May 2015 subject reports

HISTORY

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level route 2 Africa – peacemaking (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 23	24 - 31	32 - 41	42 - 52	53 - 62	63 - 100

Higher level route 2 Africa – Arab–Israeli conflict (Timezone 1)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 24	25 - 32	33 - 42	43 - 54	55 - 64	65 - 100

Higher level route 2 Africa – Arab–Israeli conflict (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 24	25 - 31	32 - 41	42 - 54	55 - 64	65 - 100

Higher level route 2 Africa – Communism in crisis (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 23	24 - 31	32 - 41	42 - 53	54 - 63	64 - 100

Higher level route 2 Americas – peacemaking (Timezone 1)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 23	24 - 33	34 - 44	45 - 55	56 - 66	67 - 100

Higher level route 2 Americas – peacemaking (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 23	24 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 54	55 - 65	66 - 100

Higher level route 2 Americas – Arab–Israeli conflict (Timezone 1)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 24	25 - 33	34 - 44	45 - 57	58 - 67	68 - 100

Higher level route 2 Americas – Arab–Israeli conflict (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 24	25 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 56	57 - 67	68 - 100

Higher level route 2 Americas – Communism in crisis (Timezone 1)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 23	24 - 33	34 - 44	45 - 56	57 - 67	68 - 100

Higher level route 2 Americas – Communism in crisis (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 23	24 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 55	56 - 66	67 - 100

Higher level route 2 Asia and Oceania – peacemaking (Timezone 1)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 22	23 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 54	55 - 65	66 - 100

Higher level route 2 Asia and Oceania – peacemaking (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 22	23 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 54	55 - 65	66 - 100

Higher level route 2 Asia and Oceania – Arab–Israeli conflict (Timezone 1)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 23	24 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 56	57 - 67	68 - 100

Higher level route 2 Asia and Oceania – Arab–Israeli conflict (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 23	24 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 55	56 - 66	67 - 100

Higher level route 2 Asia and Oceania – Communism in crisis (Timezone 1)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 22	23 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 55	56 - 66	67 - 100

Higher level route 2 Asia and Oceania – Communism in crisis (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 22	23 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 55	56 - 65	66 - 100

Higher level route 2 Europe and the Middle East - peacemaking (Timezone 1)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 9	10 - 22	23 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 54	55 - 65	66 - 100

Higher level route 2 Europe and the Middle East - peacemaking (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 9	10 - 22	23 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 54	55 - 65	66 - 100

Higher level route 2 Europe and the Middle East – Arab–Israeli conflict (Timezone 1)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 -1 0	11 - 22	23 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 56	57 - 67	68 - 100

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Higher level route 2 Europe and the Middle East – Arab–Israeli conflict (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 22	23 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 55	56 - 66	67 - 100

Higher level route 2 Europe and the Middle East – Communism in crisis (Timezone 1)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 9	10 - 22	23 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 55	56 - 66	67 - 100

Higher level route 2 Europe in the Middle East – Communism in crisis (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 9	10 - 22	23 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 55	56 - 65	66 - 100

Standard level route 2 PS 1 peacemaking (Timezone 1)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 23	24 - 33	34 - 44	45 - 55	56 - 67	68 - 100

Standard level route 2 PS 1 peacemaking (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 23	24 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 54	55 - 65	66 - 100

Standard level route 2 PS 2 Arab–Israeli conflict (Timezone 1)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 24	25 - 33	34 - 44	45 - 58	59 - 69	70 - 100

Standard level route 2 PS 2 Arab–Israeli conflict (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 24	25 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 57	58 - 68	69 - 100

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Standard level route 2 PS 3 Communism in crisis (Timezone 1)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 23	24 - 33	34 - 44	45 - 57	58 - 68	69 - 100

Standard level route 2 PS 3 Communism in crisis (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 23	24 - 32	33 - 43	44 - 55	56 - 67	68 - 100

Higher level route 1

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 12	13 - 26	27 - 35	36 - 45	46 - 54	55 - 64	65 - 100

Standard level route 1

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-11	12-26	27-37	38-47	48-55	56-65	66-100

Higher and standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-3	4-7	8-9	10-12	13-15	16-18	19-25

The range and suitability of the work submitted

At the upper end there was a wide range of suitable and interesting topics, many on aspects of regional history. However, as has been mentioned in previous years, there were many research questions that were too broad, resulting in research lacking depth in Section B and the introduction of new material in Section D. New evidence in this section cannot be credited and candidates will therefore lose marks. Although many candidates used suitable sources, there seems to be a marked tendency to use non-academic internet sources. There were some candidates who attempted to evaluate the historical accuracy of films or books. This can lead to a very successful assessment but only on rare occasions. This type of assessment does not often have analytical depth and can result in narrative or simplistic comparisons.

There were very few samples that failed to use the required format for the Internal Assessment and on the whole the work submitted showed an improvement on previous years.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Plan of the investigation

Most candidates managed to state the research question clearly in the body of the Plan of Investigation, although there is still a surprising number who do not do this and so lose marks. However not all research questions were carefully defined, meaning that some candidates struggled to fulfil the demands of an historical investigation within the 2000 word limit. In other seen work, the research questions were too open-ended, resulting in a lack of analysis in Section D.

Again, most candidates identified the method and scope of their research question but few did more than outline them and so could not score full marks here. The method should include two parts; firstly reference to the kind of sources used in the assessment and secondly brief explanation of why those sources were chosen. This has been remarked on in previous years. The scope should identify aspects and areas of the themes that will be explored. It should not include long introductions, background description or context.

Criterion B: Summary of evidence

The standard of the work in this section has improved. More of the responses showed organisation and relevance to the research topic. However there were too many candidates who used only non-academic internet sources. These do not give the depth or reliability that is necessary for work at this level and there is so much other material available on the internet and elsewhere that is more suitable. In this session, there seemed to be a greater use of bullet

points, which was disappointing. Nevertheless these can be, for some candidates, a useful way of presenting information. That said, they need to be relevant, clearly organised and not simply a series of quotations from the sources. Section B should contain all the evidence necessary for the IA, so that new evidence does not have to be introduced in Section D.

It has to be reiterated that the information in this section should be clear, relevant, well-organised and correctly referenced. Some candidates did not reference correctly, or at all, and so the amount of marks they could be awarded was capped.

Criterion C: Evaluation of sources

Overall there seemed to be some improvement here. Nevertheless, the choice of sources to be evaluated is important. They should be relevant to the research question as their significance has to be shown in Section D. It is not good practice to evaluate an extract from a book, especially expansive history books, as the passage selected may not be indicative of the themes and ideas presented in the wider text. More candidates attempted to refer to the origin, purpose, value and limitations of the sources; however, there was still a tendency to see the value and limitations in terms of usefulness and without reference to the origin and purpose of the sources. There were some instances where the sources were described or where the evaluation was more general and not related to the specific source.

Criterion D: Analysis

This is the section that often causes the most problems. In too many cases new evidence was presented. This cannot be credited and teachers should make their candidates aware of this. There was often a lack of analysis, critical or otherwise and too much description. There is a clear connection between a broad or poorly focused research question and problems in this section. This has been stated before. Some candidates demonstrated little or no awareness of the significance of the sources they had evaluated in Section C and in all of these cases the candidates lost marks.

Nevertheless, some candidates exhibited an in-depth understanding of the research they had carried out, sometimes with an analysis of differing historical interpretations and they were able to understand fully the significance of the two sources they had evaluated in Section C.

A problem that has been remarked upon previously is the lack of referencing in this section. Marks were too often lost because of poor referencing that did not sufficiently indicate the provenance of the material used to develop the analysis.

Criterion E: Conclusion

Most candidates wrote a conclusion that was consistent and relevant. However, if new information is included this cannot be regarded as consistent with the evidence presented and not all conclusions were completely focused on answering the research question.

Criterion F: Sources and word limit

There were a surprising number of candidates who could not write a bibliography following the rules of one standard method. This is a requirement at the moment. When listing internet

sources, it is important to state the date they were accessed. As mentioned above, not all internet sources were suitable and it is important to limit the number of student study guides and general histories. If the candidate has included a reference to an interview that they have conducted, a transcript of the interview, together with details of when and where it took place, should be included. All sources that are used or cited should be included in the bibliography. This was not always the case.

Most, but not all, candidates wrote their word count on the title page and very few internal assessments were over the word limit. There is no word limit for the different sections.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Candidates need detailed guidance on how to choose a research question with a precise focus and clear instruction on how to find suitable sources.

- If internet sources are to be used, candidates should be guided as to how to use them critically.

- Have the criteria available at all times and encourage the candidates to read them carefully and see how they apply to their own work.

- There is evidence that more detailed instructions on how to write the Plan of Investigation (and what exactly is required) are needed.

- Centres need to train their candidates on the difference between evidence and analysis and how they are to be applied to the Internal Assessment.

- Correct referencing and citation styles need to be developed and the importance of referencing correctly in Sections B and D should be stressed.

- Stress that only material that is relevant to the research question should be included in Section B and that the material should be well organised.

- The selection of sources for evaluation is an area that needs to be reviewed. Candidates should be reminded that these sources should be used in the analysis in Section D. Avoid the use of extracts from a larger book or other more expansive source material.

- Practise evaluating sources for origin, purpose, value and limitations; not just those that will be used in the assessment. It is important to convey to the candidates that usefulness is not a valid reason for value of a source.

- Stress that no new material should be used in Section D.

- Show that the conclusion should answer the research question and be based on the material in the assessment and not include new evidence or new ideas.

- Work on the listing of bibliographies.

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Higher and standard level route 1 and 2 paper one

General comments (all prescribed subjects)

In terms of the reactions from the schools to May 2015 there was a remarkable degree of similarity in the G2 forms for the various prescribed subjects. For Route One 98% of responses found the paper appropriate and 72% of a similar standard to last year. For Route 2 the statistics for peacemaking were 98% and 72%; for Arab-Israeli 100% and 74% and for Communism in Crisis 100% and 70%. The presentation and clarity of wording of all five prescribed subjects was generally considered to be good or satisfactory. There were similar reactions in the actual comments made on the G2s: "a fair paper"; "topics, documents and questions were clear and fair"; "a standard exam meeting expectations". One concern needs to be noted. Schools were generally content with the choice of Locarno in peacemaking although one or two schools commented that they had only focused on those areas in the history guide that had not been set in previous examinations. This seems to be a rather risky strategy as numerous exam papers have to be set on this syllabus and there might be the possibility of areas that have been set in the past being revisited at any time in the future.

In route one candidates responding to Section A (Rise of Islam) questions showed some improvement in comparison to previous sessions. Nevertheless, Section B (Kingdom of Sicily) responses reflected a much better performance than Section A and thus a superior mastery of the skills and techniques associated with the source-based paper.

For route two, examiners reported that most scripts seemed to reflect a sound understanding of the theme/topic of the paper and the majority of candidates attempted an appropriate approach to each style of question. In addition there was an improvement in the number of candidates attempting all four questions and writing a fairly developed response for the final question. More detailed analyses of how the candidates dealt with individual questions can be found below.

Route 1 - Paper 1: Islam and Sicily

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates

Despite the comment above about the difference in performance between Section A and B there are clear signs of improvement by many candidates in the application of the skills needed for a source paper.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Unfortunately some candidates failed to complete all of the questions. A general feature of the sources in Section A is that they provide a limited explanation of the reasons behind the success of the early Islamic conquests.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Question 1

a) The majority of candidates easily identified at least two ways in which Islam helped in the early Arab conquests. However, many of them incorrectly referred to "comforts and luxuries" as "ways", which is obviously irrelevant to the question.

b) Most candidates were able to point out that the early Islamic conquests were extensive covering a wide territory. Straightforward responses suggested that Arab Muslims were able to advance into the Byzantine and Sassanian Empires. Based on the dates of the battles identified on the map there were some sophisticated answers suggesting that the speed of the advance was rapid, thus reflecting military strength. Some good responses also suggested that military operations started in Medina, which indirectly reflected sound organization and preparations.

Question 2

Most candidates were able to identify the necessary similarities and differences regardless of the fact that the sources allowed for more contrasts than comparisons. However, most of the answers failed to establish excellent linkages and a running comparison or contrast. This could be due to the candidates' inability to understand the nature of the sources.

Question 3

When referring to the purpose of the source (especially when it is a book) most candidates pointed out the purpose of the extract rather than the book itself; for example, its title, being general, academic, specialized or non-specialized.

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The examination paper did not mention that Philip Hitti (Source C) is of Lebanese Christian background, identifying him merely as a Professor of Semitic Literature. Many candidates incorrectly read "Semitic" as "Jewish" rather than encompassing all Semitic languages, including Hebrew and Arabic and this led them to erroneously claim that Hitti could be biased and/or anti-Muslim, which was a generalization in itself. Many candidates also incorrectly assumed that he is from the West.

Question 4

Although most candidates utilized source content to answer Question 4 the majority of them failed to incorporate their own knowledge as well. This prevented candidates from achieving the higher mark levels allocated for this question.

Question 5

a) The majority of candidates easily identified the qualities of William I as suggested by Source A thus achieving the maximum 3 marks.
b) Most candidates were able to point out that the Palace of Zisa reflected William's power and dominance as a ruler. In addition, many candidates suggested that the palace reflected wealth and/or stability. Some candidates were able to point out that, given the architectural features of the palace, William was either tolerant of Islam or that there was Muslim influence in Sicily. Some general responses suggested that the palace mirrored William's support for architectural and cultural activities.

Question 6

Many responses established excellent linkages and included detailed running comparison/contrasts.

Question 7

Responses generally reflected an excellent understanding of the essence of source evaluation reflecting the importance of the origin and purpose of a source in determining its value and limitations. However, some candidates incorrectly assumed that hindsight was a limitation. In addition, some candidates incorrectly stated that the author of Source D is a modern historian and not an eyewitness of the event claiming this to be a limitation of the source.

Question 8

There were several good responses that utilized the content of the sources in addition to the candidates' own knowledge. This produced structured and focused answers directed at the question. As a result, some candidates were able to achieve the maximum mark for this question.

Route 2 prescribed subject 1: peacemaking, peacekeeping — international relations 1918–1936

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-2	3-5	6-9	10-12	13-14	15-17	18-25

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates

The two areas that posed some difficulties for the candidates were the compare and contrast question and, as usual, Question 4. In Question 2 too many candidates attempted to use the nationalities of the authors or the dates of publication as comparisons or contrasts despite the question specifically asking for the "views expressed" in the sources. For Question 4 there was too much focus on the content of the sources and not enough on the actual wording of the question that asked for an analysis of the countries' "desire for peace" in signing the Locarno Treaty.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Candidates scored well on the first questions and there was a pleasing increase in the understanding of the message in the cartoon. Question 3 on the origin, purpose, value and limitations was well-handled this year compared to previous years although Source B was, in general, better analysed than Source A.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Question 1

a) Most candidates correctly identified three points from the Source and obtained the maximum three marks.
b) Here again many candidates received two marks by identifying two messages. In some cases the analysis of the cartoon was extremely perceptive. The greatest weakness was probably in not identifying that European peace was yet to be achieved as there were other obstacles to overcome.

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Question 2

Many candidates struggled to find more than three or four comparisons/contrasts here. Candidates also did not actually read the sources carefully enough causing them to make erroneous claims about the nature of British or German guarantees over the eastern or western borders.

Question 3

Candidates found Source B easier to analyse than Source A as it was a book written in 1936 and a more familiar type of source seen in many examinations. Source A, being the terms of a treaty, was rather less well-handled particularly in the identification of its value and limitations. Using the 4/2 split in the markband however did enable candidates to score well on this question.

Question 4

The focus of the response on the reasons why nations signed the Locarno Treaty rather than its better known consequences caused the candidates some difficulty and many of them struggled to include meaningful commentary from their own knowledge. This meant that they often included some irrelevant material, such as post-1925 events/actions by the League of Nations or they focused too heavily on the Treaty of Versailles, almost ignoring Locarno.

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Route 2 prescribed subject 2: the Arab-Israeli conflict 1945–1979

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-16	17-19	20-25

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates

There were two main areas with which candidates struggled. Firstly, dealing with the comparative analysis of the prescribed sources (please see below for comments on Question 2). Secondly, evaluating sources in terms of their origin and purpose (please see below for comments on Question 3).

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Many candidates showed a reasonable degree of proficiency in the interpretation of evidence in a visual form. Many candidates were well-versed in the application of the sources provided and were able to develop plausible and, sometimes, well-supported historical arguments.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

As far as the candidates' general preparedness was concerned, the evidence is patchy, not only in terms of overall attainment but also with regard to relative performance in the different questions. Thus there were many instances where the candidates attained a higher proportion of the available marks in Question 4 than their weaker answers to the preceding questions would have suggested. One gained the impression that many candidates had been well taught in how to approach this type of question.

Question 1

a) Many answers included three valid points. However in some cases the responses were unnecessarily lengthy, and this often had an adverse effect when the candidates came to Question 4. A small number of scripts lacked sufficient precision, particularly when all the details were clearly identified in the source (for example the Syrian/Israeli border clashes and the Egyptian blockade of Eilat).

b) Most answers successfully identified US/USSR rivalry, but fewer candidates reached an accurate conclusion from the cartoon's depiction of U Thant as smaller in stature than the superpowers - and therefore the ineffective nature of the role of the United Nations.

Question 2

Many candidates put forward only one comparison (usually Syrian/Israeli hostility) and only one contrast (usually whether or not the superpowers, specifically the USSR, played a major role in increasing tension in the Middle East). There were also some instances where the answers were simple description of the sources' content, without any comparative analysis and linkage.

Question 3

The responses of many of the candidates gave the impression that they had little or no experience of source evaluation. This meant that, although some answers successfully identified the sources' origin and purpose, the actual evaluation of the sources was weak. On the whole, candidates were stronger in their discussion of Source B than Source E. Source E presented a number of difficulties, with many candidates assuming that Rostow was a member of the UN. There were also many statements identifying "bias" in a source with no attempt to explain why this was the case. Answers were too often based partly, or completely, upon an evaluation of the sources' content, rather than their origin and purpose. In a few cases the candidates misread the question and sought to evaluate Source D.

Question 4

It was encouraging to encounter many answers that applied some, or all, of the sources so as to generate an interpretation of the evidence that was closely and clearly related to the question (rather than merely summarizing the sources). In some cases the answers displayed a good understanding of different strands of the argument. However, the candidates' own knowledge was rarely included and some of them clearly ran out of time.

Route 2 prescribed subject 3: Communism in crisis 1976–1989

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-2	3-5	6-9	10-12	13-15	16-18	19-25

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates

Overall, candidates demonstrated an understanding of the topic of the paper, but some responses lacked appropriate and/or relevant development. Candidates sometimes offered only one or two points for questions where several marks could be awarded. Although there was a better understanding of what is required for Question 4 (regarding the need to explicitly refer to the sources), many responses lacked detailed own knowledge. It should also be noted that the requirement for the top marks for Question 4 is a comprehensive evaluative response and not simply a list of the content of each source in a mechanical fashion.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

There continues to be some improvement in the structure and focus of responses for Questions 2 and 3. Most candidates also attempted to use or refer to the sources in their responses to Question 4, addressing the question explicitly and synthesizing source material with detailed own knowledge. Overall, most candidates seemed to have an understanding of what was required for each question.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Question 1

a) This question was generally answered well with candidates clearly stating three clear points. However, sometimes the question was addressed with only one or two key points. Some candidates included extensive background detail or other own knowledge that could not be rewarded. This also meant they had less time for the other questions.

b) Many candidates interpreted two valid points regarding the message of the poster. However, some responses were limited and it appears that some of these candidates were unaware of the need to find two points. Some responses did not address the question and discussed generally the nature of Deng's reforms without direct or relevant comment on the message of the source.

Question 2

The 'compare and contrast' question was often approached appropriately with most candidates identifying clear comparisons. However, some responses identified only one or two points of linkage and many candidates established incomplete links particularly for contrasts. There were a few that offered descriptive accounts with very limited linkage and a bolt-on conclusion. Candidates should be reminded that there are 6 marks on offer and they should attempt to analyse the sources in depth before finding a number of comparisons and contrasts (this could mean 3 comparisons and 3 contrasts, or a split of 4+2 or 2+4). This session saw some improvement in responses as better linkage was attempted between the sources. However, there were a number of 'note form' or 'table form' responses to this question. This style should be discouraged in favour of continuous prose; table form responses are unlikely to achieve the maximum marks as it is difficult to develop clear linkage and/or a running commentary when using table or note form.

Question 3

There was an increase in the number of responses that set down the origin and purpose of each source; however not all candidates went on to assess the value and limitations of each source thoroughly. Some candidates continue to attempt to find value and limitations from only the content of a source rather than the provenance and purpose. Candidates should be reminded that responses should be specific to the given sources and be developed fully, for example, the comment "this poster was from China at the time of Deng's reforms" would need further development to establish its value and/or limitations. In addition, there were a number of scripts that suggested that some candidates were unaware of how to approach this question and offered descriptive, poorly-structured and vague responses. There was also a slight increase in the number of candidates who evaluated the wrong source for this question. Candidates usually managed the less familiar poster/non-textual source quite well. Candidates should also be reminded to develop their explanations with reference to the specific provenance of the sources. Identifying only the origin of a source does not automatically achieve 1 mark.

Question 4

The focus of the question, (Deng's economic policies and the extent to which his policies were 'successful, but progress was not always smooth') was generally understood and addressed by most candidates. The majority of responses had attempted to explicitly use the sources, and there was some good use of source material and some excellent evaluations that included detailed own knowledge. Responses often attempted to refer to all the sources, although some used only the content of two sources to develop a number of points.

However there were also some poorly executed essays, sometimes due to time-management issues. In general, timing remains a problem for many candidates on this paper. There tended to be a lack of detailed own knowledge in responses and although some candidates included details of the events of the Tiananmen Square demonstrations in 1989 as an example of how progress was not 'smooth', overall the synthesis of relevant own knowledge was very limited. There were several examples of responses that merely listed the content of each source, and candidates should be aware that this type of response is unlikely to attain high marks as the question is not fully addressed.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates (all prescribed subjects)

- As can be seen from the comments above, timing is still an issue on this Paper. Source-based practices should be timed to allow candidates to adapt to the one hour exam. The mark allocation given for each question can be used to get candidates to estimate how long they should take to write an answer to a question. Question 4 is worth 8 marks, approximately 1/3 of the total marks available so candidates should be writing for at least 15 minutes on this question alone. It is important that candidates do not spend too much time on the earlier questions to allow sufficient time for dealing with this final, and numerically more valuable, question. It is not advisable to start with Question 4 and work backwards as the questions are designed in a hierarchy of skills ranging from knowledge to synthesis. Teachers are required to teach and review all themes in the bullet point list for the chosen Prescribed Subject. Trying to "second guess" the theme could prove fatal for the candidates.

- **Question 1 (a)** is worth three marks so candidates should be taught to ensure that three points are made – the best way is to write three sentences that clearly signpost the answer to the examiner.

- For **Question 1 (b)** candidates should be dissuaded from starting their answer with an explanation of the symbols/content of the source: that is not the message. Candidates should be taught to start their answer with a variant of "The message in the source is … and this can be seen by …" Remember that there is a variety of possible non-textual sources; cartoons, photographs, statistics, paintings, posters and speeches to name but a few.

- With regards to **Question 2** (compare and contrast), there should be an emphasis in class on the development of the skill of writing responses with linkage between the sources and integration of this in a coherent evaluation of comparisons and contrasts. Responses should not address and describing the sources separately nor should the answer be set out in a bullet point format. The importance of identifying several points of comparison and contrast is fundamental to succeeding with this type of question and should be taught. Although examiners are not looking for an exact balance between comparisons and contrasts (the markscheme allows for a 3+3, 4+2 or 2+4 split for the two sources), candidates need to identify more than one comparison and one contrast. It is a question worth six marks and candidates should be discouraged from over-elaborating or repeating the same point.

- While the level of analysis for **Question 3** has improved over the years candidates should be exposed to the essence of source evaluation and learn that, for the current history guide, the origin and purpose of a source (rather than its content) are instrumental in determining a source's value and limitations (**please note that this <u>will not</u> be the case in exams from May 2017 onwards, when content will also be an integral part of this question**). Too many candidates are focusing on the content of the sources when they should be, after stating the origin (including the date) and interpreting the purpose of a source, providing an evaluation of these that establishes their values and limitations.

- In addressing **Question 4**, candidates should be trained to provide (in continuous prose) an evaluation that draws together the sources and their own knowledge. Responses should be clearly structured and they must focus on the set question. As such, only relevant source material should be included. Candidates must not paraphrase each

source separately in a mechanical list on the lines of: "Source A says…; Source B says…" In essence, an excellent response incorporates a candidate's relevant own knowledge segued with detail from the sources and synthesized to fit the demands of the question.

Higher and standard level routes 1 and 2 paper two

General comments (all routes and timezones)

The overall impression this session was that candidates were able to use their knowledge to answer unfamiliar questions; however, many of them struggled to do this effectively. Candidates wrote as much as they could on their chosen questions and very few were unable to attempt an answer. For the most part, difficulties lay with an inability or reluctance, perhaps, to focus on what the question was asking with candidates, for example, discussing economic conditions when the question had specifically mentioned political conditions; ideology rather than the impact of opposition; the causes of the First World War rather than how far it can be considered a total war. There was also a tendency to describe rather than to analyse. Having said that, given that the examination is meant to test their understanding of the history curriculum, many performed quite well and demonstrated an ability to think laterally and to apply their knowledge thoughtfully. This was heartening and should reassure teachers that candidates are not always best-off when drilled in how to answer specific questions. Instead they should be encouraged to think more broadly about either medieval Islamic and European history or 20th century world events and to reflect on the themes outlined in the history guide. Fewer candidates than usual were drawn into recounting historiography as an end in itself with no accompanying commentary and, in some instances, it was indeed used sparingly and to good effect. Similarly, although some candidates continue to quote historians in a way that assumed their authority cannot be questioned, this was done less frequently. It is important that candidates are aware of different interpretations of historical events but the questioning and evaluation of such interpretations should also be encouraged. Just because AJP Taylor offered a certain view of appeasement does not make it a truth to be reverently quoted. It is hoped that both theory of knowledge and history encourage critical thinking that can be applied to even the most august of historians. However, above and beyond all else, the overriding aim of the candidate must be to answer the set question: to do so, they must be sure that they understand all of its demands and pay heed to the command term.

For route 2 timezone 1, 222 respondents submitted G2 forms. Of these, 184 (82.88%) thought the paper was appropriate and 38 (17.12%) perceived the paper to be too difficult. When compared the May 2014 paper, 115 (51.8%) thought that is was of a similar standard; 14 (6.31%) that is was a little easier, 50 (22.52%) that it was a little more difficult and 22 (9.91%) that it was much more difficult (a further 8.56% of respondents did not elect to respond to this section). This is slight increase in the numbers who considered the paper more difficult and there were lengthy comments, many of which were quite critical of certain questions. There was criticism, for example, of the specificity of some questions that were deemed to require focus on topics, such as the Marshall Plan, that were generally taught within a wider context. Conversely some questions, such as Question 1 on total war, were considered to offer insufficient focus and it was feared that candidates would be uncertain as to how best to approach them. As is often the case, candidates do need more detailed knowledge and to have a solid grasp of historical context. In order to construct good, well-supported responses they need to know when events happened in order to demonstrate causation and consequence. Accurate detailed knowledge is also a requirement for a good answer.

Higher and standard level route 1 paper 2

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-17	18-20	21-23	24-40

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates

There continues to be a considerable difference in the level of historical knowledge possessed by candidates. Some have excellent, detailed knowledge of the topics they have studied but others show a lack of both breadth and depth in historical knowledge.

Too frequently it was clear that candidates had not read the questions carefully. This meant that they did not identify the command terms and the key words that specified the focus and nature of the response required. This failure leads to irrelevant and unfocused responses that result in poor outcomes. Some candidates displayed a weak grasp of historical terms and vocabulary relevant to the topics. This led to responses that did not always address the question or show understanding of the content required for the question.

Some candidates try to fit prepared responses to the questions. This comes from memorization of certain material or responses that are then reproduced without reference to the specific demands of the question. This will not yield good results.

A significant number of candidates continue to produce narrative accounts that do not display the necessary analytical skills required for an effective response. This is a major obstacle to the achievement of better results.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Where candidates engaged with the requirements of the command terms there were some excellent responses. In terms of knowledge, there was obvious evidence of research and understanding of some complex material from some of the candidates and it is clear that their efforts paid dividends. Many of the candidates demonstrated great aptitude for coherently structuring their responses and it is hoped that this ability becomes more widespread.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Only the most popular questions will be commented upon here, please refer to the mark scheme for commentary on questions that were less frequently answered.

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Topic 1: Dynasties and rulers

Question 4

This was a very popular question and virtually all candidates selected Henry II as the ruler to discuss. Many candidates produced good responses which showed a strong knowledge of Henry's legal and administrative actions. What quite a number did not do well was to discuss the importance of these actions in comparison to other factors that might have expanded his authority. Candidates tended to describe more than discuss in many cases, which meant that their results could not reach the top level.

Question 5

This was another very popular question. There were some very strong answers and nearly all candidates attempted to develop a focused comparison between the Louis VI and William I. The best answers were distinguished by their clear understanding of the points by which the rulers could be most usefully compared and contrasted.

Question 6

The vast majority of candidates chose to analyse the extent to which Mu'awiya could be considered a successful ruler. Whilst there were some good answers, many responses suffered from a highly narrative, descriptive format as opposed to a more analytical presentation. Many responses spent much time discussing his rise to power rather than attempting to deal with an assessment of his work as a ruler.

Topic 2: Society and economy

Question 10

There were some insightful and well-organized responses to this question on trade in the Islamic world, which showed mastery of a range of reasons and supplied relevant examples. Weaker responses tended to have a narrow focus and described one or two reasons with minimal supporting detail.

Topic 3: Wars and warfare

Question 13

Although this was a popular question, it proved to be a significant problem for many candidates as they did not address its specific demands. The question asks for an examination of the results and effects of one war; however, many candidates chose to discuss a single battle and this meant that many responses could not reach the higher bands of the markscheme. Additionally, many candidates chose to discuss causes and events of the war (battle) and did not focus – as the question required - on its results. This is a clear case of needing to read questions carefully and understand terminology.

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Question 15

Another popular question, this required that candidates determine the extent to which the success of the First Crusade was the result of Muslim weakness. There were some excellent responses and in almost all cases candidates attempted to reach a judgment about the question. The best responses were those that assessed a range of reasons and showed a depth of understanding of the topics that they discussed. In all cases well-structured essays with relevant content were the key to success.

Topic 4: Intellectual, artistic and cultural developments

There were very few responses in this section.

Topic 5: Religion and the state.

Question 26

There were a number of responses to this question. The question required a judgment on the extent to which Gregory VII was successful in expanding papal power. The best responses recognized that an analytical structure, which produced a judgment about the question, was the proper format to employ. A number of candidates described Gregory VII's career but did not address the *to what extent* aspect very effectively.

Question 28

This question dealt with the rise and fall of a religious opposition movement. There were some excellent and detailed responses - usually about the Cathars - that showed good essay structure and a very detailed knowledge of the movement.

Higher and standard level route 2 paper 2 (timezone 1)

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-4	5-9	10-12	13-16	17-21	22-25	26-40

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates

The examination was a challenging paper and with many candidates appeared to have some difficulty in finding questions for which they felt well prepared. As a result, many responses were just satisfactory with candidates struggling, at times, to use their knowledge effectively. As usual, the most popular topics were 1, 3 and 5 with (apart from Q7 on Weimar) very few responses seen to questions from Topics 2 and 4. For the most part, candidates favoured questions from Topic 3, and responses to questions from Topics 1 and 5 were less focused and there appeared to be a greater difficulty for candidates to support their arguments with relevant, accurate knowledge. General questions that offered candidates the opportunity to select their own examples proved particularly troublesome as the candidates demonstrated a tendency to fall back on the few wars/single-party leaders or events from the Cold War that had been revised. Often, it seemed that regardless of the demands of the question, candidates resorted to using a relatively small amount of knowledge, hoping it would be relevant. This also comes back to the importance of candidates choosing questions that allow them to use their knowledge most effectively. Too many incorrectly used Stalin in Q14 as an example of a leader who established a single-party state while the same material could have been used quite appropriately for Q13.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

The majority of candidates wrote reasonably well-structured responses and had clearly been taught to refer to the question in their introductions and to attempt to stay focused. There were very few rubric offences with only a small minority answering more or fewer questions than was required. Better answers reflected not only good knowledge and understanding of certain topics but a high level of thoughtful and, often, very interesting, analysis that was well supported by relevant detail. These made for most enjoyable reading and the candidates are to be commended for "thinking on their feet" in exam conditions and using their knowledge so effectively.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Only the most popular questions will be commented upon here, please refer to the mark scheme for commentary on questions that were less frequently answered.

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Topic 1: Causes, practices and effects of wars

Question 1

This was a very popular question with most candidates being able to define "total war" to good effect and referring to, for example, the role of civilians, the establishment of wartime economies and the curtailment of individual freedoms. Better answers focused on examples such as the First World War or the Second World War to illustrate the way "total war" dominated the first half of the century and then proceeded to discuss the post-1945 era. Some candidates argued that conflicts such as Korea and Vietnam were "limited" wars for the superpowers but total wars for the countries in which the wars were fought. Others argued that these remained "limited wars" as nuclear weaponry made the "total war" unthinkable. Both arguments were acceptable as long as they were well supported. Unfortunately, rather too many candidates neglected to go beyond 1945. Similarly, it seemed that this question was the refuge of those who had anticipated and prepared for a question on the causes of the First World War and were determined, relevant or not, to begin with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and to proceed through the events of 1914 to 1918. For the most part, these did not score so well.

Question 2

Another popular question with most candidates demonstrating fair knowledge of technology and an ability to link this to the length of the war. Most answers included references to machine guns and barbed wire that led to trench warfare and a stalemate. More developed responses discussed the entry of the US into the war (although a dismaying number of candidates attributed this solely to the sinking of the Lusitania) and the way in which advances in technology were often matched by defensive measures that neutralized any hope of a rapid victory. A few also referred to the industrialization of warfare with seemingly endless quantities of arms being produced on, indeed, an industrial scale, and how this made it possible for countries to stay in the war for a prolonged period.

Question 3

A few answers seen that, for the most part, attempted to link wars such as the Spanish Civil War and the Chinese Civil War to revolutionary movements. Both were possible examples if handled cautiously. Less easily made relevant were the Nazis as a revolutionary movement invading Poland in 1939. Although Gavrilo Princip and the Black Hand (whether or not he was a member or simply assisted…) was often used more effectively.

Question 6

This was very popular with candidates tending to discuss the impact of the First World War on the German economy and, all too often, turning this into a "rise of Hitler" response that proceeded to outline events that led to the outbreak of the Second World War. Rather too few of the many answers to this question considered whether or not economic problems were, indeed, "the longest lasting results" but the ones that did included some thoughtful analysis of social or political problems. Indeed, it was unfortunate that candidates who focused so intently on the rise of Hitler did not think of structuring this to support an argument that political ideologies can arise out of economic problems and are longer lasting. It is worth highlighting

that candidates continue to mention "hyperinflation" as a by-product of the Great Depression in Germany and to blame the continued payment of reparations as exacerbating the economic problems facing Weimar and Hitler.

Topic 2: Democratic states — challenges and responses

Question 7

This was quite popular with most candidates attempting to address both economic factors and political parties although knowledge was quite definitely stronger on the former rather than the latter. Most responses were able to make some mention of the Ruhr Crisis, hyperinflation and many pointed out that the Weimar Republic was able to rather deftly weather these storms. Furthermore, most responses were able to link the increased popularity of the NSDAP to worsening economic conditions after 1929. However, few candidates were able to make meaningful links or to mention by name, any political parties other than the NSDAP and, in some cases, the KPD. There was much that could have been said about the different coalitions (certainly, more than there were lots of them) and of the difficulty the Grand Coalition had in addressing the problems of unemployment and maintaining state benefits in the wake of the Wall Street Crash and the calling-in of American loans. A few did, however, and were able to structure some very effective answers.

Topic 3: Origins and development of authoritarian and single-party states

Question 13

This was extremely popular and most candidates who attempted it used Mao and Hitler as examples of single-party leaders. However, detailed knowledge was often quite limited and too many responses strayed into the rule of the chosen leaders with candidates often writing quite a lot about the rulers' economic policies. Candidates who chose Mao or Castro for this question could, perhaps, have been able to use their knowledge of "rule" more effectively for Q16. To give some idea of the depth of knowledge required, where Hitler was used, more was needed than a vague recollection of Hitler having been appointed Chancellor in 1933. Candidates needed to demonstrate an understanding of how this was managed by von Papen and the influence he wielded over President Hindenburg. Additionally, a detailed knowledge of how the NSDAP evolved into a popular political party would have been useful as well as sufficient detailed knowledge of election statistics.

Question 14

Another very popular question with Castro, Hitler, Mao and, unfortunately, Stalin as the most popular examples. Stalin did not establish the single-party state in the Soviet Union and so he was not an appropriate example, underlining how important it is that candidates read questions carefully during that initial five minutes of reading time. There was some confusion over "establishment" with some candidates assuming this meant "rule" whereas it means up to setting up of a single-party state so, for example, for Hitler, the relevant content could go up to 1934 but, more appropriately, could end in July 1933 with the ban on all other political parties.

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Question 15

Better answers to this question were thoughtful, focused well on the question and used knowledge effectively. These not only gave reasons why opposition was limited in nature and impact but also why different opponents of Hitler were unable to gather support. Several pointed out how opposition became a little more strident as the war started to go badly but that, for the most part, in Nazi Germany, opportunities to protest were minimal and to do was highly dangerous.

Question 16

This was quite popular with responses being evenly divided between Mao and Castro. For the most part, responses on Mao were rather better supported with candidates referring to such policies as the Agrarian Land Reform, the Five Year Plan and the Great Leap Forward and commenting on how the failure of the latter threatened Mao's authority as the ruler of China. Responses on Castro were, as usual, rather less well informed with candidates rarely able to discuss more than land reform and the US embargo.

Question 17

There were a few responses seen to this question but few were able to introduce detailed, relevant knowledge and were reduced to making rather general comments that rarely addressed the command term, "to what extent". Most agreed that single-party rulers did have a negative impact on the arts and used literature, art and music for propaganda purposes. Few candidates made an attempt to consider whether or not, even in a repressive state, art could flourish.

Question 18

There were a few answers seen but the economic policies of both Nasser and Peron were not particularly well known. By and large, answers contained rather vague generalisations.

Topic 4: Nationalist and independence movements in Africa and Asia and post-1945 Central and Eastern European states

Question 21

This was the only question that proved to be popular in Topic 4. Several answers were seen that discussed Gandhi's importance in the struggle for Indian independence. Some responses were very good with sound knowledge of Gandhi's campaigns and his role as a popular leader. Furthermore, these responses considered "the importance" of Gandhi and compared his contributions to those of Jinnah. Nehru and, indeed, the British government as it moved, inevitably, towards relinquishing its control over India. Weaker responses gave rather narrative responses that outlined, often in the vaguest terms, some of Gandhi's better known campaigns.

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Topic 5: The Cold War

Question 25

This question was attempted by a few candidates, most of whom did not have a clear idea of the Marshall Plan and found it difficult to come up with successes and failures. Some better answers did place it correctly in the context of the early period of the Cold War and were able to describe how it helped the recovery of some of the Western European countries, leading even to the establishment of NATO and laying the foundations for the EU. Failures were considered to be the way it aroused the ire of the Soviet Union and prompted the establishment of Cominform and Comecon. Not many candidates were able to link the Marshall Plan effectively to the Berlin Blockade and the deepening division of Germany and Europe but the few who did so demonstrated sound knowledge and a good understanding of the impact of this application of the policy of containment.

Question 26

This was a very popular question with many candidates giving some attention to the influence of Cold War tension although quite a few had some difficulty selecting two examples from different regions. Some tried to use the Arab-Israeli conflicts although too many seemed to think that these were Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. Those who did focus on the Middle East, used some very limited knowledge of the Six Day War as the basis for a discussion but arguments were poorly supported. There were some reasonable discussions of the Korean War and the Vietnam War. Unfortunately, rather too many candidates chose the Cuban Missile Crisis as the other example of a "military conflict" when, of course, it was not. Indeed, if they take anything away from studying this event, it should be that the superpowers edged towards the brink of conflict but shied away from it. A rather surprising number of candidates did mention this but still went ahead with discussing it as a military conflict. Admittedly, one U2 was shot down but, still, conflict was avoided.

Question 27

This was very popular and, perhaps, one of the most successfully answered questions in Topic 5. Most candidates were able to discuss Truman's contribution to the origins of the Cold War although some were unable to resist recounting Cold War historiography and, in the process, lost sight of the question. It is not very effective to lay out the interpretations of, for example, the orthodox, and/or revisionist historians and then leave it up to the examiner to decide how this links to the question. Some candidates went on to apply the same historiography to Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis, to little effect. Better answers focused on Truman and then discussed Kennedy's role in solving the Cuban Missile Crisis but also noting the contributions of Khrushchev and, in some cases, the role of Robert Kennedy in his negotiations with Dobrynin.

Question 29

Very few responses were seen and most of these demonstrated an uncertainty over when the Warsaw Pact had been established and why. Rather weak responses, for the most part.

Higher and standard level route 2 paper 2 (timezone 2)

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-4	5-9	10-11	12-15	16-20	21-24	25-40

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates

The vast majority of candidates demonstrated understanding of the requirements of Paper 2. They were able to identify two suitable questions on two different topics and then write an essay response.

Candidates appeared better prepared for Topics 1, 3 and 5 with a large majority showing interest in Topics 1 and 5. Some responses were seen for Topic 2 on the Weimar Republic and very few for Topic 4.

There were very few rubric offences but, when they did occur, it was candidates writing an answer to only one question. Candidates were able to stay focused and with the exception of question 26 where candidates did not seem to be prepared to focus on military conflicts and instead on conflict in general.

As in previous sessions, the most common difficulty was to choose a question they understood as the answer tended to drift away from its focus. The approach had a tendency to be "write everything that has been learnt in class despite the question not asking for this". There were generalizations and lack of development of an argument as well as an attempt to include historiography that ended up in "recipe essays" that do not always fit the demands of the question.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

There were a number of strong responses that included well-structured essays, which consistently and explicitly deconstructed and addressed the demands of the question with a balanced and well-supported discussion that ended with a coherent conclusion.

Candidates were well prepared to answer questions about war. They were well prepared in terms of terminology and demonstrated an adequate understanding of the aspects of war that the question required.

It was also evident that candidates are organizing their essays in a more structured manner, which helps them stay focused on the question. Having their plans in the answer booklet also helped candidates stay on task, although the majority did not use this opportunity effectively.

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The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Only the most popular questions will be commented upon here, please refer to the mark scheme for commentary on questions that were less frequently answered.

Topic 1: Causes, practices and effects of wars

Question 1

Very few candidates went beyond the description of limited or total wars. The main focus was on a narrative of the reasons why the First World War and the Second World War were total wars. A few candidates considered Cold War conflicts as limited wars.

Question 2

This was a very popular question for which a number of good essays was seen. Candidates were able to identify reasons why technology prolonged war beyond simple facts or descriptions of technological advances. A few candidates were able to challenge the question by stating that it had actually shortened the war rather than prolonged it.

Question 3

Difficulties defining resistance movements. A few candidates focused on resistance to Germany during the Second World War.

Question 5

Another popular question; however candidates had difficulties in focusing on ideology. Many candidates wrote a general narrative on the origins of the war with few attempts to develop ideology. Both wars were equally popular yet ideology presented difficulties.

Question 6

There was a tendency to generalize, as vague and unsupported answers emerged for this question. The vast majority of the answers dealt either with Germany or the US.

Topic 2: Democratic states — challenges and responses

Question 7

By far the greatest number of responses to this question evaluated the Weimar Republic rather than the constitution. In spite of this, a few answers demonstrated detailed knowledge on the specific articles of the constitution that highlighted weaknesses as well as strengths.

Question 12

There was very little understanding of what a pressure group was and many candidates chose examples of non-democratic states!

Topic 3: Origins and development of authoritarian and single-party states

Question 13

A very popular question for which candidates were able to successfully identify the political conditions that led to the rise to power of two leaders. A few answers focused on the rise to power more than the political conditions, especially those that utilised Stalin as an example.

Question 14

There were a few rubric offences for this question (two leaders drawn from the same region). Other than that, there was a tendency to describe the *rise* rather than the *rule* of the leaders.

Question 18

A very popular question that was, generally, well answered and included relevant and accurate detail. Those candidates who demonstrated difficulties tended to experience these because they focused on social policy rather than economic policy.

Topic 4: Nationalist and independence movements in Africa and Asia and post-1945 Central and Eastern European states

Question 23

Very few responses but those who attempted it had difficulties beyond general details.

Topic 5: The Cold War

Question 25

Many responses for this question lacked historical detail. Not many candidates successfully examined the impact of NATO on Europe. Despite the popularity of the question, candidates rarely went beyond general narration.

Question 26

A popular question, but many candidates fumbled the term 'military conflict'. Many candidates chose the Cuban Missile Crisis and a few more chose Berlin (either the wall or airlift).

Question 27

An extremely popular question. Some candidates treated this as the origins of the Cold War while others used it as an opportunity to list historiography. Only a few answered the question effectively.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates (all routes and timezones)

- It is recommended that candidates be thoroughly acquainted with command terms so that they are aware of what is meant, for instance, by "Examine", "Evaluate" or "To what extent". These terms are listed on the last page of the history guide along with explanations of how responses to each command term should be formulated. Familiarity with these terms should give confidence to candidates and provide them with the requisite skills to deconstruct exam questions and determine what is required. This approach may also benefit candidates by encouraging them to take a little more time to read questions carefully and thereby resisting the temptation to rush into a response, based only upon the recognition of some of the key terms. As always, familiarity with past exam papers is always helpful, especially if candidates are given practice at answering slightly different questions on the same topic; for example, a question on the origins of the Cold War that asks about the importance of ideology alongside a question that asks about the importance of fear and mistrust. Another way to encourage candidates to reflect on the requirements of particular questions would be to substitute different command terms in order to see how this would require a different response.

- While accurate, detailed knowledge is vital for a well-supported answer, candidates need also to be aware of its relevance. Again, practice with past papers is the best way to point out to candidates that writing everything they have been taught about the Crusades may not be the most effective way to answer a question about the factors that determined the outcome of the First Crusade, just as an account of Mao's Long March is not relevant to how he maintained power as a single-party leader.

- Although it may seem rather outdated to say so in the internet age, reading history books is strongly encouraged in order for candidates to have the breadth of knowledge and confidence to tackle questions. Historians are often mentioned but, all too often, the impression given is that of quotes having been memorized, rather than different interpretations having been fully understood. Wide reading also has the advantage of encouraging a more academic, and less colloquial, style of writing.

- Once again (and in spite of the fact that – in class - it is advice that goes unheeded by so many candidates) effective planning of essay responses is most strongly advised.

- Having said all this, the level of detailed knowledge demonstrated by many candidates was quite impressive and many scripts were a pleasure to read with responses that addressed (and challenged) the questions with élan.

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Higher and standard level route 1 and 2 paper three

General comments (for all routes and regions)

In all regional options the G2 forms indicated that teachers perceived the examination questions to be both accessible and at an appropriate level (although this can only be gleaned from the relatively limited number of responses that were received). Overall candidates had little difficulty in finding three questions to answer and the quality of the third answer was, on the whole, consistent with previous answers.

In many cases there was evidence of careful planning and well-developed and structured essays emerged. At the higher levels some very sophisticated analysis was supported by in-depth, detailed knowledge. At the other extreme there were fewer extremely weak answers. However there are still significant numbers of responses that lack specific, accurate and detailed knowledge to support the analysis being made, too many responses indicate understanding and focus on the question but take a very broad thematic approach. In order for candidates to achieve the higher markbands in-depth knowledge must be applied as evidence

Some candidates are attempting to consider the issue of historiography but too often this amounts to naming historians or the authors of textbooks, which is not appropriate and demonstrates little understanding of the perspective of these historians. This approach adds little to the analytical content of an essay and will rarely move answers to higher mark bands.

There is an increasing tendency from some candidates to "challenge the question", which is very much part of the historical process but not if it is merely a formulaic strategy and unsupported by a logical argument.

There were fewer answers that appeared to be responding to a question the candidates would like to have seen on the papers. Candidates are identifying the focus of the questions more effectively but not always responding to the command terms, for example; in a question on the causes of the First World War candidates demonstrated that they knew the causes but often struggled to express an evaluation as to which was the most significant.

In higher-level answers it is expected that there will be a synthesis of knowledge and analysis in response to the questions set – both in terms of the period/issue in the question and in relation to the command term used.

Higher level route 1 paper 3

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-8	9-16	17-19	20-24	25-30	31-35	36-60

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates

It is clear that some candidates, although not all of them, continue to struggle with command terms and the focus of individual questions, instead tending to drift into narrative passages that do little to advance their responses. On too many occasions it is evident that a number of candidates are rote-learning responses and attempting to re-engineer them to fit questions for which they were not created. In order to counter this, for these candidates there needs to be greater focus on understanding historical material so that it can be more appropriately deployed. Further, it is evident that a number of candidates need to have a more specific understanding of historical detail; too many rely on generalizations and, on some occasions, half-truths in order to scaffold the ideas they are trying to put forward.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Some candidates handled some complex material well and were able to draw on relevant historical detail from both the medieval European and Islamic worlds. In terms of the overall sweep of the periods under discussion candidates appear to have a competent understanding.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Only the most popular questions will be commented upon here, please refer to the mark scheme for commentary on questions that were less frequently answered.

Question 1

A fairly popular question for which candidates were able to put forward some explanations of the causes of the monastic reform movement after 900 CE, but were less capable on the results. A number of candidates confused the dates and were not able to include accurate and relevant content.

Question 3

This was a very popular question and a number of very well organized and supported responses were produced; however a (significant) number of candidates reverted to using simple narratives of the rise and fall of the Fatimids or restricted themselves to addressing the reasons

for the fall of the dynasty and not addressing the specific demands of the question. This may be a case of trying to fit prepared responses to the question.

Question 4.

This question proved difficult for many candidates as they did not address the issue of the degree to which the Fatimids had progressive religious, political and economic policies. Many candidates merely described the Fatimid religious policies with limited analysis of the degree to which they would be considered progressive, and the political and economic sections of the question received limited attention.

Question 5

Another very popular question for which there were many excellent responses. The question required a knowledge of the actions of two to three rulers and an ability to demonstrate the importance of a range of reasons: economic, political, military, religious that expanded those rulers' authority. In all cases in-depth, accurate content was required for the best answers.

Question 6

In their responses to this question, which required a focus on both "reasons for" and "results of" in the campaigns by Henry I and William I to reduce the power of the nobility, candidates merely described the rulers' careers and the methods by which they expanded their authority. The question asked for a clear focus on the issue of the nobility and responses that showed that focus and gave strong supporting content did very well.

Question 7

There were some excellent responses with strong essay structure and detailed content showing a sound ability to assess the importance of different factors. The largest areas of weakness in the question were in confusing the personal motives of the crusaders with those of the papacy and, in some cases, a tendency to narrate the events of the First Crusade.

Question 8

There were some good responses, but a number of candidates were hindered by a lack of knowledge or a failure to assess effectively the relative importance of the Crusader states as opposed to other results.

Question 10

There were a number of responses that provided detailed descriptions of Mongol military tactics but did not evaluate their importance relative to other factors in explaining Mongol success. This showed a lack of knowledge of other factors or, perhaps, a failure to understand the demands of the question.

Question 17

Whilst this was a popular question it was, by and large, poorly done by many candidates who engaged in descriptions of the causes and events of the Black Death. They did not develop an analytical structure that sought to examine the reasons for the Peasants' Revolt and the role of the Black Death in it. This was another case of prepared answers being made to fit a question with little success.

Question 23

This was not answered by a great number of candidates; however there were many fine responses submitted by those who attempted it. Responses had a clear focus, a range of reasons and good supporting detail

Question 24

This question was done by a significant number of candidates. There were quite a number of excellent responses, which showed an understanding of the demands of the question and the ability to reach a judgment on the importance of dynastic rivalry as a motive for exploration and conquest. A knowledge of the principal dynastic rivals and their motives was crucial as was an understanding of the other factors such as religion and personal ambitions that contributed to the movement. Excellent evidence was presented by many candidates to support their arguments.

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Higher level paper three – Africa

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-6	7-13	14-17	18-22	23-28	29-33	34-60

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates

Whilst no specific topics were done poorly overall, there is an ongoing concern regarding the low level of detail some candidates use to support their responses. Candidates must be sure to have read as widely as they can in order to give themselves the factual armoury that is required in order for them to combat the question effectively. Similarly, there needs to be greater emphasis on understanding the command terms and working out exactly what the question requires them to do.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

There were some excellent responses to a range of topics, including European imperialism and responses to it, as well as post-independence politics and Africa and the international community. Candidates were able to draw on some varied material to support their answers and it was evident that many of them were clearly engaged with their chosen topics.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Only the most popular questions will be commented upon here, please refer to the mark scheme for commentary on questions that were less frequently answered.

Question 1

This question expected candidates to have in depth knowledge of the response of Lewanika of the Lozi and Mkwawa of the Hehe to the difficulties of state-building; however, a significant number of candidates failed to adequately identify the difficulties that were faced and thus were unable to fully evaluate the leaders' responses.

Question 2

Few candidates focused in any great depth on the changes in the social and economic organization of Sudan and fewer still fully examined the range of factors that led to the emergence of the Mahdist state. This meant that the answers were very one-sided and lacked the necessary analysis.

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Question 3

A popular question, for which candidates were expected to discuss the factors that led to the Mfecane. Overall candidates seemed quite well prepared in this topic, although some of them did not score as highly as they might, due to their failure to address some of the key implications.

Question 5

Whilst this was another popular question, and many candidates responded well to it. However, others did not and these relied on a narrative account of European colonial expansion without first discussing the role played by the political factors that led to this. Good answers were more effectively structured and addressed these political motivations and contextualized them against other relevant factors before reaching a substantiated judgment.

Question 6

Again, a popular question that offered some mixed results. Good answers first examined the role played by German annexation in escalating the Scramble before looking at other factors whilst weaker ones indicated a limited knowledge of the role of Germany in the first place and this led to rather wobbly analyses from these candidates.

Question 7

This was another popular question and it was one for which candidates seemed well prepared. Candidates drew some interesting comparisons and contrasts between Menelik and the Nandi and this helped them to carry out an effective analysis.

Question 10

The best answers looked at the strength of the French military and other strengths of the French, but also considered the weaknesses of the Mandinka Empire; including the lack of support from her neighbours. It was important that any factor highlighted was linked to the question; unfortunately too many used these factors as part of an overall narrative response.

Question 11

This was another very popular question with the candidates who were expected to have good knowledge of the factors (primarily economic ones) that contributed to the South African War between 1899 and 1902. Alas, some of the candidates only focused on the discovery of gold and diamonds and failed to look at other economic factors and wider factors overall, which would have provided a far richer and more evaluative response.

Question 12

For this question candidates were expected to have an in-depth knowledge of the apartheid policies of Malan and Verwoerd up to 1966, with a focus on the impact that the policies had on South Africa. Candidates scored poorly here because they failed to identify actual policies and therefore the essays tended to be too general. Some of the candidates talked of policies without

clearly identifying whether the policy was Malan's or Verwoerd's and this therefore compromised the quality of their answers.

Question 13

This question expected candidates to have clear knowledge of the factors that led to Ghana attaining independence in 1957 with particular focus on the role played by its advanced economic, social and political development. Many candidates also – usefully – addressed what was happening in the British Empire and how this contributed to the granting of Ghanaian independence.

Question 15

Candidates were required to select one of the regions of Africa as outlined in the history guide: Eastern and Central Africa; South(ern) Africa; West Africa; North Africa, and evaluate the factors that contributed to the decline of the slave trade and its replacement with legitimate trade in some areas. A link between the two issues was desirable; however this was not always seen and many responses strayed into narrative accounts.

Question 16

Candidates were required to select one of the regions of Africa as outlined in the history guide: Eastern and Central Africa; South(ern) Africa; West Africa; North Africa, and critically examine the factors that helped and hindered the spread of Christianity in colonial Africa. Both aspects of the question were expected, although there did not need to be equal treatment of them; however too many responses once again veered into narrative accounts of the spread of Christianity in colonial Africa.

Question 22

A clear understanding of the impact of civil wars in two African countries up to the year 2000 was expected and often, this emerged. However, a number of candidates elected to use fairly unsuitable examples and this had a detrimental effect on the calibre of their responses.

Question 23

Good responses identified the main objectives of both the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the African Union (AU) and these candidates were thus able to provide a critical analysis of the objectives of these bodies. It was important that candidates drew a conclusion as to what was the major factor that led to the prevented the achievement of these aims – be that the lack of a common vision or purpose or another factor.

Question 24

Although popular with candidates the calibre of responses to this question was fairly varied. Most candidates had a generally coherent understanding of the issues relating to Somalia and Rwanda; however not quite as many of them were able to draw the appropriate links that the question required.

Higher level paper three – Americas

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-6	7-13	14-19	20-25	26-32	33-38	39-60

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates

Candidates appeared to exhibit somewhat greater knowledge in respect to 19th century topics than topics of the 18th century or earlier and this was reflected in the choice of questions as well. As is so often the case, social history questions often led to descriptive and generalized accounts that produced weaker evaluations. Comparison and contrast questions were seldom answered in a structure that provided a running comparison or that clearly arranged similarities and differences; therefore, comparison and contrast was often more implied than overt.

As with previous sessions, some candidates provided responses to an anticipated question, rather than to a set question. Candidates continued to have some difficulty in distinguishing between political, economic and social aspects of history as well as accurately defining and applying terms such as 'radical' and 'conservative' (although instances of candidates not understanding the demands of a question appear to have declined).

A narrative approach is still too often the fall-back approach of candidates, even when it lacks direct relevance to the question. Critical commentary, supported by evidence, is found only in the stronger responses. In response to thesis-based questions, there is a tendency of weaker candidates to take extreme positions and an unwillingness to either challenge the statement or to present a balanced interpretation. Identification of historians by name, rather than application of the historiography they represent, is still common.

For questions with the command phase, "To what extent…", too many candidates make brief reference to the stated thesis, (in their introduction or conclusion), and then dismiss out of hand that the thesis position has any merit. Candidates then build a case for their preferred stance on the question, which has little chance of success since the quoted thesis will not have been addressed. Candidates are entitled – and welcome – to disagree with a thesis; however they cannot simply ignore it.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

There were few cases of candidates answering only one or two questions and very few instances of a response that was on a topic not in the region of the Americas. The trend toward candidates providing an introduction that directly addresses the question and elucidates a thesis seems to have continued its growth and this is most welcome development. This is also

true for providing clearly structured and topical paragraphs that lead to the reiteration of the opening statement in a concise and reasoned summative paragraph.

Candidates generally demonstrated good levels of knowledge in respect to 20th century domestic political history and foreign policy. The latter was particularly true in respect to the Cold War.

While historiography was not extensive (nor does it need to be), quite a few candidates properly cited comparisons of orthodox versus revisionist historians' interpretations for a variety of questions.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Only the most popular questions will be commented upon here, please refer to the mark scheme for commentary on questions that were less frequently answered.

Question 1

Most candidates supported the thesis that Latin American wars of independence were encouraged by growing resentment between the Creoles and peninsular Spaniards but usually cited additional factors such as the complaints of the lower classes as well as factors within European historical events impacting the colonies. While not a popular question, treatment was generally competent and often impressive.

Question 2

The influence of political ideas on the nature of the US Declaration of Independence was infrequently addressed and quite often answered at a level of marginal quality. Candidates had a tendency to discuss the causes of the American Revolution on the basis of events, rather than analyse the political ideas represented in the document. There was some confusion between the content of the Declaration and the US Constitution.

Question 4

The idea that the constitution of 1787 produced radical change In the US political system was a fairly popular choice and produced a wide range of responses in terms of quality. The treatment was often in the form of comparison and contrast with good levels of knowledge. There were sound arguments presented as to both the radical nature of the new constitution as well as support for both constitutions having some common elements in response to the experiences of the Revolutionary War.

Question 5

The theory that problems associated with westward expansion were the most significant cause of the US Civil War was a very popular question and produced responses with a wide range of quality. The majority of candidates took the position that westward expansion was a major, though not the dominant, cause of the war. Slavery, states' rights, as well as social, economic

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and cultural differences were often part of the 'blend' of causes that were cited. Levels of knowledge were generally quite high and there were instances of exceptional knowledge and analysis. Some candidates ignored the prompt and wrote on the causes of the war without demonstrating knowledge of the westward expansion issues.

Question 6

Comparison and contrast of the effectiveness of one Union and one Confederate military leader was chosen with some frequency and usually cantered around General Grant and General Lee, though other comparisons were also offered. Too often, the essays focused more on the strengths and weaknesses of the North and South rather than the effectiveness of the military leaders, limiting the relevance of the content. Too often, description of the military leader took precedence over comparison and/or contrast.

Question 9

The idea that the US fought the Spanish-American War to obtain Cuba's freedom from Spain was fairly popular and usually challenged as either wholly or partially inaccurate. More analytical responses that were able to apply the multitude of causes for entry and also evaluate the insights revealed by post-war actions produced the strongest results.

Question 10

The idea that the impact of the First World War was generally positive was not frequently answered but the responses were nearly all in reference to the experience of Canada and lingered on the pride of Canada's wartime contributions and movement toward independence. Stronger responses moderated this view with content on the internal divisions caused by the war.

Question 11

Comparison of the aims and methods of Villa and Zapata was a fairly popular question and generally produced adequate to excellent responses. However, the structure of the responses was often of a poor standard.

Question 13

The extent to which either Vargas or the Concordancia successfully resolved the problems associated with the Great Depression was rather a popular question. Responses were more often focused on Brazil than Argentina and were generally quite strong in terms of both knowledge of events and analysis as to effectiveness.

Question 14

The extent to which Franklin Roosevelt's response to the Great Depression was either radical or conservative was a very popular choice and produced a full range of responses in terms of quality. The slight majority supported the idea that the policies were more conservative than radical, although analysis was not always consistent or clear. Perhaps surprisingly, most

candidates attempted to analyse the programs in respect to their conservative or radical nature, rather than just present a narrative of events.

Question 15

Examination of the diplomatic or military role of two countries during the Second World War was most often centred on the US and Canada, though the role of Mexico and Brazil was also addressed. The question was not a very popular choice and there was generally an imbalance of knowledge with Canada's role receiving limited attention. There were a few essays that sought to utilise countries not within the Americas.

Question 16

The extent to which the use of the atomic bomb in the Second World War was a military versus a political decision was a very popular choice, and exhibited a wide range of quality in terms of answers. Most candidates interpreted the decision as predominantly a political decision, though acknowledging that military considerations also played some role. The ability to apply evidence in supporting a mostly political decision ranged from a thorough discussion of the geopolitical conditions as the war neared its end to those that provided only vague generalizations. There was a conspicuous absence of knowledge as to the military issues that affected the decision to use the atomic bomb. Weaker responses generally took an extreme position in advocacy of either military or political factors as the dominant or only motive.

Question 17

The extent to which political factors were the main cause of the Cuban Revolution was a fairly popular choice. The majority of candidates interpreted the revolution as caused more by internal social and economic factors than by political factors. They also tended to emphasize the role of Cuba's foreign relations with the US as a main contributor. There was a tendency to give too much attention to a narrative of Castro's leadership, appeals and actions, rather than to centre on the question posed.

Question 20

Factors that influenced US intervention in Korea was fairly popular and generally produced sound responses. The essays often provided strong background knowledge as to the impact of Cold War conditions or issues and avoided purely narrative accounts. There was some confusion as to the chronology of events with candidates applying theories that were post-Korean War. Interestingly, only a minority of candidates mentioned that the US response was within their role as a member of the United Nations.

Question 21

Evaluation of the contribution of either Dr Martin Luther King or Malcolm X within the Civil Rights Movement was perhaps the most popular choice of the session. As might be expected for such a choice, the range of quality was extreme. Perhaps 95 per cent of the responses addressed the role of Dr King and there were some essays that struck a balance between his many contributions and the limitations experienced in the later stages of his efforts. There were also

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many weak narratives that demonstrated only some contextual understanding of Dr King's role in the movement. Malcolm X was infrequently selected and, while there were a few strong essays, the general standard was weak as to his contributions.

Question 22

The extent to which native peoples advanced their civil rights after 1945 was seldom chosen. Unfortunately, the question led to some confusion as to what constitutes 'native people' in spite of the reference to 'Native Americans and civil rights' in the history guide. While there were a few responses of good quality, there were also a few candidates who wrote about African-American civil rights issues or the role of women in the civil rights movement.

Question 23

The successes and failures of Reagan's foreign policy in the Americas was not a popular choice but nonetheless, when answered, led to generally strong responses. Most centred on Reagan's policies toward Grenada, El Salvador and Nicaragua and evaluated the policies as having little success but consistent with Reagan's general foreign policy approach. There were a few essays that did not confine the content to foreign policy in Latin America but spilled over into relationships with the USSR.

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Higher level paper three – Asia and Oceania

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-6	7-12	13-18	19-24	25-31	32-37	38-60

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates

Consistency in the spelling of the Chinese words is needed. Some candidates used a mixture of Pinyin and Wade-Giles. A candidate should only use one system. Given that the IB uses Pinyin with Wade-Giles in parentheses (and will move to using Pinyin only from May 2017) teachers are encouraged to switch to Pinyin.

Several of the G2 comments indicated that the respondents felt question 11 was too narrow in naming the Northern Expedition and the Jiangxi (Kiangsi) Soviet as factors to be explored in Mao's rise to power. These two events are named in a bullet point in section 6, *The Republic of China 1912-49 and the rise of Communism*; therefore teachers should have covered them. Also the timeframe of the question was until 1935 so discussion of the Long March was not excluded from the question as implied by some G2 comments.

Others thought that the coverage of the syllabus was narrow because there were not questions on Meiji Japan or Sun Yatsen (Sun Yixian) and the 1911 Revolution in section 4, *early modernization and imperial decline in East Asia-mid19th to early 20th century,* or Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) in section 6, *The Republic of China 1912-49 and the rise of Communism*. These topics have been covered in some previous examination papers, but will not necessarily be in every examination.

As for paper two and the other regional options in paper three, there was evidence of rote-learning in hope of a generic question. Many candidates had learned a prepared response and they found it difficult to adapt their material to cater to the demands of a specific question. This was particularly evident for questions 2, 3, 7, 11, 12, 13, 19 and 20. Often candidates tried to impose a rigid political, economic and social analysis when the question did not ask for this. This was particularly evident for questions 12 and 21. On the other hand, where candidates did attempt to respond to the actual question many of them did not include enough specific detailed factual information to illustrate and support their comments. Candidates who did not clearly define in the introduction what was meant by the terms: 'tribute system' and 'clash of cultures' (3); 'Muslim separatism' (9); 'Second United Front' (12); 'turning point' (13); 'early successes' (14); 'victory for Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung)' and 'disaster for the Chinese people' (19); 'economic developments' (21) and 'technological advances' struggled to come to grips with those questions.

Questions 3, 7, 8, 13, 18 and 19 required candidates to cover a great deal of material in order to answer both parts of the question. Many candidates did not deal effectively with both parts of these questions. More widely, many candidates did not have a strong sense of chronology

and context and some of them ignored the timeframe given in the question and consequently did not score highly. This particularly applied to questions 3, 7, 11, 12, 14 and 19. Another area of concern was the (excessive) amount of time that some candidates spent on background information in their responses particularly in questions 3, 4, 7, 11, 12, 19, and 20.

Many candidates referred to historians by name but in a forced and unnatural manner whilst some just referred to school textbook authors. Most of the time historians' opinions were not integrated within a flowing argument or in a discussion of the historiography relating to the topic. Once again, it must be stressed that historiography is not the be-all-and-end-all, and candidates should only seek to deploy it when they are confident that they are able to do so effectively. Of much more use is a critical analysis of various interpretations that does not become entangled in a web of (invariably misunderstood) metanarratives. Jung Chang was used frequently, but her controversial views were not counterbalanced by references to other historians' views.

In terms of specification coverage, questions 21 to 24 are not general or generic questions and candidates should avoid them unless they have studied sections 11 and 12 or developed a particular case study with reference to these sections. Quite often the candidates who answered them did not really address the question and just presented rote-learned pieces about Japan under the US Occupation for question 22 and about economic changes in Deng's China for question 24.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

This session there were fewer candidates who made the costly mistake of writing about the wrong time period, geographic area or person. It was also pleasing to note that there was much less use of idiosyncratic abbreviations. Hopefully, the comments in previous examiners' reports have alerted teachers to this issue. Only commonly used standard abbreviations such as CCP and GMD (KMT) should be permitted.

Most centres still seemed to concentrate on China and Japan or China and India. The quality of the responses was equally balanced across the countries. Furthermore it was noted that this session there were more responses to the 20th century questions than previously.

Many candidates were able to structure thematic responses, many of them displayed a comprehensive knowledge of a range of topics and many more wrote detailed, relevant and well-constructed essays. They were a pleasure to mark.

The responses that tended to fall into the highest bands were on the crisis of the Bakumatsu period (4); whether the invasion of Manchuria was a turning point for Japan in domestic and foreign affairs (13); the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (19); and the economic developments in Singapore (21). They displayed a mastery of historical knowledge, considerable analytical skills and the ability to structure thematic responses.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Only the most popular questions will be commented upon here, please refer to the mark scheme for commentary on questions that were less frequently answered.

Question 2

There were a small number of responses to this question and overall they were mixed in quality. Some covered a range of events and policies about India prior to 1857, whilst others contained sweeping generalisations. A few challenged the assumption in the question and discussed the Orientalist approach of some administrators. Less developed responses did not really come to grips with the question and wrote a rote-learned response about the causes of the Great Revolt (Indian Mutiny).

Question 3

This was a popular question. Most candidates tended to be rather descriptive and/or narrative about the trade missions, the kow-tow and the Chinese tribute system. They concentrated on these aspects of the 'clash of cultures' and very few examined other factors such as extraterritoriality and the strength of the British desire to balance the trade. Too many responses were quite Eurocentric in their analyses and dismissive of Chinese culture. The majority of candidates attempted both parts of the question and mentioned the unequal treaties, but only the more developed responses really analysed their significance for the Chinese. Many candidates said that Lin Zexu (Lin Tse-hsu) burned the opium, but this is inaccurate and teachers should endeavour to impart the correct version of how Lin Zexu destroyed the opium.

Question 4

This was a popular question and overall candidates addressed it with balance and insight. They understood this question clearly and discussed both the period before Perry's arrival and after in order to analyse the reasons for the crisis of the Bakumatsu period. The more developed responses displayed detailed knowledge of the tensions between the Shogun and the *tozama* clans.

Question 5

This question was chosen by a small number of candidates. Responses ranged from being focussed on the question and detailed to containing sweeping generalisations. Less developed responses concentrated on the British policies of 'divide and rule' whereas the more advanced ones discussed the impact of these two events on political organizations, such as the Indian National Congress, the All India Muslim League and other groups that promoted home rule and independence.

Question 7

This was a popular question, but generally it was done very poorly. Most candidates did not come to grips with what the question was asking, which was to evaluate the successes and

failures of the Self-Strengthening Movement. Candidates just discussed the failures in general terms or why the movement failed. Most responses lacked specific information that identified what was successful and what failed. Many tried to adapt a rote-learned piece that compared China and Japan and thus they included much irrelevant material. Other candidates wrestled with the timeframe of the question: There were many responses that discussed later reform movements as well as the fall of the Qing.

Question 8

Very few candidates chose this question. Many candidates confused the annexation of Korea in 1910 with results of the Sino-Japanese War, the Russo-Japanese War or the invasion of Manchuria and did not have a strong sense of chronology. The knowledge of Korean history was limited and many responses focused solely on Japan. Most did not address the results in any depth.

Question 9

There were only a few responses to this question and overall it was not done well. Most candidates did not really know much about Jinnah's role over the whole timeframe and many were inaccurate about when he took over leadership of the League. Many responses were merely descriptive about the nationalist movement in general. Too many responses did not address the question because they dismissed Jinnah very quickly and then discussed Gandhi's role!

Question 10

There a limited number of responses to this question. Malaya, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines were the most popular choices. Some candidates erroneously chose China and Korea. Less developed responses were mainly descriptive with few comparisons or contrasts.

Question 11

This was a very popular question. Some candidates wrote comprehensive and well-argued responses, but the majority were very general and did not really know much about Mao during the Northern Expedition or his role in the Jiangxi (Kiangsi) Soviet. Many candidates inaccurately stated that Mao was already the leader of the Chinese Communist Party during the Northern Expedition. Other candidates mistakenly confused the Northern Expedition with the Long March and the Jiangxi Soviet with Yan'an (Yenan). Many responses successfully challenged the assumption in the question and argued that the Long March was more significant. Other responses discussed in detail the emergence of Mao's ideas on the role of the peasants in revolution, land reform, the status of women, the rules for the Red Army and guerrilla warfare during the Northern Expedition and the Jiangxi Soviet.

Question 12

This was also a very popular question. Again, there was a range of responses from poorly developed to quite sophisticated. Many candidates did not really address the question and discuss the Second United Front, because they concentrated on the events leading up to it in

detail. Too many candidates seemed to think that the Guomindang, GMD (Kuomintang, KMT) did little fighting against the Japanese and that it was mainly down to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to deal with the invasion. Candidates seemed more confident in explaining GMD weaknesses than CCP strengths and survival. Most candidates had no specific knowledge of the Sino-Japanese War in terms of the Second United Front, tactics, strategies or battles. Some candidates tried to adapt a rote-learned piece about why the GMD lost and CCP won the Civil War in 1949.

Question 13

A significant number of candidates chose this question and many did it quite well. Candidates were fairly evenly split about whether it was a turning point or not. Most candidates attempted to discuss both parts of the question. Overall, most knew more about Japanese foreign affairs rather than domestic affairs. Some candidates had the tendency to write a rote-learned piece on the rise of militarism. Others challenged the question and identified other 'turning points', which is a valid approach within the timeframe, but unless the impact of the invasion of Manchuria was analysed in depth and in context the discussion of other events only partially addressed the question.

Question 14

Overall, this question was done poorly. Very few candidates identified why Japan was initially successful or discuss what Japan did or did not do that led to failure. Too many candidates focused primarily upon the actions of the US and just discussed the US tactics of island hopping and the atomic bombs.

Question 18

There were a few responses to this question: the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia were the popular choices. Most responses tended to be narrative and/or descriptive and concentrated on the reasons for political conflict rather address both the reasons and the results.

Question 19

This was the most popular question on the paper. There was a range of responses from less developed to quite sophisticated, but most candidates clearly understood the question and attempted both parts. The first part on 'a victory for Mao' was less effectively handled than 'a disaster for the Chinese people'. Some candidates spent too long explaining the background to the Cultural Revolution and discussing Mao's position within the CCP at the start of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution rather analysing its impact and the subsequent changes.

Question 20

This question was quite a popular question, but overall it was done very poorly. Too many candidates just did not have much knowledge about Sino-American relations. Many discussed Sino-Soviet relations and then inferred the changes in Sino-American relations.

Question 21

A small number of candidates chose this question and most discussed Singapore. There were quite a few detailed and well-developed responses; others were narrative and/or descriptive rather than analytical.

Question 22

Most of the small number of candidates who chose this question used it to do a set piece on the US Occupation of Japan. Only a few attempted to go beyond the 1950s, but even then they did not cover the whole timeframe of the second half of the 20th century.

Question 24

This question was chosen by a small number of candidates. The main problem was that candidates did not define the term 'technological advances' and they just discussed economic changes. Some did Japan, which was a good example, but the responses lacked specific knowledge of technological advances and tended to write about economic developments. There were some rote-learned pieces on the economic and agricultural changes in Deng's China. Other responses were about South Korea, and Malaysia.

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Higher level paper three – Europe and the Middle East

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-5	6-11	12-18	19-24	25-31	32-37	38-60

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates

In many responses candidates failed to respond effectively to the command terms in the questions, they had knowledge but often failed to make judgments in relation to the premise in the question. This was particularly the case with questions where the command term was "evaluate".

In some instances candidates lacked knowledge of a whole period. This was particularly the case with questions 3 and 15.

For some of the social and economic questions candidates often had only generalized knowledge and not over a 50 year period.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Most candidates were well prepared for some of the mainstream areas of the curriculum, such as Russian and German history.

More candidates were able to write structured essays and to make an attempt at synthesis of knowledge and analysis

There was better focus on the questions set and candidates were on the whole able to answer three questions

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Only the most popular questions will be commented upon here, please refer to the mark scheme for commentary on questions that were less frequently answered.

Question 1

Better answers examined a range of causes and were able to support their answers with reference to specific problems such as Louis XVI's failure to support able Ministers such as Necker and the impact of the Enlightenment. However many answers consisted of basic narrative and references to the extravagance of the royal family

Question 2

There was a limited number of responses; some candidates wrote about Napoleon and very few had knowledge of the reasons for the Bourbon restoration or indeed the sequence of events in 1814/1815.

Question 3

There were some good answers; however too many candidates had very limited knowledge of the revolutions in Italy in 1848 and made some rather general statements about the impact of Mazzini and Italian nationalism. The impression gleaned was that many candidates were keen to move onto Cavour.

Question 4

A popular question for which candidates were generally well informed. A pleasing number of them were able to consider underlying factors as well as the wars and avoided a narrative of events.

Question 9

Whilst this was a popular question, in too many cases candidates expended excessive energy on Alexander II because this is what they knew about. Knowledge of the reign of Alexander III was at times sketchy with a better knowledge of Nicholas II. There was limited knowledge of specific opposition movements with some candidates assuming that only the Socialist/Marxists opposed the Tsars and little evidence of knowledge regarding moderate opposition; Kadets, Octobrists and Liberals. Nevertheless, there were some very good answers with full knowledge of Tsarist policies and how they led to the growth of a range of opposition groups.

Question 10

There were some very good answers focused on military and political leadership as well as some that argued it was the inherent weakness of the Whites that led to victory. In the middle range there was less knowledge of Lenin's role in ensuring that the Bolshevik state supported the Red Army. A significant number were unable to separate the 1917 Revolution from the civil war.

Question 11

Answers ranged from being very knowledgeable about Europe with cogent references to all of the Great Powers to answers that allowed the emergence of Germany to dominate. From this latter type it was discerned that many candidates were unable to differentiate between Bismarck's actions in Europe and those of Wilhelm II. Nevertheless - and pleasingly - most did responses did not stray into the first decade of the 20th century.

Question 12

This was the most popular question on the paper with a huge range of answers, most of which demonstrated a sufficient range of knowledge of the key factors: militarism, alliances,

imperialism and nationalism. However there was limited evaluation of their contribution to the outbreak of war. Analysis was often limited, undeveloped and, in some cases, based on inaccurate material; it was **not** Bismarck's web of alliances that contributed to tensions but the alliances formed after 1890 – post-Bismarck. There were some errors that were repeated in many responses, for example candidates argued that Serbia wanted independence from Austria–Hungary, clearly unaware that Serbia was an independent – and expansionist – state. Many candidates referred to different historical perspectives including Taylor and Fischer but (disappointingly) very few seem aware of the latest writings on the issue, such as Clark. It is not appropriate for candidates to cite authors of more general texts such as Lee and Lynch.

Question 13

A reasonable number of responses emerged with most being able to identify the main areas of diplomatic activity. Both reasons for such activity and consequences of that activity were identified. However the focus tended to be on Palestine in the longer term. A few better-prepared answers were able to identify the consequences on the war itself and also the longer-term consequences across the region in areas such as Iraq and Syria.

Question 14

Most responses were well informed as to the events and demonstrated links to British withdrawal in the timeframe; only a few narrated the events of the 1920s and 1930s. Some candidates were, however, unable to comment on Britain's weakness following the Second World War. Furthermore, some weaker candidates focused on the 1948/49 conflicts rather than British withdrawal.

Question 15

A relatively popular question with some very good answers that identified the various crises, both political and economic, and also focused on the "survival" dimension of the question. A significant number of candidates knew little about the political instability and believed that Germany was forced by Versailles to become a republic. There was limited understanding of the importance of Ebert as president in ensuring survival, although most knew of Stresemann. The bullet point in the guide is Germany 1919-1933 and teachers are strongly encouraged to cover the whole period and not just 1929 to 1933 and the rise of Hitler.

Question 16

This was a reasonably popular question especially with some very good answers that were able to consider a range of factors for Republican defeat not just foreign aid to Franco. Some indicated an in-depth knowledge of the complexities of politics on both sides and made analytical links to the question on this issue. Many responses demonstrated much more in-depth knowledge on this topic than in previous examination sessions. Weaker answers accepted - without question - that it was German and Italian aid that led to Nationalist victory.

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Question 17

A popular question which was often answered well, with most candidates ably identifying the main personalities involved and some weaknesses, such as Trotsky failing to attend Lenin's Funeral. A significant number lacked real detail on the nature of the power struggle that took the form of debates on economic policy within the party. There were frequent errors with reference to Stalin hiding Lenin's Testament, or Stalin relying on popular support outside the party to gain power. Answers were often unbalanced with limited attention paid to the weakness of opponents.

Question 18

There were some very good answers particularly those that relied on knowledge of their own national history to respond – especially in relation to Poland and Czechoslovakia. Some candidates however interpreted opposition to mean the US opposing Soviet dominance.

Question 19

Again some very good answers that examined a range of factors that led to the establishment of West Germany, from Cold War tensions to economic factors. Weaker answers only focused on the Cold War context.

Question 20

A range of responses was seen, with some candidates focusing on dissent, such as Free France, and others focusing on opposition to economic policies, for example the miners' strike in the United Kingdom. Most were, however, weak and generalized or dealt with the wrong timeframe.

Question 22

Many answers focused on Iran and some were very knowledgeable, being able to consider the impact of changing policies over the timeframe. Weaker answers tended to focus only on the policies such as the White Revolution prior to the Iranian revolution.

Question 23

Answers tended to be rather general, with some candidates writing about Nazi education policies. However there were a few impressive responses on the expansion of education in the United Kingdom.

Question 24

There was confusion over immigration and emigration in some responses. Many candidates focused on Arab Emigration from Palestine but failed to cover a 50-year period. Nevertheless a handful of candidates wrote detailed answers that clearly identified and assessed reasons.

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Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates (all routes and regions)

- Ensure that candidates know the sections of the paper they are prepared for.
- Teach all the bullet points in a section and, where dates are specified, events for the whole period, for example Germany 1919-1933 should be taught in detail.
- Make candidates aware of the command terms and how to respond to them. Evaluation of a range of factors is a very important skill and whilst candidates may have knowledge, they often fail to make a judgment on the importance of various factors.
- Give plenty of practice in *unpicking questions*; that is, identifying the focus of a question. Too many candidates provide answers to questions they would like to see and don't really engage with the questions that are set. This *unpicking* would also help prevent long, often irrelevant, narrative answers.
- More essay practice is – as always – encouraged in order to school candidates in attaining the requisite balance between knowledge and analysis.
- At the higher levels there is an expectation of in-depth knowledge and candidates should be helped to develop strategies to help them gain and retain knowledge.