

May 2017 subject reports

HISTORY

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level Africa and the Middle East

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 23	24 - 34	35 - 47	48 - 61	62 - 73	74 - 100

Higher level Americas

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 23	24 - 34	35 - 47	48 - 61	62 - 73	74 - 100

Higher level Asia and Oceania

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 23	24 - 34	35 - 47	48 - 61	62 - 73	74 - 100

Higher level Europe

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 23	24 - 34	35 - 47	48 - 60	61 - 73	74 - 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 12	13 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 48	49 - 62	63 - 76	77 - 100

Higher and standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-2	3-5	6-8	9-12	13-15	16-19	20-25

The range and suitability of the work submitted

While the new style IA did not present major issues for most centres, several schools submitted work that followed the old IA format. Also, some candidates complied with the new structure but did not seem to understand what was required of them in each section. This was particularly evident in the treatment of Section 3 (Criterion C – see below).

Topics were, overall, suitable and interesting and included a wide range of issues on international, national and local history. However, some Internal Assessments broke the ten-year rule by focusing on events taking place after 2007. Although most topics were appropriate, many research questions formulated by candidates would have benefitted from a clearer focus.

A few candidates exceeded the word limit of 2,200 words and compromised their performance in Section 3 (Criterion C) as examiners are instructed not to read or award marks for material beyond the word limit.

Candidate performance against each section

Section 1—Criterion A:

In this section candidates are expected to:

- clearly state an appropriate research question
- identify and select appropriate relevant sources
- explain why the sources are relevant to the investigation
- analyse and evaluate two sources with explicit reference to their origin, purpose and content.

A surprising number of candidates did not state the research question **as a question** (see History Guide page 86) on either the title page or within Section 1 and lost marks for this omission. Several research questions were too broad or did not encourage an analytic approach to the topic but a narrative of events. The six key concepts for History (causation, consequence, continuity, change, significance and perspectives) can help candidates think of topics more critically and structure research questions that avoid a narrative approach.

To reach the top band (5–6 marks), candidates must clearly explain the relevance of two selected sources to their investigation. This requirement was met by a small number of candidates only. Most candidates presented their research question and then proceeded to evaluate two sources without explaining the reasons for their choice.

Although the evaluation of sources is a familiar task, there is still room for improvement in how this is approached. Candidates must use the origins, purpose and content of each source as supporting evidence to evaluate the values and limitations of historical sources for the topic under investigation. There were many candidates who mentioned these elements but only referred to the values and limitations hastily at the end. Some candidates also made a poor choice of sources and claimed that a source was limited in that it offered insufficient information on the topic.

Not all sources evaluated in this Section were identified clearly. Although it is permissible for candidates to refer to “Source A” or “Source 1” in their evaluation, the full details of each source must be offered within the Section. This can be done either using a heading for each evaluation, the use of footnotes with full details, or by including the full title, author and date of publication explicitly when discussing the origins of each source. Some candidates lacked detailed knowledge of the sources and included unsupported assertions.

Section 2—Criterion B:

In this section, candidates are expected to:

- offer a coherent and effectively organized investigation
- offer well-developed critical analysis that is focused clearly on the research question
- offer evidence from a wide range of sources in support of the arguments
- evaluate perspectives
- arrive at a reasoned and consistent conclusion.

The integration of evidence and analysis into one section was a new feature that worked well. Most candidates produced material that was generally clear and well organized. However, in cases where the research questions were not clearly focused (see Section 1), the investigations were vague and lacked depth. Some candidates included lengthy background material related to the general topic that did not focus on the specific research question. This approach did not allow for the development of critical analysis or encourage consideration of different perspectives and, consequently, did not score well.

The effectiveness of the use of sources as evidence varied considerably. It is important for candidates to understand that the range of sources included in this section must be used effectively to support the arguments offered. While some candidates made efficient use of several sources, offering different perspectives on their investigation, others only summarized the two sources evaluated in Section 1 and included a few citations from other sources. Integration between the evidence from the sources and the analysis should be explicit and sources used effectively in support of the arguments.

Although many candidates offered a consistent conclusion in this section, there were also investigations that presented their conclusion in Section 3 (the reflection), where this is not relevant (see Section 3).

Section 3—Criterion C:

The purpose of this section is to offer candidates an opportunity to reflect on what their investigation highlighted to them about the methods used by, and challenges facing, the historian. Candidates are expected to focus on:

- what they learned about the methods employed by historians
- the limitations of the methods employed by historians and the challenges historians encounter
- the connections between the investigation and the reflection.

Some candidates did not seem to have understood the requirements of this Section and approached it as a conclusion. This had a negative impact on their marks for both Section 2 (lack of a conclusion) and Section 3 (misunderstanding of the demands of the section).

Other candidates discussed their personal experiences by, for example, explaining the reasons for their interest in the topics or stating that the investigation taught them to be more organized. Such considerations are not relevant to the methods used and challenges faced by historians and must not be part of this section.

Some candidates clearly focused on what the investigation highlighted to them about the methods and challenges of the work of historians and included explicit connections between the section and the rest of the investigation.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers must ensure that candidates are familiar with the new assessment criteria so that the candidates fully understand what is expected from their work.

The assessment criteria should be made available to candidates early in the process. A group session introducing the Internal Assessment to candidates is highly recommended.

Candidates should be offered guidance in the process of formulating a narrow and focused question that also avoids a narrative approach. If questions are broad, it may become difficult for candidates to effectively address the issue within the word limit.

The 10-year rule means that the event discussed in the Internal Assessment must not have occurred within the previous 10 years. However, the most up-to-date literature and research regarding the event may be used.

The research question should be phrased as a question and included in Section 1.

In Section 1, candidates must explain the relevance to the investigation of the two sources evaluated.

Candidates must explicitly use the origins, purpose and content of each of the sources to evaluate its value and limitations.

In Section 3, candidates must focus on the ways in which their investigation helped them understand the methods used—and the challenges faced—by historians, offering explicit relations between the reflection and the investigation.

The lack of referencing was noted on some samples. Although there is no separate mark for referencing, to comply with the academic honesty policy, it is expected that candidates credit all sources used in their investigation.

Candidates may only use footnotes to reference the sources used and, where necessary, add the original version of a quotation where they have provided their own translation. Additional factual material should not be used in the footnotes as a means of circumventing the word count.

Teachers are **strongly encouraged** to include comments to show the reasoning behind the marks they have awarded their candidates' Internal Assessments.

Higher and standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18	19-24

General comments

The most popular—by far—of the five prescribed subjects was prescribed subject 3: the move to global war. This was selected by considerably more than half of all candidates. The next most popular was prescribed subject 4: rights and protest, which was answered by slightly under a third of all candidates. Disappointingly, very few centres have opted for the remaining prescribed subjects. Particularly lowly were the numbers for prescribed subject 1: military leaders and prescribed subject 2: conquest and its impact. Sadly, several of the responses to both of these sections indicate that they had been answered by mistake; either by candidates opening the paper and ploughing straight into prescribed subject 1, or by those attempting to answer all prescribed subjects but running out of steam—and time—by question 10 (although a handful of candidates managed to offer the briefest of responses to all the questions in the paper).

According to the G2 data that was received, 93.36% of respondents found the paper to be appropriate, with 51.17% finding the paper of a similar difficulty to last year with 19.14 arguing that it was a little more difficult and 5.86% arguing that it was a little easier. However, many respondents did not make a direct comparison between May 2016 and May 2017 due to the differing nature of the papers.

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

The origin, purpose, content, value and limitations question was difficult for some candidates as the format of the question had changed from last year. Many candidates did not comment on content. Too many responses wasted time listing at great length the origin, purpose and content of the sources, but not linking these to the value and limitations of the source (see below for an analysis of issues relating to individual questions).

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

Overall, most candidates seemed well prepared for the new style Paper One. Generally, candidates demonstrated a reasonable understanding of the subject matter of each paper, and of what was required for each style of question. Most candidates demonstrated comprehension and interpretation for the first two questions. In addition, candidates showed an understanding of how to identify comparisons and contrasts between sources for the third question, and had attempted to use the sources as evidence for the fourth question although, in some cases, this

needed to be more explicit. Most candidates responded to all four questions. This suggests that candidates have been well prepared with regards to the distribution of time for each question. It may also suggest that the new programme, with four rather than five sources and one less evaluation to complete, facilitates this.

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

Questions 1a; 5a; 9a; 13a; 17a.

There were many candidates who achieved all three marks here. Candidates are obviously being well trained to analyse the meaning of a source. However, there were many comments in the examiner reports about answers being too long for the few marks available. In some cases, the candidates “imported” material from their own knowledge which, though perfectly accurate, could not be derived from the actual source.

Questions 1b; 5b; 9b; 13b; 17b.

Candidates were generally very good in conveying the correct message of the visual source. While some time has elapsed since a statistical table has been included as a source on Paper One, candidates were not unduly fazed.

Questions 2; 6; 10; 14; 18.

There was a tendency for some candidates to follow the old curriculum and set out their response as follows: origin, purpose, value and limitation. This caused some problems as many candidates spent considerable time writing on the source’s origin and purpose but without making any reference at all to potential values and limitations. It was common to see reference to values and limitations only appearing in the second half of a candidate’s answer. Candidates also often missed one of the three requirements (origin, purpose and content) in their analysis of their relationship to possible values and limitations. There was far too much descriptive and narrative writing in the weaker responses. Regrettably, there were still many instances of the candidates’ evident belief that primary evidence is inherently more valuable than secondary material. There was also some confusion shown when differentiating the content from the purpose of the source.

Questions 3; 7; 11; 15; 19.

Many candidates identified the similarities and the differences in both sources with the better responses linking them in a running, point by point approach. However, some candidates cited only one comparison and one contrast instead of multiple examples for each. There were many responses where candidates had not drawn links between the sources and had instead provided two separate analyses with an attempt to draw a conclusion that was bolted on to the end. Responses such as these cannot attain high marks for this question. Many candidates referred to the wording of the question but too many repeated the same points again and again or simply listed the content of the sources without explicit comparison or contrast. Weaker answers tended simply to provide a summary of what the two sources said, leaving the reader to infer possible comparisons and contrasts between the sources. The more effective

responses not only clearly identified such comparisons and contrasts, but also supported them with explicit references to the relevant passages within the sources.

Questions 4; 8; 12; 16; 20.

Most candidates had attempted this final question—more than in the previous iteration of this paper, which suggests some improvement in time management. However, some responses lacked focus on the question and many candidates' responses lacked any own knowledge. Some answers failed to gain many marks because they simply provided a (sometimes lengthy) description of each of the sources, without clearly relating the material therein to the Question. The more rewarding answers were characterized by a focused and sustained application of the sources directly to the question, supported by the inclusion of relevant own knowledge. However, please note that too many candidates continue to rely on implicit source references and do not refer to the source explicitly.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Provide all candidates with the May 2017 source booklet and question paper to familiarize them with the new format. However, please reinforce the message that the mark scheme is a tool for examiners and not a teaching aid. Its format must not be adopted in candidates' responses, which we strongly encourage candidates to write in continuous prose.

Emphasize to all candidates that they should answer the questions on only one of the prescribed subjects. Some candidates may have answered the incorrect prescribed subject by mistake, or they may have been swayed by what they perceived to be a more appealing set of sources. However, in the final question, these candidates are limiting themselves, as they do not have the own knowledge that is required to fully analyse the sources.

Questions 1a; 5a; 9a; 13a; 17a. Encourage candidates to find three separate points, and avoid rolling points together or summarizing the source in one developed point.

Questions 1b; 5b; 9b; 13b; 17b. Candidates should identify two distinct points and ensure that they link their comments to the source's content and, where appropriate, its title.

Questions 2; 6; 10; 14; 18. Candidates must be taught to make sure that the origin, purpose and content of the source are used as supporting evidence to make relevant comments on the source's value and limitations. The emphasis must be on the value and the limitations of the source using the other three indicators as supporting evidence.

Questions 3; 7; 11; 15; 19. Candidates should practice identifying comparisons and contrasts between the two sources. They should understand that they are required to find more than one comparison and one contrast between the sources to reach the upper mark bands.

Questions 4; 8; 12; 16; 20. It would be useful to continue to offer guidance on the amount of time candidates should spend on each question to ensure candidates have sufficient time to

write comprehensive responses for the fourth question, which is now worth nine marks and constitutes over a third of the total marks for this paper. Candidates should be advised that the mark band descriptors assess the following: focus on the question, effective use of sources and synthesis of own knowledge. Candidates are expected to give explicit source references whenever possible. Implicit references can sometimes get lost in the general discourse.

Higher and standard level paper 2

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-4	5-8	9-10	11-14	15-19	20-23	24-30

General comments

For Paper 2, the changes in this new specification for history were quite significant with topics ranging from (to use European terminology) the early middle ages to the 20th century. This allowed for a greater opportunity for teachers and candidates to focus on areas of expertise and interest. There were two questions per topic but both were non-specific, thus allowing candidates to select and then use their knowledge effectively. To assist teachers and candidates, the History Guide includes a thorough outline of themes to be covered in each topic and these are an indication of the terminology that will be used in examination questions and the content that should be covered when teaching candidates. It was pleasing that, for the most part, candidates seemed well prepared according to the demands of the new curriculum. Nevertheless, non-specific questions may prove to be more challenging for less able candidates, and teaching strategies that help candidates to select the most relevant material are strongly encouraged.

Across the range of available questions, it was pleasing to see that all of them were answered in both the English and Spanish papers. For English, this ranged from 74 responses to Question 4 to 18,074 responses to Question 24. For Spanish, it was from 61 responses to Question 2 through to 2,141 responses (again) for Question 24. In both the French and German versions of the paper there was a concentration in the number of responses between Question 19 and Question 24, although there were several responses to many—although not all—other questions as well.

In all languages, there was a wide range in the quality of the material that was seen by examiners; however, in some responses it was difficult to ascertain what the candidate was trying to express. It was apparent that some of these candidates did not have as sure a grasp of the language in which they wrote their responses as might be hoped and, as such, they had difficulty in expressing their ideas with clarity.

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

Although most candidates were able to answer two questions, each from a different topic, some struggled to use the material they had studied effectively. There were some rubric offences this year with a small number of candidates answering two questions from the same topic or selecting rulers/states from the same region when the question specifically demanded that examples be chosen from different regions. It may be that having two questions to choose from made it rather difficult for candidates who had hoped to minimise their revision to the two world

wars, for example, and then found that the questions asked specifically for civil wars. It is very important, considering the new guidelines, that candidates are encouraged to revise appropriate examples that would fit all the bullet points for the topics that they have studied.

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

Most candidates were able to structure an effective response using a clear and coherent essay structure. Best practice—that candidates refer to their chosen question in the opening paragraph—has clearly been widely taught. Similarly, almost all responses demonstrated at least some understanding of the demands of the question and candidates attempted to use their knowledge effectively.

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

Only the questions that have been answered most frequently will be dealt with in the following segment.

Topic 1

Question 1

A few candidates attempted this question using their national history. However, some of them did not appear to know that the Spanish conquest did not happen until after 1400, therefore, providing an example of little value in the case of the Americas.

Topic 2

Question 3

Examples chosen by candidates were appropriate and there was some detailed discussion of various methods of warfare: from the mobile attacks of the Mongols to the siege warfare practiced both in Europe and in the Middle East.

Topic 3

Question 5

Responses by candidates who had been taught this topic were well constructed and detailed, demonstrating a sound knowledge of the chosen rulers that, in some instances, were from the dynasty. In weaker responses, candidates tended to narrate the rule of leaders rather than demonstrating a clear focus on their rise.

Question 6

In several cases, candidates tended to describe challenges that any ruler could face rather than outlining specific challenges to their power.

Topic 4

Question 8

For the most part, responses were rather weak. However, there were a few exceptions in which candidates demonstrated sufficient knowledge to effectively discuss the support that religion gave to the states, especially during the Spanish conquest.

Topic 5

Question 9

For candidates who had studied the Spanish conquest, this was a very popular question but it was, by and large, poorly answered.

Question 10

Many responses to this question indicated some confusion over the term "colonial states", interpreting this as meaning the colonizing power (these are referred to as "colonial empires" in the History Guide). As a consequence, many responses scored rather poorly.

Topic 6

Question 12

While there was a healthy number of responses to this question, most candidates referred to modern wars and so the examples were not appropriate.

Topic 7

Question 14

This was a popular question with the examples chosen ranging from Mexico to Japan, although the US and Great Britain were also popular. Most responses demonstrated some knowledge of the process of industrialization and made some attempt to discuss the social and political impact, although for the most part, this lacked detailed understanding. For example, mention was made of child labour, but knowledge of laws passed to limit or abolish this was not included. Similarly, very few candidates were able to link urbanization to the growth of trade unions and to democracy.

Topic 8

Question 15

Most responses used India or Vietnam as one of the given examples. However, as these were from the same region, there was often some difficulty in finding another example. In addition to this, there was some confusion over the chronology of independence in South Africa, where it was assumed that independence came after the end of apartheid or, indeed, that Fidel Castro brought independence to Cuba.

Question 16

As with Question 15, Cuba under Castro was used as an example of a country that suffered political problems as one of the main challenges during its first 10 years of independence. It seemed that candidates had not fully understood that the question asked about (and the topic is about) independence movements.

Topic 9

Question 17

This was a popular question with candidates mostly choosing to discuss Weimar Germany. However, they neglected to focus on the period prior to 1918/1919 and, instead, described the emergence of the NSDAP which was, surely, the antithesis of "demand for democratic reform". South Africa was also a popular choice and, in most responses, there was sufficient knowledge to outline the demand for equal voting rights and an end to apartheid.

Question 18

Although several responses were encountered during marking, none demonstrated sufficient knowledge to support relevant analysis. Examples ranged from Mexico to Japan (though mostly the US) but the impression was of candidates cobbling together vague ideas rather than having been taught this topic. One response demonstrated confusion between "isolationism" and "industrialization".

Topic 10

Question 19

This was a very popular question, with most candidates choosing Hitler and Mao as examples. A few chose Stalin, although he did not preside over the emergence of an authoritarian state and so was not an appropriate example. In previous sessions, candidates have usually been able to present a reasonable response on the rise to power of Hitler or Mao but this session it seemed that knowledge of the rise to power of Hitler was rather limited. Very few candidates referred to the events of 1930–33/1934, which would have been a suitable endpoint to the emergence of an authoritarian state.

Question 20

Again, a very popular question for which most candidates chose states from different regions. Although the question specifically mentioned "authoritarian state", most candidates built their responses around leaders such as Castro, Mao or Hitler. This was quite acceptable as in many ways, as authoritarian leaders, they embodied the state. Most candidates addressed the command term with an effective compare and contrast structure, doing their utmost to stay on task.

Topic 11

Question 21

A very popular question with most candidates discussing the Spanish Civil War and the Chinese Civil War. In general, knowledge of the impact of foreign involvement upon the outcome of the Spanish Civil War was good although, as with other popular questions on the 20th century, not as detailed as usual and with some rather tentative analysis. Other appropriate examples included the Russian Civil War, the Nicaraguan Revolution, the Vietnam War (also the Indochinese War) and the Korean War.

Question 22

Another very popular question, however, only a few responses went beyond some general assertions about the role and status of women. Unfortunately, candidates still tend to revert to inaccurate generalizations when dealing with the topic of women. A frequently seen example of this is the suggestion that before the First World War, women rarely left the house and immediately on its cessation returned to their roles as housewives. Apparently, they would not emerge again until they started to work in factories during the Second World War.

Nevertheless, some detailed responses discussed the varying impact of war upon women as casualties and victims in some countries and contrasted this with that of increased employment in others. In some cases, candidates referred to the post-war impact of the Chinese Civil War, explaining how this war resulted in women being given, in theory, a new status in society.

Although mentioned in the History Guide in this topic, few candidates demonstrated more than a vague impression of the impact of wars upon women suggesting they had not studied this in any detail.

Topic 12

Question 23

There were fewer responses than expected to this question on the outbreak of the Cold War and the level of knowledge was generally not as thorough as was anticipated. Having said that, some candidates demonstrated sound knowledge of events up to 1949 and were able to refer effectively and concisely to different interpretations posited by historians.

Question 24

As mentioned above, this was the single most popular question among the M17 candidates. However, in very many instances, it is clear that candidates would have preferred to discuss Cold War crises (as demonstrated by the focus on events such as the Berlin Blockade and the Cuban Missile Crisis in most of the responses seen). Although such events were relevant, the question asked for a more general overview of the impact of the Cold War. There were some very good responses that used detailed knowledge of how Cold War politics influenced, for example, India or Afghanistan. In some cases, attempts were made to widen a discussion of the Korean or Vietnam War to say something about the impact on the population and on post-war politics, but these were in the minority. Too often, candidates demonstrated a rather limited

understanding of the context for the "crises" they narrated. In some instances, candidates focused on the impact of certain events upon the superpowers and, as such, their responses lacked focus.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

While many teachers have prepared their candidates admirably for this paper, we would encourage all teachers to pay close attention to the History Guide, and to carefully guide their candidates through the relevant topics; considering the preamble at the beginning of each topic and all parts of each bullet point in the prescribed content. As is undoubtedly already the case, candidates should be encouraged to revise thoroughly so that they can be sure of answering one question from two different topics. It may be that there has been some uncertainty about how much material needs to be taught, or perhaps that, because questions are no longer specific, two states for topic 10 or two wars for topic 11 will suffice. Please discourage candidates from assuming that revising just two examples from different regions will be sufficient to ensure they do well in the exam. They are likely to enter the exam with greater confidence if they have learned sufficient examples to ensure that they are prepared for questions on civil wars as well as inter-state wars, or the emergence of authoritarian states as well as their consolidation. Revising just two wars and two states, for example, may well mean that they are thrown back on using Stalin for Question 19, for instance. As such, candidates run the risk of having only partially answered the question. Similarly, for topic 12, the whole of the Cold War must now be taught to provide candidates with sufficient knowledge to be able to tackle questions that will be based upon the themes listed. Careful planning, taking into consideration overlap with Papers 1 and 3, is a good place to begin. Paper 2 remains an examination paper that allows candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of their chosen period of history and to be able to make meaningful comparisons and contrasts over time periods and different regions. This enables candidates to understand that events do not take place in isolation but are inter-connected. Demonstrating this skill, however, requires good analysis supported by accurate background knowledge that has been thoroughly revised.

Higher and standard level paper three

General comments (for all regions)

A significant number of examiners remarked on the extent to which the candidates' handwriting was so illegible that it hindered their ability to properly discern the extent of knowledge contained in the essays. This is a growing problem that teachers are urged to address well in advance of the examination so that an appropriate resolution can be found. Nevertheless, the quality of the essay structure appears to be gaining some degree of improvement or at least is not in decline and there were fewer narratives or poorly organized responses.

Less positive characteristics were noted in the lack of understanding of both command terms and the terminology used in the guide. Candidates seemed unfamiliar with some of the terminology used in the individual questions despite these terms being found in the guide. This led to many poor, misdirected responses.

Across the four regional papers, there was a range of responses on the G2 forms. For Africa and the Middle East, a clear majority of respondents suggested that the paper was of an appropriate level of difficulty. In addition to this, a majority (albeit less substantial) argued that the paper was of a similar standard to last year. Given the extent of change to this paper, a larger proportion of respondents than usual did not provide a response for this latter issue. For the Americas, most respondents suggested that the paper was appropriate; however, in terms of a comparison with last year's paper, respondents were more divided. The largest minority felt that the paper was comparable to last year's, but many also felt that it was a little more difficult than last year. Again, due to the developments in the paper, the number of missing responses to this particular question was unusually high. For the Asia and Oceania paper the data was mixed. A little over half of respondents argued that the paper was of an appropriate level of difficulty and a little under half that it was too difficult. This data was mirrored when teachers responded to the question of comparability with last year's paper. Finally, for Europe, a clear majority argued that the paper was of an appropriate level of difficulty; however, once again the data regarding comparisons was more mixed. The largest minority felt that it was comparable, but there was also a significant minority that felt the paper was more difficult than its M16 counterpart. As was the case for the other regions, a larger than usual number of respondents did not respond to this question.

As always, we encourage teachers to provide feedback on the G2s as this information is very useful and helps to create a fuller understanding of how the various papers were perceived by candidates (and, of course, their teachers).

Higher level paper three – Africa and the Middle East

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-26	27-31	32-45

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

A positive feature of candidate responses was that there seems to have been a general improvement in their ability to present responses in a structured essay format. The tendency among many candidates has been to offer a story that does not effectively answer the set question. There were proportionally fewer of these this year. There were also fewer poorly organized responses; teachers are evidently enjoying more success in encouraging many of their candidates to effectively plan their responses before they embark on writing them.

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

Less positive characteristics were noted in the lack of understanding some candidates had of the detail included in the guide. On occasions, it seemed that they were aware of some bullet points but not others. Many of them, for example, tried to steer irrelevant material into a question that was not devised for that material. Of course, while some of this is due to lack of revision, in some cases, very detailed information was present for some parts of a question, but was nearly absent for another part. The impression that was gleaned from this—rightly or wrongly—was that only parts of certain bullet points had been covered.

Another significant issue was that of timeframes. In too many cases, candidates offered a number of weak responses as they used improper examples. Some of them seized upon a question that looked familiar and then wrote an answer that had material that was several hundred years out of date. Section numbers were deliberately added to the examination paper so that candidates would be able to go straight to the questions that were relevant to their learning; please do encourage them to focus only on the sections they have studied.

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

Only the questions and/or sections that have been answered most frequently will be dealt with in the following segment.

Question 5

This question was well done by many of those who attempted it. Weak responses tended to ignore the requirement of the question, which was to focus on the reasons why the crusading

movement failed to replicate the success of the First Crusade, and instead focused on the motives for the Crusades in general.

Section 4: The Ottomans (1281–1566).

While there were relatively few responses to the questions in this topic, a number of these highlighted a significant problem: as with a number of other topics from the earlier periods, many candidates offered information that was primarily about the 18th and 19th centuries.

Question 15

This question was attempted by many candidates. There were some excellent responses, all of which showed some understanding of a good essay format. Less developed responses tended to lack understanding of the concept of economic weakness and related a list of causes of imperialism in Africa.

Question 16

This question was attempted by relatively few candidates, and quite often rather unsuccessfully. They tended to narrate details of King Leopold's role in Africa but showed no knowledge of De Brazza, which was the second part of the question. In any event, analysis and knowledge were both lacking.

Question 18

This question was poorly done in almost every case, as candidates did not appear to be able to get to grips with the term "collaboration" as it was used in the question (and in the History Guide). Answers were misdirected and, by and large, of little relevance.

Question 24

This question on the impact of the First World War on the Ottoman Empire was very popular and there were some good responses. However, many candidates showed serious weaknesses in their knowledge and understanding of the period under discussion and, in many cases, the meaning of the term "impact". Too many wrote about reasons for Ottoman entry into, and the events of, the First World War. Others had rather thin knowledge overall.

Question 25

This question on conflict caused by the Paris peace treaties was very popular. However, responses were often mediocre. Candidates had some idea of the treaties and their impact but far too often responses focused on one issue—the Balfour declaration and resulting problems in Palestine—to the exclusion of other points.

Question 30

Candidates were asked to evaluate the importance of international opposition to apartheid. Candidates tended to recount examples of international opposition without providing any insight

as to their importance. Many responses were limited to one or two examples, albeit in detail, that failed to show appreciation of the range of international opposition.

Question 33

This question on the reasons for the outcome of the 1967 and 1973 wars involving Israel and the Arab states was very popular but often not well done. Many candidates had limited or no knowledge of the 1973 War. Others failed to read the question and discussed causes or simply related the outcomes without reference to the reasons, which was the point of the question. Lack of knowledge of both wars was often a source of weakness.

Question 34.

This was a popular question that asked candidates to analyse the extent to which Iran had been westernized by the Shah to 1979. This question showed that candidates had some knowledge of the initiatives undertaken by the Shah but many failed to deal with the “to what extent” command term. They failed to produce an argument showing analytical skills and this limited the value of their responses quite substantially.

Higher level paper three – Americas

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-26	27-31	32-45

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

Candidates often demonstrated a lack of responsiveness to the specific demands of the question and, instead, provided either a narrative or descriptive answer. There was also a tendency to respond to an anticipated or practiced question, which also led to the demands being ignored in whole or part. Many candidates provided very broad and unsubstantiated generalizations that lacked examples of historical knowledge to support their assertions. Many also struggled to properly separate social, economic, political and diplomatic history when the question called for this distinction. There were also instances where candidates confused foreign and domestic policy.

In their responses, some candidates applied a narrative approach to questions even when the need for critical commentary was indicated by the command term. This often led to poorly substantiated responses. There were many instances where a candidate's analysis was lacking balance or acknowledgment of alternative interpretations. While candidates continue to cite historians by name, sometimes this is very general and not helpful. It is infrequent to find a clear delineation of historians' positions on a subject and quite rare to read an account containing historiography that identifies alternative interpretations.

In terms of rubric issues, more than a few candidates failed to respond to the requisite three questions. Sometimes, however, candidates were aware of this requirement and their third response was little more than a paragraph containing scant knowledge of the subject. Fortunately, there were relatively few candidates who applied historical information that was outside the region of the Americas.

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

Despite the comment above, overall, the trend toward improved essay structure was evidenced once again. Candidates applied introductory paragraphs that indicated an understanding of the question and its demands along with conclusions that summarized the main thrust of their arguments. Also noted is an improved capacity to place historical events in context (although there are instances when this becomes too lengthy).

Responses pertaining to knowledge of the Mexican Revolution as well as the Great Depression (in both the US and Latin America) often displayed considerable depth of knowledge and some cogent analysis. The same was true for the role of economic factors in the rise of independence

movements, the treatment of Japanese-Americans and Japanese-Canadians, the Civil Rights Movement and, although not frequently addressed, for questions focused on the history of Canada.

While historiography was not commonly applied, the trend to compare orthodox historians' interpretations to those of revisionist historians was one that was most widely seen. In some instances, this was accomplished with excellent depth of evidence and analysis.

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

Only the questions that have been answered most frequently will be dealt with in the following segment.

Question 3

Many candidates evaluated the factors that led to the conquest of the Aztecs in 1521. Content was generally accurate and cited a variety of factors, applying an adequate level of analysis.

Question 4

This too was a popular question, although it was not answered quite as successfully as Question 3. Here, candidates failed to limit their discussion to elements contributed from Europe to the Americas. Emphasis was on disease and slavery. While there was an attempt to balance positive and negative consequences, candidates tended to emphasize the latter.

Question 8

The social and political impact of the Great Awakening was seldom selected but did produce a few answers of good quality that tied the movement to its impact on the coming of the American Revolution.

Question 9

Discussion of the social impact of slavery was answered very frequently. There was a tendency to address economic (rather than social) aspects and to answer only in respect to the history of North America. In quite a few cases the content addressed issues beyond the limitation of the timeframe (that is, after 1800). More successful responses usually considered the impact throughout the whole of the Americas with emphasis on Latin America.

Question 11

Economic factors and their role in the rise of independence movements was popular and mostly answered in respect to the US War of Independence. Content and analysis was generally sound and sometimes quite impressive. Another choice, though rarer, was the Haitian Revolution.

Question 13

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the Articles of Confederation was another very popular question. Many candidates emphasized the structural limitations of the document and applied a few examples; however, the answers often lacked extensive historical knowledge. Achievements under the Articles were rarely discussed, other than the achievement of independence.

Question 15

The role of the Democratic and Republican parties in failing to achieve national unity was a frequent choice and led to a wide range of marks. Many candidates failed to address the Election of 1860 with any depth and simply provided a narrative of events leading to the Civil War. Stronger efforts tied the events of the recent past to the parties, candidates and platforms of the 1860 election to demonstrate linkage to the coming of the war.

Question 16

Evaluation of the Presidential and Congressional plans for Reconstruction was selected a little less frequently than expected. Only a minority of candidates addressed the demands with depth of knowledge and analysis. Many essays failed to accurately distinguish between Presidential and Congressional Reconstruction or to evaluate the plans.

Question 17

Answers concerning whether the effects of railroad construction were largely positive or negative led to mostly mediocre results and broad unsupported generalizations. The focus was almost always on the US and Canada but with little specific knowledge.

Question 18

This question, on the veracity of the assertion that nationalism was the most important ideological trend of the given period, led to some essays of good quality. Emphasis varied considerably as to the geographic focus of the candidate.

Question 19

The extent to which Dollar Diplomacy was the dominant element of US foreign policy during the given period was a fairly frequent choice and produced a good range of capable responses. Most candidates asserted that Dollar Diplomacy permeated all US foreign policy during the early 1900s, although some candidates claimed that “Big Stick” policies were the underlying force that had the greatest influence.

Question 20

Discussion of the domestic impact of the First World War was a frequent choice and usually focused on the US and Canada. Most responses were adequate but not superlative and lacked balance between the two choices. Focus was not always limited to social impact.

Question 21

Whether political or economic factors were most responsible for the maintenance of the Diaz regime was assessed by quite a few candidates with rather equal opinion as to which was more significant. Candidates generally had a good grasp of the period and applied relevant content and analysis. However, there were quite a few responses more focused on how the actions of the Diaz regime led to the revolution than on the methods used to stay in power.

Question 22

Discussion as to whether the Mexican state dealt successfully with post-Revolution challenges was popular and was largely handled well when chosen. Emphasis was often on the extent to which the Constitution of 1917 successfully addressed the challenges present in Mexico and there were many instances of sound critical analysis having been applied. Weaker responses provided a narrative of the Mexican Revolution.

Question 23

The impact of the New Deal on the economic and political systems of the US was exceptionally popular and produced a range of essays from adequate to thorough. The position taken was often balanced, although many candidates asserted that there were either few, or even no, economic benefits. Less successful responses dealt with the causes of the Great Depression or on the inadequacies of the Hoover response.

Question 24

The extent to which the Great Depression contributed to political instability was often selected and was usually focused on Brazil. Content and analysis was generally quite knowledgeable. However, there was a tendency to discuss the economic policies of Vargas rather than to discuss the impact of the Great Depression on political instability.

Question 25

Evaluation of the Good Neighbor Policy led to a good deal of confusion as to the policy and its effects. Content was often vague and supported by broad, unsubstantiated generalizations.

Question 26

The treatment of people of Japanese origin during the Second World War was another very popular choice and often led to quite competent essays. The US and Canada were almost always the choices and many candidates could accurately differentiate between the treatment in the two countries.

Question 27

Comparison and contrast of two Latin American populist leaders was not quite so frequently chosen, but it did produce some worthy essays. Issues existed as to whom should be considered a “populist” given that some leaders ruled at times by military intervention and at

other times through popular appeal. Examiners were instructed to remain open to a wide variety of interpretations.

Question 28

Evaluation of the economic and social policies of a military dictatorship was a popular choice, but it produced wide ranging results. As in question 27, the definition can be problematic and examiners were advised to remain open to various interpretations. Candidates sometimes did not limit their focus to economic and social policy but shifted attention to foreign policy issues.

Question 29

The consideration of John F Kennedy's New Frontier was seldom chosen and did not produce many essays of commendable quality. Focus was not always limited to domestic policy. A few candidates recognized his introduction of policies that were later accomplished by President Johnson.

Question 31

The impact of the Korean War was a frequent choice and yet it was often answered with questionable quality. The focus on the US was usually adequate and Canada, generally the second example, was occasionally done well. However, a number of candidates asserted that Cuba was directly affected.

Question 32

The reaction of Canada or Latin America to the Vietnam War was a fairly common choice and it produced some worthy responses in respect to Canada. However, candidates struggled to apply much knowledge as to the Latin American response.

Question 33

With 16,675 responses, this question was the most popular choice of the paper. The quality of responses was wide but most candidates could apply relevant content and analysis. A few effectively challenged the notion that the federal government was particularly assertive in support of the civil rights movement. Weaker responses seldom applied much more than the *Brown v Board of Education* decision. There were many narratives of the Civil Rights Movement that marginally addressed the demands of the question.

Question 34

The extent to which Cesar Chavez advanced civil rights for Hispanic Americans was a fairly popular choice. However, many candidates struggled to apply more than vague and broad generalizations.

Higher level paper three – Asia and Oceania

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-26	27-31	32-45

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. While a candidate is free to use Wade-Giles should they chose to do so, they must familiarize themselves with Pinyin transliterations, as these are the ones used in both the History Guide and in the examination papers. Notification of this change was included in the History Subject Reports for November 2014, May and November 2015 and May 2016.

Many of the G2 comments felt that Question 24, on Jiang Jieshi's rule in Taiwan to 1950, was too narrow, but it directly corresponded to the last bullet point in Section 12. Several comments indicated a lack of awareness that this bullet point was in the new History Guide. Consequently, teachers are strongly encouraged to cover all parts of every bullet point in a section: otherwise candidates run the risk of not being able to answer some questions. Other G2 respondents commented that the mix of specific questions (based on one, or part of one, bullet point) and the more general questions (based on several bullet points) was an issue for some candidates. Overall, this mix is a positive aspect of the paper particularly if candidates have covered all the bullet points in their chosen sections.

As per the other history papers in this examination session, 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. Often, candidates tried to impose a rigid political, economic and social analysis when the question did not ask for this. On the other hand, where candidates did attempt to respond to the question, many of them did not include enough specific detailed information to illustrate and support their comments.

The scope of some of the questions appeared to be a challenge for a few candidates, particularly where these were two-part questions. Further, many candidates did not have a strong sense of chronology and context. Some candidates ignored the timeframe given in the question and consequently did not score highly. Many candidates referred to historians by name but in a forced and unnatural manner. Some just referred to school textbook authors. Often, different perspectives were not evaluated and historians' opinions were not integrated within a flowing argument or in a discussion of the historiography relating to the topic.

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

There was much less use of idiosyncratic abbreviations. Only commonly used standard abbreviations such as CCP and GMD should be permitted.

There was a greater variety and range of answers, indicating that several centres had chosen some of the sections of the new guide that contained material which had not been included and examined previously. Nevertheless, most centres still seemed to concentrate on China and Japan or China and India and the quality of these responses was equally balanced across the countries. Not many centres answered questions about South-East Asia, but there were a few coherent responses on Malaysia and Singapore.

Many candidates could structure thematic responses and many displayed a comprehensive knowledge across three questions. Many candidates wrote detailed, relevant and well-constructed essays. As always, these were a pleasure to mark.

The questions that led to some of the highest calibre responses were on the reasons for the fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate (Question 14) and the comparison of the attempts at modernization in China and Japan (Question 17). They displayed a mastery of historical knowledge.

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

Only the questions that have been answered most frequently will be dealt with in the following segment.

Question 4

There were a small number of responses to this question and, overall, they were mixed in quality. Some candidates erroneously discussed a period beyond this section such as the Tokugawa era. Developed responses examined the impact of the samurai on Japanese society in relation to other factors.

Question 6

This question was chosen by a small number of candidates and, overall, it was done quite well. Most candidates tackled the question thematically and identified both internal and external reasons for Japanese isolationism.

Question 7

There were a few responses to this question and generally it was done well. Most candidates covered both Babur and Humayun and evaluated their contributions by looking at a range of factors. Some responses were very detailed about Babur's military achievements, but did not include much information about his social or cultural contribution.

Question 11

There were a small number of responses to this question and, overall, they were mixed in quality. Some candidates tended to concentrate on the roles of Dalhousie and Bentinck rather than evaluate their policies. Others knew more about Dalhousie than Bentinck. Developed responses showed clear knowledge about both and evaluated the social impact of their policies.

Question 13

This was a popular question, but the quality of the responses varied. Less developed responses offered a chronological approach and mainly concentrated on British actions prior to the First Opium War and did not necessarily get to the point of the question—the imposition of the unequal treaties. Yet, there were also some highly developed thematic responses that identified the grievances and demands of the western powers prior to the war and linked them to the terms of the unequal treaties. The cut-off date of the 1840s was often ignored, particularly by those candidates who wrote a rote-learned response about the causes of the First and Second Opium Wars.

Question 14

This was another popular question and it was done well by most candidates. Most responses adopted a thematic approach and identified the reasons for the fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate that were inherent in the society before Perry's arrival and those that developed afterwards.

Question 17

This too was a popular question and, overall, it was done quite well. Most candidates attempted a comparison and the more developed responses did this in a thematic way with a running commentary of both countries. Less developed responses tended to be unbalanced because candidates displayed more knowledge about one country. There was also confusion about China, because some candidates discussed the Hundred Days Reform Movement of 1898, which fell beyond the timeframe of the question. To these candidates, it seemed that the Self-Strengthening Movement and Hundred Days Reform Movement were part of the same philosophical approach to modernization. Candidates need to be able to distinguish between these two movements.

Question 18

This was a reasonably popular question although the quality of the responses varied. Some candidates did not address Sun Yixian's contribution fully enough and concentrated on other causes of the Xinhai Revolution. This approach was not appropriate because, unless Sun's contribution was evaluated in depth, the discussion of other factors only partially addressed the question. Other candidates gave Sun too much credit for the revolution. More developed responses offered a balanced appraisal of Sun's ideology, revolutionary activities in China and abroad and his contribution. They also identified other key causes of the revolution.

Question 19

This was quite a popular question, but, overall, it was not done particularly well. The main problem was that very few candidates defined the term “Home Rule” or understood the concept. Many candidates just described the nationalist movement after the First World War, but did not relate it to the impact of the war. Section 10 starts in 1919, but the Home Rule movement flourished between 1916 and 1920.

Question 20

A significant number of candidates chose this question and the quality of the responses varied. More developed responses discussed Mountbatten’s role effectively in relation to the other factors that led to partition. Most responses were very weak on Mountbatten’s role and tended to just discuss the actions of Nehru and/or Jinnah. Less developed responses wrote narratives about the general issue of independence that culminated in partition.

Question 21

This was quite a popular question, but, overall, it was not done particularly well. A significant number of candidates included too much background material about the Meiji period. Other candidates only discussed the immediate aftermath of the First World War and the Treaty of Versailles. There was very little knowledge of the 1920s in many responses and candidates seemed to jump from 1919 straight into the 1930s. More developed responses defined the terms militarism and nationalism clearly and evaluated the impact of the war in the 1920s as well as the 1930s.

Question 22

A reasonable number of candidates chose this question, but, overall, it was done poorly. Candidates did not define the term “globalization” and tended to confuse it with “westernization” or “modernization”. Therefore, most responses were a chronological narrative that covered the period from 1912 to 1990. Less developed responses even described the Meiji modernization. Very few responses examined post-Second World War economic development and the effects of globalization on Japanese society. Some just concentrated on the US occupation.

Question 23

This was a very popular question although, again, the quality of the responses varied. Some candidates did not really understand the nature of the May Fourth Movement. Others just described the formation of the CCP and then the conflict between the CCP and the GMD from 1927. More developed responses adopted a thematic approach and evaluated the intellectual ideas of the May Fourth Movement, the impact on Chinese nationalism and the desire for unity, the political ideologies that emerged by the 1920s and the subsequent consequences.

Question 24

There were relatively few responses to this question and fewer still that addressed the question and discussed the correct timeframe and Taiwan. Most misread the question and wrote about

Jiang in mainland China in the 1930s. Nevertheless, there were several well-developed responses where candidates had clearly been prepared for this new bullet point.

Question 25

A few candidates attempted this question, but most did not appreciate the key words “South-East Asia” and so erroneously focused on East Asia (Japan, China and Korea). Section 13 is about South-East Asia so it appeared that candidates had not been made aware of this.

Question 26

Again, many of the responses to this question did not appreciate that Section 13 is about South-East Asia, and many candidates erroneously chose China or Korea as one—or both—of the countries. However, there were some more developed responses that effectively compared and contrasted two appropriate countries. These were most frequently Indonesia, Malaya, the Philippines and Vietnam.

Question 27

With 741 responses, this was the most popular question on the paper. While most candidates clearly addressed the question, many responses were little more than a review of historians’ perspectives without clear contextual knowledge of the reasons for the Hundred Flowers Campaign. Too many responses were confused chronologically and put the Hundred Flowers Campaign after the Great Leap Forward or mixed it up with the Cultural Revolution. More developed responses adopted a thematic approach and discussed the reasons for the Hundred Flowers Campaign in the light of Mao’s ideology, his history of repressive campaigns, and his desire to consolidate his power. Many of these responses also integrated a discussion of different perspectives about the issue.

Question 28

This was a reasonably popular question that offered responses of variable quality. Most candidates understood the aims of the Tiananmen Square demonstrators, but they did not consider fully enough whether they had been achieved. A few candidates developed a narrative about the democracy movement and discussed other demonstrations in Tiananmen Square such as those following the death of Zhou Enlai in 1976. Some also mentioned the pro-democracy demonstrations in 1986–1987 before discussing the 1989 demonstration. Developed responses displayed clear knowledge about the situation in China both before and after the 1989 Tiananmen demonstration.

Question 29

Quite a few candidates chose this question and, overall, it was done well. Most candidates could discuss both the internal reasons that prolonged the war as well as the external impact of the Cold War. Less developed responses only looked at it from a US perspective and lacked any discussion of the situation in Vietnam and the region at this time. A few responses erroneously went up to 1975.

Question 30

Relatively few candidates chose this question. Many of the responses tended to be narrative and descriptive about the causes or the course of the war rather than the consequences. More developed responses evaluated the impact of continued Soviet support, the emergence of the Taliban, the return of opium production and the effect on the role of women.

Higher level paper three – Europe

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-45

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

The areas of the programme that proved difficult tended to be where there was not as full a grasp of the History Guide as may have been anticipated. Section 13, with its focus on domestic developments, was the cause of some issues, and the cut-off date of 1945 in Section 15 also caused some candidates problems. Overall, the greatest problem is that candidates do not support their analysis with detailed knowledge—they show understanding but are often lacking specific support. Essentially, evidence is required to support the analysis, and to ensure that this evidence is available to them when it matters, some of the candidates may need to work a little bit harder on their revision.

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

Candidates were well prepared for some of the very early questions seen and Sections 11 and 13 were well done.

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

Only the questions that have been answered most frequently will be dealt with in the following segment.

Question 1

Very few responses were seen but those that were, tended to be well done and made use of some clear and coherent knowledge.

Question 2

This question was also quite well done—although there tended to be more comparisons than contrasts.

Question 3

Very few seen but answers tended to be vague and generalized.

Question 6

Most candidates knew the events of the Wars of the Roses but many of them did not often make clear comments on their impact on Royal authority.

Question 15

Candidates tended to try and answer this as if the question was about the Revolution, rather than the Revolutionary Wars. Increased focus on this bullet point may be required.

Question 17

Candidates often tried to answer this as if the question were on the 1789 Revolution, rather than the 1848 Revolution. Again, increased focus on this bullet point may be required.

Question 21

A popular question that many candidates answered successfully, showing knowledge and offering an evaluation of Cavour, Mazzini and other actors.

Question 22

Some good knowledge was shown on Bismarck's domestic policy.

Question 23

This was quite popular but a significant number of candidates had insufficient knowledge to discuss the issues in a meaningful way. There was limited critical analysis of the extent/success of developments. Quite a few severed off to answering on the social and political impact.

Question 24

This was reasonably popular. Some excellent answers were seen but the clear majority again showed limited detailed knowledge and often did not discuss the possessive policies. Many were unable to distinguish between terror and coercion.

Question 25

Again, quite popular and reasonably well done with most able to link Kaiser Wilhelm II's policies to the changing policies of other powers. The candidates seemed to be weakest on Austria-Hungary and how Wilhelm's policies affected the policies of the empire.

Question 26

Although many candidates did very well on this question, quite often candidates wrote a "why Germany was defeated" answer. Some, when considering domestic instability, had limited detailed knowledge of events inside Germany, especially the impact of economic hardship on political stability.

Question 27

While this was a very popular question, it was not one that was done well by many candidates. Candidates were aware of why opposition was difficult in general terms but often lacked detail. They had limited knowledge of opposition as such, and often went into the wartime period regarding the White Rose and July bomb plots. The dates in the question were very clear.

Question 28

This was quite a popular question and some excellent, knowledgeable answers were seen. However, while many candidates understood the broad inequalities that led to polarization they had little or no detailed knowledge of political groups, or the policies, that contributed to polarization.

Question 29

Again, very popular and there were some good answers. However, too many were unable to distinguish between the terms "appeasement" and "collective security" or to offer reasons why appeasement might be necessary.

Question 30

A reasonable number of responses was seen. However, the majority were rather general and unable to give effective examples of impact on civilians—even when talking about casualties. Bombing in cities such as Coventry, Dresden or Hamburg let alone Berlin and London was not mentioned. Many candidates just talked of more opportunities for women.

Question 31

This too was quite popular, with knowledge of the various methods of propaganda shown by candidates. However, very few could see how these methods affected Stalin's power or support for the state. Too many do not understand that popular support was not a major factor in maintaining political power in the Soviet Union as the population overall had no influence.

Question 34

Candidates tended to answer about the division of Germany with little or no knowledge of society in West Germany post-1949.

Question 35

Very few answers were seen, but those that tackled this question had reasonable knowledge and were able to make valid points on Tito's success in following his own path.

Question 36

Many responses were seen but most tend to take the view of there being no Support for Soviet control/influence, which was certainly not the case initially. Answers tended toward narratives,

especially regarding Hungary in 1956, and very few could discuss the motives for unrest and demonstrations.

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

Please ensure that all candidates are familiar with all bullet points of the sections that have been taught and learned, and encourage them to support their understanding of these with specific historical material.

Reviewing the new 0–15 mark band descriptors would be a worthy part of any programme's preparation efforts in that it would help candidates incorporate more of the required elements into their essays. The application of these descriptors as part of the standard grading process within the classroom might be an effective method to achieve this objective.

Review of past examinations is an essential component in that it helps candidates develop understanding of the demands that command terms have in the response to questions. This is best incorporated into lesson plans, so that the skill is developed throughout the year, rather than used as a strategy over the final few weeks of the course. It also helps to ward against the application of pre-formed essays as a response to popular topics. Candidates will benefit from practice of the demands of past questions in respect to: command terms, key words, timeframes and, in relevant instances, case studies.

Of benefit is the use of timed essays within class, as opposed to “research-based” essays outside of class time (although these too, of course, have merit). Of equal importance is the feedback that candidates receive through comments on their work. This allows for good practice to be consolidated and, hopefully, common errors to be phased out.

Occasionally giving candidates a range of questions in class tests may also help teachers to understand why certain choices are being made and facilitate discussions about improving the choice of questions that candidates make.

It is crucial that candidates have a strong chronological awareness of major events, movements and eras within their curriculum topics. Also, for testing purposes, it is essential for candidates to be alert to the timeframe of the section from which they choose to answer a question. The section may indicate a restrictive timeframe that is not stated in the question itself.

It is quite understandable that candidates will frequently apply generalizations during their essay writing. It is crucial that throughout their course, great emphasis is placed on substantiation of those generalizations through concrete examples. Achievement of this skill would greatly enhance most scripts.

Many examiners continue to express concern regarding the extent of illegible scripts and its impact on candidates receiving deserved credit for their knowledge. Teachers need to address any issue of legibility early in their coursework with a candidate and seek strategies that would mitigate the negative effects. This may include using print, rather than script, skipping lines or providing better spacing of words, and, in rare cases, requesting permission for the candidate to type their response. The key is to achieve early intervention and to help the candidate realize that credit can only be awarded for knowledge that an examiner can clearly read.