

HISTORY

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 24	25 - 36	37 - 47	48 - 59	60 - 69	70 - 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 46	47 - 59	60 - 70	71 - 100

Higher and Standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 13	14 - 15	16 - 20

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 13	14 - 15	16 - 20

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Many of the schools moderated this session complied with the appropriate format for the internal assessment. Some of the schools, however, did not include the completed 3/IA and 3/CS forms. There were not particular problems observed during the session. Overall, the selected topics were appropriate, and more schools are opting for a research question. As in previous session referencing was a problem, with some schools sending candidates work without references. On the other hand, teachers are using rather well the assessment but the tendency to over mark remains a factor, and very few wrote comments which explained the

awarded mark. It is expected that with the revised guidance for the new Internal Assessment, some of the issues will be corrected.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A.

Although many students scored well in this criterion, some candidates lost marks because either the methodology or the scope were not clearly explained or developed.

Criterion B.

In this criterion, the scores were rather satisfactory. Some problems with lack of references and candidates using only one or two sources.

Criterion C.

Improvement continues in this area, but it still needs practice.

Criterion D.

Differentiation between B and D is also beginning to show improvements and therefore developing historical skills.

Criterion E

No significant problems in this area.

Criterion F

This is an area which also showed improvements. However, candidates lost marks due to lack of recognizable format in the bibliography

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- It would be useful if teachers train students in two particular areas: referencing and bibliographies.
- Suggest the use of appropriated sources and skills, such as the use of end/footnotes within the summary of evidence and analytical approaches for D.
- Teachers should write comments at the end of each section

Higher and Standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 15	16 - 18	19 - 25

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 15	16 - 18	19 - 25

General comments

The G2 forms sent to IBCA by the schools indicated that the November 2008 Paper One was well received. 1 centre found it easier than November 2007, 34 thought it was of a similar standard, 5 found it a little more difficult and 1 centre found it much more difficult. In terms of the suitability of the question paper 1 school found it too easy, 39 found it appropriate and 2 centres found it too difficult. 40 schools found the syllabus coverage satisfactory or good, 1 found it poor; 40 found the clarity of wording satisfactory or good (1 found it poor); and 40 schools found the presentation satisfactory or good (1 found it poor). The comments that were received were also, generally speaking, complimentary. "Good and well-directed toward the syllabus recommendations. Well rounded in all."; "well-designed exam, suitable for the level"; "appropriate in design and content"; "good use of table to demonstrate the organizational structure of the Communist Party of China." "Generally speaking I felt the tone was fine. Stalin would have been relatively accessible for most students and the Mao section was appropriate". There were one or two detracting comments "I was not crazy about this paper as it did not allow students to show their knowledge and skills across the whole topic." "The graphics for Sections A and C were very good, but students found the chart in Section B more difficult". It was clear that the vast majority of centres found the Paper fair and appropriate. As usual Stalin was the most popular choice, followed by The Cold War and Mao.

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

Many candidates still do not understand the role of an historian or that of a biographer or the nature of a memoir or oral history. They tend to dismiss all secondary sources as having limited value. Time management was an issue for some candidates: they tended to write too much for each part of the first question and then did not do the last one justice. Three other areas of concern were noted. Firstly, there was a notable lack of 'own knowledge' that was relevant for the final mini essay questions. Secondly, many candidates concentrated on the origin and limitations of the sources and did not acknowledge purpose which is a crucial part of the rubric when it comes to assessing the values and limitations of a source.

Very few candidates made the point that all sources are valuable when cross-referenced with other documents and that bias in a source can make it very valuable to a researcher. Finally, there was a tendency for some candidates to refer only very vaguely to sources, for example – ‘Sources A, B, C and E all suggest that...’ without any direct or specific reference to the sources. Some candidates just listed the sources and their references and did not attempt to coordinate their responses into a coherent mini-essay.

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

In general candidates demonstrated detailed knowledge of their chosen topic, and could put the sources in their correct historical context. The approach to both the compare/contrast questions and the evaluation questions was generally better. Most students seemed prepared for the style of questions and the content of this paper.

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

Questions 1, 5 and 9

Question 1

- a) Many candidates clearly identified three aims from the source.
- b) Generally well answered although not all candidates related it to Stalin’s involvement in Kirov’s assassination.

Question 5

- a) Done well by most candidates
- b) Most candidates were able to read and understand the chart, some struggled.

Question 9

- a) Well answered with the majority of candidates able to find at least two reasons and many with three reasons.
- b) This was generally well answered although some candidates could not identify two points.

Questions 2, 6 and 10

Question 2

Some candidates just identified the contrasts. Others tried to evaluate the sources or put in too much of their own knowledge. Most candidates attempted a running commentary rather than just paraphrasing the sources. There were some outstanding linkages of both similarities and differences.

Question 6

Generally well answered with some outstanding linkage of both similarities and differences. Many candidates were able to compare and contrast B and C well, but some just described the content of each source

Question 10

Generally well answered with candidates drawing strong contrasts between the two sources – although not always finding similarities.

In general terms examiners again reported that although there were some excellent responses, weaker candidates merely described the content of the two sources without making any clear attempt at identifying their similarities and differences in a linked manner. End-on answers, where the first source is examined and the second source is then dealt with separately, will not achieve high marks. Many examiners reported that many candidates did attempt some linkage, even if it was only in a concluding paragraph. Globally, this type of question is the one best handled by the candidates.

Questions 3, 7 and 11**Question 3**

Many candidates did not come to grips with Source C as an extract from an official communist party authorised history. Many erroneously identified it as a primary source. The minor issue re translation was overly emphasised by some. Most candidates were able to identify the origin of C and they discussed its limitations, but did not really evaluate its purpose or value. For E, however, many candidates did not understand the role of an historian and said it had very little value because it was a secondary source. Only a few commented on the fact that it was from a study of European Dictatorships and that this indicated the historian's purpose.

Question 7

Many candidates did not come to grips with Source B as an extract from an official CCP source. The minor issue with regards to translation was overly emphasised by some. Some candidates were misled by the fact that it had come from the internet. For D, however, many candidates did not understand the role of an historian and said it had very little value because it was a secondary source. Quite a few said that its major limitation was that Meisner had not lived in China and did not have personal experience of the period discussed.

Question 11

Generally balanced evaluations of both sources and, surprisingly, often stronger on Source B than E.

Here again examiners commented on three areas of concern. The first has been mentioned above in that candidates neglect the importance of the purpose behind a source. A second weakness in candidates' treatment of this type of question is the misunderstanding of the role and the activities carried out by an historian. Bias in sources does not automatically mean that the source is distorted, useless and should be discounted. The final concern here is that despite being clearly led to consider the 'origins, purpose, value and limitations' of their sources, many candidates still discussed the content of the source. There was, again, a

tendency to write 'note form' responses, bullet points or 'grids' that duplicated the structure of the mark scheme and were usually labeled 'o. p. v. and l'. Comments made by candidates about problems of translation or the fact that the source is an extract from a wider source are unlikely to receive much credit. It is amazing to see the number of candidates who do not identify the date of a source.

Questions 4, 8 and 12

Question 4

Some strong answers which made confident use of the sources and their own knowledge. Many candidates made very good use of precise own knowledge and were able to integrate this with the use of the sources. The question worked really well.

Question 8

Question seemed to work well with candidates making good use of the sources and some very relevant own knowledge especially of Hundred Flowers Campaign. Generally well focused.

Question 12

Most candidates focused well on the question and made perceptive use of some or all of the sources. However not as much own knowledge as in other two synthesis questions and many candidates were very poor in their historical knowledge of the background to the conflict.

Better candidates have the ability to write elegant and well synthesized mini-essays-sometimes at surprising length. The key is that this essay must focus on the question that has been set rather than merely describe related policies/events/actions.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

This section is going to be structured differently than in previous years in order to emphasize what aspects of this paper teachers should focus on, as they relate to the types of questions which are usually set on the Prescribed Topics. This approach was used in the May 2008 Subject Report for Paper One and was well received.

Question 1, 5 and 9

Although extremely lengthy responses for the opening questions should be avoided, students should be guided to attempt to identify 3 separate points for the first part of the question. Where they are unable to do so, they should attempt to develop the 2 points that are perhaps more obvious.

For the part b) style questions students should practice 'reading' cartoons, photos, statistics, speeches etc. Many candidates pay only superficial attention to important details or miss them altogether. In addition, they should be guided by the fact this is worth 2 marks and so should attempt to make 2 clear points about message / points being made.

Question 2, 6 and 10

It is essential that students be taught how to structure a comparative response. End-on accounts will only achieve partial marks. Practicing identifying themes between sources is also important. Candidates should be taught to consider both similarities and differences when comparing and contrasting sources.

It would also be useful in future to practice comparing and contrasting three sources, not two, as the new syllabus (with first exams in May 2010) will include this type of question for Higher Level candidates. Bullet point, grid or note form responses must be discouraged.

Questions 3, 7 and 11

Candidates should continue to be taught that these questions are focusing on the origin and purpose of the source. A source may have more than one purpose. Students need to be able to place documents in their historical context and make coherent and sensible comments on their value and limitations. Bullet point, grid or note form answers must be discouraged by teachers. Candidates are unlikely to reach the highest levels if they answer these questions in that format. In addition, simply stating origin copied from the paper is not demonstrating a skill. Having identified the origin of a source candidates must then go on to analyze its value and limitations. Candidates often seem content to identify one value and one limitation when there may be several.

Question 4, 8 and 12

The main issue with the mini-essay question is the synthesis of the source material with a candidates' own knowledge. Again practice of these skills is essential. It would also be useful for candidates to make a brief essay plan for this question, in which they note down the sources to be used in support of their own knowledge (or vice versa).

Timing is also an issue for many candidates. It is important that they practice writing an entire mock document paper before the examination – several times under timed conditions. Some candidates had simply run out of time at the end and could only write a brief paragraph for this last question. The last question should be a mini-essay and not set out in a Source A, Source B, Source C, Source D, Source E format which appears rather mechanical. Here it seems that some centres have instructed candidates to mention each source and they will receive at least five marks. This is not the case unless the comments are focused back on the actual question that was set. This session also produced some answers where it was obvious that a long list of historians' quotations is a guaranteed way to demonstrate 'own knowledge'. Unfortunately this was not the case as, here again, the actual question was ignored. One candidate quoted fifteen historians in an answer to one of these questions!!

Higher and Standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 22	23 - 26	27 - 40

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 22	23 - 26	27 - 40

General comments

The total number of candidates taking Paper Two History (Higher and Standard level) in the November 2008 session was 1,912- a 13% increase upon the November 2007 session. The number of G2 forms received from centres, as of December 15th and the beginning of the Grade Award for the November session was 48. Respondents in these G2s considered that this year's paper, in comparison with last year's paper, was largely of a similar standard. With reference to the 'level of difficulty', the overwhelming majority of respondents (46 out of 48) found the paper 'appropriate'. In terms of syllabus coverage, clarity of wording and presentation of the paper there was a widespread acknowledgement that the paper was 'satisfactory' to 'good'- with approval ratings of 95%, 100% and 100% respectively in these categories.

Practising teachers commented on the adequacy of the question balance and accessibility of the paper for candidates. There was some criticism from specific centres concerning, for example, Question 11 in which three factors were focused upon in explaining the rise to power of two named single – party leaders. The criticism that “Students were required to be familiar with all three factors and this can be challenging for those who did not study adequately” perhaps requires little or no comment on the part of the examiners and paper writers for this examination.

As in previous examination sessions (both May and November) the popular topic areas remain Topics 1, 3, and 5. Some centres in the southern hemisphere continue to show evidence of some specialisation in areas of study relevant to Topic 2 (South Asian nationalism in particular- with particular emphasis on Gandhi and the achievement of independence /partition of the subcontinent in 1947)). Topic 6 again produced few responses. Topic 4 continues to attract responses relating to the failure of the League of Nations as a peacekeeping organisation **regardless of the question being asked in relation to this international organisation.**

Rubric offences were not common this session with relatively few candidates choosing two questions from the same topic area / answering questions without a focus on the twentieth century/failing to observe the need to provide examples from different regions. On the whole it may be observed that the level of historical knowledge was often no more than adequate in

topic areas one would have expected to have been mainstream areas for study in Paper 2. All too frequently the ability to select and deploy accurate and sufficient historical detail in a relevant fashion to meet the demands of the task was disappointing. Specific comments on the treatment of individual questions (below) may help clarify this point.

Last year (indeed every year/session) there is a comment on the use and abuse/misuse of historiography. It is the case that some centres still seem to encourage candidates to shoehorn into their responses as many references to historians as possible. This is not a guarantee that the answer will attain higher grade bands- indeed often the opposite is the case. Below is repeated last year's comment upon the historiography issue. It still applies.

*“Historiography remains problematic. Many candidates continue to name drop or summarise ‘schools of historiography’ in the belief that this in itself constitutes a sound answer to the tasks set. Topic 5 in particular seems to be an area in which ‘orthodox’, ‘revisionist’ and ‘post-revisionist’ schools are described regardless of the need for detailed consideration of historical events/developments in the period. Parroting historians **is not** what is required. The provision of considered judgement/critical comment on the part of the candidate, based on accurate and relevant historical knowledge, **is**. As one examiner pointed out:*

‘The best answers were often devoid of any historiography’ and were distinguished by the fact that ‘candidates focused on the question and drew on their own knowledge of the events’ ”

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

There was a heavy concentration on relatively few questions in the paper as will be seen below in comments on the most popular questions. What might be considered ‘mainstream’ topics are studied in the different continents, but not always to a satisfactory depth of understanding. For too many candidates the approach to this paper is to paint with the widest of brushstrokes, producing very generalised responses which lack sufficient substantiation.

Question analysis and task identification remain areas which still require attention if the candidate is to provide a relevant and focused response instead of the provision of a ‘learned response’ which the candidate is determined to write regardless of the actual demands of the question

The necessity of planning needs to be constantly reinforced to candidates. Once again note the advice provided previously (November 2006 Report) in relation to the importance of planning/structuring an essay answer

“Candidate performance in all essay responses could be improved significantly by taking time to plan the answer- where possible organising the response into suitable themes rather than producing narrative /descriptive accounts. Candidates might be encouraged to present their plans in their answer booklet (making sure to draw a line through them at the end) as they can be helpful to the marker. Five to ten minutes drawing up an essay plan is time well spent despite what many candidates may think in their eagerness to address the question”.

Every session it is necessary to point out that too many candidates in writing answers in Topic 3, fail to read the question carefully and confuse **rise/rule** resulting in students losing marks. **‘In power’** and **‘rise to power’** are not synonymous - and it is dispiriting to read responses which, though very knowledgeable, are largely irrelevant to the question. A single-party **ruler**

refers to the period of rule of that individual- especially worth noting in relation to Topic 3, Question 12 this session

Knowledge of chronology is worryingly weak in a significant number of cases – or simply non-existent. Without a knowledge of the chronological development of events it is difficult to see how candidates can, with any confidence, effectively establish links between causes and consequences/results. **Dates do count and accurate knowledge of events and their timing is important in the structuring of convincing argumentation.**

The levels of knowledge, understanding and skill demonstrated

The best performances were characterised by good planning and the provision of specific, accurate, detailed and relevant historical knowledge. Thematic responses and running comparisons/contrasts were often undertaken with very positive results.

Higher awards also tended to go to those students who were able to define/explain effectively key terms at the outset. The possession of a sound historical vocabulary base aids greatly in formulating focused responses. Terms such as 'ideology', 'total war' 'charismatic' for example need to be learned, understood and accurately applied to the task presented.

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

Topic 1

Question 1

Not a particularly popular question. The majority of responses seen dealt with the Spanish Civil War, often in a narrative /descriptive treatment of developments in Spain up to 1936. Obviously some centres had produced an information sheet overview which some candidates memorised, understood and wrote down rather better than others.

Question 2

It is quite disappointing that the term 'total war' is still for many candidates not fully understood. 'Total war' remains for many a description of a geographically wide conflict rather than a term which involves the economic, social and political restructuring of societies at war on the home front and of course developments on the military front. Occasionally such answers paid lip service to some aspects by mentioning 'women' – but without much convincing substantiation.

There were however some very strong efforts which showed a good grasp of the concept of 'total war' along with impressive factual knowledge of the developments on the civilian and military fronts in either the First or Second World War

Question 3

Russia, China, Spain were the most popular choices for civil wars. On the whole this question was soundly done with good knowledge of the motives and more importantly the contribution of outside intervention to the conflicts studied. 'To what extent' also permitted candidates to consider other factors which may have helped decide the outcome, and the best answers

were able to construct a balanced response between external and internal factors in the wars discussed.

Question 4

Not a popular choice. Again the use of the term 'social' was not always well understood and political developments rather than social were dealt with. Economic results were better done. For those candidates who chose the Cold War as an example the result was not good as it was an invalid choice.

Question 5

There were a few successful attempts at this question but for some candidates their focus was on land warfare (trenches, for example) rather than 'technological developments' in air and sea power.

Topic 2

There were relatively few attempts at answering questions in this topic area. Of the questions which were addressed, Questions 6, 7 and 8 all tended to concentrate on South Asia with India being the focus of the response. As noted in last year's report for the November session, some centres have focused on South Asian nationalism as part of their course of study but the responses still seem somewhat pre-learned overviews of nationalism and British imperialism in the sub-continent.

Topic 3

Question 11

One of the most popular questions on the paper. It provided a structure for candidates and the possibility to identify and comment upon 'other factors.' Although there were some very impressive efforts (especially with reference to Lenin), it was disappointing to see just how sketchy the knowledge of Russian and Italian history in the period under discussion was. Generalised coverage of the subjects often produced weak overviews of either the rise of Mussolini and Lenin which were frequently erroneous in part - or simply characterised by a paucity of historical knowledge. Knowledge of what constitutes 'ideology' was scant. A large proportion of candidates dealing with Lenin seemed to have little awareness of the existence of the Provisional Government between February and October 1917.

Question 12

Quite a popular question, done well, as long as the focus was on the 'single-party ruler'- that is in power. Too many candidates spent much too long on the rise to power of their chosen leaders and were therefore not sufficiently focused on addressing the task at hand. Long detailed explanations of the succession dispute in the USSR after the death of Lenin or the Long March in China for example were not necessary.

Question 13

A few responses, usually dealing with women in National Socialist Germany or the PRC. On the whole creditably done in a running comparison/contrast approach.

Question 14

Stalin and Hitler were the most common examples selected for this question. The latter was dealt with more satisfyingly than the former. It is surprising that Stalin post 1941 was largely ignored by many candidates. It appeared that such candidates may have studied Stalin for Prescribed Subject 1, but not beyond the 1941 end point. Given the mention of 'global impact' one might have expected something on Stalin's impact on world politics 1945-1953.

Question 15

A few efforts in relation to Peron and Castro, with mixed results. 'Charismatic' needed definition/explanation in the majority of answers.

Topic 4

Candidates scour this topic area in search of the 'failure of the League of Nations' question and when it cannot be found they often tend to write about it anyway.

Question 16

Required consideration of the League and the UNO- too often an unbalanced response was provided.

Question 18

Quite clearly requested candidates not to use the League or the UNO as an example. This was ignored with serious consequences by a few candidates.

Question 20

Stressed 'economic and social progress'- the few attempts made in regard to this question saw it as the opportunity to write the 'failure of the League' type of answer noted above.

Topic 5**Question 21**

A popular (predictably) choice on the origins of the Cold War- as in previous sessions. Once again it resulted in many candidates reproducing standard responses on the origins of the Cold War often based upon highly descriptive coverage of 'Orthodox', 'Revisionist', 'Post-revisionist' – and now, 'Realpolitik'- interpretations which, presumably, are intended to show the candidate's 'sound grasp' of historiography.

The best responses tended to have relatively little of this formulaic approach and instead focused on, and analysed, historical events/developments pre and post 1945. It was often, too often, the case that the knowledge of the ideology of the rival sides was not well understood. Candidates assumed capitalism was the ideology of the USA rather than a particular economic system. Many candidates dismissed ideology or emphasised its importance without really showing a convincing grasp of what the two antithetical systems were and why they were 'inevitably' doomed to conflict with each other.

A reminder from last year's report:

“Where candidates used historical detail of the period, rather than regurgitating ‘historiography’ the results were significantly better in producing focused and convincing responses.”

Question 22

Popular- but with a very limited treatment by the majority of the respondents who tended to deal with the question as one solely/mainly concerned with the Missile Crisis of 1962.

Question 23

No responses were seen for this question.

Question 24

For some candidates an opportunity to narrate /describe US involvement in Vietnam- but some strong responses which covered the period from 1950 (and Korea) up until the fall of Saigon in 1975. Results (and contrasts) were suitably emphasised by more able candidates.

Question 25

While there were some very perceptive responses which dealt with more than the Gorbachev policies of Glasnost and Perestroika, and which examined developments in Eastern Europe and the impact of US policy (under Reagan in particular), too many candidates adopted a narrow treatment of the question and wrote only about developments inside the USSR without relating these developments to the wider international context.

Topic 6

There were, as in the past, very few takers for questions in this section. Where some attempts were made, the responses on the whole tended to reflect highly generalised, often poorly supported work.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Appended below are general recommendations made in relation to the November 2006, May 2007 and May 2008 sessions - which are themselves largely a compilation and repetition of general points made, with regularity, concerning student performance in Paper Two - and what guidance could be provided for future candidates. **Rather than re-inventing the wheel, these points still stand as a guide for candidates hoping to successfully address the demands of this particular paper.**

- “Each year the recommendations concerning guidance for future candidates are remarkably similar, and one hopes that centres/teachers do read these and try to adapt teaching methods and candidates’ approaches to dealing with the tasks set in the examination paper.

- Although the followings suggestions may appear repetitive- they are worth repeating- **and making available to students** in order to inform candidates what examiners are looking for in the essay questions set.
- Every essay provides a specific task for the candidate. Students need to identify the key terms in the question and plan an effective and relevant response accordingly. **Question analysis** means reading the **entire** question, breaking down the task into constituent parts or themes and then avoiding the temptation to produce an avalanche of information whose relevance to the specific demands is quite marginal.
- 5-10 minutes writing a **plan** of the response is time well spent and can aid in providing a coherent and focused answer. Encourage students to include the plan within the exam answer booklet- having made sure to draw a line through the plan to indicate it is not part of the essay answer obviously
- In questions relating to **Topic 3** - students must exercise great care in identifying whether questions are asking candidates to focus on **rise or rule** of single-party leaders - **or both!** Marks are lost by candidates who fail to identify the scope of these questions.
- A thematic approach to essays, when appropriate, usually produces a more successful outcome. The chronological narrative often tends towards descriptive writing and curtails analytical treatment of topics.
- Opinions need to be supported by relevant, accurate historical knowledge if candidates wish to achieve the higher grade bands. **There is no substitute for mastery of the material** and its focused deployment in the attempt to meet the demands of the task.
- **Define** terms which appear in the questions – not only for the sake of examiners but in order to clarify the task at the outset for the candidate- ‘ideology’, ‘limited warfare’ for example - need to be explained at the outset.
- **Historiography** is not the be-all and end-all of history essay writing: it should not be a substitute/ replacement for solid factual knowledge, accurate chronology and sequencing which must form the basis of any effective essays.”

Reiteration of these points over the years has, in some cases produced a significant improvement in the way in which candidates approach question types- especially notable here being the improvement in the structuring of ‘Compare/Contrast’ questions. Yet much still needs to be done. Candidates must learn to focus on the specific task, must learn to read the question and answer **that question and not another!** Many students do indeed have a mastery of historical information - it is a pity to see this being squandered by a failure to think about the question and plan accordingly at the outset.

Higher level paper three - Africa

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 7	8 - 15	16 - 23	24 - 29	30 - 34	35 - 40	41 - 60

General comments

The paper was taken by 40 candidates in two centres. There were fewer than 4 answers except to questions on which comments are made.

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

As has been the case for many years, questions on nineteenth century topics continue to be more popular. Questions on African history since independence are much less well answered and the topics may not have been taught. Topics 1 and 12 are still not taught in sufficient depth. Otherwise the weaknesses of the candidates were not related to particular areas of the programme.

The levels of knowledge, understanding and skill demonstrated

There was a clear range of ability all the way to the high mark bands. The major weakness is still the tendency of some candidates to generalise without supporting evidence. There are, however, fewer candidates writing unfocused narrative answers. Most candidates sought to address the demands of the questions, whose main requirements were well understood. But there was a variation in the amount of adequate, specific and accurate knowledge. Questions on Ethiopian history are still popular, partly because they focus on specific personalities. So are questions on South Africa, but they are not answered with the same depth or degree of relevance.

Many answers were well structured, looked at other factors in answering 'to what extent' questions, and showed the ability to analyse, evaluate and assess, to compare and contrast. Better candidates showed a readiness to challenge the assumptions behind questions based on quotations.

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

Question 2

This question was very popular and there were many thoughtful and thorough assessments of Menelik's contribution in all three areas with credit being given to the work of his predecessors. Some essays lacked balance and dealt with one aspect rather briefly.

Question 2

This question was generally well answered though more could have been written on the impact on Sudan of the British occupation of Egypt. The religious appeal of the Mahdi and grievances arising from Turco-Egyptian rule were mostly well covered.

Question 5

The few answers to this question were mostly disappointing and showed a serious lack of knowledge which led to the selection of completely inappropriate examples like Samori Toure.

Question 7

This question was generally very well answered and candidates were very familiar with the historiographical debate and showed evidence of wide reading on the topic.

Question 8

This was, as expected, the most popular question but not always the best answered. There was a lack of depth in many answers. The impact of the conference itself was treated too briefly and some answers were unfocused general discussions of the causes of the European partition of Africa.

Question 9

This was generally well answered though some answers did not focus enough on the key word 'prolonged' and devoted much of their answers to a rather obvious explanation of why the Nandi initially resisted the British.

Question 15

The few candidates who answered this turned it quite incorrectly into a second question on Menelik and failed to discuss the Italian occupation under Mussolini of Ethiopia from 1936.

Question 16

The few answers were adequate but somewhat generalised and did not analyse in depth the nature of the Mau Mau struggle and especially its impact on the decolonisation and achievement of independence in Kenya.

Question 19

The few answers to this question showed some knowledge of events in Sharpeville and Soweto and their impact on African resistance but they failed to compare and contrast the two explicitly.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers are well advised to choose a maximum of five topics but ensure that they cover every single aspect identified in the bullet points on the syllabus. There are 22 topics to choose from and teachers might wish to concentrate more on topics related to East, West, South or Central Africa or Ethiopia and the Sudan.

It is essential to emphasise the need for in- depth knowledge of every aspect of the selected topics and to support every argument with specific, detailed evidence. Students should never write unsubstantiated generalisations. They should only answer questions on topics they have been taught and in particular should avoid answering questions on Africa since independence on the basis of general knowledge. It would be helpful for students to have a list of past questions on the selected topics since the syllabus was introduced in 2003. They should then practise answering as many as possible under exam conditions strictly in 50 minutes, the time available to answer an essay question in the final exam. The mark schemes for African history are quite detailed and should guide teachers on the main points needing to be developed. Students should be taught to write balanced answers to questions which have several parts eg. Question 2 which required assessment of Menelik's contribution to the unity, modernization and preservation of the independence of Ethiopia. They should practise answering 'compare and contrast' questions in a clear comparative framework and to avoid end- on or sequential answers with only implicit comparison. They should also practise writing answers to 'to what extent' questions and ensure that their answers always give due consideration to other factors e.g. questions 8, 15 and 21 on this paper, which are also quotation questions. They should understand what is required in questions beginning 'analyse or 'assess'.

Higher level paper three - Americas

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 7	8 - 15	16 - 22	23 - 28	29 - 33	34 - 39	40 - 60

Introductory comments on the overall performance of the candidates

The paper seemed to work very well, providing a wide choice of questions for the candidates. The selected questions, however, were concentrated in a rather narrow scope of the ones that were offered for choice. The answers showed a good spread of marks, from some excellent display of knowledge and understanding, to some limited in appropriate skills and knowledge. The majority of the G2 forms reported that the paper was of similar standards from previous year session. There was a strong concentration of answers on both Latin American and US history.

The most popular answers were: 10, 12, 14, 18, 19, and 21. Very few questions about Canada were answered. All the students answered the required three questions.

The areas of the program which proved difficult for candidates

The main problem observed during this session was the lack of attention to the demands of the question. This was particularly obvious in questions 12, 21, and to a lesser degree question 10. This “lack of attention” seemed to be the result of pre-planned answers which did not quite fit with the required demands of the question, an unwelcome development in the preparation of candidates.

The levels of knowledge, understanding and skill demonstrated

A positive feature in many answers was that candidates showed relevant knowledge about the topics. Some candidates made excellent use of both Spanish and English historical evidence and historiography. Analytical and writing skills, showed a significant improvement this session

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

Question 1

Very few answers. Limited knowledge.

Question 2

Few answers, although some of them very good. The only example selected was the United States.

Question 3

No answers

Question 4

No answers.

Question 5

No answers.

Question 6

No answers.

Question 7

No answers.

Question 8

No answers.

Question 9

No answers.

Question 10

Some excellent answers with detailed knowledge and analytical skills. On the negative side, some students expanded the answers to discuss all the aspects of Theodore Roosevelt's foreign policies in the area.

Question 11

Very few answers, some very good.

Question 12

Probably the most popular question. It elicited some excellent answers with detailed and relevant knowledge.

On the other hand, many candidates ignored the demand of "one Latin American country" and answered about the Depression in the United States and consequently obtained the lowest mark.

Question 13

No answers.

Question 14

Very popular question with some excellent results: depth in knowledge and historical skills.

Question 15

No answers.

Question 16

Although not many candidates selected this question, the ones that did, selected Cuba as an example. Some good, solid answers but some unnecessary descriptions of the Cuban revolution.

Question 17

No answers.

Question 18

Not very popular but some good, detailed answers.

Question 19

Many candidates selected this question. Very good answers with balanced analysis and understanding of the topic.

Question 20

Answers to this question varied. There were some excellent answers supported with relevant knowledge and evidence. Others, however, ignored the demands of “during the second half of the 1960s” and discussed the first phase of the Civil Rights movement.

Question 21

Many of the candidates that chose this question basically ignored Truman policies' towards Vietnam and developed only Johnson's. Consequently the results were not satisfactory. Even if the students know a great deal about Johnson, it will not compensate for the fact that this a comparative answer and if only one aspect is addressed the results will be very poor.

Question 22

Few answers, but overall well informed and balanced assessments.

Question 23

No answers.

Question 24

No answers.

Question 25

No answers.

Recommendations and guidance the teachers should provide for future candidates

- Candidates should be trained in reading carefully the questions and to follow the demands of the questions. As mentioned above, one of the observed weaknesses was the lack of attention to the dates and commands prescribed by the question.
- Encourage candidates to include references and accurate factual detail to support their responses and to explain and evaluate events.
- Candidates should strive to provide well-supported answers to the questions asked and avoid use of sweeping generalizations and 'pre-prepared' answers. Students should be encourage to develop independent thinking and to write about varying opinions on subjects.

Higher level paper three – East and South East Asia and Oceania

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 7	8 - 15	16 - 23	24 - 29	30 - 34	35 - 40	41 - 60

General comments

From the G2s received from the schools most centres felt that the level of difficulty of this paper was on a par with that of last year's. Some G2s commented that it was clearly worded and accessible for the candidates. Others were pleased with the balance of the questions and the coverage of the course. Most centres still seem to concentrate solely on China and Japan in the nineteenth century, though there were a few interesting responses to some Australian History questions. There were many responses where the candidates wrote fluently and well, but they did not include enough specific factual evidence to support their analyses. Where this applied to whole schools it seems that the teachers may not be expecting enough precise detail from their students.

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

- Some candidates appeared to have prepared answers to set questions and they found it difficult to adapt their material in response to the specific question asked.
- This was particularly evident for questions 1, 3, 8, 16, 18 and 20.
- On the other hand, where candidates did attempt to respond to the actual question some of them did not include enough specific detailed factual information to illustrate and support their analysis.
- Some candidates did not have a strong sense of chronology and context.
- Some candidates did not seem to understand the distinction between East and South East Asia and consequently some candidates a lost significant number of marks due to this mistake. This applied to questions 12, 17 and 24.
- Some candidates spent too on long background information in their responses particularly in questions 8, 18 and 22.

The levels of knowledge, understanding and skill demonstrated

- Most candidates were able to structure sophisticated thematic responses.
- Many candidates displayed a comprehensive knowledge of the course.
- Many candidates wrote detailed, relevant and well constructed essays. They were a pleasure to mark.

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

Comments are only provided on the most popular questions

Question 1

This was a very popular question. Most candidates agreed with the statement in the question. Some tended to concentrate just on the opium issue, but the majority attempted to address the notion of a culture clash by looking at trade in general, diplomatic and legal issues. The better students examined the treaties to analyse what the war was really about.

Question 2

This was very popular question. Most candidates answered it thematically focussing on strategic blunders, ideology, quality of leadership and the strength of the Qing armies. The better candidates also discussed the significance of the Taiping alienating the Western powers

Question 3

Often the question was not addressed. Many candidates just described Tokugawa Japan. Most candidates mentioned "Dutch Learning", but not "National Learning". Many concentrated on the economic and feudal system changes in Japan. Very few discussed the role of the tozama clans. Quite a few used a lot of Japanese words without much explanation or analysis.

Question 5

One unfortunate candidate misinterpreted the Selection Acts as the anti-Chinese immigration laws!

Question 7

Overall this question was not done particularly well. Only a few candidates wrote comprehensive and detailed running comparative analyses of self-strengthening and modernization in China and Japan. Others seemed to know more about Japan than China. Many candidates were quite dismissive of China's achievements.

Question 8

This was a popular question, but one which was done very poorly. Very few candidates really knew much about Sun Yatsen beyond his Three Principles of the People ideas. There was very little understanding of the revolutionary movement in China in the period 1902-1911 and the numerous attempts by the Tongmenghui (Revolutionary Alliance League) to overthrow the Qing government. Most candidates just discussed the long-term causes of the 1911 Revolution and then mentioned that it started by accident. These responses did not really integrate Sun Yatsen's ideas and activities into this discussion.

Question 9

This was quite a popular choice. There were some excellent responses which analysed thematically the changes in Meiji society and which also discussed the extent to which Japan was transformed and commented on the way in which some aspects of Japanese culture and values prevailed. Some candidates used a lot of Japanese words without much explanation or analysis.

Question 11

A few responses, but they were largely descriptive of events rather than analytical.

Question 12

A few responses, but some candidates erroneously chose India which was outside the syllabus for this paper.

Question 13

Most candidates concentrated too heavily on just the impact of the First World War on Australian identity and nationalism rather than putting it into the context of the development of these concepts since the late nineteenth century.

Question 14

Many candidates only looked at the internal factors that influenced the rise of militarism in Japan. Very few analysed the changing nature of militarism in the given timeframe. Many were fairly narrative in their approach.

Question 16

This was a very popular choice. Most candidates answered the question thematically and really addressed the issue of a turning point well. All candidates discussed the rise of the communists, but many also examined the achievements and failings of the Nationalist government in the given timeframe.

Question 17

There were a few responses and these addressed the question in a general way. They did not have enough detailed knowledge of the growth of nationalist movements in South East Asian countries. Some candidates also interpreted the question re Japan over extending and hence discussed the impact on Japan's war effort. A few candidates did not understand the distinction between East and South East Asia and discussed China.

Question 18

This was the most popular choice. Most candidates dealt with this question in a thematic way and there were very few narrative responses. All were able to discuss the weaknesses of the Nationalists and the reasons why the Communists won in general terms ranging over several issues such as treatment of peasants and soldiers, military tactics, support bases, leadership, economic issues, Japanese and the Sino-Japanese War. Many spent too long discussing the 1920s and 1930s. Only the better candidates were able to be more detailed about the events

of the Civil War which led to the CCP victory in 1949. The weakest candidates had no sense of context and chronology. Some confused the Red Army and the Red Guards.

Question 20

This was the second most popular question. Many candidates wrote detailed and interesting chronological accounts of the policies and events in Mao's China. There were also some very good thematic responses. However, the main issue with this question was that most candidates did not fully address the question and assess the extent to which the Cultural Revolution was "a struggle over the future of China". Many just discussed the Red Guards and did not analyse ideology or the political power struggle. Often the Cultural Revolution was not put into a context.

Question 21

There were some superb responses to this question that dealt with military, strategic, psychological and international factors. However, others just tended to concentrate on the events of the war rather than look at the initial Cold War context and the shift in the United States' domestic and international attitudes.

Question 22

There were a few responses that were largely descriptive and which focussed on the post-war reconstruction rather than the 1960s.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Teachers should make sure that their students know the geography of the region and therefore the difference between East Asia and South East Asia so that candidates do not make the wrong choice of question.
- Teachers should stress the importance of reading the question properly and thus avoid costly mistakes.
- Teachers could encourage their better students to include quite a lot of precise evidence in their responses. This can be done by setting research tasks as part of the coursework.
- The better students should also be encouraged to show evidence of wide reading and an understanding of historiography, particularly with regard to Tokugawa Japan, Mao's China and the United States' involvement in the Vietnam War.
- However, teachers and students should be wary of misunderstanding what is meant by historiography. Name dropping and referring to school text book authors does not constitute historiography.
- Evidence of wide reading can be obtained by encouraging students to use a range of history books like Hsu, Spence, Gray, and Fairbank for China and by using relevant articles from magazines such as *History Today*, *History Review* and *Twentieth Century History Review*.

- Teachers should avoid preparing candidates with set pieces on a particular topic using exactly the same examples and information. Candidates who have this type of prepared answer struggle to adapt the material to the actual question asked in the examination.
- Teachers should stress that the candidates must respond to the actual question asked. Many candidates did not do this and included irrelevant material which was often out of the timeframe given.
- Candidates should be trained in answering questions that have two parts such as *Analyse the reasons for the rise and the changing nature of...; In what ways, and for what reasons, was...; Analyse the impact and consequences of...; and Compare and contrast the....*
- Teachers should make sure that their students do many practice timed essays in 50 minutes which is the time students should allow for each question in the examination.
- Students from some schools wrote introductions that were far too long and which included too much detailed information. They later repeated this information in the body of the essay. This meant that the essays were very repetitive.
- Candidates should also avoid long repetitive conclusions.
- Candidates should avoid using idiosyncratic abbreviations such as YSK (for Yuan Shikai); SYS (Sun Yatsen); CKS (Chiang Kaishek); EIC (East India Company); OW (Opium War); FACW (First Anglo-Chinese War); CCW (Chinese Civil War); SEM (Socialist Education Movement) and NVA (North Vietnamese Army) etc! Only commonly used standard abbreviations such as CCP and GMD (KMT) should be permitted.

Further comments

Consistency in the spelling of the Chinese words is needed. Some candidates used a mixture of Pinyin and Wade-Giles. A candidate should only use one system. Given that the IB uses Pinyin with Wade-Giles in brackets teachers should be encouraged to switch to Pinyin.

Higher level paper three - Europe

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 7	8 - 15	16 - 23	24 - 29	30 - 34	35 - 40	41 - 60

General comments.

This was on the whole a satisfactory paper with some excellent scripts and few very weak ones. The main weakness was the misuse of Historiography, which caused some able candidates to score less highly than was probably expected. See below

Strengths and weaknesses of the candidates.

Most candidates understood the demands of the questions that they answered, and wrote reasonably structured answers. Focus varied, but it was generally at least satisfactory. Most candidates selected 'main stream' questions, and produced satisfactory arguments. Answers to comparative questions continue to improve, and most candidates avoid areas that they have not studied in some depth.

As in every year, weaker candidates produced answers that were too general, with insufficient evidence to support their assertions. However, the main weakness of this November's examination was the misuse of historiography. Historiography should only be used to identify historians who have put forward an original argument, which is well supported by specific evidence, and contributes something new to the historical debate on that subject.

That does not mean that only historians writing today can be used, but historians who put forward strong, probably original views. Candidates should not write that historian X, Y and Z wrote/ agreed etc. on something that most historians and students of history held the same views, especially when it is an accepted fact that, for example, 'the First World War started in 1914'. If a valid historian is selected and his/her views given, the evidence for the historian's conclusion must be explained by the candidate. Historiography is not name dropping. One examiner reported that a candidate this session had used historians' names 48 times in the paper. Also it is not necessary to write 'Historian Mack Smith', just Mack Smith will suffice. Also do not use text book authors in historiography. It is possible to score full marks without attempting historiography. Different interpretations of events, based on specific evidence, and using the candidates' own judgement is much better. Chronology needs to be improved; this will be noted below. Another weakness that is increasing is the use of the word 'create'. It has a specific meaning which is rarely correct for an historical answer. Candidates must think of a word that has the exact meaning required. One page seen used the word create 12 times.

The levels of knowledge, understanding and skill demonstrated

Knowledge was as usual good in that very few candidates did not have a general overview of the subject that they were tackling, but adequate exact specific knowledge, including chronology, was too often lacking in answers to main stream questions, such as 5, 14 and 21. Understanding was thus sometimes too general and lacked depth. Social and economic question, such as 9, 17 and 25, were not tackled well. A problem noted in some scripts was the difficulty in distinguishing between aims, policies and ideology.

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

Question 1

Reasonable answers but needed more depth and detail of the monarchy's failures and the aims and failures of the various revolutionaries.

Question 2

This was quite a tricky question, but some interesting answers of how Napoleon was effected by the Revolution, and to what extent he continued some of its reforms were seen.

Question 3 and 4

Were not seen.

Question 5

This was very popular, but exact details with dates were often missing. Too many candidates wanted to include prepared answers on Mazzini and Garibaldi as well as Cavour, so not all material was relevant.

Question 6

This topic was generally known, but early Prussian developments, as well as Austrian weakness often lacked details.

Question 7

This too needed more specific detail and analysis.

Questions 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12,

Were rarely answered.

Question 13

Not very popular; candidates probably wanted a question on Alexander 11, and knowledge on Nicholas 11 was too sparse and general.

Question 14

This popular question produced disappointing answers. Candidates had insufficient specific knowledge of what Lenin did between 1918 and 1924--or rather 1922, as he was ill 1922-24.

Question 15

Answers to this question were probably rather better than in the past, but what was surprising was the lack of mention of the part played by Australian, New Zealand and Canadian forces.

Question 16

Fairly popular; Germany and Italy were popular choices, but focus was too much on rise of Hitler and Mussolini. Russia was also a popular choice, but there were problems between results of War and Revolution.

Question 17

One of the better answers on social and economic policies.

Question 18

This was too vague on the whole with unsubstantiated generalisations.

Question 19

This question needed more specific evidence; candidates generally concentrated on either pre or post 1945. Few did both successfully.

Question 20

Too much on Civil War.

Question 21

Too much on Versailles and appeasement and too little on Hitler's policies.

Question 22

Weak-vague

Question 23 and 24

Both need more specific knowledge and analysis.

Question 25

Not seen.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- The usual advice, think and plan more in order to focus on the exact question.
- Improve chronology, and use it: Too often candidates get the sequence of events in the wrong order
- Only advise very able candidates to attempt historiography.
- Make sure that candidates have sufficient specific knowledge on main stream topics such as the World Wars and Russian Revolutions. All candidates seem to think they know these topics, but often exact knowledge is limited..
- Analysis needs more explanation from teachers.