

HISTORY

Paper 9769/11
British History Outlines c.300-1547

Key Messages

- Key words in the question should be considered carefully
- Better answers offer more than lists of explained factors
- Clear communication of argument is essential

General Comments

There was a considerable range of answers, not only in terms of topics, but also in terms of quality of response. The best answers were very impressive, and demonstrated a control of the material and a focus on the question that showed not only thorough preparation, but mature understanding and reflection. Outstanding answers responded directly to the question, covering the period required, addressing all aspects of the question and showing very sound knowledge. This knowledge was used in a flexible way to support arguments and led to judgements being convincing. The best answers communicated very effectively. The line of thought was always clear, and prose was direct and unpretentious. This aspect cannot be overstressed. There is no need to write in 'high style' which often obscures argument. Clarity of thought and expression is vital. Strong knowledge must be used flexibly and not as an end in itself. Answers which were well-informed but were clearly not focused on the specific question set could not achieve higher marks. Obviously, candidates must be aware of key historical issues and must have considered debates and alternative explanations. However, they should also be prepared – as the better candidates were in this examination session, to consider exactly what the question demands and be able to select knowledge with discrimination.

Few candidates offered purely descriptive answers, although some offered unnecessarily lengthy descriptive passages which did not demonstrate a command of knowledge. There was a great deal of sound explanation, but better answers did not relay so much on 'lists' of explanations, but engaged more with assessing factors or balancing judgements. This more demanding skill led to some insightful analysis. Better answers showed intellectual independence and flexibility. Some responses wanted to challenge questions, rejecting the implicit assumptions. There is always room for this type of initiative, but answers must address the substance of the question set and not rely completely on creating their own. Less successful responses did sometimes suggest that an answer on a particular section of the paper had not been adequately prepared, and it is important that candidates do not rely too much on particular topics or aspects of the topic being set. There is a need for adequate coverage of two periods. This was not generally a problem, but it did lead to some answers being quite thinly supported and under developed. The following comments deal with questions which had more than a very small number of responses.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

There was good knowledge of the archaeological evidence for the period. Answers needed more breadth to the discussion and a wider range of factors to assess. Urban life was less well analysed.

Question 2

There was some sound discussion of the origins of the Anglo-Saxons and how this affected their settlement in England. The evidence for their dispersal across the country needed stronger analysis and a clearer conclusion to be drawn.

Question 3

There was sound knowledge of both Aethelbert and Raedwald and answers argued well that their qualities were vital. Alternative explanations were less fully considered.

Question 4

There was useful assessment of the ways in which the church gave support to and legitimised monarchs but the ability of the ruler and his military might were seen as more vital factors. There was some useful challenge to the question in the suggestion that the kings were not, in fact, all that strong. Detailed knowledge of their achievements could have been better covered.

Question 5

The work of Augustine was well known and there was some good analysis of what he achieved. The context of Roman interest in England was also looked at usefully. The answers were less strong in considering other factors and weighing up the Celtic role against the Roman. This was a question where a clear conclusion was possible and answers needed to be more decisive in the final judgement.

Question 6

There were sympathetic views of Theodore and the difficult situation he faced. Responses would have benefited from a more detailed knowledge of his activities. The alternative factors, coming from other parts of England were covered quite well but a little patchily. Theodore was generally seen to be a major factor, partly because of the problems with getting a broad range of evidence.

Question 7

There was a variety of approaches to this question and some good analysis and judgement. Answers often pointed out the paradox of the political decline in Northumbria at the same time as the cultural flourishing. There was detailed knowledge of a range of examples from the Franks Casket, the Ruthwell Cross and the Dream of the Rood to the Lindisfarne Gospels and the Codex Amiatinus. The answers would have been improved with less emphasis on describing the cultural treasures and more on trying to account for their production. Trade contacts and external influences needed fuller analysis. The work of Bede was not universally accepted as a sign of cultural achievement. There was some attempt to argue that this was not a period of cultural achievement, although this lacked conviction.

Question 8

There was some sound knowledge about Offa and his methods of government and conquests, and useful discussion about the purpose of the Dyke. Answers would have benefited from a better balance between the two rulers, as there was often less consideration of Aethelbald. Stronger responses made a direct comparison, while weaker answers dealt with the monarchs in turn, which meant there was often no clear final judgement.

Question 13

Answers showed good knowledge and understanding of the events of 1066 and were aware of the main areas of debate. They were able to analyse the respective roles of Harold's errors, William's powerful leadership skills and the element of luck which favoured William. The best answers were able to make a supported judgement about which factor was the decisive one and all three explanations were cited in the various responses. Less strong arguments were those where the factors were seen as equally important and no judgement was reached. Some tried to argue that the reasons all linked together, but such discussions needed to show more precisely how this interlinking occurred.

Question 15

A good range of answers was given to this question, with some well-argued conclusions that William II was the more successful, that it was Henry I, or that one was more successful in some aspects and less successful in others. There was strong supporting knowledge both in relation to William II's military advances and Henry I's legal reforms. There was some productive discussion about the problems of weighing up such diverse achievements against one another. Very few weaker answers were seen. One

aspect of the reigns which was less well considered was the church, although responses suggested neither of the monarchs was especially successful in this area and so concentrated on other, more fruitful, issues.

Question 16

The answers to this question found it a challenge to cover the specified period. The answers were able to consider the military role of the nobles in the earlier period, although they were less well-informed about the way the role changed to become partly advisory. The responses tended to be quite descriptive and would have been improved by more specific examples of nobles.

Question 22

There were some strong answers to this question, with a good range of factors being analysed. Many responses concluded that it was the circumstances which faced Stephen, rather than his personal shortcomings, which caused his problems. Some of these analyses were powerfully argued and revealed strong knowledge and understanding of the reign; others were vague on defining exactly what his troubles were. Some went so far as to avoid discussion of the Civil War, and Matilda did not appear in some answers. Recent research about Stephen's adaption of the governmental system of Henry I needed to be put into the context of disorder in the kingdom, even if there was discussion about how widespread the disruption actually was. There was good reference to the sources for the reign and their reliability both for the facts and the interpretation. There was much recognition of Geoffrey de Mandeville as a spectacularly wicked baron, but also some consideration of the difficult situation which faced many barons with the breakdown of central authority. The answers had plenty of material on which to draw and the most successful chose telling examples which were directly relevant to the terms of the question.

Question 23

The answers to this question generally agreed with the statement it contained and were able to provide detailed information about the reforms passed by Henry II in his government. Some of these accounts were rather descriptive of the changes he introduced and did not focus sufficiently on assessing Henry's judgement. Stronger responses considered whether he was wise to embark on the Criminous Clerks issue, especially once the quarrel with Becket developed. Very good responses linked his obstinacy on this matter with his refusal to give way when his family tried to thwart his wishes. Equally good analyses argued that Henry's judgement was not the root cause of his troubles but that the inexorable rise of the French monarchy was bound to affect the Angevin Empire. Thus Henry's real error was to provide the situation in which the French could flourish. There was less sound knowledge of Henry's quarrels with his wife and sons, and how far Henry was to blame and his final defeat in 1189 was sometimes omitted.

Question 24

Answers to this question mostly recognised that, faced with two clear alternatives, they were expected to make a decisive judgement between them. Some answers described the course of events, both regarding the quarrel with Innocent III and the issues with the barons and did not concentrate sufficiently on analysing the impact of these matters. The better responses made valiant attempts to decide whether the outcome of the excommunication and Interdict was worse than that of the baronial discontent. The discussion often hinged on weighing up the financial benefits John derived from the church against his position as a pariah ruler and the French readiness to invade to overthrow him. The advantage he gained from surrendering to the Pope at the last minute and thus being able to repudiate Magna Carta with papal backing was less well assessed. Some strong answers concluded that the Papacy had the greatest potential to harm John, but that his timely self-humiliation prevented this and thus the French invasion was largely the outcome of his poor relations with his barons and hence the baronial debacle was the more serious problem.

Question 27

The answers to this question were well informed and able to argue convincingly that Edward I needed money to finance his ambitious programmes in Wales, Scotland and France, but that restoration of order and the prestige of the monarchy after the reign of his father were uppermost in his mind. It was noted that all medieval kings needed money but that Edward's aims extended beyond the amassing of treasure. Thus he saw money as a means to an end and not an end in itself. The answers were strongly analytical and avoided description of his methods or his campaigns. The issues that underlay his introduction of statute law and his use of Parliament were well explained and set in context.

Question 28

The answer argued that geographical factors were important, although they needed more detailed knowledge to support this view. The coverage of the nature and leadership of the opposition was stronger, while the financial difficulties of the English kings and the bad decisions made by Edward II also featured. A clear conclusion with support was important.

Question 29

There was a good deal of strong knowledge of the details of the reign, but some answers focused on a narrative approach. Equally, some responses needed to be more focused on the wording of the question and they tended to analyse the reasons for Edward II's deposition in general terms. Better answers needed to consider aspects of Edward's character, as distinct from his policies. Some discussion argued that Edward's need for close male friends and his obstinacy in supporting them, along with his apparent dislike and distrust of, and hostility to much of the baronage, were what led to his disastrous policies and this could be effectively argued. Other answers considered that a weak character did not necessarily lead to poor decision making and so felt that it was the policies, rather than the character flaws, which led to Edward's downfall. Either view was acceptable if it was well supported. Some answers became a little confused on the ebb and flow of events and needed to have precise and selected examples to illustrate their arguments.

Question 31

Answers were very varied to this question, reflecting that there were several different factors which could be seen as the vital explanation. Some responses lacked total conviction. John of Gaunt was blamed by some, not only for the difficult legacy he left but also for dying inopportunistly. The fears of the nobility that Richard was embarking on a tyranny were analysed and supported. Richard himself was far from emerging unscathed by blame. Even his treatment of the peasants in 1381 was adduced to show his lack of sympathy for their plight and hence his unkingly outlook. There was some good argument that the Lords Appellant created a situation which it was impossible for any self-respecting king to accept. There was also good assessment of the role of immediate factors such as the banishment of Bolingbroke and its impact on baronial concerns and Richard's unfortunate absence in Ireland when Bolingbroke invaded. The responses mostly really tried to identify a key factor.

Question 32

The answers were well-focused and argued clearly in favour of the proposition in the question. They also added a caveat that Henry IV was not wholly ineffective as a king. His need for baronial backing and his problems in finding adequate reward for those who had helped him to the crown were well explained. There was some discussion of other possible explanations for his problems, such as his increasingly poor health and the spread of Lollardy, but issues like the hostility he faced in the North and in Wales were seen as having their roots in his accession. The taint of regicide was hard to shake off, as indicated in some responses.

Question 33

The answers to this question revealed polarised opinions about Henry V. He was either seen as a great soldier, diplomat and administrator or as a pursuer of foreign glory at the expense of his subjects, to the detriment of the French and the cause of years of misery. The former argument outweighed the latter but both were pursued with vigour and good detail. There was some sound discussion of the views of contemporaries and of the idea that the fifteenth century may have judged the royal abilities by different criteria from the twenty-first. Whichever view candidates took, these answers were nearly all of a high standard, with relevant and cogent analysis.

Question 34

The answers covered a number of possible explanations, although they did not always come to a clear conclusion about which was the best one. Some argued that the position of the English in France was inherently unsustainable, while others suggested that the death of Bedford or the Treaty of Arras were key turning points. One aspect that was less well analysed was the military decline and poor decisions made by the commanders. The revival of the French was dealt with better, but with surprisingly few mentions of the part played by Joan of Arc. The answers needed to be more decisive in identifying the main factor. Those which tried to argue that the factors were all interlinked, needed to show exactly how this could be worked out.

Question 37

Most of the answers were well focused and able to separate the two aspects of the reign successfully. There were examples of responses where the character and the actions became too entwined and one of the approaches adopted by candidates turned the question round and suggested Richard was a good man, due to his personal piety and as a victim of very hostile Tudor propaganda, but a bad King who made ill-advised decisions leading to his downfall. This was not, perhaps, wholly tenable, but was a brave effort on the part of those who attempted this line argument. In a small number of answers detailed knowledge was not displayed, despite such a short reign. There was some over-emphasis on Richard's achievements before he became King.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/12
British History Outlines, 1399-1815

Key Messages

- Key words in the question should be considered carefully
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- Clear communication of argument is essential

General Comments

There was a considerable range of answers, not only in terms of topics, but also in terms of quality of response. The best answers were very impressive, and demonstrated a control of the material and a focus on the question that showed not only thorough preparation, but mature understanding and reflection. Outstanding answers responded directly to the question, covering the period required, addressing all aspects of the question and showing very sound knowledge. This knowledge was used in a flexible way to support arguments and led to judgements being convincing. The best answers communicated very effectively. The line of thought was always clear, and prose was direct and unpretentious. This aspect cannot be overstressed. There is no need to write in 'high style' which often obscures argument. Clarity of thought and expression is vital. Strong knowledge must be used flexibly and not as an end in itself. Answers which were well-informed but were clearly not focused on the specific question set could not achieve higher marks. Obviously, candidates must be aware of key historical issues and must have considered debates and alternative explanations. However, they should also be prepared – as the better candidates were in this examination session, to consider exactly what the question demands and be able to select knowledge with discrimination.

Few candidates offered purely descriptive answers, although some offered unnecessarily lengthy descriptive passages which did not demonstrate a command of knowledge. There was a great deal of sound explanation, but better answers did not relay so much on 'lists' of explanations, but engaged more with assessing factors or balancing judgements. This more demanding skill led to some insightful analysis. Better answers showed intellectual independence and flexibility. Some responses wanted to challenge questions, rejecting the implicit assumptions. There is always room for this type of initiative, but answers must address the substance of the question set and not rely completely on creating their own. Less successful responses did sometimes suggest that an answer on a particular section of the paper had not been adequately prepared, and it is important that candidates do not rely too much on particular topics or aspects of the topic being set. There is a need for adequate coverage of two periods. This was not generally a problem, but it did lead to some answers being quite thinly supported and under developed. The following comments deal with questions which had more than a very small number of responses.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 3

For greater success in answering this question, responses needed to cover the whole of the period and offer more supporting factual material. Some answers lacked a close focus on the question, instead tending to focus on the personality of Henry VI.

Question 4

The better answers focused well on Margaret of Anjou and were able to produce relative evaluation of Margaret against other factors. There were quite a lot of straight narratives of the period which did not achieve higher marks; they tended not to single Margaret out for any special analysis. More mention of the crucial role played by Margaret of Anjou in 1461 would have improved some responses.

Question 5

The scope of some answers was limited, with most candidates focusing on a period of not more than twenty or thirty years, and other candidates focusing on just one rebellion.

Question 6

Better answers really considered the issues in the quote, rather than relying too much on narratives. There was some reference to historical debate in many responses, which often enhanced the sense of analysis.

Question 8

The answers were generally well focused and avoided description of the plots against Henry VII. Some could have been more carefully structured as there was a tendency to concentrate on a single factor, namely that Henry's claim to the throne was not that strong, and these answers could not develop a convincing argument around this one aspect. There was less analysis of the crisis at the end of his reign where the deaths of Arthur and of Henry's wife left him dangerously exposed. Better answers considered the difficulties of Henry's position in 1485, the persistence of pretenders over some years, the foreign aid they received and the dubious loyalty of much of the nobility. Some digressed a little into the debate about whether Henry was anti-noble or not.

Question 9

Responses agreed with the suggestion in the question and few made much of an alternative argument. They had plenty of evidence for their analysis, notably from the foreign policy of the early years of Henry's reign and from Wolsey's arrest of Buckingham at Henry's behest. Some argued that the legal reforms showed some independence from the monarch, while others suggested that the provision of effective government was the duty of a royal servant. The deciding evidence came from Wolsey's fall which was seen as entirely reflecting his dependence on the King. The view that Wolsey was setting himself up as an *alter rex* was discussed in some answers but dismissed as not proven. These were generally strong answers which reached a clear conclusion.

Question 10

The answers to this question were focused on opposition, although not always on why it was not very effective. The best responses argued that the real problem for opponents lay in the gradual imposition of the Reformation so that they did not have a clear idea of where it was going and hence exactly when to oppose it. They considered that the real issues were difficult for many to appreciate. They also suggested that Henry's ways of dealing with such opposition as there was, were not likely to encourage more. A few made reference to the idea that the Reformation had popular support which meant opposition was muted. Less successful answers tended to describe the opposition and its causes. More reference to the work of Cromwell in limiting opposition could have been made.

Question 11

The answers here could have been improved by a greater focus on the terms of the question. Some attempted to discuss whether there was instability in the given period, which was a side-issue. Others tried to describe the rebellions to illustrate the causes of instability but did not make the link between the factor they were discussing and exactly how this led to instability. There was some sound analysis from answers which avoided a chronological approach and were more thematic, considering religion as opposed to economic and social factors across the period. The best of these argued powerfully that inflation and unemployment were strong drivers of unrest and hence instability. Some pointed to evidence indicating that there were many local protests over social conditions as well as the major outbreaks of rebellion.

Question 12

The answer was focused more on the early part of the period and analysed well the opposition to the initial settlement. It was less confident on the support for the Settlement, arguing that there was a general feeling that the Settlement might well prove to be as impermanent as the previous ones, so support was minimal. The answer needed more detail on the developments in the period up to 1566 and especially on the efforts of Parker and the Queen herself to ensure the survival of the Settlement.

Question 14

There was some good analysis of the initial causes of the declining relationship with the religious and economic issues well explained. The answers were less successful in explaining the hostility over the whole period and events in the Netherlands could have been more fully explored. The years after the defeat of the Armada also needed to be considered.

Question 16

This question was well answered, although the responses were happier to analyse *flourishing* than *vibrant*. There was impressive knowledge about the virtues of the Church in this period, with reference to many aspects of devotional practices and public demonstrations of confidence. The accusations of the anti-clerical lobby were largely seen as unjustified. One or two answers moved on to look at the debate about whether the Reformation was from below or above and this was less useful.

Question 19

The answers to this question tried hard to take a broad view and recognised what was required. They needed to cover the whole period, rather than just the first part of the Tudor dynasty. They also needed to keep to the issue of threat and not digress into discussion of why rebellions failed. Some analysis considered the question in terms of success, arguing quite usefully that a rebellion which was easily put down was not much of a threat, but others did not make this connection so clearly. The argument that the rebellions were not very threatening but that the Tudors with their limited coercive powers tended to exaggerate the threat as they never forgot how they had come to the throne of England, was seen.

Question 22

This was a very popular question which was answered very confidently by the majority of candidates. A range of issues were evaluated and candidates were successful in identifying areas of relative success, and links between factors were also made. Arguments were generally very well supported.

Question 23

This was quite a popular question, with a good number of evaluative answers. Most answers were able to identify a range of issues and show whether these could be considered as tyranny or not. The most successful responses showed an understanding of this question in terms of the perspectives of seventeenth century contexts.

Question 26

Responses were very well informed and identified a wide range of winners and losers; many were able to fine tune these assessments in terms of evaluating relative gain and loss.

Question 27

A very popular question -answers were generally well supported factually, although some were unable to move on from providing a narrative of the wars in this period. However, the majority of answers identified a range of possible factors and were able to make appropriate links between these. The most successful questions identified reasons for change and development in factors over time.

Question 28

A few candidates attempted this question and most answers would have benefited from a more in-depth approach. This was another question where candidates would have improved responses with a more sufficient coverage of the timescale in the question.

Question 29

Walpole proved to be very popular indeed and answers were well-informed, and offered a good range of material which candidates were able to evaluate to support their arguments.

Question 32

Answers were well informed, although there was some narrative of events. Most candidates concluded that the effectiveness of George III changed and developed over time and some responses made good use of how opinion of George II has also changed.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/13
British History Outlines, 1689- 2000

Key Messages

- Key words in the question should be considered carefully
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- Clear communication of argument is essential

General Comments

There was a considerable range of answers, not only in terms of topics, but also in terms of quality of response. The best answers were very impressive, and demonstrated a control of the material and a focus on the question that showed not only thorough preparation, but mature understanding and reflection. Outstanding answers responded directly to the question, covering the period required, addressing all aspects of the question and showing very sound knowledge. This knowledge was used in a flexible way to support arguments and led to judgements being convincing. The best answers communicated very effectively. The line of thought was always clear, and prose was direct and unpretentious. This aspect cannot be overstressed. There is no need to write in 'high style' which often obscures argument. Clarity of thought and expression is vital. Strong knowledge must be used flexibly and not as an end in itself. Answers which were well-informed but were clearly not focused on the specific question set could not achieve higher marks. Obviously, candidates must be aware of key historical issues and must have considered debates and alternative explanations. However, they should also be prepared – as the better candidates were in this examination session, to consider exactly what the question demands and be able to select knowledge with discrimination.

Few candidates offered purely descriptive answers, although some offered unnecessarily lengthy descriptive passages which did not demonstrate a command of knowledge. There was a great deal of sound explanation, but better answers did not relay so much on 'lists' of explanations, but engaged more with assessing factors or balancing judgements. This more demanding skill led to some insightful analysis. Better answers showed intellectual independence and flexibility. Some responses wanted to challenge questions, rejecting the implicit assumptions. There is always room for this type of initiative, but answers must address the substance of the question set and not rely completely on creating their own. Less successful responses did sometimes suggest that an answer on a particular section of the paper had not been adequately prepared, and it is important that candidates do not rely too much on particular topics or aspects of the topic being set. There is a need for adequate coverage of two periods. This was not generally a problem, but it did lead to some answers being quite thinly supported and under developed. The following comments deal with questions which had more than a very small number of responses.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 17

Stronger responses were well-focused on the question and able to analyse how Liverpool was able to adapt to changing circumstances and thus address the *so long* in the question. A small number included too much description of measures passed under Liverpool and others were too vague on his virtues, asserting that he held his party together, but needing more detail on exactly how this was achieved. Most responses argued that it was Liverpool's skills as a chairman which kept him in power, rather than any particular policy, and often suggested that the chaos into which the Conservatives fell after his death was sufficient evidence to show how valuable his managerial ability was.

Question 18

Less successful answers did not consider by what means a *decade of reform* might be judged. Hence they described reforms and briefly assessed the extent to which they remedied the problems they were designed to solve. There was accurate knowledge of the 1832 Reform Act, but less sound information on other reforms. Coverage of the whole period was offered by stronger responses, some of which produced outstanding analyses of the nature of the reforms and made convincing critiques based on considering the implications of the quotation.

Question 20

These answers were focused on the question and often well-balanced, arguing that the failure was in the short term, but that in the long term the Chartists succeeded in most of their aims and that they also encouraged political participation by the working classes, which eventually had its flowering in the founding of the Labour Party. There could have been stronger detail on the factors which led them to be seen as a failure initially. Some responses would have benefitted from more focus on Chartism itself, rather than simply aspects of reform which it promoted.

Question 22

The responses to this question which were the most successful were those which tried to establish a means of defining a *great reforming administration*. Some were able to put the reforms into context and juxtapose the undoubted achievements with the deficiencies of the measures to reach a final overall conclusion. Other answers were less ambitious and gave an account of some of the reforms and asserted that this was, therefore, a great reforming administration. Some included the Irish reforms, which was helpful to answers which favoured the view in the question, while others concentrated on the domestic programme. Some better answers tried to group the reforms according to aims such as broadening access to education, the Civil Service and the Army, which was often a sound approach. Some answers needed to keep the issue of how great the reforms were at their heart and avoid sidetracks like the impact on the unity of the Liberal Party.

Question 23

Less successful answers lacked sufficient detailed knowledge about the policies, or described events without much discussion of the objectives. Some argued that the aims of the two parties were very different but that the outcome was surprisingly similar. There needed to be coverage of the whole period but the 1880s were neglected.

Question 24

Less successful responses focused on the rise of the Labour Party and not on trade unions. Better answers had some good material about new unionism and the legal problems faced by the unions, but needed to make more of the strikes of 1888-9 and the impact they had on the popular perception of trade unions.

Question 25

There was some perceptive argument that the reforms should be judged by short term and long term impact. Some saw the social reforms as harbingers of the welfare state, and the whole debate on the issue of state versus private provision was well tackled. The constitutional crisis, some argued, looked more important at the time, but its effects were less lasting as the House of Lords became less relevant in government. But such responses conceded that House of Lords reform was still a matter of debate. Other answers tended to list the social reforms and ran out of time to deal fully with the impact of the constitutional crisis. What they needed to do was to analyse and compare the effects of each aspect and also to reach the clear conclusion for which the question was asking.

Question 26

Some responses put forward a variety of reasons but found it difficult to make links between them or to suggest any kind of ranking, so the factors appeared as an unconnected list. The argument that, though Belgium could be seen as an excuse, without the German invasion Britain would have been struggling for a strong *casus belli*, was seen. Others explained the formation of the Alliance System in detail back to 1902 and discounted Belgium completely. Defence of the empire and the position of the navy also featured. Responses found it easiest to blame the Kaiser. Another approach to answering this question saw the

genesis of the war in the Balkans and Britain dragged in by Russia, to a war in which she had little to gain. There was some better discussion of the view that Britain could not afford to stay out as, if France and Russia defeated Germany, they would then dominate Europe to the detriment of British interests. Some even referred to balance of power and consistencies in British foreign policy.

Question 33

This proved to be a very popular question. Most answers were well focused on effectiveness. The general conclusion was that Lloyd George was an effective wartime leader but shackled by circumstances and/or the Tories in the post-war period. What he was able to achieve in the immediate aftermath of World War I was usually credited by the answers. There was good knowledge of the measures of his ministry and sound analysis of the impact they had. This could be differently interpreted. Some argued that the Irish Settlement was a positive achievement, while others condemned the use of the Black and Tans as a blot on the reputation of a Radical. Weaknesses lay in the lack of detail on why Lloyd George was effective as Prime Minister in the war. The word *decisive* was often repeated but needed illustrating with examples. The events of 1922, the ultimate example of ineffectiveness, needed to be better covered. Most answers had plenty of detail on the various scandals which engulfed Lloyd George. It was important that the whole period of the question should be considered and some neglected this.

Question 34

These were generally sound responses, well aimed at the terms of the question. Many of them made a genuine attempt to isolate a main factor. These ranged from the leadership of Ramsay MacDonald to the impact of World War I on both Liberals and Labour. The argument that the extension of the franchise was the key moment, was made. The Government of 1924 was also seen as a breakthrough for the party. Answers were weaker in that coverage of the whole period was not always achieved, especially if too long was spent on the advances made by Labour during the war. Apart from MacDonald, knowledge of leading Labour figures was lacking.

Question 35

There were some restricted responses which concentrated on Amritsar and little else. Better answers were well-focused with a range of examples, contrasting the success of the dominions, evidenced by their role in World War II, with the problems in India. This response also suggested that success in India depended on the viewpoint. Preserving order could be seen as a success from the British angle but the protests showed the Indians had a different notion.

Question 37

This was another question where there needed to be some means of assessing *radical*. Some answers concentrated on the welfare state and putting its instigation in context achieved some sound analysis. Some suggested that it was so rapidly revised because of the cost that it was never radical. It was also argued that the criticisms of the left showed it was not radical enough, while the howls of protest from those on the right showed it was. The derivative nature of the reforms was seen as reducing their radicalism. Others relied on description and a final statement that these measures therefore were a sign of a radical ministry. It was generally agreed that nationalisation and the economic reforms were useful but not radical. Some answers moved away from social and economic reforms to India and other irrelevant topics. In some answers the analysis lacked depth.

Question 39

The answers were divided between Conservative strengths and Labour weaknesses. Both were generally well explained, although some conclusions were reluctant to come to a final judgement as the question asked. Those that did make a clear decision mostly favoured the divisions within Labour as the main cause, with a proviso that the circumstances of the 1950s favoured the Conservatives. Labour leadership was viewed as particularly poor, while the debonair Eden and Macmillan were much more attractive prospects.

Question 40

Some of these answers would have benefited from more detailed knowledge on the influence of the Unions. They were better at analysing the circumstances which allowed unions to flourish. The approach was seen which challenged, somewhat unconvincingly, the terms of the question and suggested they were not that powerful in fact, and that suggestions that they were, should be seen as misperceptions.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/21

European History Outlines c.300-c.1516

Key Messages

- Candidates should respond to the exact terms of the question set
- It is important that knowledge is sufficient to make arguments convincing
- Communication of a clear argument is a vital requirement

General Comments

There was a very wide range of responses and performance. At the higher end of the mark range there was some very strong well-focused and thoughtful work. There was also an indication that some candidates needed more command of the material to produce competent and relevant answers. It is important for the question to be answered directly and its terminology and implication to be grasped and responded to. Where there is a wide period, as in thematic questions, there must be an adequate coverage of that period. Reading the question carefully remains of paramount importance: the Congress System, for example, is not the same as the Congress of Vienna. If the question says 'Louis VI and Louis VII' then both monarchs must be considered. Knowledge to support arguments is vital, but even interesting and detailed knowledge should not be inserted for its own sake. Few candidates offered highly indiscriminating narrative answers, but there were instances of the aim seeming to be more to show knowledge than to use it flexibly. Specific content is not expected but answers which omit major elements will not offer a convincing analysis. For example, an answer to the question 'To what extent was Louis XVI responsible for the crisis of 1789 in France' which offers a pre-determined list, however detailed, of 'causes of the French Revolution' from the class system, to the enlightenment, to peasant hardship and ends with a brief paragraph on the King's poor personal qualities, with little reference to specific elements such as finance or the events concerning the Estates General in 1789, will not really be responding very adequately to the demands of the question. Answers on Charlemagne seemed particularly affected by the desire to show scholarly knowledge not always related to the actual question. A question about the relative importance of cultural and educational achievements and conquests should focus on those aspects and its effectiveness is going to be judged by the knowledge of those specific aspects and the quality of judgement shown about their relative significance. If there is little knowledge of those elements, then the answer will not be successful, even if there is knowledge about a lot of other factors. The discrimination in the selection of knowledge is vital.

More effective answers were those in which the knowledge used to support arguments was not expressed in an obscure way. Much depends on candidates engaging with key concepts in the question. For example, 'How extensive were the achievements of Gregory VII' depends on an understanding of the implications of the term 'achievement'. A description of his policies and actions with some comments on successes and failures is not required. Similarly 'aims' differs from 'policies' or 'actions'. It is important that historical terminology should be understood and that the concepts inherent in the questions should be considered. Many of the answers seen in this examination session did present developed and complex arguments and it is particularly important that not only are these carefully related to the question to ensure clarity but also that they are legible, which is not always the case. However, overall there is much strong work, well-focused argument and good knowledge, with a wide range of topics being written about in an interesting way which shows real reflection and interest. The personal engagement of many candidates with the topics studied is a distinctive feature of this paper and there were many lively and well-informed responses. What follows are comments on questions with significant numbers of responses.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 5

The answers were well focused and argued cogently that Justinian's reign saw strong achievements but that his personal responsibility was more questionable. Generally, a greater grasp of detail would have improved the answers.

Question 8

The answers to this question generally focused on the cultural and military achievements. They were less strong in assessing what Charlemagne deserved to be remembered for. There was some discussion about the notion of *correctio* and its importance but this needed to be more directly related to the question set. The conquests were sometimes rather patchily considered. The responses needed to assess the impact of Charlemagne's achievements over time, rather than describe them. Some stronger answers were able to do this well and also to analyse the influence of the Empire of Charlemagne in European History. This latter approach was not necessary for high marks but was a pleasing example of a wide-ranging response.

Question 11

The responses were able to analyse the problems facing the Capetians and how successfully they solved them. Some needed to focus more on discussing 'surprisingly'. Stronger answers considered the weaknesses of the Capetian position and then assessed their reactions and the reasons for their survival. Some suggested they were lucky and so were surprisingly strong, while others argued that the secure succession and the support of the Church made them strong enough. One or two answers worked their way through the kings chronologically and this did not allow for thematic analysis. The answers needed to have a two-way approach, rather than just to agree with or to challenge the statement in the question.

Question 13

Responses were well informed and focused. The complex events in the Iberian Peninsula in the period were clearly understood. The conclusion was that the positive strengths of the Christians outweighed Muslim weaknesses. Some of the discussion needed more depth.

Question 14

These answers considered what Gregory achieved but were challenged by the term *widespread*. Better responses considered how broadly the reforms were accepted or had an impact and often argued that the short term effect was less than the long term as Gregorian reform took root in the Church and influenced later Popes. Some answers described the reforms and the Investiture Contest without relating their exposition sufficiently to the terms of the question. Directly relevant discussion was needed.

Question 15

These answers sometimes neglected to reach a clear conclusion about the factor in the question, as compared with other factors. There was good knowledge of why the Crusaders were able to capture Jerusalem, although less assessment of importance. The leaders were seen partly as a key factor but Muslim disunity was also cited. Good responses included a clear evaluation of the role of the different explanations.

Question 16

These responses varied in quality. Good knowledge and balanced analysis was seen, where the argument was made that Frederick had problems but his initial successes had a real impact in Germany. Also seen was material which lacked an alternative argument and just outlined some of Frederick's achievements in general terms.

Question 17

The conclusion of most of these answers was that military success made all the difference since, without it, nothing else was likely to allow the monarchy to become stronger. There was good understanding of the campaigns of Louis VI. The administrative successes of the monarchs were less well utilised. Most answers argued that Louis VII was not all that successful in war and that the strengthening of the monarchy was more the result of some fortunate decisions and the Angevin quarrels. Coverage of both reigns was needed for better marks, but a chronological approach was not expected.

Question 18

Philip Augustus is always a popular topic. The responses were better at describing his achievements than assessing them. The stronger responses analysed the material, some arguing that the Angevins made it easy for Philip, so lessening his role, or that their Empire was doomed anyway. Others suggested that Philip's abilities and ruthless pragmatism would have outwitted better rulers than John and that his administrative reforms were all his own and firmly enforced. This kind of discussion was needed for high marks to be reached.

Question 19

There was some impressive discussion in the answers to this question which was well focused on the central issue. The general conclusion was that it was hard to distinguish between religious and secular motives for Innocent as, to him, they were much the same. Responses which tried to make the distinction were often good and came to varying conclusions, some seeing Innocent as more of a secular ruler, while others were convinced he was primarily a man of religion. Some answers were couched in rather vague terms and needed more precise knowledge of events in the Empire, France and England.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/22

European History Outlines c.1378-c.1815

Key Messages

- Candidates should respond to the exact terms of the question set
- It is important that knowledge is sufficient to make arguments convincing
- Communication of a clear argument is a vital requirement

General Comments

There was a very wide range of responses and performance. At the higher end of the mark range there was some very strong well-focused and thoughtful work. There was also an indication that some candidates needed more command of the material to produce competent and relevant answers. It is important for the question to be answered directly and its terminology and implication to be grasped and responded to. Where there is a wide period, as in thematic questions, there must be an adequate coverage of that period. Reading the question carefully remains of paramount importance: the Congress System, for example, is not the same as the Congress of Vienna. If the question says 'Louis VI and Louis VII' then both monarchs must be considered. Knowledge to support arguments is vital, but even interesting and detailed knowledge should not be inserted for its own sake. Few candidates offered highly indiscriminating narrative answers, but there were instances of the aim seeming to be more to show knowledge than to use it flexibly. Specific content is not expected but answers which omit major elements will not offer a convincing analysis. For example, an answer to the question 'To what extent was Louis XVI responsible for the crisis of 1789 in France' which offers a pre-determined list, however detailed, of 'causes of the French Revolution' from the class system, to the enlightenment, to peasant hardship and ends with a brief paragraph on the King's poor personal qualities, with little reference to specific elements such as finance or the events concerning the Estates General in 1789, will not really be responding very adequately to the demands of the question. Answers on Charlemagne seemed particularly affected by the desire to show scholarly knowledge not always related to the actual question. A question about the relative importance of cultural and educational achievements and conquests should focus on those aspects and its effectiveness is going to be judged by the knowledge of those specific aspects and the quality of judgement shown about their relative significance. If there is little knowledge of those elements, then the answer will not be successful, even if there is knowledge about a lot of other factors. The discrimination in the selection of knowledge is vital.

More effective answers were those in which the knowledge used to support arguments was not expressed in an obscure way. Much depends on candidates engaging with key concepts in the question. For example, 'How extensive were the achievements of Gregory VII' depends on an understanding of the implications of the term 'achievement'. A description of his policies and actions with some comments on successes and failures is not required. Similarly 'aims' differs from 'policies' or 'actions'. It is important that historical terminology should be understood and that the concepts inherent in the questions should be considered. Many of the answers seen in this examination session did present developed and complex arguments and it is particularly important that not only are these carefully related to the question to ensure clarity but also that they are legible, which is not always the case. However, overall there is much strong work, well-focused argument and good knowledge, with a wide range of topics being written about in an interesting way which shows real reflection and interest. The personal engagement of many candidates with the topics studied is a distinctive feature of this paper and there were many lively and well-informed responses. What follows are comments on questions with significant numbers of responses.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

Responses tended to describe the events leading to the Great Schism, rather than analysing its impact.

Question 3

A surprising number did not discuss the actual siege (the question is about the fall of the city). Good answers appreciated the significance of gunpowder as the key factor in breaching the walls; after all, the Turks had besieged it before without success despite superior numbers, and when the Byzantines were equally weak. Candidates did not seem to appreciate that the Empire had shrunk so much; it really only consisted of the city by the fifteenth century.

Question 7

There was generally good understanding of the defects of the Papacy in this period. One or two answers strayed beyond the confines of the dates and began to explain how the Papacy reformed. Alexander VI figured as the greatest promoter of his family but other examples from the Medici were quoted. The role of the Popes in improving the appearance of the city of Rome attracted praise. Alternative factors included the pursuit of temporal power, extending Papal territories and the eradication of heresy. There were some energetic defences of the Popes, arguing that they needed to be able to hold their own among the various Italian states. Good answers needed this kind of approach.

Question 10

Better answers compared other elements with the key factor in the question. Some answers needed to fully appreciate the geographical significance of Granada, and some actually only referred to the city. Some argued that the unification of Spain was not their intention and that the discovery of the New World was inadvertent.

Question 11

There were some strong responses to this question, demonstrating sound knowledge. Most answers included a range of possible factors, such as the theology of Luther, the dislike of Rome, the attractions for rulers of Protestantism, the views of peasants, knights and cities in Germany and the ideals of German nationalism. Some responses would have benefited from reaching a supported judgement about the importance of the factors, and in engaging in a fuller discussion.

Question 14

Most responses were general in nature – writing about gold, spices and empire before going on to describe the exploits of Henry the Navigator or Cortes.

Question 15

Quite a few candidates were able to discuss the negative impact of the monarchs – in terms of financial disaster and foreign policy failure (though one positive – the capture of Calais – could have been mentioned more). There was less strong analysis when it came to the parlement, the nobility and the growth of the Huguenots. As far as the Huguenots were concerned, more candidates could have appreciated how Francis had let them grow to 1534. Some candidates commended the monarchs for clamping down (Henry II in particular) and more could have pointed out that the Wars of Religion were their legacy. It was appreciated that both monarchs cultivated the arts, although some answers added little beyond that. More could have been written about Francis, the Renaissance Prince.

Question 16

A reasonable attempt was made by some to show how Philip's policies were shaped by his faith – with regard to the Inquisition, the Turks, the Netherlands and (eventually) England etc. Better candidates demonstrated how he interpreted God's will in terms of what was in his best interests – by citing his ambiguity towards Elizabeth and of course, the Pope. What would have improved some answers was depth (lack of cooperation with the Papacy simply consisted of ignoring a bull banning bullfighting in some

responses!), and a more sophisticated discussion of the relationship between religion and politics in the early modern era.

Question 18

These answers had plenty of knowledge about the changes in the Roman Catholic Church in the period. Some were too descriptive. They needed to consider more carefully what the differences might be between the two alternative assessments in the question. Some were able to analyse reforms by examining their aims and so assign them to one view or the other. Some made good points about chronology, citing reforms originating in the period before or soon after the start of the Reformation. The strongest answers argued that there was a desire for a Catholic Reformation but it was the need for a Counter Reformation which gave it an initial impetus. This kind of approach was needed for higher marks.

Question 19

Less successful responses stated the Edict was not his greatest achievement and then went on to write a lot about Sully. Better answers explained why the Edict was not so great but some were hard-pressed to come up with a greatest achievement. The best answers dealt with Henry's life before 1598, and considered his conversion, his war with Spain and coming to terms with the Catholic League, offering a supported view of his greatest achievement.

Question 20

Candidates who wrote about the legacy but focused on the reign were rewarded for analysis. Some responses were not able to make it explicit that they were referring to things that lasted and made the subsequent empire sustainable or unsustainable. Weaker answers simply outlined what Suleiman did.

Question 21

Not all the responses addressed the whole period covered by the question and so there were gaps in the analysis. Questions in the Themes section are designed to elicit discussion across a wide period. Answers needed to include the Hussites as well as the Protestants, with regard to heresy and Councils from Constance to Trent. Most answers felt that heresy which divided and fractured the Church irretrievably was the worse threat, but there was some vigorous assessment of the potential of the conciliar movement and the skilful way in which the Papacy side-stepped this threat. Answers needed to select from the plentiful material available and to be discerning in their choices.

Question 25

Answers tended to be rather generalised and although some good detailed reasons were seen, more genuine evaluation was needed, linking developments in a chronological fashion. Weaker answers simply wrote about the conquests of the Aztecs and Incas.

Question 30

Quite a few answers provided an outline of achievements. Some responses needed to add the depth and detail required to really illustrate the extent of the Great Elector's achievement. In particular, candidates would have benefited from a better grasp of the political geography of Frederick William's scattered territories, and how he dealt with each in a different way. The following inclusions would have improved responses: the fact that much his territory was occupied by enemies on accession, how he was lucky at Westphalia to be favoured by Mazarin (as a counterpoise to Sweden), how he duped the Estates, how he obtained full sovereignty of the Duchy of Prussia, how he got the epithet 'great' (Fehrbellin) and how late in his reign much of the administrative organisation (GKK) occurred.

Question 32

There were some good answers to this question, although some omitted the Great Embassy, or did not explain it; some did not mention the building of St Petersburg. However, there was an appreciation by others that Peter's conquest of Baltic territory gave him a 'window on the West' and that while his attempt to westernise applied to a few in the west, most of Russia was untouched by what occurred. Better answers engaged with the concept of 'westernisation' as opposed to change in general or key events of the reign.

Question 34

Better responses dealt with a range of aspects of the reign and offered a direct response to the issue of 'benefit'. Most saw merely personal glory as his aim – a view with some justification but which required more balance in some responses.

Question 35

Better answers went beyond the basic view that the Charles XI was good (he achieved peace and stability), while Charles XII was bad (he was a warmonger who lost his empire), and discussed how the Swedes failed to integrate their empire, and how Charles XII had little choice but to fight to defend a vulnerable entity.

Question 37

There could have been stronger appreciation of the difficulties of a regency and Fleury's remarkable management of the king. There was some understanding of things that went wrong too. Less of a reliance on description would have helped in some answers.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/23

European History Outlines c.1715-2000

Key Messages

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Comments on Specific Questions

Question 3

Frederick William I was frequently regarded as the more successful because he kept Prussia peaceful, though candidates did acknowledge that Frederick II's conquest of Silesia was important. Some answers tended to compare the achievements of the two kings, rather than tackle the question as set.

Question 6

Some candidates had difficulty in distinguishing between Catherine's ability and vision, and many responses would have benefited from attempting to do so. Generally, answers tended to outline her achievements.

Question 8

Most answers had a sound understanding of the financial difficulties of *ancien regime* France. Louis XVI was described as weak and blamed for the dismissal of ministers. More candidates needed to identify the king's particular contribution to the outbreak of revolution and to assess how important it was in relation to other factors.

Question 9

Candidates would have improved their responses if they had defined an enlightened despot. While most candidates were able to enumerate his repressive measures, responses needed to be more definite about the nature, extent and intellectual provenance of his reforms.

Question 10

Candidates knew much about Alexander's domestic reforms and evaluated them well, and some assessed his contribution to the post-war settlement at Vienna; most had little to say about his defeat of Napoleon and some asserted that it was (others that it was not) his greatest achievement without analysing why it was important or how much Alexander himself contributed to it.

Question 17

Most candidates realised that the differences between the great powers was a major reason for the failure of the Congress System, although answers were often generalised and lacked detailed knowledge of the issues at stake in successive conferences. Less successful candidates just described the Congress of Vienna. There were, though, some outstanding answers to this question, demonstrating well-focused, accurate and informed analysis.

Question 18

Most candidates challenged the view that Nicholas I was backward-looking and appeared to assume that this had also dealt with the 'worn out ideal' part of the question. Consequently, Nicholas's limited attempts at reform and his repression were outlined. What Nicholas stood for was described, whereas analysis was required.

Question 19

Answers to this question would have benefited from greater balance. Candidates were aware that divisions among the revolutionaries were an important reason for the failure of the revolutions but analysis and knowledge of the repression tended to be generalised and sketchy. More could have distinguished between different countries in analysing the outcome of the revolutions.

Question 20

Most candidates observed that Italy faced a north-south divide after 1861 and some were aware of papal hostility to the new regime and the 'brigands' war'. Generally, responses would have benefited from covering more than this.

Question 21

Most candidates wrote on how successful Napoleon III had been and regarded the interests of France as a monolithic entity, well served when Napoleon was successful and ill-served when he was not. Candidates would have improved responses had they endeavoured to identify the aims and interests of different social groups and assessed how far those were, or were not, advanced by the Second Empire.

Question 22

Most candidates were convinced that Bismarck's handling of foreign policy had been both wise and effective, in that he had maintained European peace and kept France isolated, though a few conceded that his successors had been less able than he to maintain his network of alliances.

Question 26

There were some very well-informed answers on the Balkans and some strong understanding of the relative importance of this aspect. Less successful responses struggled with knowledge of the Balkans, other than pointing out that there had been some wars there before 1914 which set Russia and Austria against one another. Most agreed that these had been important in causing the outbreak of war, but thought that other factors were more important.

Question 34

Some of the answers to this question struggled with defining a *Marxist state* and so were not able to make their responses as strong as they could have been. Others had sound knowledge about the state established by Lenin and could offer a reasonable analysis. There was some good argument that the nature of the state changed over time. There was some confusion about whether War Communism on the one hand, and the NEP on the other, were typical of Marxism. A clear judgement needed to be reached, and a wider range of material covered, in several of the answers.

Question 35

These answers tended to be descriptive and to be dominated by accounts of hyperinflation, not always correctly attributed to 1923. Some better knowledge of the economic policies of the Third Reich appeared in other answers. The most common approach was to take the two periods in turn and hence the Hitler state was often neglected. Most answers agreed with the statement in the question and consideration of the policies of the Nazis sometimes needed a fuller treatment. Stronger consideration of the outcome and impact was needed. There was reference to other European economies which were no stronger – this was done well. Most candidates argued that Nazi policies were successful and those of Weimar were not. Many candidates assumed that all Weimar policy after the hyperinflation of 1923 was the work of Gustav Stresemann. Hitler was often credited with ending reparations. Nazi policies were generally thought to have been successful but analysis and knowledge of them would have benefited from going beyond autobahns and rearmament. Schacht's financial policies or Goering's Four Year Plan could have been better known, and those who commented on the state of the German economy in 1939 mostly thought that it had been ready for war.

Question 36

Knowledge and understanding of the impact of War on the rise of Fascism in Italy varied. Better answers were aware that Italy's losses and the results of the Versailles Settlement were important but the impact of the war on Italy's economy and its social and political structure was overlooked. Some candidates were aware of the growth of the left and needed to go on and explain how this was affected by the war. Those few who referred to the Spanish Civil War assumed that it had strengthened Mussolini's regime because Franco had won, rather than relating it to the state of Italian armed forces in 1940. While most candidates were aware that Italy was ill-prepared for war, they did not write very much about the Second World War itself and some even neglected to mention the Allied invasion. Many candidates preferred to write about the failure of various pre-war Fascist projects.

Question 37

The answers knew the ways in which Stalin carried out repression and could outline them quite effectively. They were less convincing in analysing the reasons behind repression and some offered material mainly on Stalin's personal paranoia. The *extent* part of the question was not always dealt with but the activities of the

secret police, variously described as Okhrana, Cheka and KGB, were generally mentioned. The effect of a police state on the people of Russia needed more careful explanation. Some answers diverted into description of collectivisation or industrialisation, which could be used to provide a context for the need for repression but could also be a distraction.

Question 39

This question could have been better done. Most candidates were aware that Khrushchev had initiated the policy of 'destalinisation' by releasing some political prisoners and liberalising censorship and this was assumed to have benefited the USSR; explanation of how it did so was needed, as was discussion of attempts to reform the Soviet economy. There was some discussion of Soviet scientific achievements and these were uncritically classified as a benefit. Some candidates assumed that Poland and Hungary were part of the USSR and provided lengthy descriptions of the unrest and repression there.

Question 41

Many responses embarked upon orthodox, revisionist and counter-revisionist views and so missed the requirements of the question. Stronger responses saw the Communist/Capitalist split as crucial and underpinning the distrust on both sides. Alternative factors most quoted were the historical background both before and during World War II and the domino theory. The arguments that the downfall of Communism ended the Cold War, thus proving it was ideological, and that detente showed it was not that vital, were seen in these responses. Mostly, ideology was only loosely understood and only the USSR was thought to have been at all influenced by it. There much description of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Question 43

Knowledge of developments in post-war Italy was variable. As a result, analyses were generalised, although most candidates were aware of the murder of Aldo Moro and knew something of the activities of the Red Brigades.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/03
US History Outlines c.1750-2000

Key Messages

- It is important to respond to the exact question set
- It is important that knowledge is sufficient to make arguments convincing
- Communication of a clear argument is a vital requirement

General Comments

There was a very wide range of responses. At the higher end of the mark range, there was some very strong, well-focused and thoughtful work. It is important for the question to be answered directly and for its terminology and implication to be grasped and responded to, and better responses achieved this. Where there is a wide period, as in thematic questions, there must be an adequate coverage of that period. Reading the question carefully remains of paramount importance: if a question is about Wilson's first term, then that must be what is addressed; if a question asks about US policy in dealing with international problems, then those problems must be the focus of the answer, rather than a general consideration of isolation; if a key word is used in the question, for example in **Question 1** with 'unreasonable', then it must be considered fully in the answer. Better responses showed an awareness that using knowledge to support arguments is vital, but even interesting and detailed knowledge should not just be inserted for its own sake. Few candidates offered highly indiscriminating narrative answers, although there were instances of the aim seeming to be more to show knowledge than to use it flexibly. Examiners do not expect specific content, but answers which omit major elements will not offer a convincing analysis. For example, in an answer to the question which asks about the importance of States Rights as a cause of the Civil War, then that issue must be at the heart of the answer which should not be just a list of factors bringing about war. Discrimination in the selection of knowledge is vital.

Where there is argument, but it is expressed in an obscure and indirect way, then answers will lack effectiveness. Much depends on candidates engaging with key concepts in the question. For example, **Question 7** was focused on the concept of Jacksonian Democracy; it does not require a description of Jackson's policies and actions with some comments on successes and failures. It is important that historical terminology should be understood and that the concepts inherent in the questions should be considered. Many answers did present developed and complex arguments and it is particularly important that not only are these carefully related to the question to ensure clarity but also that they are legible, which was not always the case. However, there was much strong work, well-focused argument and good knowledge, with a wide range of topics being written about in an interesting way, which showed real reflection and interest. The personal engagement of many candidates with the topics studied is a positive and encouraging feature of this paper, and Examiners were impressed by many lively and well-informed responses. Those questions which produced too few responses for meaningful comments to be made are not commented on below.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

Stronger answers engaged with the concept of 'unreasonable' and offered some strong and balanced analyses, with a sustained focus on the question. Some appeared to be prepared for a question on the causes of the War on Independence. These candidates considered a number of events and developments from 1763 to 1776, often in descriptive mode; these responses would have benefited from greater reference to the 'attitude of the Americans'. The weakest responses offered a list of causes with little or no reference to the question. Some answers did respond to the question directly but would have been improved by a fuller coverage of the period before 1776.

Question 2

There were some well-focused answers, although some interpreted this question as one that demanded an assessment of Saratoga as a 'turning point'. Those that did often presented a fair line of argument, even if the focus of the question was really asking if the battle was 'decisive'. Most regarded the intervention of the French as the key impact of Saratoga, though more could have analysed the limits of this development. Few candidates were able to explore in sufficient depth the ways in which the battle was important. Many preferred to list the more general reasons for the outcome of the war – Washington, weaknesses of British generals, terrain, nature of the war etc. Sometimes this was covered in a descriptive way. To improve responses, these candidates needed, generally, to respond more to the specific demands of the question.

Question 5

Of those who stuck to the period in the question (rather than the years after 1820), some concentrated on the reasons why the South wanted to keep (rather than restrict) slavery. Some did focus more directly on the question set and most of these would have benefited from a consideration of 'how successful', rather than a concentration on the reasons for the survival of slavery.

Question 6

Most accepted the view that slavery was 'a system of ruthless exploitation' and would have improved their answers by presenting more than a one-sided response to this question. Some did acknowledge the counter-argument, and fuller and more evenly distributed effective analysis would have benefited essays further.

Question 7

Attempt to discuss both the negative and positive role of Jackson were seen in some answers; a greater understanding of the implications of the term 'Jacksonian Democracy' would have aided some responses.

Question 9

This was a popular question. Better answers gave the issue of States Rights good attention and compared this issue with others, some showing in effective analysis how the issues were linked, but still offering a clear judgement. Less successful responses struggled to adequately define the notion of States' Rights. Some assessed how this issue helped cause the civil war, before considering other factors in turn, but used more of a 'list of causes' approach. Besides slavery, most candidates discussed the cultural differences between North and South, the economies of the two Sections and the election of Lincoln. There was often a strong understanding of the factors in themselves, and more on the relationship between them, and their relative importance, would have helped to produce even better responses.

Question 10

This was also popular. There were some strong answers which explained why the key issue was important and assessed it against other elements. Most understood the 'management of men' and tried to apply it in various ways – Lincoln's Cabinet, his generals, Congress – with varying degrees of success in terms of analysis or development. Some stretched the concept too far to include Lincoln's standing in public opinion. Other qualities of Lincoln were also considered, such as his oratory, the initiative of the Proclamation, his experience in office and his willingness to repress dissent. Some lost focus by trying to broaden the scope of the essay to include an explanation of factors that explained the victory of the North such as resources, Southern weaknesses etc. Some offered lengthy reflection on the Emancipation proclamation – greater linkage to the question would have benefited some of these answers.

Question 15

Most answers provided a summary comment of the work of a number of authors, giving each a paragraph. There needed to be more of an attempt to assess the accuracy of the novelists. The relationship between the novels and their time required greater consideration in terms of this question. Cross referencing them would have helped – especially in the avoidance of disjointed answers. Some gave space to 'Gone with the Wind' which was not relevant.

Question 17

There were few answers to this question. There were, however, some perceptive and well-argued analyses, assessing the role of corruption and showing a sound understanding of different factors. Weaker responses tended to rely too much on description of features of Reconstruction.

Question 19

Some argued the view that US foreign policy was imperialistic, rather than addressing the specific question. The majority of those who focused on the question looked at a range of factors that explain the extension of US influence, usually with sound supporting evidence. The analysis of these factors could have been fuller and more candidates could have provided a judgement about the relative merit of economic factors.

Question 20

Answers would have been more successful if there had been more engagement with what was implied by 'great'. Rather, the emphasis was often on the successes and failures of Roosevelt, at home and abroad. Some also considered his personal qualities. Some compared him to Lincoln but without establishing common terms of reference. Most answers were competent on the history of Roosevelt's presidency, and would have benefited from a deeper consideration of 'greatness'.

Question 21

Some went beyond the years 1913-17 (January) and, instead, focused on the second term. More candidates could have attempted to define Wilson's principles. The majority also preferred to concentrate on Wilson's foreign policy, and especially relations with Mexico. Many of the answers seen needed to consider more closely the requirements of the question in terms of time period and scope.

Question 22

This was a popular question. The majority of answers were concerned to assess the degree of continuity or change in the 1920s regarding the latter as the reason for, or equivalent of, 'a crisis of values'. To some extent this was a valid approach which allowed discussion of attitudes and beliefs. A few more thoughtful answers were constructed on the values using the developments of the period as support. Some ran through familiar issues such as Prohibition, flappers, immigration and so on, rather than providing a sustained engagement with the exact terms of the question.

Question 24

There were some good answers which focused on the period as a whole and analysed in terms of the question. Other responses, while showing some understanding of US policy, appeared to be answering a question about the extent of isolationism, rather than the effectiveness of the US to resolve problems.

Question 30

Some attempted to argue that detente was somehow an objective different from containment, rather than a different way of achieving the same objective – to contain communism. These responses were not always convincing. Better responses were aware of other objectives – strategic and economic; less successful essays would have been improved by greater balance and broader analysis.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/04

African and Asian History Outlines c.1750 - 2000

Key Messages

- Key words in the question should be considered carefully
- Better answers will go beyond lists of explained factors
- Clear communication of argument is essential

General Comments

Most answers focused on China, with some venturing into Japanese history and some essaying India. The questions on Africa and South East Asia, received few responses. There was a distinct sense of enjoyment and interest evident in many of the responses on Asian history. The best answers were very impressive, and demonstrated a control of the material and a focus on the question that showed not only thorough preparation, but mature understanding and reflection. Outstanding answers responded directly to the question, covering the period required, addressing all aspects of the question and showing very sound knowledge. This knowledge was used in a flexible way to support arguments and led to judgements being convincing. The best answers communicated very effectively. The line of thought was always clear, and prose was direct and unpretentious. This aspect cannot be overstressed. There is no need to write in 'high style' which often obscures argument. Clarity of thought and expression is vital. Strong knowledge, of which there was a considerable amount in many answers, must be used flexibly. Obviously, candidates must be aware of key historical issues and must have considered debates and alternative explanations. This was the case in better responses - these candidates were able to consider exactly what the question demanded, and to select knowledge with discrimination.

Few candidates offered purely descriptive answers, although some produced unnecessarily lengthy descriptive passages which needed to demonstrate a greater use of knowledge. There was a great deal of sound explanation, but better answers did not rely so much on 'lists' of explanations, but engaged more with assessing factors or balancing judgements. This more demanding skill led to some insightful analysis. Better answers showed a high level of intellectual independence and flexibility.

The following comments relate to questions which produced a reasonable number of answers.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 17

There was some good knowledge of attempts to reform within the period, but though there was mostly some analysis of 'successful', it might have been helpful to offer more analysis of the criteria used to assess success and to consider the context of the period rather more.

Question 18

Many did not merely offer a discussion of the outcomes of change, but tried to engage with the concept of 'revolution'. There were a variety of approaches, some considering continuity and change, others looking more at the outcome of the revolution. Some focused on the nature of the 'revolution', questioning whether its aims were for complete change. Candidates who simply explained the causes of the revolution or described events without really grappling with the concepts in the question, tended to offer less convincing answers.

Question 19

Though there were some strong balanced analyses offered, some responses need fuller coverage of the period or greater consideration of the policies of modernisation and the attempts to regenerate China. Some offered a narrow focus on the inadequacies of the Nationalists prior to 1949. If there is a designated period, then candidates should try to deal with it and to consider whether achievements varied. Also, 'achievements' implies more than outlining actions and policies.

Question 20

There were some very strong answers which considered the correct period and dealt with both of the main elements in the question. Most responses tended to agree with the idea that there were destructive experiments and engaged with the implications of 'experiments', stressing the novelty of the policies and uncertainties about their outcome. There were some well-informed analyses which focused more on the successes and failures of the policies, rather than responding directly enough to the question. Some answers were uncertain about the period and wrote about the period of Mao's rule in general.

Question 21

This question produced some well-organised responses which looked at different aspects, making a distinction between economic and political or social change.

Question 23

Most answers offered a comparison of Jinnah and Gandhi, with a lot of discussion of the latter which the question did not really invite.

Question 24

Candidates might have been better advised to consider 'persistent' rather more and to cover more of the period. Responses which focused just on the situation after independence were not really answering the question fully.

Question 27

Most answers tackled 'superficial', though some tended to consider the general level of change, rather than specifically 'westernisation'. There was some good supporting material which ranged quite widely and few answers which described developments would have benefited from offering some judgement. Better answers offered a balanced view and explored what might be a way of judging the superficiality of westernisation.

Question 28

Though not many answers were seen, the approach taken varied quite a bit. There were some answers which relied rather heavily on description; some responses did not go beyond 1937; there were some impressive surveys of the whole period which did offer a balanced discussion of the significance of Manchuria.

Question 38

Good responses were seen, although this question did produce rather list-like explanations from some candidates, which tended to emphasise Chinese weaknesses and deal with European strengths in a somewhat limited way, reducing the element of discussion. Explanations were often well developed and answers well-informed; debate/assessment could have been more developed than in some of the answers discussed above.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/51

The Norman Conquest, 1051-1087

Key Messages

- In **(a)** candidates should try to make more reference to the nature of the documents and the context in which they were produced to assess the extent of corroboration/contrast, rather than relying on describing similarities and differences between their content
- In **(b)** answers the focus should be on using knowledge in connection with the passages to form a judgement about the documents in relation to the issue
- In the essays, candidates should offer more reference to evidence studied to deepen their answers and to distinguish them from essays done on Outlines papers

General Comments

Though performance varied between the different Special Subjects, the points above might guide Centres towards basing their study more on evidence than sometimes seems the case. The essays are often done better than the document-based questions. In **(a)**, few offered sequential description and most offer sustained comparison and contrast, though sometimes this needed more balance. Responses for some would be improved by assessing how far the passages corroborate each other by looking at the documents as evidence and assessing their relative value. The judgements should be supported much more by a consideration of the nature of the evidence and the context in which it was produced. There should also be a sustained focus on the actual issue rather than a general list of similarities and differences per se.

In **(b)**, weak less successful responses found it hard to link the documents to the issue. There was some evaluation of the documents, although this was less evident than the explanation of how they related to the key issue. Better answers used knowledge well to support their view of the documents; in other responses, additional knowledge often dominated or was just added on to the analysis. In the former case, it appeared that another essay answer was sometimes being attempted with the documents being referred to from time to time. Alternatively, there were answers which focused almost exclusively on the documents, missing the instruction which is stated very explicitly that candidates should make use of contextual knowledge. Where knowledge was used selectively and linked to a clear and critical understanding of the documents, the results were impressive and scored highly. However, candidates do need to respond to the documents and remember the nature of the task, which is essentially document-based. On the positive side, there was often a very good understanding of the issues and some strong and detailed knowledge.

Where the approach of analysing an issue and referring to evidence would be more appropriate, in the essay questions, there was relatively little reference to source material and often the responses were very similar to those in an Outlines paper. A Special Study does require a deeper study and it would be good to see more reference to evidence. Knowledge was often very strong, and this needs to be complimented by a more developed element of discussion and assessment of views or approaches. Some relied on a series of explanations of different factors when a sharper judgement would have yielded work of greater depth. However, there were many well-informed and analytical answers in which it was clear that answers were based on wide reading and serious study.

Comments on Specific Questions

9769/51 – The Norman Conquest

Question 1

- (a) Most of the responses saw the similarities between the documents clearly and the ravaging of the Normans was fully covered. The different versions of exactly how William dealt with the Danes were less well analysed in that William's bribery of the Danes to persuade them to leave was viewed as out of character for the Conqueror. But some answers suggested it showed William's pragmatism and that his inherent strength meant that the Danes were unlikely to take advantage as they had done in earlier periods. The provenance could have been better used and answers needed to say more than that the viewpoints were English and Norman, but to use the tone and detail in the documents to assist in the analysis.
- (b) By using the documents as a set many answers argued that C, D and E showed William using the tactics of terror, while A and B suggested he used diplomacy with Edgar and Malcolm and sound military tactics against Hereward. The 'Harrying of the North' was used to develop the argument about terror and contextual knowledge from the Domesday Survey supported this view. Most responses reached this level, but stronger ones were able to identify other factors from the documents, such as references to castles in A and D and to wise choices of castellans, luck in the death of Edwin in B and the storm at sea in E, and William's ability to recruit more men from the continent in A and E. There was plenty of contextual knowledge to support these points. Some needed to argue more clearly about which was the favoured method. Good responses suggested that terror worked, as the decline in revolts and the evidence of the documents showed, and so it was the decisive factor.

Question 3

The majority of the answers showed a strong understanding of the terms of the question. These answers were able to identify examples, showing William's leadership skills from events both before and during the battle, and then consider these against other issues such as the errors made by Harold and the element of luck which favoured William. Different responses suggested that each of these explanations was the chief one and usually marshalled the material appropriately. There was good, well-informed discussion of the rights and wrongs of Harold's decision to march south soon after Stamford Bridge and also about how far he could rely on the loyalty of some of his fellow Anglo-Saxon leaders. The few less successful answers seen would have been improved by reaching a clear judgement and less reliance on narration of the events of the battle.

Question 4

Some of these answers could have been more effectively argued. They had some sound knowledge of the workings of the Anglo-Saxon state, but tended to assert that William carried on using most of its institutions, without further development. Some of the answers strayed away from government to discuss innovations such as church building and changes in society, while neglecting some legal issues like the forest laws. The coverage needed to be wider and more precise.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/52
The Crusades, 1095–1192

Key Messages

- In **(a)** candidates should try to make more reference to the nature of the documents and the context in which they were produced to assess the extent of corroboration/contrast, rather than relying on describing similarities and differences between their content
- In **(b)** answers the focus should be on using knowledge in connection with the passages to form a judgement about the documents in relation to the issue
- In the essays, candidates should offer more reference to evidence studied to deepen their answers and to distinguish them from essays done on Outlines papers

General Comments

Though performance varied between the different Special Subjects, the points above might guide Centres towards basing their study more on evidence than sometimes seems the case. The essays are often done better than the document-based questions. In **(a)**, few offered sequential description and most offer sustained comparison and contrast, though sometimes this needed more balance. Responses for some would be improved by assessing how far the passages corroborate each other by looking at the documents as evidence and assessing their relative value. The judgements should be supported much more by a consideration of the nature of the evidence and the context in which it was produced. There should also be a sustained focus on the actual issue rather than a general list of similarities and differences per se.

In **(b)**, weak less successful responses found it hard to link the documents to the issue. There was some evaluation of the documents, although this was less evident than the explanation of how they related to the key issue. Better answers used knowledge well to support their view of the documents; in other responses, additional knowledge often dominated or was just added on to the analysis. In the former case, it appeared that another essay answer was sometimes being attempted with the documents being referred to from time to time. Alternatively, there were answers which focused almost exclusively on the documents, missing the instruction which is stated very explicitly that candidates should make use of contextual knowledge. Where knowledge was used selectively and linked to a clear and critical understanding of the documents, the results were impressive and scored highly. However, candidates do need to respond to the documents and remember the nature of the task, which is essentially document-based. On the positive side, there was often a very good understanding of the issues and some strong and detailed knowledge.

Where the approach of analysing an issue and referring to evidence would be more appropriate, in the essay questions, there was relatively little reference to source material and often the responses were very similar to those in an Outlines paper. A Special Study does require a deeper study and it would be good to see more reference to evidence. Knowledge was often very strong, and this needs to be complimented by a more developed element of discussion and assessment of views or approaches. Some relied on a series of explanations of different factors when a sharper judgement would have yielded work of greater depth. However, there were many well-informed and analytical answers in which it was clear that answers were based on wide reading and serious study.

Comments on Specific Questions

9769/52- The Crusades

Question 1

- (a) The comparison was usually well made and few answers dealt with the documents separately. The contrast was set in context well with the different outlooks of the two writers. Some answers picked up the point that A, in trying to sound attractive to settlers, was, in fact, illustrating the problems outlined in B. Less successful responses needed to look for more points of comparison.
- (b) Most answers used the documents well as a set and could group them effectively. They also largely came to the same conclusion, namely that the lack of settlers was less vital than the need for warriors or the growing threat from the Muslims and, indeed, Byzantium. Some answers pointed out that the Crusaders had some victories in this period or that settlers, living in harmony with their neighbours, as A indicated, were not what the Crusader States needed anyway. Greater use of contextual knowledge would have strengthened some answers and some of the evaluation of D and E could have been improved.

Question 2

Answers were usually well-focused. A small number of responses gave long accounts of Urban's speech at Clermont. There was some strong analysis of the problems which the Papacy had faced and the need to revive its prestige and reputation, which a Crusade was ideally poised to do. Hence, there was discussion in the answers of the mixed motives which could be imputed to the Pope, and how far the Crusade, by giving him a central role in Europe, was for secular ends. The alternative view, citing the purely religious enthusiasm which Urban inspired, argued that he was largely devoted to the religious ideal and a genuine longing to see Jerusalem in the hands of Christians. It was also pointed out that, whatever his motives, the outcome of the Crusade did not enhance his reputation that strongly. A clear judgement was needed for higher marks.

Question 3

There was good focus on the issues of poor planning and poor leadership and generally answers were able to link these problems with the failure of the Crusade. Most responses saw Louis VII as a poor planner and an even worse leader, while Conrad was viewed as little better. The best leader, if he could be described as such, was considered to be Bernard of Clairvaux. Other factors considered included the issue of how far the Crusader States were viable in the long run and the ambivalent attitude of the Emperor in Constantinople. There was some discussion about whether the Crusade, in its widest sense, could be seen as a failure, with reference to successes in the Iberian peninsula.

Question 4

This was well done, with full analysis of the role of the Crusader States and detailed and balanced discussion of the leadership of Guy de Lusignan and Reynald de Chatillon. The answers then went on to assess the other factors and blamed the unsustainable nature of the Crusader states once the Muslims regrouped under Saladin. There was good differentiation in these answers between long and short term factors.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/53

The Reign of Henry VIII, 1509-1547

Key Messages

- In **(a)** candidates should try to make more reference to the nature of the documents and the context in which they were produced to assess the extent of corroboration/contrast, rather than relying on describing similarities and differences between their content
- In **(b)** answers the focus should be on using knowledge in connection with the passages to form a judgement about the documents in relation to the issue
- In the essays, candidates should offer more reference to evidence studied to deepen their answers and to distinguish them from essays done on Outlines papers

General Comments

Though performance varied between the different Special Subjects, the points above might guide Centres towards basing their study more on evidence than sometimes seems the case. The essays are often done better than the document-based questions. In **(a)**, few offered sequential description and most offer sustained comparison and contrast, though sometimes this needed more balance. Responses for some would be improved by assessing how far the passages corroborate each other by looking at the documents as evidence and assessing their relative value. The judgements should be supported much more by a consideration of the nature of the evidence and the context in which it was produced. There should also be a sustained focus on the actual issue rather than a general list of similarities and differences per se.

In **(b)**, weak less successful responses found it hard to link the documents to the issue. There was some evaluation of the documents, although this was less evident than the explanation of how they related to the key issue. Better answers used knowledge well to support their view of the documents; in other responses, additional knowledge often dominated or was just added on to the analysis. In the former case, it appeared that another essay answer was sometimes being attempted with the documents being referred to from time to time. Alternatively, there were answers which focused almost exclusively on the documents, missing the instruction which is stated very explicitly that candidates should make use of contextual knowledge. Where knowledge was used selectively and linked to a clear and critical understanding of the documents, the results were impressive and scored highly. However, candidates do need to respond to the documents and remember the nature of the task, which is essentially document-based. On the positive side, there was often a very good understanding of the issues and some strong and detailed knowledge.

Where the approach of analysing an issue and referring to evidence would be more appropriate, in the essay questions, there was relatively little reference to source material and often the responses were very similar to those in an Outlines paper. A Special Study does require a deeper study and it would be good to see more reference to evidence. Knowledge was often very strong, and this needs to be complimented by a more developed element of discussion and assessment of views or approaches. Some relied on a series of explanations of different factors when a sharper judgement would have yielded work of greater depth. However, there were many well-informed and analytical answers in which it was clear that answers were based on wide reading and serious study.

Comments on Specific Questions

9769/53 The Reign of Henry VIII

Question 1

- (a) The two documents were considered quite thoroughly in many answers with a sound comparison made. There could have been more about the context – 1528 as opposed to the 1530s, and perhaps more consideration to the different nature and origins of the documents. However, few merely offered sequential explanation and there was generally a good understanding of the content, with better answers pointing up similarities, as well as differences.
- (b) Better answers offered an overview and distinguished between the different views. Some grouped C, D and E as demonstrating the use of Parliament. Some assumed that ‘counsellors’ meant MPs and included A in the group. In general, though, the documents and their significance were well grasped. Better answers were able to apply knowledge to the documents, expanding, for instance on the ‘raft of legislation’; or using knowledge about Cromwell. Less successful answers would have benefited from less description and less dependence on paraphrasing the content of the documents.

Question 2

A greater understanding of ‘faction’ would have provided more convincing analyses in the answering of this question.

Question 3

The answer required an analysis of the type of religious settlement achieved, but also some consideration of whether it really did ‘satisfy few’. There was more about the reversals of policy and the uncertainties of doctrine than about the impact of change. Some good understanding was shown of the religious situation and there were some well-argued responses; less successful answers tended to become descriptive.

Question 4

This was the most popular essay question and it produced some well-informed judgements based on a clear view of the aims and requirements of foreign policy. Many answers dealt with the period as a whole, though there was a tendency to focus more on the period to 1523. There were some well-informed and balanced analyses which offered different possible interpretations and assessed them with strong factual support.

HISTORY

<p>Paper 9769/54 Reformation Europe, 1516-1559</p>
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Key Messages

- In **(a)** candidates should try to make more reference to the nature of the documents and the context in which they were produced to assess the extent of corroboration/contrast, rather than relying on describing similarities and differences between their content
- In **(b)** answers the focus should be on using knowledge in connection with the passages to form a judgement about the documents in relation to the issue
- In the essays, candidates should offer more reference to evidence studied to deepen their answers and to distinguish them from essays done on Outlines papers

General Comments

Though performance varied between the different Special Subjects, the points above might guide Centres towards basing their study more on evidence than sometimes seems the case. The essays are often done better than the document-based questions. In **(a)**, few offered sequential description and most offer sustained comparison and contrast, though sometimes this needed more balance. Responses for some would be improved by assessing how far the passages corroborate each other by looking at the documents as evidence and assessing their relative value. The judgements should be supported much more by a consideration of the nature of the evidence and the context in which it was produced. There should also be a sustained focus on the actual issue rather than a general list of similarities and differences per se.

In **(b)**, weak less successful responses found it hard to link the documents to the issue. There was some evaluation of the documents, although this was less evident than the explanation of how they related to the key issue. Better answers used knowledge well to support their view of the documents; in other responses, additional knowledge often dominated or was just added on to the analysis. In the former case, it appeared that another essay answer was sometimes being attempted with the documents being referred to from time to time. Alternatively, there were answers which focused almost exclusively on the documents, missing the instruction which is stated very explicitly that candidates should make use of contextual knowledge. Where knowledge was used selectively and linked to a clear and critical understanding of the documents, the results were impressive and scored highly. However, candidates do need to respond to the documents and remember the nature of the task, which is essentially document-based. On the positive side, there was often a very good understanding of the issues and some strong and detailed knowledge.

Where the approach of analysing an issue and referring to evidence would be more appropriate, in the essay questions, there was relatively little reference to source material and often the responses were very similar to those in an Outlines paper. A Special Study does require a deeper study and it would be good to see more reference to evidence. Knowledge was often very strong, and this needs to be complimented by a more developed element of discussion and assessment of views or approaches. Some relied on a series of explanations of different factors when a sharper judgement would have yielded work of greater depth. However, there were many well-informed and analytical answers in which it was clear that answers were based on wide reading and serious study.

Comments on Specific Questions

9769/54- Reformation Europe

Question 1

- (a) Answers were able to see similarities in the general concerns of both Charles V and the Pope and in the strong language used by each of them in condemning Luther and his beliefs. Indeed, it was suggested that they were trying to outdo one another with their vehemence. There was good comment on the provenance, especially suggesting that, although clearly one-sided, the documents represented the views of the writer accurately. Some answers missed the difference arising from the papal assertion that many of Luther's followers had abjured him after the Papal Bull. Those that did pick this up were able to argue that this was wishful thinking from the Papacy.
- (b) Many responses used the documents effectively as a set and focused well on the terms of the question, considering *widely accepted* carefully. While most answers grouped documents A, C and E against B and D, there was good evaluation of the contents of the documents to show this was not necessarily how they lined up. Good answers argued that A was very early and Luther did not have access to reports from all over Germany, while B was a narrow geographical view, as was E. Some went on to say that three major cities were mentioned, so there clearly was some spread of Lutheranism. Strong responses then explained that the very hostile tone of C and D indicated that there was a threat which frightened the Emperor and the Pope, so these documents supported the view that there was a spread, even if not in all areas. There was good use of contextual knowledge about the spread to back up or challenge the documents. Less successful answers were not able to analyse in such a developed way.

Question 2

There were some well-argued answers to this question which weighed up the inheritance of Spain and the Holy Roman Empire effectively. Many concluded that Spain looked less strong, especially after the revolts of the early 1520s, and had inherent separatist problems, but was, in fact, stronger, as its support for Charles and financing of much of his foreign commitments, proved. The Empire was analysed in terms of the reforms initiated by Maximilian and it was argued that it must have been a desirable inheritance since three European rulers sought to be elected as Emperor. But most answers concluded that princely power was a serious difficulty for Charles, compounded by the spread of Lutheranism. Less strong answers were not as focused on the early period of Charles' governance and moved away from the inheritance to what followed next, some even reaching his abdication. Such responses needed to keep to the terms of the question.

Question 3

The quality of responses to this question varied. Strong material included an analysis of the role of the Jesuits and their impact on the Roman Catholic Church and balanced this against other factors, such as the other new orders, the reformed Papacy and the Council of Trent. Such responses avoided description but focused on what was achieved, arguing that in the terms of the sixteenth century, it was the Council of Trent which drove the Counter-Reformation most strongly and to its widest effect, while in a longer time frame the Jesuits could be seen in this role. Weaker material featured description of the establishment of the Jesuits and had little evaluative comment as to the extent of their contribution or assessment of their position in impelling reform forwards.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/55

The Reign of Charles I, 1625-1649

Key Messages

- In **(a)** candidates should try to make more reference to the nature of the documents and the context in which they were produced to assess the extent of corroboration/contrast, rather than relying on describing similarities and differences between their content
- In **(b)** answers the focus should be on using knowledge in connection with the passages to form a judgement about the documents in relation to the issue
- In the essays, candidates should offer more reference to evidence studied to deepen their answers and to distinguish them from essays done on Outlines papers

General Comments

Though performance varied between the different Special Subjects, the points above might guide Centres towards basing their study more on evidence than sometimes seems the case. The essays are often done better than the document-based questions. In **(a)**, few offered sequential description and most offer sustained comparison and contrast, though sometimes this needed more balance. Responses for some would be improved by assessing how far the passages corroborate each other by looking at the documents as evidence and assessing their relative value. The judgements should be supported much more by a consideration of the nature of the evidence and the context in which it was produced. There should also be a sustained focus on the actual issue rather than a general list of similarities and differences per se.

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Comments on Specific Questions

9769/55 – The Reign of Charles I

Question 1

- (a) Some answers were not able to make a full comparison, but most picked up on the emphasis in Document E that they feared Laud was bringing in superstition and the Roman Church and that this he directly denied in C. Stronger answers noted that the accusation that he had persecuted and punished opponents was borne out by C since his speech was made at once such instance of punishment. Consideration of provenance was usually good as the responses developed the theme that the documents came from sources highly hostile to each other. There was some suggestion that the Articles of Impeachment would want to find every possible accusation and so might have an element of exaggeration, while Laud, in 1637, did not exactly mince his words. Good answers needed to make most of these points.
- (b) The documents were well used in the answers to this question and some responses felt Laud was unjustly criticised, while others sided with the Puritans. As long as the argument was supported from the documents and contextual knowledge, either view could reach high Bands. There was good grouping of the documents, with A and C being set up against B, D and E. The first view was developed by suggesting that A showed how little reverence there was and so Laud's reforms were needed, while C showed Laud defending his position and denying innovation. The other documents were then discussed, but dismissed as making their case too rancorously. These answers used evidence to show that Laud had no intention of turning to the Church of Rome. The other view argued that there was innovation, that Laud was provocative, that bishops, such as Juxon were too powerful and that the tone of the Puritan documents reflected their deep fear for the future of the Church. Better responses used all the documents fully, while weaker answers often missed some of the points in B especially.

Question 2

Some answers were well focused and recognised that religious issues were the main factor in creating a Royalist party from those who disliked the abolition of bishops and also felt royal power had been emasculated beyond a reasonable measure. These responses were able to name individuals and explain their motivation clearly. Less strong answers spent too long in assessing the reasons for Charles's unpopularity in 1640, and so not really addressing the thrust of the question. Some of these were also rather descriptive of the reforms passed in 1640-1.

Question 3

There were mostly good answers to this question, with some showing detailed knowledge of Leveller aims and methods. Virtually all addressed the issue in the question and some agreed it was the main factor and included arguments that both the elite and the workers were excluded, for different reasons, and also showed that women resented being marginalised by the Levellers. Others suggested that the programme was too radical, the leadership was eccentric and the movement had no coherence. The death of Rainborough was another factor stressed by some. The better responses covered a good range of factors, while the less successful ones needed to move on from the factor in the question to get a balanced consideration and so reach a clear conclusion.

Question 4

The answers here had some good analysis of the role of Charles I and generally argued that he was to blame. His belief in divine right was seen as driving his duplicity and refusal to compromise. There was less strength in the argument that there were other factors, particularly the divisions between the army and Parliament and the Presbyterian/Independent divide. The responses were less assured in discussing these aspects and some moved on to events in 1648 and even to the execution of Charles in 1649.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/56

The French Revolution, 1774–1794

Key Messages

- In **(a)** candidates should try to make more reference to the nature of the documents and the context in which they were produced to assess the extent of corroboration/contrast, rather than relying on describing similarities and differences between their content
- In **(b)** answers the focus should be on using knowledge in connection with the passages to form a judgement about the documents in relation to the issue
- In the essays, candidates should offer more reference to evidence studied to deepen their answers and to distinguish them from essays done on Outlines papers

General Comments

Though performance varied between the different Special Subjects, the points above might guide Centres towards basing their study more on evidence than sometimes seems the case. The essays are often done better than the document-based questions. In **(a)**, few offered sequential description and most offer sustained comparison and contrast, though sometimes this needed more balance. Responses for some would be improved by assessing how far the passages corroborate each other by looking at the documents as evidence and assessing their relative value. The judgements should be supported much more by a consideration of the nature of the evidence and the context in which it was produced. There should also be a sustained focus on the actual issue rather than a general list of similarities and differences per se.

In **(b)**, weak less successful responses found it hard to link the documents to the issue. There was some evaluation of the documents, although this was less evident than the explanation of how they related to the key issue. Better answers used knowledge well to support their view of the documents; in other responses, additional knowledge often dominated or was just added on to the analysis. In the former case, it appeared that another essay answer was sometimes being attempted with the documents being referred to from time to time. Alternatively, there were answers which focused almost exclusively on the documents, missing the instruction which is stated very explicitly that candidates should make use of contextual knowledge. Where knowledge was used selectively and linked to a clear and critical understanding of the documents, the results were impressive and scored highly. However, candidates do need to respond to the documents and remember the nature of the task, which is essentially document-based. On the positive side, there was often a very good understanding of the issues and some strong and detailed knowledge.

Where the approach of analysing an issue and referring to evidence would be more appropriate, in the essay questions, there was relatively little reference to source material and often the responses were very similar to those in an Outlines paper. A Special Study does require a deeper study and it would be good to see more reference to evidence. Knowledge was often very strong, and this needs to be complimented by a more developed element of discussion and assessment of views or approaches. Some relied on a series of explanations of different factors when a sharper judgement would have yielded work of greater depth. However, there were many well-informed and analytical answers in which it was clear that answers were based on wide reading and serious study.

Comments on Specific Questions

Paper 56: The French Revolution

Question 1

- (a) It is important that candidates focus on the key point of comparison in the question. In this case, the issue of the *legality* of putting the king on trial should be examined. Less successful responses simply provided a comparison of the documents with no obvious relation to the actual question. It is also important that candidates look at similarities and differences on a point-by-point basis. It is advisable not to have a paragraph on C, and then a paragraph on D, even if this is followed up with a conclusion. Detailed explanation of a candidate's own knowledge is not required. The best answers focused on the similarities and differences in the way the documents viewed the legality of the trial. Long sections of own knowledge without reference to the documents are not required. General understanding of the content of the documents was good, with many candidates dealing well with the potentially tricky concept of 'inviolability'. Provenance, on the whole, could have been considered more. Candidates were not expected to know who the two authors were, and speculative answers such as 'the Marquis de Condorcet, author of D, was probably a Jacobin' are not recommended and, in this case, incorrect. Candidates who looked at the dates of publication and made reference to the context in which the debate was played out, achieved more searching explanation.
- (b) There were some very strong answers to this question in which candidates kept an analytical focus on the question and incorporated the documents with their own knowledge. There were a number of common issues in weaker answers. Firstly, it is important that candidates assess 'how convincing' the documents are. A sharp focus on the demands of the question is required, rather than stock evaluation or a paraphrasing of the documents. A good approach is to broadly group the documents together, depending on which side of the argument they are on, and then to look at each document in more detail within this structure. It is a good idea to cross-reference or directly compare the documents wherever possible. Running through the documents sequentially is not the best approach. A few candidates missed out one document altogether. In general, provenance could have been more effectively used. It is important that any explanations of provenance are helped to further the understanding of the candidate's answer to the question. Rather than speculating as to who the authors might be, it is far more advisable to simply look at when they are written and to use own knowledge to explain what was happening at that time. Key events such as the Brunswick manifesto, the flight to Varennes, Louis' own inability to deal with the situation and the failure of the constitution were generally well understood. Strong answers managed to use knowledge of these events to further explain the documents in their answer to the question.

Question 2

There was a wide range of answers to this question. The best included a detailed explanation of why attempts at financial reform, as undertaken by Louis and his ministers such as Turgot, Necker and Calonne, failed. Some answers approached this in a narrative way. It was better to approach analytically and look at the underlying reasons for failure. More answers needed to explain the events of 1788-89. Many answers appeared to be a response to a broader question about the origins of the French Revolution. Such answers often included lengthy explanation of the role played by Marie Antoinette, the Enlightenment and the Estates system. Some explanation of the trickier issue of finance would have improved these responses.

Question 3

There were some excellent answers to this question that weighed up the importance of popular unrest alongside other factors such as the development of political stalemate and the economic crisis. Those answers that identified links between these factors were well rewarded. Analysis of events such as the meeting of the Estates General, the subsequent political deadlock, the Tennis Court Oath, the Bastille, the Great Fear and the October Days was often well done. Other answers tended to be narrative in their approach, and did not evaluate the importance of popular unrest in the development of these events. Some candidates wrote about events after 1789.

Question 4

On the whole answers to this question could have been improved. The complexity of the period could have been better understood by some candidates, and too many answers were overly broad in their approach. Stronger answers demonstrated the links between the course of the war and the Terror. The execution of the king represented a shift in the radicalism of the revolution, and candidates needed to explain how this contributed to a 'crusading spirit' amongst the revolutionaries. The conflict between the Jacobins and the Girondins needed to be analysed, and the fall of the Girondins was sometimes neglected. The role of the CPS could also have received fuller coverage. Some candidates referred to the growing fear of counter revolutionaries and how this helped to stimulate the Terror, but this could have been better done.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/58

Gladstone and Disraeli, 1867-1886

Key Messages

- In **(a)** candidates should try to make more reference to the nature of the documents and the context in which they were produced to assess the extent of corroboration/contrast, rather than relying on describing similarities and differences between their content
- In **(b)** answers the focus should be on using knowledge in connection with the passages to form a judgement about the documents in relation to the issue
- In the essays, candidates should offer more reference to evidence studied to deepen their answers and to distinguish them from essays done on Outlines papers

General Comments

Though performance varied between the different Special Subjects, the points above might guide Centres towards basing their study more on evidence than sometimes seems the case. The essays are often done better than the document-based questions. In **(a)**, few offered sequential description and most offer sustained comparison and contrast, though sometimes this needed more balance. Responses for some would be improved by assessing how far the passages corroborate each other by looking at the documents as evidence and assessing their relative value. The judgements should be supported much more by a consideration of the nature of the evidence and the context in which it was produced. There should also be a sustained focus on the actual issue rather than a general list of similarities and differences per se.

In **(b)**, weak less successful responses found it hard to link the documents to the issue. There was some evaluation of the documents, although this was less evident than the explanation of how they related to the key issue. Better answers used knowledge well to support their view of the documents; in other responses, additional knowledge often dominated or was just added on to the analysis. In the former case, it appeared that another essay answer was sometimes being attempted with the documents being referred to from time to time. Alternatively, there were answers which focused almost exclusively on the documents, missing the instruction which is stated very explicitly that candidates should make use of contextual knowledge. Where knowledge was used selectively and linked to a clear and critical understanding of the documents, the results were impressive and scored highly. However, candidates do need to respond to the documents and remember the nature of the task, which is essentially document-based. On the positive side, there was often a very good understanding of the issues and some strong and detailed knowledge.

Where the approach of analysing an issue and referring to evidence would be more appropriate, in the essay questions, there was relatively little reference to source material and often the responses were very similar to those in an Outlines paper. A Special Study does require a deeper study and it would be good to see more reference to evidence. Knowledge was often very strong, and this needs to be complimented by a more developed element of discussion and assessment of views or approaches. Some relied on a series of explanations of different factors when a sharper judgement would have yielded work of greater depth. However, there were many well-informed and analytical answers in which it was clear that answers were based on wide reading and serious study.

Comments on Specific Questions

9769/58 Gladstone and Disraeli

Question 1

- (a) Candidates readily compared the two documents and identified key similarities (for example, both agree that Anglo-Irish relations have not been good and that British legislation has been at fault here), and differences (for example, Parnell wants full self-government while Gladstone offers a limited devolution of powers). Better candidates then exemplified those similarities and differences by close reference to the texts. The best responses used some own knowledge to evaluate the documents, especially in terms of their context – how far was each man playing to his audience and how far, therefore, does one truly corroborate the other?
- (b) No one saw the answer to be ‘a land question, pure and simple’, so discussion surrounded the degree to which land was or was not at the heart of the problems in Ireland. The better responses produced a supported judgement and evaluation of the documents critically via own knowledge was seen in responses. Overall, however, candidates tended to reference rather than evaluate the documents.

Question 3

Candidates were very strong on what Gladstone did when in office and, to a certain extent, what he believed in, but the effect of Gladstone’s ideas on the Liberal party could have been better done by some. Better responses would have linked, for example, Gladstone’s belief in moral leadership with some of his foreign policy decisions, or his belief in removing barriers to army reforms or the Forster Education Act. The knowledge was not lacking but the focus of the answers needed some re-alignment.

Question 4

Candidates generally had a good grasp of the events in respect of British imperial policy in this period, particularly in respect of Egypt and the Sudan, and South Africa. They were able to describe in detail what was done in those countries and in Afghanistan, to a lesser extent. Judging the effectiveness of Liberal policies was less well undertaken, and the foreign policy dimension was only briefly touched upon. Thus, there was no more than a passing reference to the Conference of Berlin or to Anglo-German relations. It should be noted that as, at this time, the United Kingdom included the whole of Ireland, lengthy sections on Irish policy were not relevant.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/06

Personal Investigation

Key Messages

In better investigations, candidates tended to avoid very long introductory narratives and then went on to identify key issues and debates, whilst maintaining a sharp focus on the question. It is also important that the word limit is observed.

General Comments

Once again, a very diverse range of topics was submitted by candidates and the level of scholarship was generally very good. Most candidates wrote with a clear level of engagement and enthusiasm on their chosen topic. The real discriminator was the quality of the argument and the analytical approach. Candidates who maintained a sharp focus on the specific question, and who engaged with the historical debate surrounding their chosen topic, were successful. Other investigations would have benefited from displaying a greater differentiation of narrative from evaluation and analysis.

Although candidates approached the writing of the investigation in different ways, some introductions and conclusions were very similar; some needed to address more closely the specific question posed. There were introductions which were very long and which became scene-setting narratives. Those which set the issue in context were the most successful, along with work which was very sharply focused on the debate, in which every paragraph demonstrably advanced the argument and analysis. Often, candidates have done a great deal of research and reading; greater discrimination between essential material and material which is simply interesting, would help some. It is clear that when a question was really well thought out, the argument was often much stronger. Candidates made some use of sources - both contemporary sources and the work of historians, although in some cases the long quotes from sources would have benefited from more comment. Some 'stock evaluation' was seen, for example, 'This historian was educated at Oxford so he must be reliable'; this approach is best avoided. There were, however, some impressive pieces which sought to evaluate the sources used in a highly analytical way. This often depended to a degree on the type of question. Some ancient, classical and medieval sources were more readily analysed in this way, as the overall material available was more limited. There was good use of cross reference in some work, using both contextual knowledge and other views to assess the validity of what was being argued. Some bibliographies consisted mainly of general text books. Both this and the footnoting of websites could have been improved.

As in previous sessions, very few candidates wrote significantly less than 3500 words, but a number wrote in excess of 4000 words. Centres are reminded that candidates who seriously breach the word limit cannot have all their work read -most often this means that the conclusion is not seen, which could certainly hamper the overall impression of the work. The Candidate Declaration Form is very clear on the word limit, although some appeared to have evaded this by excluding quotes or by continuing the debate in the footnotes which is not acceptable. Some Centres did not include a copy of the consultancy form; this is a requirement and it helps the Examiners to understand the original formulation of the question.

Comments on Specific Questions

There was a wide variation in the titles chosen. Although there were some unusual choices, generally topics were mainstream and some clearly related to the periods being studied for the Outlines papers, though not topics being studied for the Special Subjects which is prohibited. Various individuals were analysed for their achievements or success in a named aspect, including Roosevelt, Nixon, Napoleon, George Washington, Kennedy, and, perhaps unsurprisingly, Richard III and Abraham Lincoln. Where candidates had chosen topics which were outside the areas being studied at the centre, it was clear to Examiners that real enthusiasm was present in the investigation.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/71

Russia in Revolution, 1905-1924

Key Messages

- In **(a)** candidates should try to make more reference to the nature of the documents and the context in which they were produced to assess the extent of corroboration/contrast, rather than relying on describing similarities and differences between their content
- In **(b)** answers the focus should be on using knowledge in connection with the passages to form a judgement about the documents in relation to the issue
- In the essays, candidates should offer more reference to evidence studied to deepen their answers and to distinguish them from essays done on Outlines papers

General Comments

Though performance varied between the different Special Subjects, the points above might guide Centres towards basing their study more on evidence than sometimes seems the case. The essays are often done better than the document-based questions. In **(a)**, few offered sequential description and most offer sustained comparison and contrast, though sometimes this needed more balance. Responses for some would be improved by assessing how far the passages corroborate each other by looking at the documents as evidence and assessing their relative value. The judgements should be supported much more by a consideration of the nature of the evidence and the context in which it was produced. There should also be a sustained focus on the actual issue rather than a general list of similarities and differences per se.

In **(b)**, weak less successful responses found it hard to link the documents to the issue. There was some evaluation of the documents, although this was less evident than the explanation of how they related to the key issue. Better answers used knowledge well to support their view of the documents; in other responses, additional knowledge often dominated or was just added on to the analysis. In the former case, it appeared that another essay answer was sometimes being attempted with the documents being referred to from time to time. Alternatively, there were answers which focused almost exclusively on the documents, missing the instruction which is stated very explicitly that candidates should make use of contextual knowledge. Where knowledge was used selectively and linked to a clear and critical understanding of the documents, the results were impressive and scored highly. However, candidates do need to respond to the documents and remember the nature of the task, which is essentially document-based. On the positive side, there was often a very good understanding of the issues and some strong and detailed knowledge.

Where the approach of analysing an issue and referring to evidence would be more appropriate, in the essay questions, there was relatively little reference to source material and often the responses were very similar to those in an Outlines paper. A Special Study does require a deeper study and it would be good to see more reference to evidence. Knowledge was often very strong, and this needs to be complimented by a more developed element of discussion and assessment of views or approaches. Some relied on a series of explanations of different factors when a sharper judgement would have yielded work of greater depth. However, there were many well-informed and analytical answers in which it was clear that answers were based on wide reading and serious study.

Comments on Specific Questions

9769/71 – Russia in Revolution

Question 1

- (a) Answers tended to describe the passages sequentially and most attempted some comparison. Some neglected to focus on the impact of Bolshevik rule sufficiently, but most saw that the two documents did have similarities, even though their perspectives were different. A few answers were so intent on commenting on the origins of the passages that they neglected to analyse the content. Generally, better answers did offer an analysis of both content and provenance.
- (b) This is quite a well-known debate and better answers did relate the documents to a discussion of whether there was merely a response to circumstances or an ideologically justifiable transition. In order for this to be effective, there had to be an understanding of the theory of Marxism. Where this was lacking or not strongly grasped, then answers were weaker. In general, responses would have benefited from the application of more contextual knowledge, but there were some good answers which did understand the point of the question and offered supported judgements.

Question 2

Less successful answers offered an account of some of the changes made between 1905 and 1911, mainly focusing on 1905. Stolypin's reforms often needed consideration in more appropriate depth. Better responses engaged fully with the criticism in the question, considered the alternative view and offered a judgement.

Question 3

Relatively few answers to this question were seen. Less successful responses wrote mostly about the period from 1917 to 1924, rather than the date specified in the question.

Question 4

This elicited some well-focused responses and most attempted a comparison and offered some argument. Where there was some lack of support it was, oddly, on the role of Lenin rather than Kerensky and some offered little information beyond Lenin's 'Peace Bread and Land'.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/73
Germany, 1919-1945

Key Messages

- In **(a)** candidates should try to make more reference to the nature of the documents and the context in which they were produced to assess the extent of corroboration/contrast, rather than relying on describing similarities and differences between their content
- In **(b)** answers the focus should be on using knowledge in connection with the passages to form a judgement about the documents in relation to the issue
- In the essays, candidates should offer more reference to evidence studied to deepen their answers and to distinguish them from essays done on Outlines papers

General Comments

Though performance varied between the different Special Subjects, the points above might guide Centres towards basing their study more on evidence than sometimes seems the case. The essays are often done better than the document-based questions. In **(a)**, few offered sequential description and most offer sustained comparison and contrast, though sometimes this needed more balance. Responses for some would be improved by assessing how far the passages corroborate each other by looking at the documents as evidence and assessing their relative value. The judgements should be supported much more by a consideration of the nature of the evidence and the context in which it was produced. There should also be a sustained focus on the actual issue rather than a general list of similarities and differences per se.

In **(b)**, weak less successful responses found it hard to link the documents to the issue. There was some evaluation of the documents, although this was less evident than the explanation of how they related to the key issue. Better answers used knowledge well to support their view of the documents; in other responses, additional knowledge often dominated or was just added on to the analysis. In the former case, it appeared that another essay answer was sometimes being attempted with the documents being referred to from time to time. Alternatively, there were answers which focused almost exclusively on the documents, missing the instruction which is stated very explicitly that candidates should make use of contextual knowledge. Where knowledge was used selectively and linked to a clear and critical understanding of the documents, the results were impressive and scored highly. However, candidates do need to respond to the documents and remember the nature of the task, which is essentially document-based. On the positive side, there was often a very good understanding of the issues and some strong and detailed knowledge.

Where the approach of analysing an issue and referring to evidence would be more appropriate, in the essay questions, there was relatively little reference to source material and often the responses were very similar to those in an Outlines paper. A Special Study does require a deeper study and it would be good to see more reference to evidence. Knowledge was often very strong, and this needs to be complimented by a more developed element of discussion and assessment of views or approaches. Some relied on a series of explanations of different factors when a sharper judgement would have yielded work of greater depth. However, there were many well-informed and analytical answers in which it was clear that answers were based on wide reading and serious study.

Comments on Specific Questions

9769/73 – Germany

Question 1

- (a) Candidates generally were able to identify key points of similarity and difference, with the more effective responses providing specific references rather than generalised comments. The idea of ‘solving the Jewish question’ was the main similarity, while many saw Goebbels comment in Document C (‘the Jew should be eliminated from any position in public life’) to have its parallel in Hitler’s ‘the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe’. Better responses identified the main area of non-corroboration to be that Hitler was talking in very general terms, while the conference was trying to deal in practical strategies. Some candidates developed this further to comment on the different tone brought about by the differences between a private meeting and a public speech – this was the nearest candidates got to explaining why the two documents differed, although there were a few references to the idea that C was a good example of people ‘working towards the Führer’, aiming to achieve what they thought Hitler meant by speeches such as that in Document D.
- (b) Candidates were divided on this question and both cases were argued from the documents, with the idea of ‘cumulative radicalisation’ being quite popular. So too were attempts to debate the issue through the structuralist/intentionalist argument. Sometimes this was very successful, especially when candidates were able to explain what they meant by the terms and provide some examples of historians who supported one view or another. It was not always clear, however, that candidates were clear on the meaning of the terms and so confusion followed in some responses. The construct is a useful one within which to analyse aspects of Nazi rule, but it does need to be understood fully. Better candidates made very good use of the different documents, especially with regard to Documents A and E. In the former case, they showed how the political context of April 1933 impacted on Nazi policy (and also the different perceptions of leadership and the ‘rank and file’). Document E was the most closely evaluated, largely through its provenance, and was used as the main plank for those who supported the assertion in the question. Evaluation through the provenance is sound but can sometimes be just assertion. Evaluation through valid own knowledge or context is more effective as this extract suggests: ‘Document D may be limited to an historian analysing the intention of the regime from 1933. Anti-Semitic policy tended to become more radicalised throughout the 1930s, with the gradual acceptance by the population of violence and legislation against the Jews’. The assertion of the first sentence is given an explanation in the second, and while it may not be strong evaluation, it shows the right approach. It should be noted that this question had dates of 1933-39, so detailed discussion of Wannsee and death camps was not appropriate, even if a reference to them to show the consequences of ‘cumulative radicalisation’ could be accepted.

Question 2

Where candidates did know the detail, their responses were very good and the various factors were debated. It was important to note the parameters of the question to avoid irrelevant material from the period after August 1934. The challenge which was met effectively by the better candidates was to evaluate the different factors to determine what best explained Nazi success. The majority of responses concluded that it was range of things (e.g. the destruction of the threat from the SA to win over the army; the ‘legal’ approach adopted by the party; Hindenburg’s support etc.) but the most significant single factor was the Enabling Act. A sharp focus on the argument characterised better responses; a tendency to deploy knowledge and wander outside the date range marked less successful scripts.

Question 4

This was a popular question. From the responses, there were three main views on this question, with a synthesis of the two suggestions in the question being the most popular. The idea that Hitler was the master planner was rooted in *Mein Kampf* and the *Zweites Buch*. These were used to postulate the theory of a long-term plan with various events tied to one or other of the texts. The alternative view was based on the context of the 1930s and suggested Hitler responded to events, rather than dictated them. The synthesis view was that, rather than the aforementioned texts being a blueprint for the 1930s, they were aspirational and outlined what Hitler wanted to achieve. The planning was more ad hoc, depending on what circumstances laid before him. Many candidates who favoured this view came to a rather ambivalent conclusion, that he was both. The better responses came to the firm conclusion that there was a plan, but it depended very much on

opportunism and some good fortune for it to be achieved. There were a significant number of references to the historiography – better candidates were able to put names to theories rather than ‘some historians think’, while ‘others have a different view’. Knowledge of the events of the 1930s in respect of foreign policy was very good, although some candidates had a tendency to wander beyond 1939.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/74
China under Mao Zedong 1949–1976

Key Messages

- In **(a)** candidates should try to make more reference to the nature of the documents and the context in which they were produced to assess the extent of corroboration/contrast, rather than relying on describing similarities and differences between their content
- In **(b)** answers the focus should be on using knowledge in connection with the passages to form a judgement about the documents in relation to the issue
- In the essays, candidates should offer more reference to evidence studied to deepen their answers and to distinguish them from essays done on Outlines papers

General Comments

Though performance varied between the different Special Subjects, the points above might guide Centres towards basing their study more on evidence than sometimes seems the case. The essays are often done better than the document-based questions. In **(a)**, few offered sequential description and most offer sustained comparison and contrast, though sometimes this needed more balance. Responses for some would be improved by assessing how far the passages corroborate each other by looking at the documents as evidence and assessing their relative value. The judgements should be supported much more by a consideration of the nature of the evidence and the context in which it was produced. There should also be a sustained focus on the actual issue rather than a general list of similarities and differences per se.

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Comments on Specific Questions

9769/74 – China under Mao Zedong

Question 1

- (a) The comparisons and contrasts of the content of the documents were often effective, with sound understanding of the texts. There were some perceptive comments on the nature of the documents. Candidates should try to use the provenance to explain the differences more, but generally this question was done well.
- (b) Some answers struggled with the meaning and implication of 'ideological'. However, in general, the documents which largely showed that the struggle was ideological were identified and understanding of their content was shown. Fewer offered much in the way of contextual knowledge. Attention is drawn to the rubric which specifically requires this and in order to improve performance, candidates should make more use of knowledge.

Question 2

There was much sound knowledge offered; more answers needed to offer a comparison between the weakness of the enemies and other explanations, particularly the strengths of the CCP. Thus what emerged was often a 'list of explanations' - often thorough and supported, but requiring more judgement.

Question 3

This received fewer responses and again many responses really answered the question 'What explains?' rather than fully engaging with the question 'What best explains?' which would have involved a much greater element of judgement and assessment of factors.

Question 4

Some responses tended to offer a commentary on key elements of the period 1949-1962, and would have benefited from analysing the situation in 1949 and considering whether Mao's policies had strengthened or weakened it. These answers featured description and commentary, rather than full engagement with the question. Candidates who offered a balanced assessment with a clear comparison between the years in the question, impressed by their knowledge and understanding.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/75

Special Subject - The Civil Rights
Movement in the USA, 1954–1980

Key Messages

- In **(a)** candidates should try to make more reference to the nature of the documents and the context in which they were produced to assess the extent of corroboration/contrast, rather than relying on describing similarities and differences between their content
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Comments on Specific Questions

9769/75 - Civil Rights

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates identified the similarities/differences. There were many similarities and a key difference in the attitude of each document to the use of violence. Most candidates settled for direct comparisons of content, taking the different themes to structure their responses. Some candidates used their own knowledge to evaluate Document C, and how the impact of Malcolm X and his views had led to the 'reversal of ideologies for many organisations'.
- (b) Candidates were able to draw out arguments for both integration and segregation from the documents. The stronger answers began by grouping the documents (B and E for integration; A and C against, with document D placed in either or both arguments depending on how the candidates read it). This allowed them to cross-reference more effectively and also to give weight to one argument or the other. Evaluation of reliability etc. was not common but where it did occur, it tended to be in respect of Documents A or C where candidates clearly knew something about the authors (for example, references to Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam). Little appeared to be known about the Chicago Freedom Movement or Leon H. Sullivan and his work.

Question 2

As with other responses, it was important to assess the key issue of the interpretation in the light of other factors. There were many different events or developments that could be considered (for example, Brown v the Board of Education; the impact of the presidents and the Cold War; Little Rock and its media coverage; etc.). Better candidates kept the focus firmly on the Boycott and analysed the relative significance of it against some of the other factors. They were then able to reach a supported judgement as to where the Boycott should stand in the catalogue of major events. Different conclusions were reached, with the Brown case and its knock-on effect on Little Rock, with its TV coverage and the way this showed the USA to itself and the wider world, being often considered of greater importance. The quality of the argument and analysis that led to that judgement was the most important element in responses. Less successful responses tended to 'list' each important event in its own paragraph and then draw a general conclusion at the end.

Question 3

For the candidates that attempted this question, the role of CORE needed to be central to their response. There was a significant discussion of other factors but knowledge of CORE itself could have been fuller, as could knowledge of this topic after the Freedom Rides of 1961. Consequently, its importance was downplayed by all candidates. Greater credit was given to other groups (e.g. SCLC, SCNC, the Supreme Court, the role of various presidents), and while good cases were made for these, more of a focus on CORE would have strengthened some responses.