

November 2014 subject reports

HISTORY

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level route 2 Americas – peacemaking

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

Higher level route 2 Europe and the Middle East – peacemaking

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|--------------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-9 | 10-22 | 23-31 | 32-43 | 44-54 | 55-66 | 67-100 |

Higher level route 2 Asia and Oceania – peacemaking

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|--------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-10 | 11-22 | 23-30 | 31-42 | 43-53 | 54-65 | 66-100 |

Higher level route 2 Americas – Arab-Israeli conflict

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|--------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-11 | 12-23 | 24-32 | 33-43 | 44-54 | 55-65 | 66-100 |

Higher level route 2 Americas – communism in crisis

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

Higher level route 2 Europe and the Middle East – Arab-Israeli conflict

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|--------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-10 | 11-22 | 23-32 | 33-44 | 45-54 | 55-66 | 67-100 |

Higher level route 2 Europe and the Middle East – communism in crisis

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|--------------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-9 | 10-22 | 23-31 | 32-43 | 44-54 | 55-66 | 67-100 |

Higher level route 2 Africa – Arab-Israeli conflict

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|--------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-11 | 12-23 | 24-32 | 33-43 | 44-54 | 55-65 | 66-100 |

Standard level route 2 PS 1 peacemaking

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|--------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-10 | 11-23 | 24-31 | 32-43 | 44-54 | 55-66 | 67-100 |

Standard level route 2 PS 2 Arab-Israeli conflict

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|--------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-11 | 12-24 | 25-32 | 33-44 | 45-55 | 56-68 | 69-100 |

Standard level route 2 PS 3 communism in crisis

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|--------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-10 | 11-23 | 24-31 | 32-43 | 44-54 | 55-66 | 67-100 |

Higher level route 1

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|--------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-11 | 12-23 | 24-33 | 34-44 | 45-54 | 55-65 | 66-100 |

Standard level route 1

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-11 | 12-24 | 25-33 | 34-44 | 45-55 | 56-67 | 68-100 |

Higher and standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

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

The range and suitability of the work submitted

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

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

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Plan of the investigation

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

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

Criterion B: Summary of evidence

The standard of the work in this section has improved. More of the responses showed organisation and relevance to the research topic. However there were too many candidates who used only non-academic internet sources. These do not give the depth or reliability that is necessary for work at this level and there is so much other material available on the internet that is more suitable. In this session, there seemed to be a greater use of bullet points, which was disappointing. Nevertheless these can be, for some candidates, a useful way of presenting information. That said, they need to be relevant, clearly organised and not simply a series of quotations from the sources. Section B should contain all the evidence necessary for the IA, so that new evidence does not have to be introduced in Section D.

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

Criterion C: Evaluation of sources

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

Criterion D: Analysis

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

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

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

Criterion E: Conclusion

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

Criterion F: Sources and word limit

There were a surprising number of candidates who could not write a bibliography following the rules of one standard method. This is a requirement at the moment. When listing internet sources, it is important to state the date they were accessed. As mentioned above, not all internet sources were suitable and it is important to limit the number of student study guides and general histories. If the candidate has included a reference to an interview that they have conducted, a transcript of the interview, together with details of when and where it took place, should be included. All sources that are used or cited should be included in the bibliography. This was not always the case.

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

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Candidates need detailed guidance on how to choose a research question with a precise focus and clear instruction on how to find suitable sources.
- If internet sources are to be used, candidates should be guided as to how to use them critically.
- Have the criteria available at all times and encourage the candidates to read them carefully and see how they apply to their own work.
- There is evidence that more detailed instructions on how to write the Plan of Investigation (and what exactly is required) are needed.
- Centres need to train their candidates on the difference between evidence and analysis and how they are to be applied to the Internal Assessment.
- Correct referencing and citation styles need to be developed and the importance of referencing correctly in Sections B and D should be stressed.
- Stress that only material that is relevant to the research question should be included in Section B and that the material should be well organised.
- The selection of sources for evaluation is an area that needs to be reviewed. Candidates should be reminded that these sources should be used in the analysis in Section D. Avoid the use of extracts from a larger book or other more expansive source material.
- Practise evaluating sources for origin, purpose, value and limitations; not just those that will be used in the assessment. It is important to convey to the candidates that usefulness is not a valid reason for value of a source.
- Stress that no new material should be used in Section D.
- Show that the conclusion should answer the research question and be based on the material in the assessment and not include new evidence or new ideas.
- Work on the listing of bibliographies.

Higher and standard level route 1 paper one

Component grade boundaries

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-2 | 3-5 | 6-8 | 9-11 | 12-14 | 15-17 | 18-25 |

General comments

There were very few candidates so limited conclusions can be drawn about the papers.

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

The only area of occasional difficulty on paper one was the analysis of sources. Some candidates tend to focus on the content of the source and not the details of the attribution. In addition, some do not have as clear an idea of value and limitation as they might.

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

See route 1 papers two and three.

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

See route 1 papers two and three.

Higher and standard level route 1 paper two

Component grade boundaries

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-5 | 6-10 | 11-13 | 14-17 | 18-21 | 22-25 | 26-40 |

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

See route 1 paper one.

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

For papers two and three the responses were generally strong with a sound focus, good content and clear structure.

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

Occasional weaknesses occurred when candidates did not focus precisely on the demands of the question. In addition some candidates provided exhaustive detail in their responses but, as a result, were not able to develop a sufficient range of points in their responses.

Higher level route 1 paper three

Component grade boundaries

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-6 | 7-13 | 14-19 | 20-25 | 26-31 | 32-37 | 38-60 |

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

See route 1 paper one.

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

For papers two and three the responses were generally strong with a sound focus, good content and clear structure.

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

Occasional weaknesses occurred when candidates did not focus precisely on the demands of the question. In addition some candidates provided exhaustive detail in their responses but, as a result, were not able to develop a sufficient range of points in their responses.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Please refer to route 2 papers two and three.

Higher and standard level route 2 paper one

General comments (for all prescribed subjects)

At the time of writing 28 schools had returned G2 forms covering all three Prescribed Subjects in English, German and Spanish. This makes it difficult to generalize as some comments were very specific on translation issues and others, as usual, were both complimentary and critical about the papers. Overall, the papers seemed to work well and the majority of candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of the content and context of the sources and the theme of the individual papers. From the G2 forms the clarity, wording and presentation of all of the papers were considered to be very good to excellent. Most respondents found the papers to be of a similar level of difficulty to last year although a significant minority found prescribed subject 1: *peacemaking, peacekeeping — international relations 1918-1936* to be a little more difficult (28.65 per cent). This was not supported by the candidates' performance in the exam.

Prescribed subject 1: Peacemaking, peacekeeping — international relations 1918–1936

Component grade boundaries

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-2 | 3-5 | 6-7 | 8-10 | 11-13 | 14-16 | 17-25 |

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

Although the quality of answers to Question 3 was, on the whole, satisfactory some candidates limited themselves to paraphrasing the sources or commenting on their content in attempting to assess value and limitations. Many candidates still claim that because a source is primary it is intrinsically more reliable than a secondary source and this is clearly not the case. Many candidates, when answering Question 4, did not use their own knowledge in their answers and this, inevitably, restricted their performance. Questions that simply summarize the content of the sources and offer some limited own knowledge, but then fail to focus this material on the set question, will not achieve high marks.

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

In general, responses showed an appropriate knowledge of the set topic. On the whole candidates followed the order of questions and this resulted in a better understanding of the issues. The majority of candidates understood how to approach each style of question, and had attempted to answer all four set questions. Candidates were more succinct on questions 1(a) and 1(b), which gave them additional time to adequately address the other, more discursive, questions. There was some improvement in the structure and focus of responses for Questions 2 and 3 and most candidates also attempted to use or refer to sources in their responses to Question 4; however there were few cases of synthesis between the sources and the candidates' own knowledge. By and large, most candidates seemed to have a sound understanding of what was required in order to answer the different types of question encountered on the source paper.

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

Question 1

- (a) This was very accessible to the candidates and many scored the full three marks.
- (b) The quality of the image did not impair the candidates and many scored the full two marks; usually by reference to the length of the French pipe and the potential danger of a spark causing an explosion and/or revolution.

Question 2

This type of compare and contrast question provides many candidates with a challenge in terms of linking the two sources in a running commentary. It was pleasing to note that in this session the candidates were able to find a good number of comparisons and contrasts.

Question 3

The origins, purpose, value and limitations (OPVL) question appears to cause difficulties for some candidates in their efforts to attain marks at the higher end. Source A, by Keynes, was usually better handled than Source D, by Poincare, and there was the usual issue of candidates describing the content of a particular source rather than analysing its value and limitations.

Question 4

It is interesting to note that the comments by the examiners on Prescribed Subjects 2 and 3 make reference to the failure of the candidates to use their own knowledge. That was the case here. There was some discussion on the G2s concerning the lack of a date in the question although the question clearly stated “the challenges facing them upon negotiating the treaties...” which must refer to the time period of 1919 to 1921. All five sources were, in general, used well although there was the tendency to summarize their content in a rather mechanical manner and not relate them to the set question.

Prescribed subject 2: The Arab-Israeli conflict 1945–1979

Component grade boundaries

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-3 | 4-6 | 7-8 | 9-11 | 12-14 | 15-17 | 18-25 |

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

Although some scripts accurately suggested points of comparison and contrast between the two sources specified in Question 2, such identification often lacked support. There were indications that many candidates did not have a full awareness of the issues to be considered when evaluating the sources. Furthermore, there were only a few instances of the inclusion of relevant own knowledge in the candidates' answers to Question 4.

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

Some candidates showed a gratifying proficiency in their interpretation, evaluation and application of the evidence.

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

Question 1

- Many answers included three valid points. However some candidates seem to have ignored the information provided in the provenance to Source A and assumed that Churchill was Prime Minister at the time and/or Israel was already formally established.
- Few candidates picked up the point in the cartoon that suggests Britain's exasperation, but many correctly identified the suggestion that the United Kingdom was giving up and that the Great Powers were intervening. Some answers seemed to assume that the bottle of "Trusteeship" (in the hand of the US figure) showed that the "medicine" of trusteeship was going to be given to the "patient", which suggests a lack of awareness of the historical background.

Question 2

This is the question that candidates often find to be particularly challenging. However in this November session a pleasing number of answers identified sufficient comparative and

contrasting items to gain at least 4 marks (the 5-6 mark range was reserved for those answers where the points of comparison and contrast included clear linkage and support).

Question 3

Candidates generally found it easier to provide a balanced evaluation of Source D (Noah Lucas) in terms of its origin and purpose than of Source A (Winston Churchill). Unfortunately there were some answers that claimed Source A was reliable because Churchill was part of the Government (and not the Leader of the Opposition at that time as the provenance to Source A stated). It was disappointing that, in many cases, one encountered one or both of the following weaknesses; extensive passages that merely described the sources' content and/or provided an evaluation in terms of the sources' content, rather than their origin & purpose. Also some answers were based on the false premise that primary sources are, *per se*, more reliable than secondary sources.

Question 4

Some answers simply offered a summary of what each of the sources said, leaving the reader to work out how the information therein related to the question. Stronger responses used the sources as raw material from which an appropriate answer was crafted; these clearly demonstrated how each source contributed something to the question. Some answers, albeit disappointingly few of them, supported their argument with relevant items of own knowledge, and this, combined with effective use of the sources, enabled such candidates to gain more than 5 marks. Regrettably there were instances when a promising start to the question was cut short, presumably because the candidate ran out of time. This may have been a consequence of those candidates spending too long in dealing with questions 1(a) and (b).

Prescribed subject 3: Communism in crisis 1976–1989

Component grade boundaries

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|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-2 | 3-5 | 6-7 | 8-10 | 11-13 | 14-16 | 17-25 |

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

Responses often lacked sufficient development to gain the top marks for each question. Indeed, candidates at times offered only one or two arguments for questions worth 6 marks. Some candidates lacked focus on the specific question and spent too much time giving background information. In addition, there was a lack of detailed knowledge on the specific theme of the paper.

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

Although detailed knowledge was sadly lacking in many responses, there was a general understanding of China under Deng Xiaoping (Teng Hsiao-p'ing) and of Deng's economic policies. Most candidates adopted the appropriate approach to each style of question and many showed sound analysis and evaluation skills. Candidates had an understanding of what was required for each question and increasing numbers are managing to complete the paper. In fact, a majority had at least attempted a response to the final question.

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

Question 1

- (a) The majority of candidates were able to find two points. However, there were few responses that had identified three elements in the source. There were some responses that offered only one extended point or repeated the same point. The G2 forms mentioned that the content of the source might be challenging and this was taken into account in the marking and grading of this paper.
- (b) There were several valid points that could be made with regard to the photograph. However, many candidates simply repeated the same point; that it suggested a 'western influence'. Candidates need to give two distinct points for this question.

Question 2

The majority of candidates had attempted to make links between the two sources and there were some excellent running commentaries. Candidates were usually able to identify at least one comparison and one contrast and most were able to go beyond this. However, the few candidates who supplied only one of each need to be reminded that they should give a range of comparisons and contrasts, and that they should attempt to identify several links between the sources.

Question 3

Generally, candidates seem to have an increasing awareness of how to approach this question. Very few candidates wrote basic descriptions of the content of the sources and most attempted to offer comments on the values and limitations of each source that were derived from their respective origin and purpose. Although Source D had a complex provenance the markscheme accommodated a variety of possible comments. However, many candidates only comment on the value of the source and neglect to refer to the purpose. It should be noted that many candidates only offer one comment on the value and limitation of each source and, where possible, they should aim to go beyond this.

Question 4

This question appeared to work well and most candidates made at least some valid comments. In addition, more candidates seemed to be aware of the need to refer directly to the sources in this question. Many of the responses included references to and analysis of three or more of the sources; however, even where the candidates seemed to have managed their time effectively there was little detailed own knowledge synthesized into the response. There were some notable exceptions to this, where the response included an impressive amount of knowledge of the successes and failure of Deng's economic policies up to 1986.

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

- Encourage candidates to find more than two points for Question 1(a) as this is a three mark question. Suggest that candidates try to write three sentences - each one making a separate point.
- When answering Question 1(b) candidates should practice interpreting the message of different types of sources: cartoons, statistics, photographs, posters, speeches are just some of the visual materials that could be drawn upon for the examination, and candidates should not simply list the symbols and/or contents of a visual source without developing this and identifying their message.
- Examiners are not looking for an exact balance between comparisons and contrasts of the two sources in Question 2 and there could be a ratio of 3 plus 3; 4 plus 2; or 2 plus 4. Many candidates seem to be content to identify two or three points and often in a manner where they describe and/or list issues before bolting on some analysis at the end of the response. There should be explicit linkage between the sources and the arguments presented throughout the response.
- Evaluation of the origins and purpose of the sources in Question 3 will lead to better analysis of the sources' values and limitations. Candidates should avoid spending too long describing the origin and purpose of each source; instead they should concentrate their efforts on analysing the impact of a source's origin and purpose on its value and limitations.
- The inclusion of relevant historical material, for example dates, details and events would improve performance on Question 4. Candidates should be reminded that only relevant knowledge will be rewarded, and that listing the content of each source without specific reference to the actual question is unlikely to attain high marks.
- Teachers should share Subject Reports with their candidates as this will make much clearer to them what expectations examiners have in the responses to individual questions. Sharing markschemes with candidates may be useful, but they must be reminded that responses should not be formatted to mimic the layout of the markschemes (which are designed to aid examiners and not as teaching aids).
- Timing continues to be an issue for many candidates and teachers are encouraged to continue the good practice of requiring their students to sit examination papers (or parts thereof) under timed conditions.

Higher and standard level route 2 paper two

Component grade boundaries

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-4 | 5-9 | 10-12 | 13-17 | 18-21 | 22-26 | 27-40 |

General comments

As in previous exam sessions, the most popular topics were Topics 1, 3 and Topic 5 with very few responses seen to questions from either Topic 2 (with the exception of Q7 on the Weimar Republic) or Topic 4. Overall, the choice of questions was rather narrow from a wide-ranging paper but the quality of knowledge demonstrated was, for the most part, good and often, excellent, reflecting sound teaching of the more popular topics.

A total of 78 G2 forms were received and 98.51 per cent of the respondents found the paper to be of an “appropriate standard” whilst 1.49 per cent argued that it was “too difficult”. Just over 71 per cent found the paper to be “of a similar standard to last year” with 16 per cent finding it “a little more difficult” and 8 per cent a little easier”. Just over 63 per cent of respondents considered the clarity of wording to be very good/excellent with 65 per cent of the opinion that the presentation of the paper was also very good/excellent.

Centres are reminded to encourage teachers to complete and submit the G2 forms as their opinions and comments are taken into account at Grade Award when senior examiners set grade boundaries for the exam session.

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

A minority of candidates were hampered by limited knowledge, making it difficult for them to respond appropriately using well-supported arguments. An emphasis on the importance of wide reading would certainly go some way towards an improvement in the performance of these candidates.

There was also a tendency to narrate answers rather than to look closely at the command terms and to then identify key words. “To what extent...”, for example, requires consideration not only of the key factor (s) mentioned in the question, but also of other issues that may have been significant. It is useful practice for candidates to deconstruct questions from past papers and determine the task required of them (Command terms and their explanations can be found at the back of the subject guide. Centres are reminded that for **papers two and three**, only the following command terms will be used: compare and contrast; discuss; evaluate, examine; to what extent).

There were only very few instances where candidates did not follow the instructions to choose questions from different topics. This suggests that candidates were being well prepared for the exam experience and for the specific requirements of paper two.

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

At the highest end, the standard of analysis and the quantity of detailed, specific knowledge was most impressive. These scripts demonstrated candidates' full awareness of the demands of the question and, in many cases, the ability to structure strongly focused responses in the time allowed. This is very encouraging. Overall, most candidates were able to structure a sound, extended response that built up a coherent argument. It was clear that candidates had some knowledge of the more popular topics and had prepared for questions on civil wars, the First and Second World Wars and both the origin and the end of the Cold War.

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

Topic 1: Causes, practices and effects of wars

Question 1

Most candidates chose appropriate countries with only two responses seen that used the US as an example of an Allied Power (this was inappropriate, given that the question referred specifically to 1914). The most popular countries chosen were Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, France and Great Britain. Responses reflected a fair knowledge of areas of tension such as imperialism, nationalism and militarism with more developed answers linking sound analysis to the outbreak of war in 1914. There was good knowledge of events such as the two Moroccan Crises, as well as the Bosnian Crisis of 1908, with many responses demonstrating detailed knowledge of both the nature of these as well as their impact upon the events of 1914. Many responses also mentioned the Balkan Wars and were able to include some accurate and relevant assessment of these conflicts. Less developed responses were either narrative in structure or, in some instances, gave little more than an overview of the general causes of the First World War. Historiography, for the most part, was used sparingly and to good effect.

Question 2

The most popular choices were the Spanish and Chinese civil wars. There were some excellent responses that were extremely thorough (especially given the time allowed) and addressed both "reasons for" and "significance of" foreign intervention with some expert analysis supported by detailed evidence. It would have been quite acceptable to have chosen either the First or the Second Chinese civil war although some candidates attempted both. Most responses suggested that whereas foreign involvement had a significant impact on the outcome of the Spanish Civil War, it was of less significance in the Chinese Civil War. Some candidates used Vietnam and Korea and although these were quite appropriate examples,

they were handled less adeptly and tended towards a narrative of events rather than a focused analysis.

Question 3

For the most part, this question was answered with a rather descriptive structure. Most responses focused on both naval and air power and chose appropriate wars, but they lacked the detail to support assertions. The First and Second World Wars were the most popular choices and, although there was an abundance of relevant material, answers tended to be rather superficial and/or limited in scope.

Question 4

Most responses chose to focus on the decade following the First World War and correctly identified the League of Nations as the prime example of collective security. Candidates who chose this question were well-versed in the successes and failures of the League although rather too many strayed beyond 1929 and could not resist the temptation to use the Manchurian and Abyssinian crises as examples and to link the failure of the League to the outbreak of the Second World War. Candidates need to be reminded that if the question includes a timeframe, they ought to stick closely to it; extraneous material would probably be irrelevant and unlikely to be rewarded.

Questions 5 and 6

Very few responses were seen.

Topic 2: Democratic states — challenges and responses

Question 7

The "Weimar question" received the most responses of all the questions in Topic 2. This was a two-part question that asked for both the "reasons" for the establishment of democracy in post-war Germany, as well as an evaluation of how the government dealt with political and economic challenges. Overall, candidates did not appear to be well-versed in "reasons" and rarely went beyond a general reference to the Treaty of Versailles. There was much to be said but very few answers mentioned the US requirements for an armistice or, indeed, the growing unrest within Germany that expressed a loss of faith in the Kaiserreich. Economic and political challenges were dealt with rather more confidently with most responses mentioning the 1923 crisis as well as threats from both the Left and the Right. Rather too many answers went beyond 1929, however, as if the gravitational pull of Hitler were too much to resist. As mentioned earlier, the timeframe is all-important and candidates need to demonstrate their understanding of the demands of the question by staying within these parameters.

Questions 8 to 12

Few answers were seen for the other questions in Topic 2.

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

Question 13

This was possibly the most popular question on the paper, with most responses being written about Hitler's rise to power. The vast majority of candidates who chose this question addressed all three parts and structured their responses accordingly with a paragraph on each one. There was, overall, a fairly even division between candidates who argued that "underestimation by opponents" was of prime importance and those who considered "economic conditions" to be the defining factor. Most responses included some detailed knowledge and, in many instances, election statistics were used to good effect to support detailed analyses of the 1929 to 1933 period. More effective answers argued that Hitler's aims were often difficult to identify and that popular support was clearly present, but not of great significance until the German economy plummeted with the recall of US loans. Mostly, candidates traced Hitler's rise as far as the establishment of the single-party state in July 1933, although some answers concluded with his ascendancy as Fuhrer in August 1934. Either endpoint was quite acceptable, especially as these were usually accompanied by explanations of why they had been chosen. Stalin was a less popular choice but, again, all three parts were addressed although knowledge was less detailed and only a few responses demonstrated good understanding of the intricate rivalry and how this was inextricably tied to the rise and fall in popularity of the NEP during the 1920s. Rather too many candidates were unsure of when Stalin's rise became his rule and resorted to narrating lengthy but irrelevant accounts of collectivization, the Five Year Plans and the Purges.

Question 14

A few responses were seen with almost all using Mao and Castro as their chosen examples. The majority of these were descriptive accounts with analysis and judgment bolted-on to the end of the response and little in the way of comparison or contrast. Knowledge was rather limited, especially with regard to Castro's policies.

Question 15

This was quite a popular question with the choice of leaders ranging from Hitler and Stalin to Mao and Castro. As is often the case, candidates appear to have revised two leaders (usually from different regions) and used these in Topic 3, regardless of the demands of the question. Depending on the question and, therefore, the relevance of the material, this can work well or, alas, not so well. Unexpectedly, as this should have been a relatively straightforward question, the responses were not so impressive and were often descriptive in nature. Detailed knowledge was rather limited, perhaps because of the "different region" requirement?

Question 16

Responses to this question tended to be descriptive with most candidates opting for Nazi Germany and Communist China as examples. Higher-level answers added some critical commentary by going beyond references to policies, such as the Marriage Reform Law or the

League of German Maidens, to attempting some assessment of how the status of women did (or did not) change.

Question 17

Very few responses were seen.

Question 18

This was a popular question, made more so, perhaps, by there not being a regional requirement. Most candidates chose Stalin and Hitler as their examples and had some knowledge of their use of force to maintain power. Surprisingly, there were several responses seen where the focus was on the rise to power, suggesting a rather hurried approach rather than a careful reading of the wording of the question. For the most part, candidates had some reasonable knowledge although rather too many dealt briskly with "use of force" to dwell at length on factors such as propaganda or economic policies, which were asserted to be more important in the maintenance of power (often with limited supporting evidence).

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

Question 19

Only a few responses were seen. These attempted to discuss the importance of leadership in Asian independence movements, mostly in India and Vietnam. Knowledge was generally limited and responses were narrative rather than analytical.

Question 20

Very few responses were seen, with "mass movements" poorly understood and, as with Q. 19, a tendency to narrate/describe rather than to analyse.

Questions 21 to 24

No responses were seen.

Topic 5: The Cold War

Question 25

This was a very popular question with many candidates seemingly having anticipated and prepared for a question on the origins of the Cold War. Knowledge was mostly detailed and accurate and most candidates managed some reference to the decisions made about post-war Germany, although too many were eager to move on to narrate what often seemed to be pre-learned responses on the role of ideology or mistrust. Some candidates were able to link these effectively to the question and to identify and elaborate on how differences of opinion and policy, with regard to the recovery (or not) of Germany, was a thread running through the emergence of the Cold War in Europe. For example, most candidates mentioned the Berlin Blockade, but few demonstrated a sound understanding of why it came about, or how it was,

effectively, a culmination of the failure of the Allied Control Commission to work cohesively when economic issues came to the fore. Overall, these responses were rather disappointing.

Question 26

This question was quite popular with fair knowledge of the 1950s demonstrated, although "reasons for" was rarely fully explained with most candidates unable to go much beyond ascribing this policy to Khrushchev. More advanced responses made some reference to economic issues and the need to cut back on defence-spending with some addressing the ideological links to de-Stalinisation. For "impact", most candidates were able to mention, for example, the Summits and state visits. There was also some analysis of events such as the Suez Crisis, the Berlin Crisis and the Cuban Missile Crisis, suggesting the impact was not always seen as beneficial by the West.

Question 27

Almost all candidates chose to focus on containment as it applied to Asia and to recount the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Most responses were rather narrative concluding that the Korean War was a success and the Vietnam War a failure for the US. More developed responses attempted some analysis and discussed the failure, for example, of "roll-back" in Korea and how this limited US policy in Vietnam. Most candidates ended, as instructed, in 1973 although few alluded to how, at this point in time, the US could have considered containment, in theory, to have been a success. Several candidates expanded their responses to include US policies towards Taiwan and also Japan, usually to good effect.

Questions 28 and 29

Very few responses were seen. For Q28, most of the responses that did emerge demonstrated a rather limited knowledge of the arms race.

Question 30

This question was very popular with candidates clearly having anticipated and prepared for a question on the end of the Cold War, although a few veered away from this and towards an analysis of the collapse of the USSR. Most candidates knew something about the policies of Reagan and how these may have had a negative impact upon the USSR. Most were able to support assertions with reasonably detailed knowledge on, for example, the SDI or US support of the mujahedeen in Afghanistan, and assessed how far this may have tipped the USSR into disastrous economic circumstances that demanded a reduction in defence spending. Most answers also attributed some responsibility for the ending of the Cold War to Gorbachev's policies as well as his readiness to meet with Reagan and to address issues of mutual concern. References to the collapse of communism in the Eastern Bloc were addressed effectively in higher-band answers and linked (crucially) to the question. Less effective responses tended towards a chronological narrative. It is clear candidates are well prepared for questions that ask for an assessment of different factors that contributed to the end of the Cold War and this topic is well taught in many centres.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Ensure that candidates are aware of the implications of a specific command term. Command terms and their explanations can be found at the back of the subject guide. For paper two (and paper three), only the following command terms will be used: compare and contrast; discuss; evaluate, examine; to what extent).
- Candidates should be encouraged to read questions carefully and to pay attention to any timeframe that may be mentioned. This helps to provide a framework for the essay and for candidates to use only relevant material. As noted above, there were rather too many instances where responses strayed beyond the end date stated (as in "up to 1973" for Q27) or, in extreme cases, ignored the timeframe entirely.
- As always, detailed factual knowledge is necessary to support arguments and dates, in particular, are useful for establishing context. In Topic 3, it is possible that questions may refer either to the rise or the rule of a single-party ruler (but rarely both) and candidates need to plan their answers carefully to include only relevant material.
- As is often mentioned in subject reports, the themes mentioned in the Subject Guide are a useful indicator of what should be covered during the course and may also be used as a useful revision guide for candidates.
- On a final note, it was a pleasure, this session, to read many excellent scripts submitted by candidates who used accurate, detailed (and relevant) knowledge to support well-argued responses.

Higher and standard level route 2 paper three

General comments (for all regional options)

Overall the comments from the G2s indicate satisfaction with the level of difficulty of the various HL regional papers. However these comments came from a very small sample of teachers and it would be helpful if more teachers would complete these forms.

Candidates did not appear to have any difficulty in finding three questions to answer and there were very few scripts with only two responses. Pleasingly (in most cases), the third answers were of a similar quality to the first two. A substantial number of answers across all options were clearly focused on the demands of the question. They had in-depth and accurate knowledge that was applied to support convincing arguments; a coherent structure; were balanced and well-developed; and, where appropriate, challenged the premise of the question.

Answers that showed the characteristics of a good essay demonstrated a clear understanding of the demands of the question by indicating the focus of the question and, where relevant, stating a timeframe. Reference to the command terms in the question was also appropriate in many responses. This may be done in the opening paragraph that outlines factors to be considered and, ideally, will indicate the line of argument. The main body of an essay should consist of a series of paragraphs focused on the various factors being considered, consisting of relevant and detailed factual knowledge synthesised with analytical comment. The conclusion of the response should sum up the key points that have been made, and where possible, reiterate the line of argument that was indicated at the start.

In all of the higher level options there were significant numbers of candidates who demonstrated knowledge, but it was not always extensive or detailed. There were also indications that too many candidates continue the practice of reproducing rote-learned responses to questions they hope to find, and forcing answers to fit questions for which they are not suitable. It is vital that candidates respond to the question as set on the examination paper. At this level candidates should be able to apply their knowledge in response to a range of questions.

Higher level paper three – Africa

Component grade boundaries

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-6 | 7-12 | 13-19 | 20-24 | 25-30 | 31-35 | 36-60 |

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

There were several areas in which questions were not attempted, and so it is impossible to draw conclusions on these topics. These sections included *The response to European imperialism (Southern and West Africa) 1870-1920* and *Africa, international organizations and the international community*.

Q1 on Mirambo and Mkwawa was attempted by very few candidates, whilst Q4 on the comparison between the organisation of the Mandinka Empire under Samori Toure and the Asante under Osei Tutu seemed to have been a problem for candidates who were expected to compare the two. Furthermore, Q3 on the Sokoto jihad had many candidates discussing the reasons for but struggling with the effects of the jihad; especially immediate effects such as death and destruction.

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

The candidates seemed well prepared for Q5 and Q6, which were, by and large, the most popular questions. The quality and nature of the responses to Q5 varied, with some focusing more on political disunity and leaving out cultural disunity. Many of the candidates discussed other factors as was expected. More developed responses to Q6 focused on the occupation of Egypt and the Berlin West Africa Conference. Others felt the need to discuss other issues, which was not required by this particular question. Between the two questions, candidates seemed more prepared for question 5.

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

Given the low candidature for this regional option, there is no separate breakdown of each question. Instead the following paragraph summarizes the key points that should be ascertained for the future preparation of candidates in this option.

Candidates seemed very comfortable with questions that only expected them to focus on one individual or one aspect of history, for example, Q3, and Q8. Where the candidates were expected to compare or discuss more than one aspect, they tended to struggle. Issues that arose were the tendency of candidates to focus too heavily on one area while disregarding, or

at best, brushing past the other factor. This would apply to Q4 and Q7 in particular. The questions that expected candidates to give reasons for, and results of, were popular, but some responses did not do justice to both aspects of the question. It was impressive to see candidates discussing alternative factors in Q11 where, apart from discussing the extent of the hatred of the Bantustans and the role it played in the end of apartheid, they also discussed other relevant issues. This also applied to Q5 where higher-end responses discussed other factors that eased the European powers' annexation of Africa.

Higher level paper three – Americas

Component grade boundaries

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

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

The weakest topic areas were; *Independence movements, Nation-building and challenges, The Second World War and the Americas 1933-1945*, and, rather surprisingly, *The Cold War and the Americas 1945-1981*, and finally *Into the 21st century—from the 1980s to 2000*. Responses related to these topics were largely unsuccessful.

On the whole, candidates did not appear to have difficulty in finding relevant questions. However, the questions that were chosen were drawn from a narrower range than usual. Since several questions were focused on very mainstream subjects, it can be said that they were easily understood and allowed candidates to demonstrate knowledge and skills.

There were only a few candidates who only wrote two responses and, in general, there were many cases in which the third essay was given as much development as the other two.

Questions on social history were better handled than in past sessions. For instance, both Q5 on slave resistance and Q22 on the Civil Rights Movement were generally well-addressed. Particularly problematic for candidates were the social history questions on the impact of independence movements (Q2) and social issues as a cause of the Cuban Revolution (Q18). The use of vague generalizations or a descriptive approach limited the marks given to many of the social history essays.

There were some questions that often produced particularly irrelevant content and that suggested a limited understanding of either terminology, or the timeframe of the topic (for example, questions 1 to 3, 7 and 20 to 21).

There were some instances of candidates appearing to write rote-learned answers rather than responding to the specific demands of the question. Examples include: Q6, where many responses were little more than a general account of the causes of the US Civil War instead of exploring the role of states' rights in causing it; Q11, where many candidates wrote a lengthy narrative on the causes of the Mexican Revolution; and Q18, where it appeared that many candidates were prepared to write on the causes of the Cuban Revolution, but could not accurately divide the causes to single-out those that were social. These were a few instances of candidates not really understanding the specific demands of the question. It is important that candidates receive practice and training in interpreting the 'demands' of a question.

In a significant number of scripts there was a clear understanding of the question with a reasonable focus; however too often answers were not supported with specific and detailed knowledge. Conversely, a number of responses revealed in-depth and largely accurate knowledge, but did not use it effectively to address the set question. These responses were largely narrative and/or descriptive with implicit linkage to the question and, at best, had some very limited critical commentary bolted-on to the end of the response.

A number of candidates still find synthesis between knowledge and critical commentary difficult and only the most developed responses synthesised the two successfully. Although there is a growing attempt to integrate historians' interpretations within a flowing argument, most candidates state rather than evaluate these viewpoints. While a comparative structure was attempted in most cases, the majority of the responses lacked depth and breadth.

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

Candidates seemed well prepared in the following areas: the causes of the Great Depression; the response of a country to the Depression (in particular, answers that dealt with Argentina and Brazil); and, to a certain extent, the causes of the Mexican Revolution and of the Cuban Revolution. Knowledge of the Civil Rights Movement was often expansive, though levels of assessment of the extent of its success in ending segregation in the South varied.

In general, writing skills have improved and the majority of candidates attempted to structure their responses coherently. Some wrote clearly-focused and relevant introductory paragraphs and conclusions that offered a clear synthesis of the arguments presented in the body of the response. Most candidates managed to score a few marks (despite weak responses) as they showed some understanding of the historical context. There is some movement away from lengthy background knowledge and more focus on the timeframe demanded by the question, as well as a growing trend to organize responses thematically rather than chronologically. There is also more evidence that suggests candidates are attempting to provide a comparative structure for those questions that demand it (although this is not always successful).

The highest level responses revealed a clear focus on the demands of the question, in-depth and accurate knowledge applied consistently and convincingly as evidence, a sound command of chronology, a coherent structure, and balanced, well-developed and well-supported arguments.

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

Question 1

This was not a popular question. Responses ranged from fairly good to irrelevant since the choice of either Castro's Revolution or the Mexican Revolution was inappropriate. Some candidates did fairly well comparing and contrasting the movement for the independence of the thirteen colonies with that of Argentina.

Question 2

This question was seldom chosen. Responses referred mostly to the US and, except in few cases, lacked sufficient breadth and depth in the evaluation of the economic and social impact of independence.

Question 3

Surprisingly, this question was not popular; responses were based on generalized knowledge on the Constitution of 1787. Not all candidates understood the term "compromise".

Question 4

This question was chosen by few and done poorly by most of that number. Responses contained sweeping generalizations or a narrative account of political events after the independence of a country.

Question 5

This was chosen by some candidates and demonstrated varied levels of performance. The most developed answers reflected an in-depth knowledge of both active and passive methods of resistance with a fairly good evaluation of their effectiveness. A few candidates wrote about resistance beyond 1860.

Question 6

A wide range of quality emerged in what proved to be a very popular question. There was, in many cases, limited specific knowledge of the issue of states' rights as a cause of secession and lengthy descriptive accounts of the reasons for the US Civil War. Many candidates agreed with the statement but failed to substantiate their arguments sufficiently or to connect their discussion topic to the act of secession. Responses in the higher markbands addressed the statement, and even proposed alternative interpretations, with supported arguments that included detailed evidence and were thematically organized.

Question 7

There were only a few responses to this question, many of which confused Theodore Roosevelt with Franklin D Roosevelt.

Question 8

Several responses related to immigration to Argentina and were based on relevant and, in some cases, in-depth knowledge on the process and effects of immigration, with a sound understanding of the historical context. Other responses were based on limited specific knowledge and generalizations on effects.

Question 9

This question was relatively popular but responses to it were uneven. While the majority of candidates showed reasonable understanding of the effects, only some of them examined them in depth. Some responses spent too long going over the causes of the war and the confrontation itself, which left less room for a balanced treatment of effects.

Question 10

This question was chosen by very few candidates and produced weak responses with generalized knowledge on effects of the First World War that were not focused on the "foreign policy".

Question 11

This question was widely addressed. Stronger responses were focused on the demands of the question, addressed with relevant in-depth knowledge that was applied as evidence and organized thematically with a clear understanding of the historical process. Unfortunately, too many were responses were narrative accounts of the Mexican Revolution with a limited focus, and their authors exhibited difficulty in delineating clearly between economic and political factors.

Question 12

This was a popular question with rather disappointing results. All candidates agreed with Madero's success in removing Diaz from power but then lacked sufficient knowledge on his rule to be able to satisfactorily assess his achievements and failures.

Question 13

This was by far the most popular question, with the most developed and cogent responses revealing an in-depth knowledge, and demonstrating a competent analysis, of the causes of the Great Depression in the US (the most popular exemplar) and Argentina. Too often, however, accounts were merely descriptive and included very limited discussion on the importance of, and the interrelationship between, the causes. Weaker performance was observed in those cases that addressed a country other than the US

Question 14

This was a popular choice, where the highest achieving answers were found in answers in which candidates dealt with the response of Argentina and Brazil to the economic problems caused by the Great Depression. Stronger responses revealed an in-depth knowledge and provided a balanced assessment of the positive and negative consequences. Weaker answers revealed relevant and largely accurate knowledge but incorporated only a limited discussion of effectiveness.

Note: There was an error in the Spanish translation of this paper. The English version of this question required that the exemplar was to be drawn from **one Latin American country**, whereas the Spanish translation of the question required that the exemplar was to be drawn

from *un país de América* (**one** country of America). This error was observed in the standardization meeting before the commencement of marking and was taken into account during the grading of this question to ensure parity in the assessment of both English and Spanish responses.

Question 15

This question was addressed by several candidates but results were somewhat frustrating. While candidates showed an awareness of the extent of the neutrality of the US, most responses were based on poorly substantiated assertions. Some candidates wrote extensively about whether or not Pearl Harbor was a surprise attack.

Question 16

This question produced highly generalized answers that considered just a few aspects and generally dealt with the economic effects of the Second World War on the US.

Question 17

This question was addressed by several candidates. There was a fairly strong range of answers, from limited to reasonably strong although there was perhaps too much concentration on Eisenhower's political success as a measurement of achievement. Weaker responses exhibited limited specific evidence concerning Eisenhower's domestic policies and a few responses addressed his foreign policy and thus revealed no understanding of the demands of the question.

Question 18

This was one of the most popular questions and the levels of performance varied. Many discussed causes other than social ones in the lead up to the Cuban Revolution. Knowledge of social causes was not extensive and many candidates had difficulty differentiating between social issues and those of a more political and/or economic bent. There was also a tendency whereby candidates did not connect social issues as a cause of the revolution. Lower band answers often lapsed into a descriptive account of the antecedents to the revolution or addressed Castro's regime without making reference to the causes of the revolution.

Question 19

This question was selected by few candidates, and when it was chosen there was, by and large, a poor performance. Answers were restricted to Carter's policy towards Panama and some (very limited) knowledge on human rights.

Question 20

This was a question that was chosen by relatively few candidates with better results for those candidates dealing with Canada and weaker, less focused responses for those exploring a Latin American country. Most of the latter type discussed Cuba but, on the whole, produced a narrative account of Castro's foreign policy, almost ignoring the period before the rule of Castro and extending beyond the timeframe of the question.

Question 21

This question was seldom chosen. Except for one outstanding response, this question was often confused with a question on African Americans.

Question 22

This was one of the most popular questions, but the quality of the responses was decidedly varied. The most developed answers addressed the question in a focused manner that evaluated the extent of success competently and supported the argument with detailed knowledge. Less developed answers narrated the story of the Civil Rights Movement with limited analysis of success, or their authors organized their responses around the actions of US Presidents with almost no reference to the efforts made by the Civil Rights Movement.

Question 23

This question was chosen by a small number of candidates; although there was an attempt to compare both leaders, answers lacked sufficient depth and breadth in the knowledge applied (especially concerning Clinton).

Question 24

Due to the poor results observed for this question, it seems to have been one that several candidates chose as a last resort. Responses gave evidence of some understanding of the demands of the question and largely consisted of limited specific knowledge on efforts and results.

Higher level paper three – Asia and Oceania

Component grade boundaries

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-6 | 7-12 | 13-17 | 18-24 | 25-30 | 31-37 | 38-60 |

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

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

Several of the G2 comments indicated that some respondents felt that Q11 and Q12, which were both on the Guomindang, GMD (Kuomintang, KMT) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), although in different time periods, were too similar and candidates became confused about what material was relevant to each question. Others thought that these questions were too broad. This comment was also made about Q20 with regard to China's relations with other countries in the region. This question was on a bullet point in the course specification that had not been examined in a previous session. Others respondents indicated their belief that the coverage of the specification was narrow because there had not been a question on Japan in section 2, *Traditional East Asian societies—late 18th to the mid-19th century*.

Teachers should be aware that they should teach all bullet points dot points of their selected options otherwise candidates run the risk of not being able to answer some questions.

As for the paper two and the other regional options in paper three, there was evidence of rote-learning in hope of a generic question. Many candidates had learned a prepared response and they found it difficult to adapt their material to cater to the demands of a specific question. This was particularly evident for questions 3 to 4, 10 to 14, and 19 to 20. Often candidates tried to impose a rigid political, economic and social analysis when the question did not ask for this. This was particularly evident for questions 12 and 13. On the other hand, where candidates did attempt to respond to the actual question many of them did not include enough detailed factual information to illustrate and support their comments and relied on basic assertions.

In addition to this, many candidates did not have a strong sense of chronology and context. Some of them ignored the timeframe given in the question whilst others spent too on long background information in their responses. Many more referred to historians by name but in a forced and unnatural manner and in most cases, historians' opinions were not integrated within a flowing argument or, where appropriate, in a discussion of the historiography relating to the topic.

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

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

In terms of specification coverage, questions 21 to 24 are not general or generic questions and candidates should avoid them unless they have studied sections 11 and 12 or developed a particular case study with reference to these sections. Most of the candidates who answered these questions did so appropriately and there were a significant number of excellent responses on New Zealand or Singapore for Q23. By and large most centres concentrate on China and Japan or China and India and the quality of the responses was equally balanced across the countries and also between the 19th and 20th centuries.

In terms of the candidates' performance, many candidates were able to structure thematic responses whilst many of them displayed a comprehensive knowledge of a range of topics. It was pleasing to observe the volume of detailed, relevant and well constructed essays and these were a pleasure to mark. The responses that tended to fall into the highest bands were on the Boxer Rebellion (Q8); Japan becoming a major power in international relations (Q13); Mao Zedong's (Mao Tse-tung's) policies (Q20); and the impact of the changes in education on one country (Q23). These displayed a mastery of historical knowledge, considerable analytical skill and the ability to structure thematic responses.

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

Comments are only provided for the most frequently answered questions.

Question 3

This was a very popular question. Most candidates tended to be rather descriptive and /or narrative about the trade mission, the kow-tow and the Canton System of trade. Nevertheless, there were some perceptive responses that looked at the clash of cultures, extraterritoriality and the strength of the British desire for trade. Some argued that opium was a minor cause for the British, but a major one for the Chinese. The most developed answers examined the growth of the opium problem for the Chinese and compared Chinese stubbornness to British arrogance. Most candidates said that Lin Zexu (Lin Tse-hsu) burned the opium, but this is inaccurate and teachers should endeavour to impart the correct version of how Lin Zexu destroyed the opium.

Question 4

A significant number of candidates responded to this question and most agreed with the quotation. Responses ranged from narrative and/or descriptive to quite sophisticated. Most candidates understood that this was a 'cause of the Taiping Rebellion' question, but many

wrote quite generically about the problems in China at this time without linking them specifically to the emergence of the Taiping.

Question 7

This was quite a popular question. Many candidates, however, concentrated mainly on the lead up to the Sino-Japanese War and did not really spend much time on the Russo-Japanese War. These candidates discussed the success of the Meiji reforms and often compared them with the weaknesses of the Self-Strengthening Movement in China. There was limited discussion of the actual progress of both wars, except to comment that the British closed the Suez Canal and the Russian fleet had to go around the Cape of Good Hope.

Question 8

This was a very popular question. Overall, it was answered well by the candidates, almost all of whom argued that the Boxer Rebellion was caused by more than the spread of Christianity. Many listed a diverse range of factors that included China's humiliation due to its defeat in wars, the Scramble for Concessions, economic hardship caused by European imperialism; the growth of anti-foreign sentiment; the destruction of foreign infrastructure; and the role of Cixi (Tz'u-hsi) in condoning the rebellion.

Question 9

There were only a few responses to this question. Many were descriptive about the nationalist movement, including the roles of individuals like Gandhi and Jinnah. Very few candidates actually analysed the Acts or gave much detail about them.

Question 10

There were few responses to this question. Most candidates only discussed Vietnam and Ho Chi Minh despite the question asking about French Indo-China. There did not have to be equal amounts of material on all the colonies in French Indo-China, but to score highly there did need to be references to a range.

Question 11

This was a very popular question. Many candidates defined the terms 'aims' and 'policies' and structured their responses accordingly. Overall, this question was not done particularly well as candidates just wrote about the aim for unity and the policies of undermining each other. Most candidates merely discussed Jiang Jieshi's (Chiang Kai-shek's) attitude and very few discussed the shift in Guomindang, GMD (Kuomintang, KMT) policies after Sun Yixian's (Sun Yat-sen's) death. There were many responses that seemed to confuse the events of the 1930s with the First United Front, for example, Mao Zedong's (Mao Tse-tung's) leadership, guerrilla warfare, rules for the Red Army and so on. Also most candidates did not find any similarities at all between Sun's 3rd Principle (People's Livelihood) and Communist ideology.

Question 12

This was also a very popular question. Again, there was a range of responses from the very weak to the reasonably sophisticated. Most candidates were very negative about the Guomindang, GMD (Kuomintang, KMT) and made sweeping generalisations about Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) and the GMD, ignoring the Japanese and implying that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) won the war. There were also many scripts that stated that the Chinese (both CCP and GMD) did nothing to fight the Japanese and just waited for the US to win the war in the Pacific. Most candidates had no specific knowledge of the conflict in terms of tactics, strategies or battles and some candidates tried to adapt a set piece of the rule of the GMD between 1927 and 1937.

Question 13

A significant number of candidates chose this question and many did it well. Nevertheless, there was not much specific detail presented with regard to Japan's role in the League. Some scripts did not even mention the League of Nations or take the response to 1929.

Question 14

This was also a very popular question, but too many candidates concentrated on the causes of the invasion of Manchuria rather than analysing the impact of this event. Very few candidates really understood the domestic politics of Japan and very few responses analysed both the domestic and foreign reactions in depth; most of them were content to stress only the popularity of the Manchurian invasion. Some candidates had the tendency to write a set piece on the rise of militarism.

Question 16

There were a few responses, but most were fairly general without much specific detail and seemed to use the question as a means to summarize New Zealand's history post 1945.

Question 19

This was the most popular question on the paper. A few candidates misunderstood what was meant by the term 'control of the population' and wrote about demographics and, erroneously, Deng's one child policy. Some candidates did not realise that this was primarily a question about domestic policies and included too much about foreign policy. Other candidates seemed to be writing a rote-learned response about how Mao established a socialist state (this was a question in a previous examination). More advanced responses were able to challenge the assumption in the question and argue that Mao's economic policies (and even some initial social policies) were about modernising China and creating a fairer society in the 1950s, but that his political policies were about control. Some candidates tried to make a distinction between control and Mao's personal power. Less focused responses simply reproduced material on the Cultural Revolution.

Question 20

This question was quite a popular one, but overall it was done very poorly. Too many candidates were content to write about Sino-Soviet and Sino-American relations and there were not many responses that really examined China's relations with a range of countries in the region.

Question 21

A small number of candidates chose this question. Many responses were narrative and/or descriptive rather than analytical about the impact of the foreign powers.

Question 23

There were many responses that were focused on either New Zealand or Singapore. Generally, they were good and contained relevant detail. Some got a little bogged-down in the educational changes and did not examine fully enough the impact on the social and economic developments in the chosen country. Candidates who utilised China or Japan for this question generally did not cover the time period properly. Some candidates tried to adapt a rote-learned piece on the reforms in Japan during the US Occupation.

Higher level paper three – Europe and the Middle East

Component grade boundaries

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0-5 | 6-11 | 12-18 | 19-25 | 26-31 | 32-38 | 39-60 |

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

There were no questions on this paper that presented significant difficulty to candidates; however there were questions where candidates seemed unable in many cases to focus on the question set. This was the case particularly with Q15 where many answers were little more than a narrative of the successes and failures of the League of Nations with little reference to the broader international context. This was also the case with Q16 where there was little focus on “impact” and limited knowledge of economic policies; instead many answers were a basic and uncritical narrative of Nazi social policies.

Social and economic questions were less well done with a limited knowledge base weakly deployed to support broad generalisations.

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

Some candidates were very knowledgeable on more popular areas of the program such as *Imperial Russia, revolutions, emergence of Soviet State 1853 to 1924, European diplomacy and the First World War 1870 to 1923* and the *Interwar years: conflict and cooperation 1919 to 1930* as well as some of the sections on early 19th century history and, to a lesser extent, the topics on events in the period following the conclusion of the Second World War.

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

Question 1

There were very few responses to this question, some of which were highly generalized. Others however, demonstrated in-depth knowledge of the processes of the French revolutionary period.

Question 2

There were very few answers to this question, but where responses were seen, the answers demonstrated some detailed knowledge on military matters but were less effective when focused on diplomatic and economic factors.

Question 3

This was a reasonably popular question but few responses had much knowledge of the situation before 1862 and therefore failed to focus effectively on the set question. Please see the recommendations for future teaching for guidance on avoiding this problem.

Question 4

This question was quite popular; most candidates demonstrated knowledge of a number of leaders including Mazzini and Victor Emmanuel II, and they were able to make a judgment as to their importance. Less developed responses had a broad understanding of the roles of Cavour and Garibaldi and knowledge was not always accurate as many seemed to think that Cavour lived until 1871.

Questions 5 to 8

Questions 5 through to 8 were very much a minority interest and one response for Q6 covered the wrong timeframe

Question 9

As always, this was a very popular topic and on the whole there was a sound focus on the issue of the “impact” on the lives of the peasants. The main reforms were known and the most developed responses showed some good analysis. However, a significant number of candidates were very uncritical of the benefits of Alexander’s reforms, for example, many candidates assumed that education reforms were hugely beneficial and they were seemingly unaware that illiteracy rates remained extremely high. This is a topic where some candidates try and answer the generic question that they have rote-learned; as such a number of responses were constrained by an attempt to focus on “successes and failures” rather than fully examine the extent to which Alexander’s reforms improved the lives of the Russian peasantry.

Question 10

This was another popular question, which, on the whole, enabled candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the Leninist period and it elicited some very good answers. Nevertheless, some answers did not demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the factors and therefore focused on the Bolshevik seizure of power. Unfortunately, some, very limited, responses seemed unclear as to which revolution was at issue. However even with the more developed responses there appeared to be little understanding of the importance of the establishment of the one-party state in Bolshevik survival.

Question 11

Question 11 was also a popular question and one where many of the answers demonstrated a good knowledge of events especially in the first decade of the 20th century. However, many of these were not quite able to make the distinction between colonial rivalry and imperialism in Europe, with a few perceiving Austrian and Russian rivalry in the Balkans to be

a suitable example of colonialism. Nevertheless, most answers attempted to make a judgment about a range of factors in causing the war including colonial rivalry.

Question 12

This was reasonably well answered with candidates able to easily make the distinction between “military” and “diplomatic” errors. Some very good answers emerged, which covered all the indicative content in the markscheme.

Question 13

Question 13 appeared to be a minority choice, but there were some good answers that focused reasonably well on the question, albeit with a slightly disappointing demonstration of knowledge of the 1930s.

Question 14

This was very rarely attempted and where it was answered, analysis tended to be limited.

Question 15

Question 15 was another popular option and responses that were placed in the higher markbands tended to consider the role of the League of Nations alongside other factors, such as appeasement and the fear of communism. However, far too many responses failed to put the actions of the League, and their consequences, into a wider context. Too many candidates also focused on the reasons for the weakness of the League rather than focusing on the question.

Question 16

Answers to this question demonstrated some knowledge of social policies but they were much less knowledgeable about economic policies. In both cases there was limited comment on their “impact”. Less developed responses strayed into foreign policy or provided narratives on Hitler’s life story. It is important that candidates are encouraged to scratch below the surface to consider the real nature and impact of Nazi policies.

Question 17

There were very few answers to this question and those that were seen tended to be somewhat generalized.

Question 18

Question 18 elicited a few responses but there were some serious gaps in knowledge. Very few candidates knew anything about better relations with West Germany, which was major strand of foreign policy. There was better knowledge on Helsinki and Afghanistan and fuller answers were able to make links with Cold War issues.

Question 19

There were some good answers here as candidates were able to consider a range of factors covering the early days through to the last campaigns of the Second World War. Some candidates focused on the dropping of the Atomic bombs; something that was not relevant to the European theatre of war.

Question 20

Only a limited number of responses emerged for this question, and these tended to focus on “the end of the Cold War” rather events within Germany.

Question 21

Very few responses were seen.

Question 22

There were few responses, and whilst some candidates did a good job of comparing and contrasting, others were confused as to which conflict was which.

Questions 23 and 24

There was but a limited number of responses in this final section of the examination paper and in some cases candidates did not understand the terms used in the question. One candidate confused “suffrage” with suffering and others were unclear as to what was meant by “social welfare policy”.

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

- Ensure that candidates are aware of the implications of a specific command term. Command terms and their explanations can be found at the back of the subject guide. For paper three (and paper two), only the following command terms will be used: compare and contrast; discuss; evaluate, examine; to what extent).
- Teachers should work with their candidates on “unpicking” the questions; that is helping them to form an understanding of what the command term requires, and also to identify key words that should direct the “focus” of the response.
- It is vital that teachers cover all of the bullet points in their chosen sections of the guide and not just what they perceive to be the main areas as questions can be set on any aspect of a bullet point (for example, in Paper 3 – Europe and the Middle East, section 8 the bullet point on Germany, 1919 to 1933 is not just about the rise of Hitler).
- Where questions have a two-part structure, candidates should be taught the necessity of answering both parts of the question. Practice with timed essays will help candidates in the examination.
- Candidates should have more guidance on essay structure (please refer to the general comments for paper three). Narrative and/or descriptive answers will not do well unless there is also some analysis.
- When considering historians’ interpretations, candidates should avoid name-dropping and simplistic and/or misunderstood labels such as “revisionist historian”. Where relevant (and only where relevant), there should be real evaluation of an historian’s opinions; are they valid in the light of the evidence or indeed of recent scholarship. Candidates should not refer to student study guides when dealing with historiography, and it may be beneficial to candidates if teachers (if they are not doing so already) introduce candidates to more modern interpretations.
- Candidates should also be taught the geography of their regional paper to ensure that when a question has a geographical aspect to it, for example South Asia or Southeast Asia and Central/Eastern Europe, they do not choose inappropriate examples.