

May 2016 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 - 9	10 - 20	21 - 30	31 - 42	43 - 51	52 - 63	64 - 100

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

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 21	22 - 31	32 - 43	44 - 54	55 - 66	67 - 100

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

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 21	22 - 31	32 - 43	44 - 54	55 - 65	66 - 100

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

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 9	10 - 20	21 - 30	31 - 41	42 - 52	53 - 63	64 - 100

Higher level route 2 Americas – peacemaking (Timezone 1)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 22	23 - 31	32 - 42	43 - 53	54 - 64	65 - 100

Higher level route 2 Americas – peacemaking (Timezone 2)

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 - 22	23 - 31	32 - 42	43 - 52	53 - 64	65 - 100

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

Grade: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Mark range: 0 - 11 12 - 22 23 - 32 33 - 43 44 - 55 56 - 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 - 22 23 - 32 33 - 43 44 - 55 56 - 66 67 - 100

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

Grade: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Mark range: 0 - 10 11 - 21 22 - 30 31 - 42 43 - 54 55 - 65 66 - 100

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

Grade: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Mark range: 0 - 10 11 - 21 22 - 30 31 - 42 43 - 53 54 - 65 66 - 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 - 31 32 - 43 44 - 54 55 - 66 67 - 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 - 31 32 - 43 44 - 53 54 - 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 - 22 23 - 32 33 - 44 45 - 56 57 - 68 69 - 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 - 22 23 - 32 33 - 44 45 - 55 56 - 67 68 - 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 - 21 22 - 30 31 - 42 43 - 54 55 - 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 - 21 22 - 30 31 - 42 43 - 54 55 - 66 67 - 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 - 21 22 - 31 32 - 42 43 - 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 - 21 22 - 31 32 - 42 43 - 53 54 - 64 65 - 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 - 10 11 - 22 23 - 32 33 - 43 44 - 56 57 - 67 68 - 100

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 - 67 68 - 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 - 20 21 - 30 31 - 42 43 - 54 55 - 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 - 20 21 - 30 31 - 42 43 - 54 55 - 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 - 22 23 - 31 32 - 43 44 - 54 55 - 66 67 - 100

Standard level route 2 PS 1 Peacemaking (Timezone 2)

Grade: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Mark range: 0 - 10 11 - 22 23 - 31 32 - 43 44 - 53 54 - 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 - 23 24 - 32 33 - 44 45 - 58 59 - 70 71 - 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 - 23 24 - 32 33 - 44 45 - 57 58 - 69 70 - 100

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

Grade: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Mark range: 0 - 10 11 - 21 22 - 30 31 - 42 43 - 55 56 - 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 - 21 22 - 30 31 - 42 43 - 54 55 - 67 68 - 100

Higher level route 1

Grade: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Mark range: 0 - 11 12 - 24 25 - 34 35 - 43 44 - 53 54 - 63 64 - 100

Standard level route 1

Grade: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Mark range: 0-11 12-24 25-36 37-46 47-55 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

Overall, the Internal Assessments covered a wide range of suitable topics and those that posed a clearly stated research question and investigated a limited area were usually the most successful. However, there were research questions that were either too vague or too broad to be treated within the word limit. Candidates used the required Internal Assessment format and there was evidence that they were familiar with the Internal Assessment marking criteria.

In Sections B and D, referencing continued to be a problem for some candidates. Marks were lost due to insufficient referencing of the sources used, for example, page numbers were not always included and in some cases, the bibliographies in Section F did not follow a standard method, or were not in alphabetical order.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Plan of the investigation

Most candidates offered a clearly stated research question that focused on a narrow, specific aspect of their selected topic. However, there were still research questions that lacked clear focus. A research question that is either too vague or too broad to be treated within the 2000 word limit will affect candidates' performance in other sections, such as Section B and Section D. Also, some research questions, such as "What happened...?" and/or "Who caused...?" lend themselves to a narrative approach. These should be discouraged and candidates should be invited to use thought-provoking questions that invite different perspectives on the topic.

Most candidates included the method and scope of the research question in this section but there were cases when these were not clearly focused. The scope should focus on the specific aspect of the topic to be explored in depth. The sources used should be explicitly mentioned and referenced, as opposed to generalized comments such as "Books and the internet will provide evidence". Candidates should also state why these sources were chosen: they may, for example, explain their significance to the investigation.

Criterion B: Summary of evidence

This was a strong section for a large number of candidates, many of whom included relevant and well-organized material that was appropriately referenced. However, some candidates included material that did not focus on the specific research question. Some, for example, included lengthy background information on the topic as opposed to relevant information on the specific research question. If bullet points are used they must be clearly organized and linked

to the question. No analysis should be included in this section. A number of candidates faced difficulties when referencing the resources they had used. Some did not offer any references and lost marks. Others included incomplete references, omitted page numbers or the dates when internet resources were accessed. Using footnotes to include factual information that should be placed in the body of this section must be discouraged as it is a way of circumventing the word count and is therefore an issue of academic honesty.

Criterion C: Evaluation of sources

A significant number of candidates focused on the value and limitations of the sources, moving away from a narration and/or description of their content. Although many candidates referred to the origins, purpose, value and limitations of the selected sources, there is still room for improvement in their source evaluation. Many candidates failed to look at the date of publication of the sources, which offers important information about their value and limitations. Other candidates neglected the importance of the purpose of the sources. Furthermore, identifying sources as primary or secondary does not in itself suggest anything about their value or limitations.

In some cases, the sources included in this section were not always relevant to the investigation. Selecting two sources that offer relevant discussion on the research question is important as these sources must be included in the analysis offered in Section D (in order to reach the upper markband in that section).

Criterion D: Analysis

Although some candidates demonstrated strong analytical skills, many continued to experience difficulties in successfully addressing this section. At the upper end, candidates showed an in-depth understanding of the evidence presented in B and C and the ways in which it contributed to the understanding of the topic. They offered alternative historical interpretations and analysed their contributions in answering the research question, integrating the sources evaluated in Section C into their analysis.

Some of the problems identified in the treatment of Section D stemmed from issues mentioned in Section A of this report, such as the lack of a clearly-focused research question. This led to a narrative approach in D, which did not score highly. When Section B focused largely on background information, Section D became narrative in nature as candidates struggled to offer the factual evidence required to answer their research question. Also, some candidates failed to look at the importance of their investigation in its historical context. Another problem for candidates was the introduction of new evidence. This should not be credited, as all relevant evidence must be introduced in Section B. Many candidates did not make use of the sources evaluated in Section C and lost marks. Referencing was not always offered and, when it was, it was sometimes inconsistent, causing marks to be lost. As with Section B, the maximum that can be scored if references are not included is 2 marks.

Criterion E: Conclusion

Many candidates were successful in meeting the requirements for this criterion. Some conclusions did not answer the specific research question. A number of candidates introduced new arguments in this section. This led to a loss of marks as such conclusions were not consistent with the evidence presented.

Criterion F: Sources and word limit

There is room for improvement in the listing of internet sites, as dates of access were not always included. Long lists of resources with little to no evidence that they have been used will not gain high marks. All sources that are used or cited should be included in the bibliography.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Teachers' supervision in the choice of topics and sources is central. Candidates need guidance on how to phrase a research question with a precise focus.
- Although it is important that candidates find the question interesting, it is essential that they check the availability of appropriate resources for the investigation.
- There is room for improvement in the treatment of the scope and method in Section A. Encourage candidates to be more specific when addressing these.
- The distinction between Sections B and D should be emphasized further. Candidates should be reminded that Section B should not include analysis and that Section D should not include new factual evidence.
- More referencing of the sources used should be made in Sections B and D.
- The sources used in Section C must be integrated in the analysis of Section D.
- The bibliography in Section F should include all the sources used in the investigation. It should use a standard method.
- Candidates must not include explanatory material in footnotes. If footnotes are used, they must be reserved for references to books, articles and sources. Additionally, and where necessary, footnotes may also be used to provide the original language version of a quote or gobet that has been translated in the body of the IA (longer pieces of translated text should be added as an appendix).
- It is highly recommended that the teacher includes comments to give the moderator some understanding as to the rationale for the marks awarded.

Higher and standard level route 1 and 2 paper one

General comments (all prescribed subjects)

For route 1, all of the respondents on the G2s found the paper appropriate, with the majority finding it of a similar standard to last year's paper (70.37%). For route 2, of over 250 responses to the G2s on Peacemaking 95% of respondents found the paper to be of an appropriate level of difficulty with 69% of respondents arguing that the paper was of a similar level of difficulty to last year. 8.0% found it a little easier, 13.5% a little more difficult and 1.92% much more difficult. The statistics for Arab-Israeli were that 98.5% of centres found the paper to be of an appropriate level of difficulty with 66% arguing that the paper was a similar level of difficulty to last year. 25% argued that it was a little or much easier than last year. For Communism, 100% of G2 forms agreed that the paper was at the appropriate level. Most responses—72%—saw the difficulty of the paper as being similar to the last session, whereas 14% thought it was a little easier and 7% a little more difficult.

Recurring critical themes on the G2s for Peacemaking were the scope of the final question, which was regarded as being too wide for the time allowed by the paper, and the difficulty of the cartoon. The major issue on Arab-Israeli was the size of the cartoon and the amount of detail it contained. There were no significant issues on the Communism paper and the G2 comments were mainly positive. It is worth noting that after this May session the Prescribed Subjects for this Paper and the requirements for candidates will change significantly for exams commencing in May 2017.

Route 1 - Paper 1: Islam and Sicily

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

A number of candidates found it difficult to adequately respond to Question 4, which required an examination of the Medinan period in relation to the development of the Muslim community. The question required a fairly sophisticated level of interpretation and careful use of the sources alongside the candidates' own knowledge. Many candidates appeared to find it easier to apply their own knowledge, rather than their analysis of the sources, when answering the question.

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

Most of the responses revealed that candidates were generally well exposed to the paper in terms of skills and the format of the responses. In addition, most responses showed that many candidates adapted relatively well to the one hour duration of the paper as opposed to previous years when question 4 was usually incomplete.

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

Question 1

(a) Most candidates were able to identify two valid points including the shaping of religious institutions and the Prophet Muhammad's banishment of the Jews. However, very few candidates pointed out that the integration of Jewish rituals into Islam was an attempt to reconcile with the Jews before they were finally exiled.

(b) The majority of candidates were able to suggest the spiritual importance of the sanctuary linking it with the "fiery light" above the dome containing the Prophet's tomb. While most candidates pointed out the significance of the Sanctuary, the majority failed to link it with either the fact that it is protected by high walls or with the fact that it included the Prophet's tomb. Very few candidates commented on the long-term importance of the sanctuary, noting the fact that it is included in an 18th century manuscript.

Question 2

Most candidates were able to generate valid differences, with the majority referring to the aim of the constitution in Source A being to reduce the Jews' standing as opposed to Source B aiming to integrate them. Also, most candidates pointed out other valid differences including rights gained by the Jews in Source B as opposed to their being declined political and economic independence in Source A. However, some candidates failed to generate valid similarities, for

example, the role of the Prophet in guiding Muslim-Jewish relations. This meant that only a few responses achieved maximum marks.

Question 3

Although there were very good responses that included values and limitations that were linked with the origin (who wrote it, what it is, when it was written) and purpose of the source, many responses were formulaic and didn't fully engage with the demands of the specific question. Others were descriptive and relied on the content of the source.

Question 4

Although there were some good attempts to write structured and focused responses, the majority of candidates failed to offer detailed answers that skilfully utilized both source content and own knowledge. While the sources focused on Muslim-Jewish relations, candidates could still have pointed out the role of the Prophet in guiding such relations and thus the development of his role as a leader of a community than a leader of a cult. Also, the birth of a constitution (as much as it was simple or vague) at that point in the history of Islam marks the birth of a nation, which before the Medinan period was impossible. Further, the importance of Medina (Source E) and its development as the capital and a base from which expansion later took place could have been referred to. As part of their own knowledge, candidates could have pointed out the situation before the move to Medina (Yathrib), thus producing an argument in favour of the importance of the Medinan period. There could, for example, have been reference to the social bonds before and after the move to Medina. In fact, the Medinan period created new religious bonds rather than bonds cemented by blood. It is not enough that candidates refer to the sources in their responses to acquire marks; they must use the sources and integrate the material they draw from the sources with their own knowledge in order to effectively answer the question.

Question 5

(a) Most candidates were able to achieve maximum marks and as their responses included clear identification of the provisions that the agreement entailed.

(b) Most candidates were able to generate valid messages that the source conveyed, with the most popular point being the power, legitimacy and wealth of Charles of Anjou. In addition, most candidates were able to link the minting of the coin with Charles's attempt to assert and consolidate his position. Some candidates pointed out the message that Charles claimed to hold his titles "by the Grace of God."

Question 6

There were excellent responses here. The most popular points that served as similarities included Charles's ambition, the issue of money and the importance of the papacy. Popular points that served as differences included the role of Louis XI, who in Source C seemed hesitant but in Source D was "steadily opposed to the project." Most of the responses were well balanced and contained valid similarities and differences.

Question 7

Many responses achieved high marks with most candidates being able to offer values and limitations for both sources based on their origin and purpose. The responses to this question reflected more understanding than did their counterparts in Section A (Question 3) regarding the process of source evaluation.

Question 8

This question required an argumentative approach and an interpretation of what “God truly willed it” meant. Many candidates were able to utilize source content and to employ their own knowledge in writing in favour of and against the statement. Responses that achieved high marks referred to at least 4 sources. Content was made use of and there was a demonstration of some reasonable own knowledge, for example, the important role of the papacy and the choice of candidates (other than Charles) that were put forward.

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	6-8	9-11	12-13	14-16	17-25

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

Many candidates had some trouble synthesizing the information in the sources with their own knowledge for Question 4 and often veered off the set question. Time management was sometimes poor and a number of candidates ran out of time and did not complete the paper. Most candidates seemed comfortable with comprehension/inference questions although some wrote either far too much (one side for a three mark answer) or too little (two or three lines). A greater awareness of the balance between mark tariffs and answer lengths was needed.

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

As the questions related to the Paris Peace Treaties, a central theme of the interwar years, it was hardly surprising that candidates' responses contained a good deal of sound, accurate, historical content. Source comparison and cross-referencing was, on the whole, sound although some candidates continue to summarize each source before trying to compare them, and other candidates compare details rather than views. Overall, source analysis is improving (although some candidates still discuss origins and purpose without relating them to the value of the sources or, make no mention of purpose at all).

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

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates were able to get at least two points from the source. They were able to identify the idea of self-determination being impossible, although some candidates saw the sentence about borders and minorities as a separate issue. Similarly, many candidates mentioned the need for a Confederation to resolve the economic and political problems created by the creation of a larger number of smaller states. 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.

- (b) Most candidates understood the message of the source and in particular the reduction in size and population. Some candidates answered this question by including too much and/or unnecessary detail from the source. Responses that said Austria-Hungary became smaller or was divided, without making reference to the actual images/symbols depicted in the cartoon, did not receive any credit.

Question 2

This question appeared to be the most challenging for many candidates. In many cases the references to sources were effective although too many candidates focused on details from the sources rather than comparing and contrasting the views in the sources. A statement that something is written in one source and is not mentioned in the other is not a contrast of the *views* in the sources. Some candidates also made generalized comparisons without giving any supporting evidence from the sources themselves.

Question 3

A number of candidates see this as a mechanical exercise in which they have to go through the origins, purpose, value and limitations of each source. The stronger answers relate origins and purpose to value and limitations. Some answers focused too much on the content of the sources rather than on their provenance. The weakest skill was the identification of the purpose of the sources. A frequent answer was: to inform; to show; to discuss; or to explain, which clearly is much too vague and does not identify the exact purpose of the Source. Very few candidates noticed that Source A was dated April 1919, which was obviously a limitation when making any judgment about the successes of the Paris Peace Treaties.

Question 4

There were some well-focused answers that used the sources and the candidates' own knowledge to evaluate the view that the settlement was the best that could have been reached. Less convincing were answers that went through each source one-by-one, summarizing the content of the source rather than explicitly answering the question. Another area of weakness was answers that focused on the pros and cons of the Treaties rather answering the actual question that was set. Own knowledge was, in some cases, very limited or irrelevant to the question, sometimes focusing on Hitler's rise to power or the outbreak of the Second World War.

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

In general, candidates found the comparative analysis of two sources required by Question 2 particularly challenging. One also gained the impression that the requirement to evaluate the sources (Question 3) came as a surprise for some candidates.

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

In a pleasing number of cases the candidates displayed a confident command of the subject matter combined with a readiness to apply the source material in an apposite fashion.

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

Question 1

- a) Most candidates had little difficulty in identifying three relevant items from Source A (and in some cases, the answers included far more than the required three reasons).
- b) Source B evoked a range of different interpretations, the most popular being that the Source showed that the Jews faced attacks from all sides. A sizeable number of responses also suggested that the source showed that the Jewish side was better equipped (for example, comparing tanks with camels). Only a few answers commented on the significance of the ships approaching the coast.

Question 2

This question appeared to be the most challenging for many candidates. The answers generally identified up to three valid comparisons, but candidates often found it difficult to suggest a legitimate contrast. (When a contrast was attempted, the most popular one was the Sources' different explanations for the Arabs' lack of commitment—inter-Arab rivalries, as opposed to the Arab rulers' concern for domestic security). Examiners could not credit an attempted contrast between A's statement that "at no time" did the Arabs have more troops than the Jews, with D's reference to Arab numerical superiority until the first truce. Such a contrast could not be awarded because it was not relevant to the question's emphasis on "the reasons for Israel's success in the war".

Question 3

The quality of source evaluation varied widely, and some answers gave the impression that the candidates had little or no experience in this area. A common weakness was the tendency to base the source evaluation upon content, rather than origin and purpose. Only a few candidates suggested that a limitation of Source C was that—as an overview of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict—this source was unlikely to have gone into depth on the events of 1948–1949. When dealing with Source E, some candidates suggested that the purpose of Sharett’s speech was to persuade the UN to admit Israel as a member—despite the fact that the Source’s introduction stated that this speech was made *subsequent* to the UN vote to admit Israel as a member. Many answers identified the partisan nature of both sources as a limitation; however, it was not enough simply to state “This Source is biased”. To receive credit, such a statement needed to be clearly linked to the source’s particular origin and/or purpose.

Question 4

Many answers were characterized by a consistently well-focused application of the sources. Unfortunately, possibly for reasons of time, such answers often did not go beyond the sources to include own knowledge. When own knowledge was included, there was some occasional confusion with the nature and origin of the foreign support that Israel received in subsequent wars, for example, some answers claimed that Britain provided support to the Israelis in 1948–1949. Only a few candidates accurately identified the “unofficial” nature of the help that Israel received from the US (Golda Meir’s visit to the US in order to appeal for money and weapons). Popular points of own knowledge were Plan Dalet, Deir Yassin and Ben Gurion. Some answers spent too long in considering, for example, the origins of Zionism or the Balfour Declaration, and these aspects were not directly relevant to the question.

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	3-4	5-7	8-10	11-14	15-17	18-25

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

Overall, candidates demonstrated a general understanding of the topic of the paper, and of what was required for each style of question. However, there was often a lack of development in responses. A number of responses covered only one or two points for questions that offered several marks, for example offering one point for the three mark question, question 1a). There was some confusion with regards to the provenance and message of the photograph. Most candidates were able to identify the origin and purpose of each source. However, candidates often did not then go on to explain clear, valid and specific points of value and limitations from the origin and purpose. There remains a tendency for a commentary on just the content of each source.

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

Most scripts seemed to reflect sound knowledge and understanding of the theme of the paper, demonstrated knowledge of Gorbachev's role and could put the sources into their historical context. In addition, most candidates had attempted to answer all four questions. This session, again, saw a demonstrable improvement in time management and in the number of candidates adopting the appropriate approach to each style of question. The majority of candidates attempted all four questions. Most were able to find three points for Question 1a, and attempted to make links between the Sources for Question 2. In addition, most candidates were able to identify sound and developed comparisons between the sources. Indeed, there continues to be some improvement in the approach to both Question 2 and Question 3. Responses to the latter showed more awareness of the need to identify the origin and interpret the purpose of each source. More candidates had focused on the origin and purpose to find value and limitations rather than on content. For Question 4 most candidates had attempted to use or refer to the sources in their responses. Overall, most candidates seemed to have a sound understanding of what was required for each question.

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

Question 1

- (a) Although many candidates attained full marks for this question, there were still a considerable number of responses that offered only one or two points. Some candidates attempted to summarize the overall attitude of the Soviet Union rather than attempting to identify three specific points.

- (b) Many candidates received only one mark for this question. This was, at least in part, due to their comments being too vague and/or repetitive. Candidates should be reminded that they need to find two distinct points of the message and to link these points specifically to the source.

Question 2

The majority of candidates established some clear comparative links between the sources. However, candidates did less well in identifying developed contrasts. Candidates should be reminded to find a range of points regarding the sources and these should consist of comparisons and contrasts.

Question 3

Candidates often set out their response as outlined in previous markschemes, and they should not do this, as responses ought to be in continuous prose. There was an improvement in those correctly identifying the origin and interpreting the purpose of each source, and there were some thorough evaluations. However, there remains a tendency to offer comments on the value and limitations of a source primarily from its content. There also needs to be more specific comments developed from the information given in the provenance. Many candidates continue to make vague statements on the value of each source as, for example, it being a “primary” source (often when they mean a contemporary source) without going on to explain why this might be a value. This is also the case with limitations, with vague comments regarding a source being limited as it is “secondary”.

Question 4

In line with the positive comments regarding Question 4 on the G2 forms, most candidates were able to offer a fairly well-developed response here. Most responses had attempted to use the sources, many had included some detailed own knowledge and most had addressed the question. However, some candidates did not leave sufficient time to answer this final question. In addition, some candidates referred to the content of the sources inaccurately. However, although many candidates were able to offer some own knowledge on the role of Gorbachev, responses often lacked detailed factual support and development.

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

- Candidates should practice past Paper 1s and, bearing in mind the change to history from May 2017, the specimen papers (updated June 2016), as well as other source tasks to refine their skills and improve their time management for this component.
- 1a). Encourage candidates to find three separate points, and avoid rolling points together or summarizing the source in one developed point.
- 1b). Candidates should identify two distinct points for the 'message' and ensure that they link their comments to the source content, image, title and provenance.
- 2. Candidates should practice identifying comparisons and contrasts between two documents. There should be balance and therefore both comparisons and contrasts should be addressed. However, there need not be an equal number of each.
- 3. The focus of the question is on the origins and purpose of each source and not the content. Candidates should develop specific evaluation points from the details they are given in the provenance. They need to fully develop their explanations of why a point from the origin or purpose is a value or limitation. It is also advisable for candidates to evaluate each source separately.
- 4. It would be useful to offer some guidance on the amount of time candidates should spend on each question to ensure candidates have sufficient time to write comprehensive responses for Question 4 (which has the most marks). Candidates should be reminded that the final question requires a detailed source analysis combined with own knowledge and they should structure their response appropriately. Listing the content of each source is not what is required. Teachers should continue to emphasize the need for candidates to include detailed own knowledge. Practising the task of synthesizing own knowledge and source material may help candidates improve their performance and timing on Question 4.

Higher and standard level route 1 and 2 paper 2

General comments (all routes and timezones)

Across the two Route 2 timezones as well as Route 1, the G2 forms suggested a general satisfaction with the examination papers for the May 2016 session. As in previous sessions, a number of the further comments do not relate to the history course and as such, a certain degree of caution should be exercised when using the G2 data. Nevertheless, given that there were 243 respondents in total, it is likely that at least some trends could be discerned.

In terms of the appropriateness of the various paper 2s, a significant majority of the felt that it was appropriate with the remaining group suggesting that they were too difficult. This is reflected, to a certain extent, in the comparison with last year, whereby a little over half of the respondents felt that the papers were of a similar standard whereas a significant minority felt that it was either a little or much more difficult. However, some still argued that the paper was a little or even much easier.

Question 16 in the Route 2 timezone 2 examination paper was frequently mentioned in the comments, and concerns relating to this were dealt with by the standardization team. Another issue related to the command terms; especially the use of the word “discuss”. This appeared to have taken many teachers by surprise, despite it being stipulated in several communications since mid-2014 that it would be increasingly used to ensure that only recognized command terms (those explained in the 2010 history guide) would be used in future.

Finally, for Route 2, Topic 1 was perceived by some centres as challenging whereas Topics 3 and 5 were more favourably received. As has been the case for many years, these were, by far, the most popular topics for Route 2.

Overall, senior examiners commented on the steady improvement in the way candidates structure their responses and that this important skill is taught very effectively in many centres. There is continued concern, however, over the rather limited quality and quantity of relevant knowledge demonstrated by candidates, even on mainstream topics that are widely taught and well-resourced.

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	18-21	22-24	25-40

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

The areas that some candidates continue to find difficult include constructing an analytical essay, as quite a few continue to write narrative or descriptive responses that do not address the question effectively. In addition some candidates clearly have difficulty in reading the questions and understanding the demands of the questions.

It also seemed that a number of candidates did not have sufficient knowledge with respect to the questions that they attempted and their answers lacked depth and evidence to support their responses.

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

Areas where a number of candidates were better prepared included content and essay skills. This was particularly noted amongst a number of the lower-marked candidates who showed measurable improvement compared to previous years and, overall, there were fewer very poor responses in this session. As always, there were many excellent responses that demonstrated both skills and knowledge.

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

Comments are only provided on the most popular questions.

The questions that proved difficult for candidates were Question 2, Question 13, Question 16, and Question 17.

The difficulties experienced on Question 2 were the result of candidates not reading the question and understanding that this was a rise to power question. In the case of the Carolingians; they failed to note the contributions of rulers prior to Charlemagne and too often wrote about the achievements of Charlemagne as a ruler and did not address the issue of rise to power. With respect to the other choice in this question, the rise of the Fatimids, less able candidates tended to focus on their religious doctrines and did not give enough attention to the numerous other factors that contributed to their rise. In addition there was a tendency for less able candidates to write descriptive rather than analytical essays.

Question 13

Many candidates understood the basic demands of the question but their difficulties arose from lack of knowledge of either causes or consequences as well as a poor analytical structure.

Question 16

Candidates who struggled with this question failed to understand its demands and tended to write narrative accounts of the military career of Saladin, for example, rather than showing knowledge of the importance of other Muslim leaders. In addition, they failed to analyse the impact of Muslim leadership with respect to other factors that may have contributed to the Crusaders' defeat.

Question 17

This question was reasonably well done although weaker candidates tended to focus on the military tactics to explain English success and did not appreciate the need to consider a range of other factors in constructing an effective analysis. Responses were generally reasonable but many could have been improved with a better balance of points.

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	5-8	9-11	12-16	17-21	22-26	27-40

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

Although there were some excellent scripts with responses that were clearly focused and arguments that were well supported, the overall quality was rather poor and, moreover, appeared to be significantly worse than that of May 2015. Too often, the level of detailed knowledge, even of “mainstream” topics such as Nazi Germany or the Cold War, was very limited indeed. This continues to be of concern as even weaker candidates could gain additional marks if the content of their responses offered more detail. Additionally, weaker responses were written in a narrative style that was descriptive rather than analytical and the absence of correct terminology meant that arguments were rather poorly expressed. With regard to Topic 5, especially, it must be said that many candidates seemed to have gleaned much of their knowledge from Cold War documentaries. Documentaries, are, of course, invaluable teaching tools and can be extremely useful and very informative but it did seem that, in this session, the candidates had misunderstood much of the content. It also seemed that candidates rushed through reading the questions and didn’t always pay close attention to what was being asked. For example, Question 1. was very popular but the majority of responses made very limited reference to the actual outbreak of the Second World War, focusing instead on the Paris peace conferences and proceeding to write what may have been a familiar and anticipated narrative of the impact of the First World War on the causes of the Second although this was not the question.

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

The examination paper seemed quite accessible with few candidates failing to answer two questions, each from different Topics and, when required to do so, most choosing appropriate examples from different regions.

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

Comments are only provided on the most popular questions.

Topic 1: Causes, practices and effects of wars

Question 1

This was a very popular question. Some candidates did attempt to define ideology and were able to mention *lebensraum* as well as anti-Semitism. Too many candidates, however, incorrectly defined appeasement as an ideology. Knowledge of events leading to the outbreak of the Second World War was often very poor with many candidates unable to go far beyond mentioning the invasion of Poland. Some did make reference to Mussolini and, in a few cases, mentioned the involvement of Japan. However, there seemed to be little more than a superficial knowledge of the events of 1939 and, too often, there was confusion over the purpose and outcome of the Munich conference as well as uncertainty over the timing of the invasion of Czechoslovakia. There appeared to be little real understanding of how events were linked and, as such, arguments were often poorly supported. It would seem that many candidates had anticipated a question on the impact of the First World War and responses began (and often, concluded) with lengthy narrative accounts of the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations.

Question 2

A few responses were seen to this question and most of these were from candidates who had clearly been taught this Topic. Unfortunately, the causes were often known only superficially and few responses were sufficiently detailed to support a sound argument.

Question 3

This was very popular question with answers that were mostly about women going to work (apparently for the first time!) during the First World War, returning to their homes and then resuming work during the Second World War. Despite this very point being raised repeatedly in Subject Reports, it is disappointing that responses continue to state that that women didn't work outside the home before the First World War. Many of the candidates continue to disregard their knowledge of the sweatshops and factories of the 19th century, as well as their awareness of the work women did on farms and as domestic servants. Very few linked the two world wars to changes in the role and status of women who were affected, for example, by the extension of suffrage. The most popular wars discussed were, by far, the First and Second World Wars although rarely were there references to specific countries.

Question 6

For the most part, there was very poor understanding of what was meant by "resistance movements" with candidates apparently scrabbling around for examples. A few responses referred to the Mujahideen in Afghanistan and the Vietminh in French Indochina as well as the Viet Cong in South Vietnam during the Vietnam War and these were acceptable. There was some latitude given to other examples where it could be argued that there was an occupation of a country and movements formed to fight it. In some instances, however, candidates wrote about the opposing sides in a civil war defining "resistance" as opposition to a government.

Topic 2: Democratic states—challenges and responses

Question 9

This was quite a popular question although there was only very limited evidence offered to support quite reasonable arguments that there had been some social and political change but very little economic progress. The majority of responses referred to civil rights in the context of the struggle for racial equality in the US.

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

Question 13

This was a very popular question with most responses discussing Stalin rather than Mao. Better quality responses (of which there were very few) did attempt to do more than mention Trotsky having missed Lenin's funeral, but most focused on this event with some additional mention of Lenin's Testament (although accounts of what happened to this document were not very accurate). Purges and show trials were often mentioned, even though these were not relevant to the rise to power. In a few cases, responses did refer to the "weakness of his opponents", although such arguments were rarely well supported. In general, the responses on Mao were rather narrative and often began with accounts of the warlord era and some rather general reference to the Guomindang under the leadership of Jiang Jieshi. Few made any connection to the second civil war and the rise to power of Mao in 1949.

Question 14

Most responses included examples from different regions but candidates struggled to discuss the role of ideology. Hitler was a very popular choice but very few responses included any reference to how he came to power in 1933 and most did not grapple with the importance of ideology. This was quite surprising as the rise and rule of Hitler is widely taught. A possible approach would have been to debate whether ideology really was important given the relatively small number of votes polled for the Nazis in the 1928 election. A convincing argument could then have been made for economic factors having been more influential in convincing many to vote for the NSDAP leading to a spike in popularity in 1930/1932. Overall, few responses went beyond outlining the role of race and *lebensraum*, although this was not always well understood. The other popular choice of leader was Castro and some candidates did point out that his political career began with the Orthodox Party, not the Cuban Communist Party, and that he was not (officially) an avowed communist until 1961. With both examples, there was ample scope for sound, well-supported arguments to be made for ideology having (or having not) been a significant factor in the rise of these leaders. Unfortunately, few of these were seen.

Question 15

This was quite a popular question but responses rarely went beyond general comments about "education" or "the role of women". Where China was used as an example, candidates did refer to the Hundred Flowers Campaign or the Cultural Revolution as methods used to combat internal opposition but not many seemed able to focus clearly on how far domestic policies were successful and how far this addressed the issue of opposition.

Question 16

This should have been quite straightforward with candidates being given a start date and a specific instruction to discuss legal methods. Better answers knew something about the very important Enabling Act but rather too many responses indicated that candidates either did not fully understand or had little knowledge of the events of February/March 1933 and beyond. As such, the demands of the question were not fully understood.

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

Few responses were seen to these questions.

Topic 5: The Cold War

Question 25

This was a popular question with candidates clearly having revised this period of the Cold War. Most were able to relate some relevant points about the Yalta and Potsdam conferences and, in some cases, to refer to the Percentage Agreements finalized by Stalin and Churchill in October 1944. Many responses went on to discuss the concerns—on both sides—of the spread of the opposing ideology, and more developed responses included discussion of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan as well as “salami tactics”, the Molotov Plan and so on. Spheres of influence had to be discussed here although it was quite appropriate for candidates to argue that other factors were of greater importance in ushering in the Cold War. Overall, the level of detail was rather disappointing for what is a widely-taught topic. Also, most responses stopped short of 1950, despite this having been specifically stated in the question as the end-point.

Question 26

Most candidates who chose this question were able to demonstrate some understanding of the terms “containment” and “brinkmanship” as well as to attempt some discussion of the successes and failures of both. Some relevant examples were chosen, although a few candidates did not pay attention to 1962 as the end point and proceeded to discuss the Vietnam War. Overall, “containment” was better understood than “brinkmanship”, which—in several cases—seemed to be addressed as an early stage of containment.

Question 28

Candidates who chose this question did, for the most part, attempt to link either Afghanistan or Vietnam to the Cold War rather than simply to narrate events. Even so, when discussing Vietnam, candidates tended to stray away from the question and into discussing the impact the war had upon the public in the US. However, more developed responses were able to allude to disillusionment, the “domino theory” and to make links to the growing criticism of US Cold War policies. Rather surprisingly, there were very few responses that understood the question well enough to make links between US policy makers, the Vietnam War and the emergence of detente.

Question 29

Almost all responses to this question chose the US and the Soviet Union as examples and were able to make some general statements about the impact of the cost of the arms race (sometimes incorrectly termed “the space race”) on domestic policies, especially with reference to the Soviet Union. Overall, detail was rather limited and the implication was that there was little real knowledge of this topic.

Question 30

This was a very popular question with most responses able to identify and briefly describe Gorbachev’s policies in the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, most candidates also indicated their impression that the Eastern Bloc lay within the Soviet Union and that it was Gorbachev who, for example, chose to allow free travel from East to West Berlin in 1989. For the most part, responses needed further development and some detail other than a mention of events of November 1989.

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	5-8	9-11	12-16	17-20	21-25	26-40

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 great majority showing interest in topic 5. Fewer responses were seen on topic 2 and, especially, topic 4.

There were a few rubric offences: some candidates attempted to answer more than two questions, and quite a few of them offered answers about one region when the question required knowledge of two regions. As in previous sessions, the most common difficulty was for candidates to choose a question they understood as the answer tended to drift away from its focus. Many answers lacked developed arguments and a number of them included an attempt to shoehorn some historiography, which often resulted in “rehearsed” essays that rarely aligned with the demands of the question.

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

A good number of strong responses emerged. They included well-structured essays that consistently and explicitly deconstructed and addressed the demands of the question in a balanced and well-supported way and which led to a coherent conclusion.

Candidates were well-prepared to answer questions about war. Specifically, they were able to present insightful discussions about the significant consequences of post-war territorial changes. They were well prepared in terms of terminology and adequate understanding of the peace treaties and its effects on territorial changes, which the question required.

Essay structure has also improved. This helps candidates stay focused on the demands of the question. Having their plans on the answer booklet also helped candidates stay on task, though many did not use this opportunity effectively.

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

Comments are only provided on the most popular questions.

Topic 1: Causes, practices and effects of wars

Question 1

Few candidates were able to stay focused on the contribution of ideology on the outbreak and expansion of the Second World War. Those who treated the question effectively, focused on fascist ideology in Europe and in Asia. Weaker candidates presented a narrative about the causes and expansion of the war. Some candidates ignored the prompt and went beyond 1941.

Question 2

Higher achieving answers chose at least two different wars and focused on the treaties that ended them. This allowed answers that demonstrated how treaties shaped the new boundaries of countries involved in war. Less compelling were the answers that were unable to focus on a specific war and instead produced generalized answers about the impact of war on territorial changes.

Question 3

The two most popular wars used as examples for this question were the Falklands/Malvinas War and the Second World War. A few responses also covered the First World War. Stronger answers were able to focus on a discussion of the significance of both air and sea power in determining the outcome. Lesser answers focused on the deployment of air and naval forces yielding very descriptive answers.

Question 4

This was a very popular question with some very well-structured essays that demonstrated depth of knowledge. Strong responses focused on the economic crises and were able to give specific details about them with a rich use of examples. Weaker responses focused on the rise of Mao or on the defeat of the Nationalists rather than on the economic crises, which were barely mentioned.

Question 5

There were fewer answers to this question, yet those who attempted it were able to identify some of the economic causes of the Gulf War and discuss the merits of the assertion made. Some responses gave only a description of the war.

Question 6

Social history did not seem to be the forte of much of this cohort of candidates. Those who chose this question showed a tendency to generalize as answers were vague and unsupported. Candidates were able to identify two countries of two regions but they did not go beyond the

idea of destruction of infrastructure, nor did they effectively deal with the impact of war on the role of women.

Topic 2: Democratic states—challenges and responses

Question 8

An alternative to the usual question on the Weimar Republic, a number of answers to this question considered the US a coalition government and used it as an example to compare to the Weimar Republic. Candidates need to understand the meaning of a coalition government before attempting answers in this section.

Question 10

There were a few good responses to this question, where candidates were able to demonstrate depth of knowledge and understanding of Johnson's social welfare legislation in the US and the impact it had on its people. Candidates were able to identify specific policies and they were able to present a balance between the policies that were effective and had a very positive impact against those that were, perhaps, not as effective and did not have much of a positive impact. Higher-marked answers were able to provide a balanced discussion of positive and negative impact.

Question 11

Few responses were seen; however, for those that were, Nazi Germany was not a democratic state (in spite of the argument that Hitler's election was democratic).

Question 12

There was very little understanding of what a pressure group was. Many candidates chose examples of non-democratic states and others chose to focus on political parties that put pressure on government via parliament.

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

Question 13

This was a very popular question and many candidates were able to successfully identify some reasons for the rise in support for Nazism (and, more specifically, for Hitler). However, only the stronger responses were able to develop the extent of this support.

Question 14

There were a number of rubric offences here, as candidates chose two leaders from the same region. Other than that, there were some candidates who were well prepared to develop an answer that evaluated the success in establishing totalitarian control. Weaker answers had a tendency to narrate the rise to power of the two leaders chosen.

Question 15

Many candidates were well prepared to answer this question. They were able to identify successful policies as well as unsuccessful policies and provided a balanced assessment of the extent to which they were able to combat internal opposition. Les compelling answers focused on the use of terror to eliminate opposition.

Question 16

A fairly popular question for which candidates were better prepared to deal with Mao than Castro. Strong answers were able to evaluate Mao's methods prior to his rise and four years into his ascent to power. This was not the case for weaker answers, which focused on the ruler's rise to power and, by finishing in 1959 for Castro and 1950 for Mao, did not consider the establishment of the regime once in government.

Question 17

Few responses were seen.

Question 18

While this was a very popular question, there was little demonstration of solid preparation for a question on gender equality. Answers had a tendency to present a series of generalizations about women and their new "working status" after the war in two authoritarian regimes, the most popular being under Mao, Stalin and Hitler.

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

Few responses were seen to these questions.

Topic 5: The Cold War

Question 25

An exceptionally popular question, candidates were able to discuss mutual fear and suspicion. Stronger answers were able to identify specific historical events where both were evident. The discussion of the extent of the contribution to the development of the Cold War was eloquent and consisted of in-depth and insightful knowledge with some valid historiographical perspectives. Weaker answers had a tendency to narrate the origins of the Cold War with very little focus on mutual fear and suspicion and some answers, erroneously, went beyond 1949.

Question 26

Candidates had difficulty staying on task with this question as they ignored the fact that the date in the question was 1953 and not 1945. As such, many candidates' attention drifted to events prior to 1953 and were, therefore, of little relevance to the question. Others presented a narrative of the Cold War with a focus on Germany from the end of the Second World War to the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Question 27

Few responses were seen.

Question 28

While there were some responses to this question, they tended to be very weak. Candidates did not seem to be prepared to discuss treaties and instead they focused on the “Star Wars” initiative. Although others were able to mention SALT I and SALT II, the answers were, by and large, superficial and lacking in substance.

Question 29

Although this question could have allowed candidates to explore their local history, the answers presented were vague and consisted of nothing more than generalizations on countries ranging from the US to Germany and Vietnam.

Question 30

Stronger responses were able to present a balanced discussion of both leaders and the impact of their specific actions in contributing to the end of the Cold War. Weaker answers, however, presented nothing more than a general narrative of the end of the Cold War with some references to either one or the other leader, but only on very general terms.

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

There is only one examination session remaining for the 2010 curriculum and so there will be significant changes for the May 2017 paper both in format and in content. Even so, comments on the current session are applicable and teachers and candidates would be well advised to continue to use suitable questions from past papers for practice. Candidates also need to be well acquainted with the command terms that are listed and explained in the new History Guide (and to bear in mind the message, which was first issued in August 2014, that only “compare and contrast”, “discuss”, “evaluate”, “examine” and “to what extent...” would be used in examinations henceforth).

As always, good detailed knowledge and understanding is necessary in order for candidates to demonstrate a sound grasp of the topics that are being examined. Only then will candidates be able to choose appropriate examples (and some examples *will* be more appropriate than others) and to weave an argument that is both compelling and well supported. Most often, weaker responses suggest that candidates have done the minimum revision and relied on some basic knowledge of, for example, two leaders or wars, which they have determined to use come what may. Indeed, responses often indicated very little awareness that the question was asking for a specific response and not a narrative account based only upon what could be recalled. In particular, as we move forward to the next May session, it would be very useful to prepare candidates for questions that may ask them to make comparisons and contrasts and for which they may need to carefully consider the appropriateness of the examples that they choose before embarking on their response. Regardless of the forthcoming changes, the importance of addressing the demands of the question will, of course, continue to be fundamental and its importance cannot be over-emphasized.

Higher and standard level route 1 and 2 paper three

General comments (for all routes and regions)

Across all options there were some very good responses, where candidates utilized in depth knowledge and analysis to respond to the questions set. There was evidence of an ability to select carefully relevant material as supporting evidence to a line of argument either supporting the premise of the question or successfully challenging the question.

In route 1 and in all four route 2 options examiners found that a significant number of responses lacked detailed supporting evidence. At this level there is an expectation of in-depth knowledge to support analysis; however, too many responses made assertions that were unsupported or where the evidence was superficial and lacked depth.

In many cases, and this was noticeable for popular areas of the programme, candidates did not answer the question as set on the examination paper. Instead they utilized pre-prepared answers that appeared to have been minimally reshaped in an ineffective attempt to align them with some features of the question. These failed to score well as a consequence.

There is a worrying trend of automatically challenging the assumption in the question as mentioned in the top two mark bands, when this is done successfully it demonstrates excellent analytical ability. Where it is not done well, and/or where the challenge is either unrealistic or unsupported, it appears that candidates are, again, attempting to utilize pre-prepared material and answering the question that they hoped to find on opening the examination paper rather than the one that they did.

As has been mentioned before some candidates attempt to address historiography by “name dropping” and/or referring to various historical schools of thought without demonstrating any understanding of the differing interpretations or evaluating them in any way.

In all routes and options there was agreement that far fewer scripts were seen where the candidates did not answer three questions indicating that there are fewer problems with time management.

Higher level route 1 paper 3

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-7	8-14	15-18	19-23	24-29	30-34	35-60

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

The areas of the programme and the examination that proved difficult were the reading and comprehension of questions and, for some, proper essay structure. The failure to read and comprehend the demands of the questions meant that some candidates wrote responses that were inadequate in both direction and content. In addition some candidates continue to write prepared responses on certain topics almost without reference to the actual demands of the questions. This was particularly the case on Question 18 with respect to the Black Death.

The other major limitation was the tendency of less able candidates to write narrative or descriptive pieces with little evidence of good essay structure. This remains a problem and is one of the major reasons for the lower results for some candidates.

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

Overall there has been some improvement in essay writing and the mastery of relevant content. There were a number of excellent responses showing strong analytical skills and the ability to employ the appropriate content quite effectively.

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

Comments are only provided on the most popular questions.

Question 3

This question provided some difficulty to many candidates as they failed to recognize that the focus of the question was on the impact of Fatimid ideology in the Islamic world. Many candidates undertook long descriptions of the ideology but not its impact and others talked about the impact of the Fatimids with limited analysis of the ideological impact.

Question 4

While this was answered more competently by some candidates, others again failed to provide enough of a range of reasons in their analysis. Some concentrated on descriptions of 'Abbasid weakness while failing to recognize the role of Fatimid strengths in explaining the rise to power of the Fatimids.

Question 5

This was a very popular question and produced some excellent responses in terms of analytical format and depth of knowledge. Candidates who did not do quite as well tended to describe more than analyse.

Question 7

Another very popular question, this provided many candidates with an opportunity to produce a decent response and quite a number of them showed excellent skills in both style and content. The major weakness was that candidates tended to lose focus on the motives of the Crusaders and devoted too much attention to papal motives which were not part of the requirements of the question. This limited their ability to reach higher markbands.

Question 9

Question 9 was answered by quite a number of candidates; however, generally it was answered very poorly. There was little evidence of analysis in most responses, many of which consisted of descriptions of Mongol conquests that were not always related to Hülegü. In addition, the issue of impact was overlooked as candidates merely described a few events and many of these lacked adequate depth of content to produce even a moderate result.

Question 13

This question was generally well done with candidates selecting good examples and demonstrating good knowledge. Most essays were well structured and focused quite clearly on the question. The major difference between responses was the depth and breadth of knowledge displayed by candidates and their ability to balance the response evenly between the two chosen monarchs.

Question 18

This question was very badly done in almost all cases. Candidates did not seem to read or understand the demands of the question and set out to write prepared responses on the impact of the Black Death. The question called for an awareness of changes that had been put in motion before the Black Death and asked candidates to analyse to what extent the Black Death merely accelerated them or not. This aspect of the question was lost to most candidates.

Higher level paper three – Africa

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-5	6-10	11-17	18-23	24-28	29-34	35-60

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

Question 15 on political impact of the spread of Islam in one area of Africa was a problem because many of those who answered the question, failed to refer to an area as prescribed by the course guide: Eastern and Central Africa; South (southern) Africa; West Africa; North Africa).

The question on the Cold War was also a problem with a number of candidates choosing Egypt as a country of study in Africa when it is (currently) a part of the Europe and the Middle East paper. For Question 22, it was not very clear as to whether some of the candidates actually understood the aspect of neo-colonialism. Overall, many of the responses were rather general.

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

Many of the candidates seemed prepared for the topic on pre-colonial African States (Southern and West Africa) especially on the question on Mosheshwe. They also seemed to have good knowledge of the topic on European imperialism (topic 5), especially Question 5. Topic 5 was, in fact, very popular, with a number of candidates attempting both questions in the section. There were also candidates with some good knowledge on topic 6 (Developments in South Africa), especially Question 11.

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

It was impressive to see that all questions were dealt with by this session's cohort. However, candidates need to work on the consistency of their critical commentary if they are to attain marks in the uppermost bands. On the whole, essay structure was better and where questions had two parts or expected candidates to deal with two areas or issues, there was a more obvious attempt to deal with both aspects and not just offer some vague generalizations about the "second" part of the question. By and large, these questions were done well by candidates, many of whom tied up everything neatly in the conclusion.

Higher level paper three – Americas

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-6	7-12	13-18	19-24	25-30	31-36	37-60

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

For the most part, candidates appeared to understand the questions and their demands although a number of issues did occasionally arise. Firstly, there was a failure to confine the response to domestic or foreign policy as instructed; secondly, there was a failure to limit the response to the time period specified; and, thirdly, there was a tendency to answer a pre-determined question, rather than the one posed for the examination.

In terms of the G2s, the only question that produced a number of complaints was Q19 regarding the application of Truman's policy of containment in the Americas. The concern was over whether candidates would be given consideration for discussion of containment in the Americas **after** the Truman era. This issue was addressed in the markscheme for examiners who were instructed that post-Truman examples were to be considered as worthy as those only occurring during the Truman administration.

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

The candidates appeared to address a wider range of questions than on any other examination within recent memory. There also was a general balance as to questions being chosen from different eras of history as well as the various academic disciplines of history.

There were relatively few instances of candidates addressing fewer than three questions and very few instances of a question addressed solely on the basis of knowledge from outside the region of the Americas.

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

Question 1

The characteristics of two independence movements in the Americas were not frequently selected but did produce some responses of commendable depth, both as to specific knowledge and analysis. However, there were also many responses that were highly generalized, narrative or dealt with causes rather than characteristics. Answers most often

referenced Mexico, Brazil and Venezuela. There were some instances of candidates attempting to apply the Mexican Revolution or Castro's Revolution.

Question 2

Most candidates agreed with the premise that US support for independence movements was motivated by self-interest, though quite a few also cited the Monroe Doctrine as evidence of some idealism. Responses represented a wide range of quality. Examples ranged from the early 19th century to the Cuban Revolution against Spain. A few candidates attempted to apply Castro's revolution as an independence movement.

Question 3

A limited number of candidates explored the effects of the War of 1812. Those who did generally focused more on the US than on Canada, but there were a significant percentage of high quality responses that demonstrated a quite balanced analysis.

Question 4

Few candidates addressed new nations' impact on social and economic conditions of minority elements and the essays were often highly generalized and superficial. Quite a few candidates addressed the colonial era rather than that of nationhood.

Question 5

The statement that Lincoln's election was the catalyst for the Civil War was one of the most popular questions and produced a wide range of quality in the responses. Most candidates provided substantial context for the growth of North versus South hostility, but only a minority were able to show relevance to the 1860 election, Lincoln and the coming of war. Weaker responses largely ignored the issue of the election while stronger answers directly linked the election to secession and the attack at Ft. Sumter. A surprisingly large number of candidates asserted that it was Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation that caused the war.

Question 6

Most candidates concurred that African-Americans obtained relatively few advances from their contributions to the Civil War. The choice was both popular and ably answered to a significant extent with demonstration of in-depth knowledge as to the conditions faced during Reconstruction. There were a few candidates that successfully challenged the statement with understanding that some gains were achieved. Some candidates allowed their responses to drift into the post-1945 era.

Question 7

Essays on the role of women from 1865 to 1929 were rather frequent and represented a wide range of quality. Too many provided only a generalized account, but some provided specific evidence to show the transition toward women's rights during this era. The choice of country was almost always the US.

Question 8

Surprisingly, only a few candidates choose to discuss the achievements of Theodore Roosevelt and few if any addressed the role of Wilfred Laurier. Responses on Roosevelt were generally weak and limited mostly to foreign policy aspects of his presidency. There were a few who confused Theodore Roosevelt with Franklin D Roosevelt.

Question 9

Comparison and contrast of the Big Stick and of Moral Diplomacy was not a very frequently chosen question. Most candidates were fairly sound in their knowledge of the Big Stick and applied relevant examples, but were considerably less-informed as to Moral Diplomacy. There was a tendency to discuss the two policies only in theory, applying few historical examples of the policy in practice. Seldom were the responses constructed in a comparison and contrast format.

Question 10

Many candidates responded to the premise that the US entered the First World War for economic reasons, but very few supported this contention. Responses were often fairly well-developed, advancing a multi-causation thesis with good depth of support. Most combined economic causes linked to trade and loans along with the sinking of the Lusitania and the Zimmerman Note.

Question 11

The question as to whether Zapata or Villa was the more revolutionary was not selected frequently but usually produced an essay with a narrative emphasis. The heavy consensus of opinion was that Zapata's land reform efforts were the more revolutionary. Knowledge of Villa was more narrative and focused on his actions rather than his ideology or policies.

Question 12

The impact of US efforts to influence the Mexican Revolution was infrequently answered and when it was, with largely mediocre results. Too often, the essays were a narrative of the Mexican Revolution with little focus on either US actions or their impact. There were some exceptions that demonstrated a thorough understanding of US intervention efforts and their consequences.

Question 13

The nature and effectiveness of Hoover or Bennett's response to the Great Depression was rather popular, but with Hoover being the common choice. Candidates were fairly knowledgeable as to Hoover's philosophy but less aware of his gradual transition toward intervention. There were many essays focused on the causes of the depression or which quickly dismissed Hoover and wrote about the programs of Franklin D Roosevelt. Those few who chose Bennett were generally adequate but seldom exceptional.

Question 14

The response of Latin American governments to the Great Depression was not selected with great frequency, but the essays were often of good to excellent quality. The choice producing the most knowledge was Brazil, but a few candidates chose Argentina with adequate results. Unfortunately, some attempted to apply Peron in Argentina.

Question 15

The social impact of the Second World War on minorities in one country was popular and almost always focused on the US. Unfortunately, there were quite a number of essays that developed only one minority (usually Japanese-Americans). Responses exhibited a wide range of knowledge and analysis. Some responses extended the content well past the 1945 limit.

Question 16

A minimal number of candidates agreed that the economic and diplomatic effects of the Second World War were few. The focus was almost always on the US and knowledge of the economic impact was quite sound. Awareness of the diplomatic impact was significantly less and there were quite a few responses that addressed issues past 1945.

Question 17

Few candidates chose to respond to the theory that Nixon was a substantial initiator of reform. Those who did generally agreed or provided a balanced analysis supported by evidence. Too many strayed into foreign policy discussions, which was not part of the question.

Question 18

The extent to which Castro retained power due to political repression was not chosen with great frequency but led to a wide range of quality in the essays. The most successful demonstrated evidence of repression, but also cited, for example, social reform, charisma, attacks on the US as contributing factors to his longevity. There were some instances in which political repression was interpreted as US policy toward Cuba. There were also quite a few cases of narratives of the Castro Revolution.

Question 19

The application of Truman's policy of containment in the Americas was rather popular but often mishandled. Too many dwelt on containment in Europe and Asia. There were a good number of responses that appropriately developed US actions in Chile, Guatemala and Cuba (as well as the Red Scare in the US). Examiners were alerted to the fact that material from the post-Truman containment era was to be considered of equal potential to that from the Truman administration only.

Question 20

The domestic effects of the Vietnam War in the US was a quite popular choice, producing a wide range of quality in the responses. Many candidates had difficulty limiting their answers to

domestic effects and thus had a limited focus on the demands of the question. There were some essays that demonstrated a wide range of the domestic effects dealing with, for example, attitudes toward authority, the impact of the media, protests and music.

Question 21

Evaluation of the effectiveness of tactics in the African American Civil Rights Movement was one of the most common choices and typically produced a considerable range of quality in the responses. Weaker answers provided only a limited narrative of events or compared the effect of Martin Luther King's tactics against those of Malcolm X. Stronger responses considered the tactics of specific organizations, individuals and institutions as well as how these changed over time, along with the specific achievements (or failures) of these efforts.

Question 22

The achievements of feminist movements after 1945 was not a frequent choice with the focus rather exclusively on the US. Commentary was often narrative and generalized but there were also excellent essays containing substantial detail of both facts and analysis.

Question 23

There were only one or two candidates who chose to compare and contrast Presidents Bush and Clinton. When attempted the focus was on the foreign policy of Bush and more evenly divided as to foreign and domestic for Clinton.

Question 24

The impact of technological development on popular culture was generally discussed in reference to the US but there were exceptions where candidates addressed various countries of Latin America. Only a few instances of responses were exceptional, but a significant number were adequate. The technology most often applied was the internet, computers, mobile phones and personal music devices. Unfortunately, there were many who wrote about technology with no focus on how popular culture was affected.

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	19-25	26-31	32-38	39-60

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. Please note that the IB currently uses Pinyin (with Wade-Giles in parentheses) but, in history, will move to using Pinyin only from May 2017.

Several of the G2 written comments indicated that the respondents felt question 19 on Mao's leadership between 1949 and 1976 was too broad. If all the bullet points in section 10 had been taught then it was manageable and the evidence of the actual responses in the examination demonstrated this, because for the majority of candidates who chose this question it was their strongest response.

Others did not like the exclusions in question 10, and argued the excluded examples were perfectly appropriate. However, the question was based on the last bullet point of section 5, which states that countries *other* than those already named in the section must be used. As such, it was felt that adding the exclusions would prevent candidates from submitting responses that could not be accepted by the examiners.

As for paper 2 and the other regional options in paper 3, 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 1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 12 and 14.

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 3 and 8.

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. Others did not have a strong sense of chronology and context. In addition to this, some candidates ignored the timeframe given in the question and consequently did not score highly, while others spent too on long background information in their responses particularly in questions.

Many candidates referred to historians by name but in a forced and unnatural manner. 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.

Jung Chang was used frequently, but her 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 21 or about propaganda in Mao's China for question 24.

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

It was 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. Many candidates were able to structure thematic responses. Many candidates displayed a comprehensive knowledge of a range of topics. Many candidates 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 reasons why the 1911 revolution occurred in China (7); the strengths and weaknesses of the Taisho democracy (13); and the achievements and failures of Mao's leadership (19). 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

Comments are only provided on the most popular questions.

Question 1

There were few responses to this question and, overall, they were mixed in quality. Only a few candidates were able to identify the changing nature of British East India Company rule from trading company to agent of imperialism and explain the dual nature of the British government and British East India Company rule prior to 1857. Less developed responses did not really come to grips with the question and were often rote-learned responses about the causes of the Great Revolt (Indian Mutiny).

Question 3

This was a popular question, but, overall, it was not done well. Some candidates understood about the internal challenges of corruption, taxation, population growth and rebellions in the latter stages of Qianlong's (Ch'ien-lung's) rule (1735-1790) and during Jiaqing's (Chia-ch'ing's) time (1796-1820), but most candidates just concentrated on the external challenges of the Western demands for trade. Many candidates tended to be rather descriptive and/or narrative about the trade missions, the Chinese tribute system and the opium trade. The cut-off date of 1820 was often ignored, particularly by those candidates who wrote a rote-learned response about the causes of the First Opium War.

Question 4

A significant number of candidates chose this question, but only a few managed to write a balanced response that dealt with both China and Japan. Many candidates overlooked the key word, "consequences" and fell into the trap of giving too much descriptive/narrative background material about events prior to the unequal treaties in both countries.

Question 5

This question was chosen by a small number of candidates, but nearly all went beyond the timeframe of the question and discussed the Second World War and the Japanese occupation.

Question 7

This was a very popular question and, generally, it was done well. Most candidates attempted to look at both long- and short-term reasons in some measure as well as discussing the role of Sun Yixian (Sun Yatsen). Less developed responses did not demonstrate much knowledge about events in between the Boxer Rebellion and railway crisis at Wuhan, the accidental bomb blast and the beginning of the revolution.

Question 8

A significant number of candidates chose this question, but many responses got bogged down in background material about the Meiji reforms and did not spend enough time actually addressing the issue raised by the question. The key phrase "challenge the power" was not clearly defined and less developed responses only discussed the Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War without analysing the consequences with regard to Japan/Western relations prior to and during the First World War. The timeframe for this question was 'the early 20th century', but too many candidates did not really come to grips with the question. Some even wrote a rote-learned response about the rise of Japanese militarism in the 1930s and the build up to Pearl Harbor.

Question 9

This question was quite a popular choice. Many responses to this question were narrative in style and only concentrated on the role of the Muslim League and Jinnah. Very few candidates really examined the complexity of the issues and the events in the 1930s and during and after the Second World War. Many candidates misunderstood partition for independence and wrote

lengthy and detailed accounts of the struggle for independence rather than discuss the implications of the communal differences. More developed responses did explain in depth the reasons for communal differences by referring to political leaders, the goals of the political parties, as well as the “divide and rule” policies of the British.

Question 10

There were a small number of responses to this question. Malaya, Thailand and the Philippines were the most popular choices. Overall, it was done quite well, particularly by those candidates who wrote about Malaya. Some candidates erroneously chose Indonesia, Vietnam, China and Korea.

Question 11

This was a very popular question, but overall it was not done particularly well. Knowledge about the impact of the 21 Demands was limited and candidates found it hard to link this event and the New Culture Movement, the Treaty of Versailles and the May 4th Movement. Too many candidates just wrote about the weaknesses of Yuan Shikai’s (Yuan Shih-kai’s) government. Most candidates dealt with the political effects and the vacuum created by warlordism, but many did not discuss the cultural impact and its contribution to Chinese nationalism.

Question 12

This was also a very popular question, but most candidates just concentrated on Jiang Jieshi’s (Chiang Kai-shek’s) attempts to unify China and the conflict between the Guomindang, GMD (Kuomintang, KMT) and the Chinese Communist Party, CCP. Only a relatively small number of stronger responses were able to discuss and give concrete details about Jiang’s attempts to modernize China, such as the way he dealt with international treaties, banking, industrialization, education and other social reforms. Some less developed responses confused Jiang’s rule 1927–1937 with the later period 1945–1949.

Question 13

A significant number of candidates chose this question and many did it quite well. The stronger responses explained the implications of the Peace Preservation law, the impact of the Great Kanto Earthquake and the economic policies. Many discussed Japan’s international role as a strength. A few candidates seemed to mistake Taisho for Meiji. Again, a small number wrote a rote-learned response about the rise of Japanese militarism in the 1930s and the build up to Pearl Harbor.

Question 14

There were only a few responses to this question. Those who did attempt it generally tried to turn it into a discussion about political and economic reform. There was not much detailed knowledge about social and cultural reforms demonstrated. Stronger responses that did focus on the question mainly discussed education and women’s rights.

Question 17

The biggest problem for this question was that most candidates wrote about the wrong Gandhi! Most chose Mohandas Gandhi rather than Rajiv Gandhi. These candidates had obviously not been instructed as to which sections they had studied and the corresponding questions on the examination paper. Those candidates who did write about Rajiv Gandhi generally produced less developed responses because they were very narrative.

Question 18

There were a few responses to this question: the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore were the popular choices. Generally this question was done well, but less developed responses tended to be narrative/descriptive and discussed political developments rather than address social and economic developments. Some candidates erroneously chose Korea and Japan.

Question 19

This was the most popular question on the paper. It was accessible and most candidates clearly understood the question and attempted both parts. Many candidates answered it thematically by firstly identifying Mao's achievements and then his failures. Many candidates concentrated on economic issues, but a significant number looked at foreign policy, social change and Mao's consolidation of power as well.

Question 20

There were a few responses to this question, but some candidates confused Jiang Zemin and Deng Xiaoping. Overall, it was done poorly.

Question 21

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 really address the question and go beyond 1952, 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 significant number of candidates who wrote about propaganda in Mao's China, but very few identified actual films, music or literature. Most responses contained generalized statements and insufficient evidence, only a few were more developed with specific details about the arts during the Cultural Revolution. There were, however, some strong responses with very specific references to film, music and literature in Thailand or the Philippines.

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

Candidates found the questions with a specific timeframe or a specific historical aspect the most challenging and tended to approach them in a very general manner. This was particularly the case with Question 11 where many seemed to not understand the term “diplomatic crises” and wrote about the causes of the First World War in general terms and the events of July 1914.

For questions 12 and 19 some candidates conflated the two world wars.

In question 15 candidates tended to focus on Hitler’s rise to power with limited knowledge of the politics of the period from 1929 to 1933.

Questions 23 and 24 were often misunderstood and candidates did not focus on the social importance of religion in the case of question 23. For question 24, there sometimes analysis but it was unsupported with specific evidence.

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

There was often very good knowledge for topics such as the French Revolution, the unification of Italy, Russian history in both the 19th and 20th centuries (with the exception of Stalin’s foreign policy), Weimar Germany and some of the areas of Middle Eastern History.

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

Comments are only provided on the most popular questions.

Question 1

The majority of answers had a good knowledge of the structure of the *ancien régime* and were able to identify social problems and discuss their importance as a cause of the revolution. Weaker answers were descriptive and made general statements about the lifestyle of the monarchy or the impact of the Enlightenment without making links to social problems. They did not understand the role of the bourgeoisie making the assumption that the Third Estate were all starving peasants.

Question 3

Some very good answers that demonstrated a good understanding of Austria's decline and the reasons for it emerged. There was some good knowledge but many candidates limited their focus to the Zollverein as a reason for decline. A significant minority insisted on discussing Bismarck and the wars of unification when the end date was 1848.

Question 4

There were many good responses to this question: candidates showed extensive knowledge and were able to weigh the importance of Garibaldi against the significance of the role of Cavour and even Mazzini. In weaker answers there was an uncritical assumption that Garibaldi was the main force in Italian unification or there was limited accurate knowledge of events after 1861.

Question 9

This was a very popular question and there were some very good answers with analysis of political continuity and economic change supported by detailed evidence. Some candidates considered the overall continuity between the two reigns and the desire to maintain autocracy. Others considered changes in direction in the reign of Alexander II. Frequently there was more knowledge on Alexander II than Alexander III. However a significant number of answers took the "good Tsar"/"bad Tsar" approach with a lengthy narrative of Alexander II's reforms and an uncritical approach. It is worth noting that Emancipation did not radically alter the social structure of Russia merely the legal status of the peasantry.

Question 10

This was a popular question with some excellent answers on the issues facing the Provisional Government and how they dealt with key issues such as continuing with the war and the land question. This was balanced with discussion of the effective leadership of the Bolsheviks by Lenin who seized opportunities presented to him. However a surprising number did not comment on the role and importance of the Soviets as an alternative source of power. In some cases the responses did not focus on the Provisional government but focused on the Tsar, his family and Rasputin.

Question 11

A popular question for which there were some high quality responses that were able to link the "diplomatic crises" to the outbreak of the war. However far too many answered this as a causes of the war question, using the mnemonic MAIN (Militarism, Alliances, Imperialism and Nationalism) this would be fine as long as there was also links made to diplomatic crises. Factual inaccuracy undermined some answers, for example, some claimed that Serbia wanted independence from Austria-Hungary and that the Alliance system was set up by Bismarck.

Question 12

A very popular question, with some very good answers identifying a whole range of factors from the failure of the Schlieffen Plan to the importance of the Home Front. Others also considered

the weakness of the other Central Powers and how this helped lead to defeat. Some responses were much more focused on detailed military events without making links to the question and far too many thought the sinking of the Lusitania 1915 was the cause of US entry into the war in 1917.

Question 13

There were several responses to this question, many of which focused too much on wartime policies and agreements such as the Hussein-McMahon correspondence and the Balfour Declaration when the focus should have been on the various White Papers. Many candidates struggled to find any positive aspects to British policy.

Question 14

This was not a very popular question and many answers made highly general statements about Atatürk's rule without offering any real critical analysis. For example the attempts to create a secular state were illustrated by the ban on traditional dress. Some better answers were able to discuss the limits to democracy and make the point that many reforms did not have a significant impact throughout Turkey.

Question 15

This question was very popular but, on the whole, it was not answered very well. Candidates had a limited knowledge of the political events of the period from 1929 to 1933. Very few were able to see that divisions amongst the more moderate parties led to weakness in policy making that contributed support for extremist parties. Many answers were very simplistic in their approach, arguing, for example, that Versailles led directly to the rise of Hitler, and that the economic crisis made the rise of extremism inevitable. A number were unable to differentiate between the various governments and the Republic and there were also frequent factual errors: there was no hyperinflation at this time and Hitler did not gain a majority in the Reichstag. It is important that candidates have some in-depth knowledge of the whole Weimar period in order to respond successfully to questions.

Question 16

There were some good answers for this question, focusing not only on the various "battles" but also other domestic policies such as consolidation of power, relations with the Church and the Corporate state, with analysis of the successes and failures being fully developed. Weaker responses tended to describe the various battles with limited assessment of their success. Candidates need to be made aware of all Mussolini's policies.

Question 17

This was reasonably popular but responses demonstrated a significant lack of knowledge with regard to Stalin's Foreign Policy. On the whole most only knew about the 1939 Nazi-Soviet Pact, there was little or no knowledge of attempts to form a Popular Front, activities in Spain, Mutual Assistance Pacts and so on. A number of responses fell back on writing about domestic policies such as the Five Year Plans or referred to Stalin's actions in the wartime and post war

conference when the end date in the question was 1941. There is clear reference to Stalin's foreign policy in the guide.

Question 18

A question for which there were numerous responses, with most candidates clearly aware of the economic weaknesses in the Soviet Union after the Brezhnev Era. They knew Gorbachev's policies and some were clearly aware of the consequences of these on politics within the Soviet Union and were able to weigh up the relative importance of economic issues against other issues right up to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1919. However many answers focused on the breakup of the Soviet Bloc, which was not the question set. The final bullet in the guide is the "Transformation of the Soviet Union: political developments and change (1882–2000).

Question 19

There were some comprehensive answers to this question with a solid focus on where poor leadership contributed to ultimate defeat (Dunkirk, the Battle of Britain, Italian campaigns in the Mediterranean and Operation Barbarossa) as well as other factors such as availability of resources and/or the strength of Russian resistance. Some candidates were too focused on the detail of the military campaigns and lost the overall picture. Weaker answers contained very limited analysis and were content with basic statements about the Germans being caught by surprise by the Russian winter.

Question 20

There were very few responses in English but Spanish responses demonstrated a good knowledge of events prior to the establishment of democracy in Spain and were able to make effective comments on the role of King Juan Carlos.

Question 22

There was generally good knowledge of the various conflicts; however, analysis was undeveloped and there were several assertions about "Arab disunity" and "Israeli morale" that had little to no supporting evidence. There were limited links as to how this contributed to military dominance.

Question 23

In most cases, candidates did not answer this well as they chose to answer on how authoritarian states altered the position of religion within the state. There were some good answers from Spanish-language candidates who were able to make clear points about the decline of religion within society.

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

- All of the bullets in each section (and all aspects within the bullets) need to be covered. Teachers should discourage “question spotting” and candidates should not make assumptions about what topics will appear in questions.
- Candidates should be made clearly aware of the chronology of their taught program and the sections of the guide that are relevant. There would then be fewer instances of candidates answering in the wrong timeframe or on the wrong person.
- When revising for the exams candidates should have plenty of practice identifying the focus of questions. This would ensure that they answer the question set and not ones they have practiced.
- Candidates should be made familiar with the command terms as published in the guide and how they give them a steer on how to approach individual questions.
- Most importantly candidates should have plenty of practice in supporting their analysis with precise and detailed historical knowledge.