with other rulers.
- 23** Candidates fell into two groups: those who tried to keep to 'the development of Russian government' and those who wrote about the development of Russia, especially economic and industrial policies. The former did well; the latter fared badly. The best candidates handled the concept of 'turning point' well and identified key moments, such as the assassination of Alexander II, the 1905 and 1917 Revolutions, and the accession of Stalin.
- 24** This was the most popular question. The vast majority of candidates avoided the mistake of writing only about the peasants but a large number over-compensated by ignoring them completely. There was general ignorance about the working class in the Tsarist period except that they were exploited. Life under the communists was better handled although the more positive aspects of Stalin's rule, such as educational, health and social improvements, were rarely mentioned.

The Struggle for the Constitution 1763-1877

There were only a few candidates whose knowledge and coverage of the topics varied considerably.

Civil Rights in the USA 1865-1980

- 28** Few candidates offered a balanced coverage of the three groups. Weaker essays wrote at length about the sufferings of the Native Americans in the 19th century. The best candidates attempted direct comparisons, although knowledge of developments in the 1950s and 1960s was a problem for many candidates.
- 29** This question produced some good responses. Candidates who understood that civil rights applied to a variety of groups and not just to African Americans fared well. The New Deal was the favoured alternative turning point and quite well handled, whereas knowledge of Kennedy's and Johnson's work in the 1960s was generally rather slight.
- 30** This was by far the most popular question and generally well answered. Knowledge of African Americans was sound although it was sometimes asserted rather than used to illustrate a point, and many ended their essay with the death of King in 1968. An assessment of the role of the Federal government was less assured; presidential contributions were competently handled but knowledge of the role of Congress and the Supreme Court was often very thin.

Grade Thresholds

Advanced GCE History (7835)
Advanced Subsidiary GCE History (3835)
January 2010 Examination Series

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
2587	Raw	90	65	59	53	47	41	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2588	Raw	90	65	59	53	47	41	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2589	Raw	90	65	59	53	47	41	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2590	Raw	120	85	76	67	58	50	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
2591	Raw	120	85	76	67	58	50	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0

Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (ie after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
3835	300	240	210	180	150	120	0
7835	600	480	420	360	300	240	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total Number of Candidates
7835	14.63	48.68	79.86	97.36	99.76	100.00	463

463 candidates aggregated this series

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see:

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/learners/ums/index.html>

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

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