HISTORY

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level route 2 Americas – peacemaking

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

Higher level route 2 Europe and the Middle East – peacemaking

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-9	10-22	23-31	32-42	43-54	55-65	66-100

Higher level route 2 Asia and Oceania – peacemaking

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-9	10-20	21-30	31-41	42-53	54-64	65-100

Higher level route 2 Americas – Arab-Israeli conflict

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

Higher level route 2 Americas – Communism in crisis

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-11	12-24	25-33	34-44	45-55	56-66	67-100

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

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-9	10-22	23-31	32-42	43-53	54-65	66-100

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

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

Higher level route 2 Africa – Arab-Israeli conflict

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-10	11-22	23-32	33-42	43-53	54-64	65-100

Standard level route 2 PS 1 peacemaking

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

Standard level route 2 PS 2 Arab-Israeli conflict

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

Standard level route 2 PS 3 Communism in crisis

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

There was, as usual, a wide variety of topics chosen, most of which were suitable for the History Internal Assessment. However, the actual research questions were not sufficiently focused or their scope was too broad. There are still some research questions including "To what extent … ?" Teachers should be reminded that in this sort of question "other factors" should be included in order to evaluate the extent. The research question should not focus on description but allow an historical debate to be developed in Section D.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Plan of the investigation

The majority of the candidates stated the research question clearly with some attempt to outline the method and scope. However, fewer candidates managed to develop either the method or the scope. The method should contain at least some details of the types of sources used. It is not enough to state which two sources will be evaluated in Section C. The scope should not just be a description of what the candidate is going to write about but should show some of the issues brought up by the research question. A good scope will help the candidate to develop their argument in Section D. It should not include long introductions, background description, context or explain why the topic was chosen.

Criterion B: Summary of evidence

This ranged from excellent to poor; although overall the standard appears to be rising here. The most successful candidates realized the information had to be relevant and organized with accurate referencing to appropriate sources. The least successful candidates included a lot of irrelevant background material or mixed analysis and factual information and used few sources, usually of a general nature, or non-academic internet sources or no sources at all.

It is not particularly useful to state the information from each source separately but to organize all the evidence coherently either by theme or chronologically.

There continues to be a tendency to use footnotes to add extra information. Teachers are reminded that footnotes should be used to reference the sources used and not to avoid the word count by using footnotes.

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Criterion C: Evaluation of sources

Generally the understanding of what is required in this criterion has improved and there are fewer occasions where a candidate merely describes the source. However, the evaluation in many cases was weak. Too often the origin of the source was not clearly stated, value and limitation were still seen in terms of usefulness, limitation was not clearly stated and the reasons for bias not understood.

The main problem here however seems to be in the selection of the sources to be evaluated. Too often the sources in C had not been mentioned or used in Section B. Also, on too many occasions, the sources chosen were not relevant to the research question. It seemed difficult to understand why they had been chosen, as reference to the sources has to be made in Section D. A very short extract from a longer source, such as a book, is not suitable and this has been stated several times across a number of previous reports. However an essay from a selection of essays can be an appropriate source.

Candidates should also be reminded that a primary source is not inherently better than a secondary source and when a book has been translated it inevitably has limitations

Criterion D: Analysis

This is still a section that needs to be addressed more specifically for the majority of candidates. Too many centres do not advise candidates (or if they do, the candidates do not heed the advice) that they must not include new material in this section. New material here cannot be credited and many candidates lost marks because of this.   Furthermore, candidates should be reminded clear referencing is required here.

The more successful candidates analysed critically the evidence already presented in Section B and addressed the research question. They discussed the significance of the two sources evaluated in C and some were able to show they understood the issues posed by the research question and discuss different historians' opinions, often in depth. Others described different viewpoints without analysing them.

Less successful candidates—or those whose research question had been too vague or, perhaps, generalized—merely repeated or paraphrased information already stated in Section B. Their work did not contain any analysis and so only reached the low mark bands. Too many candidates did not refer to the sources evaluated in Section C and so could not reach a higher mark band.

There is a notable connection between a weak research question and a weak analysis.

Criterion E: Conclusion

In most cases the conclusions were consistent with the material presented and relevant to the research question. However, some did not receive full marks because they presented new information or personal opinions or were not focused on the research question.

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Criterion F: Sources and word limit

The number of candidates who are not able to list a bibliography clearly is surprising, as this is not a skill limited to the study of history.   The format does not matter; however the list must be clear and, wherever possible, consistent..

The quality and quantity of sources used varied enormously and many candidates used an impressive selection of sources, many from the internet. On the other hand many candidates are still using inadequate internet sources or general history text books and encyclopedias. As their sources lack depth, so does their work.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Candidates should have access to the criteria of the internal assessment during the whole time they are working on it, which should be in the region of the 20 hours of class time suggested by the History Guide
- Candidates should understand the importance of each of the descriptors of each criterion. These should be made clear to every candidate.
- Teachers should read the moderation feedback forms. It appears that the same problems are being repeated year after year.
- Ensure that no new material is introduced in section D.
- Time in class should be given to the identification, classification and evaluation (not merely description) of sources.
- Carefully advise candidates on the formulation of the question and advise candidates on how to structure their task and give them a final check list.
- As the IA must be clearly referenced, encourage candidates to reference all their work in order to hone this skill.
- Please discourage candidates from incorporating on the cover page of their IAs inappropriate pictures that serve no purpose in enhancing the IA or in enhancing an understanding of it.   Photographs of mutilated corpses, dead children and other such images can, occasionally, help to develop an historian's understanding of an issue, but they should never be used merely for decoration.

Higher and standard level route 2 paper one

General comments (for all prescribed subjects)

In terms of the reactions from the schools to November 2015 there was a considerable degree of similarity in the G2 forms for the various prescribed subjects. The statistics concerning appropriateness and level of difficulty being similar or easier for peacemaking were 100% and 96%; for Communism in Crisis 100% and 100%. For Arab-Israeli the figures were 77% and 77 % (23% argued that it was more difficult; mainly due to the cartoon in Question 1b, which some centres found challenging). It is worth mentioning that the number of G2 forms was quite low (27 for peacemaking, 8 for Arab-Israeli and 8 for Communism), which normally suggests that the schools were generally pleased with the examination papers. The presentation and clarity of wording of all three prescribed subjects was generally considered to be good or satisfactory. There were similar reactions in the actual comments made on the G2s: "a fair paper"; "good sources". Examiners reported that most scripts seemed to reflect a sound understanding of the theme/topic of the paper and the majority of candidates attempted an appropriate approach to each style of question. A more detailed analysis of how the candidates dealt with individual questions can be found overleaf.

Please note that no candidates sat the route 1 history examinations this session.

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

Component grade boundaries

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

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

Overall, candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of the topic and themes of the paper and seemed better prepared for the demands of each style of question. However, responses sometimes lacked focus on the specific question and some responses only gave one or two points for questions that had several marks on offer.

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

Candidates scored well on the first questions and there was a pleasing increase in the understanding of the message in the cartoon. Question 3 on the origin, purpose, value and limitations was well handled this year compared to previous years although Source A was better analysed than Source B, which was rather surprising as the nature of Source B was one that appears regularly in this paper (an academic book written some time after the event in question). Responses to Question 4 also demonstrated a better synthesis of source content and the candidates' own knowledge.

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

Question 1

(a) Most candidates correctly identified three points from the source and obtained the maximum three marks.

(b) Many candidates achieved two marks although there were few responses that mentioned the military helmet that the man representing Germany was wearing on his head.

Question 2

The majority of candidates could find points to link the two sources, and most were able to identify at least two or more comparisons and one or two contrasts. Pleasingly, there were fewer responses that assessed one source, finished with it and then embarked on a separate assessment of the second source, although there were occasions where candidates used

tables, matrices and bullet points in their responses: this should be discouraged as it makes appropriate links between the sources difficult for the examiners to identify.

Question 3

As mentioned earlier in this document, candidates found Source A easier to handle than Source B and many candidates correctly identified the origin, purpose, value and limitations of Source A. Many responses did not include the dates of both sources when identifying their origin and candidates must remember that the date of a source can be an important factor in judging the value and limitations of a source.

Question 4

As the focus of this prescribed subject was the Treaty of Versailles it was not surprising to see that the candidates were well acquainted with this subject with the consequence that responses generally used the sources well and synthesized their own knowledge to produce some excellent answers. A minority of responses chose to focus their answer on the rise to power of Hitler for which they received little or no credit.

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

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

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

The responses of some candidates gave the impression that they had little understanding of the issues to consider when evaluating the sources. Also it was particularly disappointing to encounter scripts in which the candidates' evident potential was not fulfilled because they ran out of time when dealing with the last question.

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

Some of the scripts provided encouraging evidence that candidates had awareness of, and competence in, the requisite source skills and knowledge.

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

Question 1

(a) Many candidates had little difficulty in identifying three legitimate points. However, there were a few instances of misunderstanding where the answers suggested that Ariel Sharon was proposing the abandonment of the vulnerable coastal strip in favour of settlement further inland.

(b) Most candidates were able to provide two (or more) valid interpretations of the cartoon.

Question 2

There was a wide variation in the quality of responses to this question. A particularly frequent error was the inclusion of an erroneous comparison claiming that both Sources A and D showed that the leaders of both Egypt and Israel encountered opposition within their respective countries. While this is true of Source D, Source A provides no evidence of Sharon encountering opposition from his fellow Israelis

Question 3

The candidates' evaluation of Source A (Sadat's speech) was generally stronger than their critical appraisal of Source E (Alan Dowty). It was also encouraging to observe that only a

few responses claimed that a primary source (A) was intrinsically more reliable than a secondary source (E).

Question 4

Many answers were based upon a focused application of some, or all, of the sources, clearly relating the sources' content to the question. This was a more successful approach than merely summarising the content of the sources and leaving the examiner to make the necessary inferences. Disappointingly, few responses also included relevant own knowledge, and there were some instances in which such own knowledge was marred by a confusion of the October War in 1973 with earlier conflicts between Israel and the Arab states. On the other hand there were occasionally some excellent answers characterized by an effective synthesis of the sources with the candidates' relevant own knowledge. As indicated before, some answers were disappointingly truncated.

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Prescribed subject 3: Communism in crisis 1976–1989

Component grade boundaries

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

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

Most candidates were able to find comparisons between the sources; however some struggled to identify developed contrasts. Candidates appeared better prepared for the demands of each style of question, although there were responses that described the content of each source rather than using the origin and purpose to find value and limitations for the third question. The majority of candidates had attempted to use or refer to the sources in response to the final question, however, many did not synthesize detailed own knowledge to support their arguments.

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

There was an increase in the number of candidates adopting an appropriate approach to each style of question, and overall, scripts tended to suggest that candidates were well prepared for this prescribed subject. The majority of responses were coherently structured and most candidates had attempted to answer all four questions. In addition, most scripts demonstrated a sound understanding of the theme of the paper: Gorbachev, his aims, his policies and their impact.

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

Question 1
  (a) Many candidates achieved full marks for this question. Some candidates only offered one or two points, or repeated or developed the same point. A small number of candidates clearly did not understand the question and summarized the 'background to events' without reference to the content of the source.
  (b) In general this question was answered effectively. Most candidates were able to comment on the weakness of the policies, the threat posed by the lions and/or the position and response of Gorbachev/leadership. Candidates should be reminded to look for two clear points, and avoid repeating the same point twice.

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Question 2

The majority of candidates attempted to find points to link the two sources and most candidates were able to identify two or more comparisons. However, candidates had a little more difficulty finding developed contrasts. There were fewer accounts that dealt with each source separately, one after the other; nevertheless, many candidates did attempt to comment on the origin and purpose of the sources rather than the content.

Question 3

Responses to this question demonstrated further improvement in the ability to analyse the value and limitations of a source from its origin and purpose. The speech by Mikhail Gorbachev (Source B) was managed particularly well. Candidates should be reminded that they need to develop their explanations more thoroughly, for example after stating 'a value of the speech is that it was by Gorbachev' candidates should then continue to explain why this is a value.

Question 4

The vast majority of candidates had attempted all four questions and this suggests more effective time management. In addition, the majority demonstrated a sound understanding of the question "Examine the reasons why Gorbachev's domestic reforms had not achieved their aims by the end of 1989." Most responses attempted to use the sources, and most addressed the question; however, many responses lacked synthesis of detailed own knowledge. Some candidates merely listed some of the content of each source rather than attempting to use the material to answer the question.

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

- Candidates must be prepared to answer questions on any of the bullet points listed for each prescribed subject in the history guide. Candidates should be able to use and apply detailed own knowledge to understand the context and content of the sources and add supporting evidence and examples for the final question.
- Question 1(a): Candidates should attempt to find three clear points, and avoid repetition of the same point. An ideal response would consist of three (full) sentences.
- Question 1(b): Candidates should be encouraged to look at the details of the source and to make sure they link their comments to the content of the source. Candidates should be dissuaded from starting their answer with an explanation of the symbols/content of the source. They should be taught to start their answer in a manner similar to the following: *"The message in the Source is … and this can be seen by …"* Remember that there is a variety of possible non-textual sources. While cartoons are commonly used in paper one, other sources may also be used such as photographs, statistics, paintings, posters, or speeches.
- Question 2: Candidates should continue to practice identifying comparisons and contrasts between two documents. Candidates should be aware that the focus is on the content of each source as seen through the 'views expressed' in that source. They should be reminded that they are expected to identify both similarities and differences, although there may not be an equal number of each. There may be a 3-3, 4-2, or 2-4 split between comparisons and contrasts. Points that link the sources should be fully developed.
- Question 3: Candidates should be reminded that the focus of this question is on the origin and purpose of each source, and of the need to establish and explain why the origin or purpose of a source could be a value or limitation.
- Question 4: Although there has been an improvement in the number of candidates completing a competent response to the final question, candidates should practice and be given some guidance with regards to pacing on this paper to allow sufficient time for the final, most valuable question. Candidates should also be reminded that the final question requires an evaluative structure and responses should address the specific question rather than offer a basic description of the content of each source. Candidates should also attempt to use a range of the sources and include detailed own knowledge, interlaced with the sources, to support their analysis.

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	13-16	17-20	21-24	25-40

General comments

Consistent with pervious examination sessions, the most popular topics were 1, 3 and 5. In particular, for this session, most candidates narrowed this further to topics 1 and 3. It appeared that the paper did not pose problems for the majority of candidates and this was due, in large part, to an accessible paper that provided plenty of choice and good coverage of the curriculum. Overall the quality of the responses was mixed. There were some excellent responses from candidates who had clearly been very well prepared for the examination and these scripts reflected a high level of analysis and a strong understanding of the topics that were chosen. In contrast with last year, there were also many weaker scripts where responses lacked focus on the question and the limited knowledge demonstrated was insufficient to support meaningful arguments.

Regarding the G2 forms, there were 59 responses in total and of these, 93.75% (37) considered the level of the paper to be appropriate with 77% of the opinion that it was of the same standard as last year. Overall, 76% of respondents considered the presentation of the paper to be very good or excellent and 66% also considered clarity of wording to be very good/excellent.

Centres may be reminded to encourage teachers to complete the G2 forms as these provide invaluable feedback on the content and the presentation of the examination paper.

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

In general, the main weakness appeared to be the limited knowledge demonstrated by a minority of candidates who, as a consequence, found it difficult to fully understand the demands of the question and to support their arguments. As in the past few sessions, there were only very few candidates who did not follow the examination rubric and answered two questions from the same Topic.

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

The majority of candidates indicated the question in the introductory paragraph of their responses. Undoubtedly, this helped them to focus their attention on relevant material and most were able to structure their answers and to include at least some critical commentary.

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The reliance on rote-learned historiography was also less apparent this session with more candidates successfully integrating different interpretations into their responses. As an indication of familiarity with the topic, this is certainly a more convincing approach and should be encouraged. Most responses demonstrated evidence of planning as well as effective time management as there very few scripts where the second response was unfinished.

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

Topic 1: Causes, practices and effects of wars

Question 1

This was a very popular question and most responses discussed the Spanish Civil War and the Chinese Civil War. Both wars appear to be widely taught and candidates demonstrated a good overall knowledge of the main events. The most common difficulty appeared to be with determining how best to address "outbreak" with candidates wrestling with long-term and short-term causes rather than immediate events that influenced the start of hostilities. For the most part, candidates dealt better with the "course" of the wars chosen and were able to discuss foreign involvement quite effectively. Indeed, some responses demonstrated excellent analysis based upon wide reading and familiarity with different interpretations.

Question 2

Probably the most popular question on the paper, there were some excellent answers that discussed collective security using relevant supporting evidence and demonstrating a high level of analysis and understanding. Most responses included correct definitions of the term, "collective security" and were able to mention events such as the Manchurian Crisis of 1931 and the invasion of Abyssinia in 1935. Weaker answers would have benefitted from stronger links to the outbreak of the Second World War and consideration of other factors, as the command term was "to what extent" inviting candidates to look beyond collective security.

Question 3

This proved to be quite a popular question although candidates struggled somewhat with "social" impact and tended to focus, rather, on economic impact. Although candidates could be expected to have some familiarity with this topic and, indeed, will often have some fair knowledge of the impact of wars on the home front, this question was not particularly well answered.

Questions 4 and 5

There were very few answers seen to these questions.

Question 6

Most candidates who attempted this question were able to choose wars from different regions and to discuss some relevant material. As often with questions concerning technology, some

responses demonstrated a pleasing level of knowledge and were able to discuss types of aircraft (and their capability) and to link this to the outcome of the wars. As the command term asked candidates to examine airpower, good knowledge of its importance was necessary for a satisfactory answer and candidates who ignored this element of warfare, choosing to place their emphasis elsewhere, did not fare so well.

Topic 2: Democratic states — challenges and responses

Question 7

Very few answers were seen.

Question 8

As might have been expected, this was a popular question. In general, candidates are well acquainted with Weimar Germany and so it was rather disappointing that few responses demonstrated sufficient knowledge of political extremism after 1919. Weaker responses, in general, tended to narrate the rise of Hitler with Weimar mentioned only in passing. Candidates should be advised that Topic 2 concerns democratic states and that a question (if included) on Weimar Germany would be unlikely to focus on the rise of an authoritarian leader. In this case, Hitler was certainly relevant as an example of political extremism (although there were also other examples to be considered) but the question does not ask about his rise, but rather about the collapse of democracy and "to what extent" invites consideration of other factors such as economic conditions and weaknesses (if they existed) in the constitution.

Questions 9–12

Very few answers were seen to the other questions in this Topic.

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

Question 13

This was a very popular question, with, by far, the majority of candidates opting for Mao and very few choosing to discuss Peron. The question itself provided the structure and candidates tended to follow this quite effectively with most responses addressing all three parts. In general, the level of knowledge and analysis was good with some excellent answers seen. Most responses were able to deal well with "weakness of existing government", especially with regard to Mao, though candidates were less confident in handling "popular support" and "ideology".

Question 14

Stalin, Mao and Hitler were the most common choices of leaders for this popular question. The rise to power of each leader was quite well understood with most candidates using relevant material quite effectively to support arguments. Weaker responses tended to stray into the period beyond 1929 for Stalin, or to discuss Mao's policies well into the 1950s. These, however, were the exceptions and for the most part economic problems were quite

well understood. As is often the case, social problems were less well covered with some candidates struggling somewhat to distinguish between social and, in particular, political problems.

Question 15

This was probably the most popular choice in Topic 3 with most candidates offering some definition of totalitarianism before proceeding to discuss how far this could be applied to Hitler's Germany. There were many excellent answers that carefully assessed the extent to which total control was achieved and how it was applied. Most responses began with the consolidation of political power in 1933 and provided an overview of how power grew and was exercised (or not) up until 1939, although a few candidates discussed how far power was either increased or, indeed, diminished during the war. Most responses argued that, to a great extent, given the limited opposition, this was a totalitarian state whilst others used historiography effectively to reflect on how the Third Reich could be interpreted as rather chaotic and where control was applied in a rather haphazard way.

Question 16

Very few answers were seen to this question.

Question 17

Although quite a straightforward question, responses did not always link domestic policies to the maintenance of power. Stalin was the most popular choice with few candidates choosing either Castro or Nasser. Overall, relevant knowledge was rather limited, although the economic and social policies of Stalin should be quite familiar to candidates who have studied this leader. The Great Terror was used more commonly as a policy, rather than, more appropriately, as an additional factor to help determine the relative importance of Stalin's domestic policies.

Question 18

Although a popular question, not all responses demonstrated a sound understanding of what was meant by political control, with many candidates assuming it meant simply "control" and so focusing on how far two leaders controlled populations. The most popular choices were Mao and Hitler but—despite there being a wealth of relevant material such as Mao's use of the One Hundred Flowers Campaign to root out "Rightists" or the Cultural Revolution to re-assert his political control—few candidates mentioned these or used them to good effect. Similarly, with Hitler, there was a tendency for candidates to discuss the use of terror in general terms, including the Holocaust, rather than demonstrating a good grasp of the demands of the question.

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

Very few answers were seen to any of the questions in this Topic.

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Topic 5: The Cold War

Question 25

As always, a question that asked about the origins of the Cold War proved popular and many responses included a fair level of relevant detail. Most demonstrated some knowledge of Soviet policies, making some reference to the conferences of 1945 and the sovietization of Eastern Europe. There were many references to "salami tactics" although this term was rarely explained and not always well understood. Rather too many candidates spent too much time discussing the period from 1917 to 1939 and ran out of time before they could properly focus on the question. There does seem to be a temptation when discussing the reasons for post-war enmity for candidates to feel compelled to begin with foreign intervention in the Russian Civil War. Depending on the question, this may have some relevance but careful planning would help candidates keep a focus on all that needs to be addressed and this, in turn, would help with the appropriate allocation of the limited time available. In this case, for example, the question asked that events up to 1950 be discussed and too few candidates got beyond 1945/1946. There were good answers, however, with candidates comparing Soviet and US policies and apportioning responsibility accordingly.

Question 26

Most candidates who chose this question were able to address its demands quite well with some good knowledge of the Korean War demonstrated and, for the most part, some effort made to link events to their impact on the development of the Cold War. The popular other choice was Cuba although few candidates appeared to notice that focus was required on the period from 1959 to 1963 and so more was required than a narration of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Question 27

Very few answers were seen to this question.

Question 28

A few answers were seen to this question and most demonstrated some knowledge of events from the Suez Crisis (1956) to the October War (1973). For the most part, there was some attempt to make reference to the Cold War and to link to the events discussed with several candidates able to examine the struggle for spheres of influences during the relevant period.
Question 29

Although "detente" should be familiar to candidates who study the Cold War, few of the responses seen included relevant material. Some attempted a comparative structure but, for the most part, there was little more than a general understanding of the demands of the question.

Question 30

This was quite a popular question but the responses were rather disappointing. Although there were *some* good responses, too many candidates seemed unfamiliar with the break-up

of the Soviet Union and, furthermore, assumed it included all of Central/Eastern Europe. There was some effort to discuss external pressures with some relevant knowledge of Reagan's policies, for example, but the focus then veered towards the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the fall of communism in the Eastern Bloc. Very few responses made any reference to the events of 1990–91.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Despite the forthcoming changes to the History Guide for examinations in 2017, many of the skills and concepts already being taught will remain relevant. In particular, the following points may be useful for the preparation of future candidates:

- It is always a good idea to use past examination papers, mark schemes and subject reports as a guide for candidates so they can become familiar with how questions are structured and how the wording correlates with the Paper 2 themes outlined in the History Guide.
- Candidates should not be encouraged to prepare for the examination by rote learning historians' quotes to be used in place of, rather than to supplement, their own arguments. For example, quoting AJP Taylor on appeasement works well if used to support an argument about collective security but including it as a stand-alone sentence does not add significantly to the quality of an answer. It would be more effective to explain why Taylor held such an opinion—and even to challenge it.
- On several occasions this session, scripts were seen that suggested candidates had struggled to make use of marginally relevant material to answer, for example, a question on a leader's maintenance of power whereas the same facts and arguments could have been used far more effectively to answer a question on a leader's rise to power. Candidates may be reminded that the five minutes reading time given at the start of the examination can be used to read carefully through the paper and to select the questions for which they are best prepared.

Higher and standard level route 2 paper three

General comments (for all regional options)

Overall the candidates continue to display good knowledge particularly of mainstream areas of each program and are able, on the whole, to apply their knowledge effectively and to avoid a narrative approach.

However there is a tendency in some cases to answer with pre-prepared answers and this means that the response is not fully focused on the question set. Candidates should also take heed of the dates in a question and avoid straying too far outside the parameters of these dates.

Overall there were far fewer scripts with only two responses, indicating that candidates are managing their time effectively.

There were limited numbers of G2 comments for the papers, the majority felt the papers were clearly worded well-structured and of a similar difficulty to previous papers.

One comment about paper 3 in general was that teachers have to guess which bullet point might be examined. In previous subject reports the importance of preparing candidates for all of the bullet points in the sections chosen for a teaching program has been clearly stated.

Higher level paper three – Africa

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 majority of candidates tended to focus on a fairly narrow range of questions and many other questions were barely touched upon by the candidature this session. For many of the popular questions, answers tended towards generalizations; Question 21, on ethnic conflict, for example saw candidates focusing on South Africa's apartheid system, which was really an example of racism rather than an ethnic conflict.

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

Candidates seemed well prepared for the topic on precolonial African states (Southern and West Africa) in particular question 3 on Shaka Zulu. Question 7 on the organisation of the Nandi was also quite well prepared for. Candidates had good knowledge on the two topics. Question 11 on the discovery of gold and diamonds was also popular with some of the candidates demonstrating good knowledge of the topic.

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

There were very few candidates for this paper in this session and so, specific comments are unhelpful; however It was pleasing to note that many of the candidates who did complete this examination were able to identify different historical approaches to the topic they were discussing and attempted to engage in a discussion of these approaches (albeit with varying levels of success).

Higher level paper three – Americas

Component grade boundaries

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

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

The weakest topic areas were: Independence movements; Nation-building and challenges, and Into the 21st century—from the 1980s to 2000.

Cuba and Castro seem to have been understood only in the context of: the overthrow of Batista, the Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis.

On the whole, candidates did not appear to have difficulty in finding relevant questions. In a significant number of scripts there was clear understanding of the question with reasonable focus. However, still too many answers were not supported with specific detailed knowledge. It was also unfortunate that while some responses revealed in-depth and largely accurate knowledge, this knowledge was not well applied as evidence. These responses were largely narrative/descriptive with implicit links to the question or some very limited critical commentary towards the end of the response, at best.

Questions on social history (Questions 7, 16 and 22) still represent a rather weak performance overall. In particular, the use of vague generalizations and a descriptive approach limited the marks awarded. This will be discussed in the comments on individual questions.

There were a few instances of candidates appearing to write pre-learned answers rather than responding to the specific demands of the question. An example is question 11 where many candidates wrote a lengthy narrative on the causes of the Mexican Revolution.

A number of candidates still find synthesis between knowledge and critical commentary difficult; only stronger candidates developed this synthesis successfully. Although there is a growing attempt to integrate historians' interpretations within an 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

Since several questions were focused on very mainstream subjects, they were easily understood and allowed candidates to demonstrate knowledge and skills.

Candidates seemed well prepared in the following topics: arguments for and against slavery, the Reconstruction era, the Great Depression, the response of a Latin American country to the Depression (in particular, Argentina and Brazil), and, to a certain extent, the causes of the Mexican Revolution. There were also good responses on Johnson´s Great Society.

In general, answers contained more depth of knowledge and analysis for political and economic history than for social history. Writing skills have improved and the majority attempted to structure their responses coherently. Some candidates wrote clearly-focused and relevant introductory paragraphs and some conclusions offered a clear synthesis of the arguments presented in the body of the essay.

Most candidates managed to score at least a few marks (in spite of weak responses, as they showed some understanding of the historical context). There was a clear attempt by many of them to provide a comparative structure for those questions that demand it, but this skill still needs development. Overall, The best responses revealed clear focus on the demands of the question, in-depth and accurate knowledge that was applied consistently and convincingly as evidence, command of chronology, coherent structure, and balanced, well-developed and well-supported arguments.

Only a few candidates responded to two (or fewer) questions.

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

Question 1

Responses ranged from fairly good to irrelevant since the choice of Castro´s Revolution or the Mexican Revolution was inappropriate. Candidates mastered intellectual issues more than they did religious issues.

Question 2

This was seldom chosen. Responses, on the whole, lacked sufficient breadth and depth.

Question 3

This question was not popular, but it elicited a few fairly good responses.

Question 4

Responses were based on the description of some of the causes with limited discussion. While there was focus on the question there could have been much more detail in the evidence. Most responses addressed only the US.

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Question 5

A popular question with varied levels of performance. The best answers reflected in-depth knowledge of the arguments for and against slavery. Weaker responses listed the arguments but these were not sufficiently substantiated by specific evidence. Focus lay most often on economic factors.

Question 6

Answers varied in quality. Good responses were balanced on the whole and had sufficient depth and breadth.

Question 7

Only few responses emerged and these were often done quite poorly. Answers revealed limited specific knowledge of the countries chosen as case studies. The reasons provided could well apply to any country of the region.

Question 8

While responses considered both successes and failures, in many cases these were only enumerated and not evaluated. Choice of leaders was fairly varied though quite a number of candidates dealt with Porfirio Diaz. Unfortunately, some candidates wrote irrelevant responses when they selected Peron or Castro as examples, ignoring the timeframe of the topic.

Question 9

This question was relatively popular and responses to it were uneven. While the majority showed reasonable understanding of the motives that led the US to enter the First World War in 1917, and were able to list them, only some candidates examined them in depth. A very common mistake was to state that the sinking of the Lusitania was the trigger for the US to declare war.

Question 10

This question produced weak responses with generalized knowledge on the economic effects of the First World War, but limited reference to political effects.

Question 11

This question was widely addressed. Stronger responses were focused on the demands of the question, addressed the question with relevant in-depth knowledge that was applied as evidence, and were organized thematically with a clear understanding of the historical process. Unfortunately, several other responses were narratives of the Mexican Revolution with limited focus. These reponses often exhibited difficulty in analysing the importance of the social factors in relation to other possible causes of the revolution.

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Question 12

A limited number of responses. Those attempting it demonstrated limited knowledge and understanding of the period of the Maximato. Instead their authors referred to the restoration of stability in general.

Question 13

A very popular question; better responses worked out a running comparison between both leaders' policies based on a fairly good level of specific knowledge. Knowledge on Hoover was usually weaker or simplistic as to his response. Knowledge of FDR was often quite strong. Weaker responses produced a description of their policies, at best, and only attempted to compare them in the conclusion.

Question 14

A popular choice where the best answers were found in candidates dealing with the response of Argentina and Brazil to the economic problems caused by the Great Depression. Stronger responses revealed in-depth knowledge and provided a balanced assessment of effectiveness. Weaker answers revealed relevant and largely accurate knowledge but a limited discussion of effectiveness.

Question 15

Responses almost always addressed the impact upon the US.   While the question was understood, in many cases it was addressed with rather limited specific knowledge. Even stronger responses showed greater knowledge and accuracy on economic, than diplomatic impact.

Question 16

This question was popular but produced quite a few highly-generalized answers, with no clear distinction between minority groups. There were sweeping generalizations on the changes the war brought for women regardless of the country of the region. Better responses addressed the impact on, for example, Japanese-Americans, Native Americans and Hispanics, with some responses at a very good level.

Question 17

This question was often misunderstood with many candidates writing extensively on the breakdown of relations between the US and Cuba, with a focus on the Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis. There was only a brief reference to the idea of "exporting" the revolution.

Question 18

The Great Society was a fairly popular question that generally led to acceptable responses alongside a few of very high quality. Most assessments deemed the Great Society as successful and the focus was on the efforts to combat racism. Better responses dealt with

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the full range of issues, such as education and poverty. Weaker responses contained evaluation of the programme that was not well supported by specific evidence.

Question 19

A few fairly sound responses picking Cuba as an example that revealed understanding of the question and application of relevant knowledge. While several candidates described Castro's domestic policies, they failed to tie these to the impact of the Cold War. Those who addressed Canada performed quite poorly and focused on the impact of the Cold War on "foreign" policies.

Question 20

Relatively few responses emerged. Some discussed the impact on Cuba and Guatemala quite successfully; however, many candidates were more knowledgeable as to the "New Look" than as to its application, which was often just a narrative of a few events.

Question 21

Candidates generally picked civil rights for African Americans as one of their examples but the second example (Argentina during the Peronist regime, Canada or Cuba) was often treated vaguely with no focus on the question. Other responses only addressed the US case.

Question 22

The quality of the responses varied markedly. Most candidates focused on feminist movements in the US only. Better answers addressed the challenges clearly and applied relevant detail to support their assertions. Weaker cases briefly mentioned the most common challenges faced by women throughout the region, did not pick a country, and some even developed the successes and failures of the movements with an implicit reference to the challenges women faced.

Question 23

This question was chosen by a small number of candidates. It was not always understood and when it was, answers lacked sufficient depth and breadth in the knowledge applied.

Question 24

No responses were recorded.

Higher level paper three – Asia and Oceania

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-4	5-8	9-16	17-22	23-29	30-35	36-60

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

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

There were issues with candidates including too much detail outside of the timeframe of the topics and/or questions.　Although some background context is acceptable it is important that candidates focus their responses on the dates of the topic and, where applicable, in the question itself.　This was particularly evident for Questions 13 and 19.

There were also issues with candidates not focusing enough on the demands of the question. This was particularly visible in Questions 9 and 14.　Questions 8 and 20 required candidates to cover both parts of the question and many candidates did not deal effectively with both parts of these questions.　Candidates need to focus more closely on the command terms used in the question as there are differences between them.　As there are now only five command terms used candidates should be more confident in their specific meanings.

Many candidates referred to school textbook authors as historians.　With the exception of Question 11, most of the time historians' opinions were not integrated within the candidate's own argument and did nothing to strengthen the candidates' responses.

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

Most centres answered questions relating to topics on China and Japan.　There was an excellent level of understanding shown in some topic areas and especially for Questions 4, 12 and 20.　There were significantly more responses to 20th century topics than 19th century topics and, for the most part, knowledge seemed more extensive and detailed on the 20th century.　There was also some good historiographical debate regarding the nature and impact of the Long March in response to Question 11.　Most candidates were able to structure their responses appropriately and attempted to answer questions in a thematic way.

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

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

Question 3

There were a considerable number of responses of varying quality but many were poorly done. Most candidates only wrote about the Treaty of Nanjing and British demands, and very few discussed the treaties signed with France and the US. Some candidates also wrote too much about the causes of the First Opium War or discussed the Second Opium War without making any links to the question.

Question 4

A relatively popular response and, for the most part, done very well. Responses demonstrated a good understanding of the problems experienced by the Tokugawa Shogunate before Perry's arrival. Some responses tended to be a little descriptive and needed more discussion of the question

Question 7

A popular question. The first part of the question on the reasons for failure was generally answered well; however, the responses to the second part of the question relating to the consequences of the failure of the 100 Days Reform were weaker. Candidates failed to clearly explain the link between the failure of the movement and the consequence identified. A small number of candidates also confused some detail with the Self-Strengthening Movement.

Question 8

There were a few responses to this question. Some were outstanding and demonstrated an excellent knowledge of Korea, Japan and China. However, a few seemed to use the question as an excuse to write about Meiji modernization and made no references to Korea and/or the region.

Question 9

There were a few responses. Responses were very narrative and focused heavily on Gandhi's role. Some dismissed Nehru's role entirely as insignificant.

Question 11

A very popular question and generally approached well. There were some really interesting discussions of the Long March and the different historical interpretations relating to it. Candidates who answered this question had very good knowledge and understanding

Question 12

A very popular question and there were some excellent responses that discussed a wide range of Jiang's policies and actions. However, some responses focused solely on Jiang's dealings with the CCP and/or the Japanese and so those responses were rather limited. Candidates would have benefited from defining their interpretation of the term "cruel".

Question 13

A popular question, the approach to which varied greatly. Many responses focused heavily on the 1920s and they were given credit for this, as the wording of the question did not preclude discussion of the earlier period. However, in many responses there was almost nothing on the 1930s aside from Manchuria. Also a few candidates went well outside the timeframe of the topic to discuss military reforms under Meiji.

Question 14

Quite a popular question and generally answered well. However, many candidates included too much detail on economic reforms instead of focusing on social and political developments. Closer focus on the demands of the question was needed.

Question 19

As always, this was a very popular theme and there were some excellent responses. However, too many candidates discussed the Cultural Revolution, the Little Red Book and the Red Guards in great depth despite the fact that it was outside the timeframe stated in the question. A few responses were also very detailed but lacked focus on the issue of how Mao "imposed communist rule". Candidates clearly know Mao well as a topic but it is important that they focus their responses closely on the demands of the question.

Question 20

This was a very popular question with many excellent responses. However, there were a few responses that neglected the first part of the question, which was to evaluate the reasons why Deng transformed China's economy.

Question 24

A few responses to this question all of which used New Zealand as a case study. Responses were detailed and candidates had clearly been prepared.

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	12-17	18-24	25-30	31-37	38-60

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

In some cases candidates had insufficient knowledge to answer their chosen questions effectively, this was particularly the case with Question 16 where many candidates had very little knowledge of politics in Germany in the mid-1920s and had therefore to rely on generalized, poorly-supported assertions.

Responses also need to be more closely linked to the questions on the paper: too many candidates attempted to offer a response that they had practiced, regardless of whether it fitted the requirements of the question set.

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

Overall the responses were well structured and indicated developed essay-writing skills.

Where candidates were confident with their knowledge they were able to make arguments with some success, demonstrating an ability to synthesize knowledge and analysis. This was especially the case for Question 11.

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

Comments will be made on questions that elicited a reasonable number of responses

Question 1

There were few responses but these were mostly answered with a "causes of the revolution" essay.

Question 2

Most candidates knew more about Italy than Germany but on the whole Responses were able to make some informed comment. Austria was accepted as a foreign power where argument made this relevant.

Question 8

A few candidates attempted this question using Germany as their chosen example and were able to demonstrate an element of continuity (in domestic policies) or discontinuity (in foreign policies).

Question 9

The most frequently answered question but often with limited success. Candidates often had limited knowledge of Alexander III's reign and confined themselves to general assertions of a "reforming Tsar" and a "reactionary Tsar". Answers also tended to be uncritical because their knowledge lacked depth. For example they assumed that Alexander II's reforms transformed education whereas in fact they affected only a very small proportion of the population. Nevertheless some responses indicated a clear understanding of continuity in the two reigns.

Question 10

Candidates demonstrated only a limited knowledge of Lenin's Foreign policy (despite it being clearly mentioned in the Guide). Knowledge was largely confined to withdrawal from the First World War and the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk

Question 11

There were some strong responses to this question. Many candidates had a detailed knowledge of Ottoman decline and were able to weigh up its importance against other causes of the war.

Question 12

Some reasonable responses but too often answers consisted of unsupported generalizations or focused on Great Britain only.

Question 13

Responses to this question were generally quite well done, demonstrating good knowledge of problems and an ability to weigh the significance of various factors.

Question 15

This was reasonably popular but responses on the whole were unbalanced with limited knowledge of Mussolini's policies in the 1920s. Candidates were, thus, unable to make the point that at times Mussolini's foreign policy was quite successful. Where candidates had a good knowledge of the whole period some good analysis was developed.

Question 16

This was a very popular question; however it was answered with limited success. It is very clear that candidates on the whole have a limited knowledge of German politics in the

mid-1920s. Knowledge of economics tended to be better. Please refer to the mark scheme for detail on how to consider the political situation.

Question 17

There some good responses to this where candidates were able to demonstrate both the economic and political reasons, which ranged from ideology to the need to extend Party control. Worryingly, a surprising number of candidates did not seem to know the term Collectivization and confused it with Collective Security.

Question 18

Moderately popular but candidates often drifted into responses on Foreign policy. However there were some responses that clearly demonstrated an in-depth knowledge of internal conditions under Brezhnev.

Question 20

Responses often went outside of the timeframe and made reference to the building of the Berlin Wall. Many candidates appeared to want to write a causes of the Cold War response when the focus should have been on Germany.

Question 21

There was often insufficient focus on internal Egyptian political structure.

Question 22

A limited number of responses but knowledge was reasonably sound with focus on both "modernization" and "westernization".

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

- It is essential that all the bullets of chosen sections are taught in depth to enable candidates to respond to a range of questions. They should not expect to see the same question focus on every examination paper.
- Review past examination papers and discuss the command terms, practice identifying the focus of the question by identifying key words such as "impact" or "continuity".
- Ensure that candidates support their arguments with relevant and detailed knowledge.
- Candidates should evaluate historians' perspectives rather than just stating their view. Namedropping, especially of the authors of school textbooks, does not demonstrate in-depth historiography.
- As many teachers no doubt already do, practice timed essays with brief plans at the beginning in order to help candidates produce better focused answers.
- Where candidates choose to challenge the thesis in the question they must be able to support their position with specific relevant material

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