

**GCSE**

**History B (Modern World)**

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J418**

**OCR Report to Centres June 2016**

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This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

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### History B (Modern World) (J418)

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## A010 Controlled Assessment: Historical Enquiry

### General Comments:

The overall standard of work for Controlled Assessment remains high with many candidates showing that they can write well-organised, coherent and focused extended answers. Bringing together contextual knowledge, analysis, argument and a critical use of sources into one piece of writing is a demanding task at GCSE level but many candidates achieved it to an impressive standard.

With many candidates answering questions on Germany on Paper 1, the most popular questions for Controlled Assessment were those on American history. The questions on prohibition and the Montgomery Bus Boycott were particularly popular. Nearly all the candidates used the relevant questions set by OCR although a few did carelessly write down, and use, slightly incorrect versions of the questions. The vast majority of candidates kept their answers within the word limit. This helped the quality of their answers as it stopped candidates from drifting into lengthy descriptions and narratives. Instead, a good proportion of the answers were carefully focused on the questions.

Many centres marked the work with great care. The summative comments were particularly helpful especially when they were clearly related to the criteria in the mark scheme. It is important to remember two things when marking the work. First, a level cannot be awarded to an answer until it has been read in its entirety. The level descriptions should be used in a best-fit way to form summative judgements. It is not helpful when a piece of work is placed in a top level in the first paragraph of the answer. Second, the understanding and skills in the mark scheme are not to be displayed by candidates for their own sake. They are tools to be used to answer the question. Credit should not be given simply for a good piece of source evaluation or a good explanation or comparison. It should only be given when those skills have been used to produce a better answer to the question.

Marking at the very top end of the mark range remains rather generous. Band 5 should be reserved for outstanding work. This is characterised by e.g. complex analysis and explanation, sophisticated linking and critical and relevant use of sources Band 5 should not be rewarded for just good solid and detailed answers. Further down the mark range the marking was generally accurate although towards the bottom end of the mark range, e.g. under 20, it was sometimes rather harsh.

The best answers were those that had a strong, consistent and well-supported central argument. All the questions ask for the candidate's opinion about e.g. how significant was the Montgomery Bus Boycott or was the Weimar Republic really doomed from the start. There is a general tendency for candidates to see the question as an invitation to write a survey of the topic rather than develop an argument.

The best answers had a clear strategy for addressing the question e.g. for a question about significance they might use a series of criteria for assessing significance. A good example of an effective strategy was that used by some candidates for the question about why some people were better off than others in the USA in the 1920s. Instead of writing about one group after another (which can lead to much description), they organised their answers around different reasons. This allowed them to move to a level of complexity by asking themselves e.g. whether the reasons changed over time, how far the same reasons applied to different groups and whether some reasons were more important than others.

The best answers used their strategy to focus on developing their argument in every single paragraph. Instead of each new paragraph covering more content, it was used to develop the argument further. These answers often started by stating in the opening paragraph what their argument was going to be. They then stuck to it until the end. Of course, this does not mean that answers should be entirely one-sided. Considering counter-arguments makes an answer much stronger. The skill is to show why the counter-arguments are not as strong as the one being offered by the candidate.

Finally, the best answers further strengthened their answers through the use of sources as evidence. Evidence from sources was used to support and strengthen the candidate's argument. On occasion candidates explained how evidence from a source made their argument stronger. However, this was done concisely and without disrupting the flow of the overall argument. When done badly, use of sources ends up almost turning the answer into a discussion of one source after another with no overall argument being developed.

Of course, the above is a recipe for perfection and it is recognised that most of our candidates are only sixteen years of age. The number of candidates who can come close to achieving what has been described is therefore most impressive. Even candidates who are not among the very strongest can still be encouraged to view the exercise as one where they are being encouraged to argue, and support, their own point of view, rather than produce a general survey of the topic. There was plenty of evidence that, when encouraged to so, many candidates can achieve surprisingly good results.

### **Comments on Individual Questions:**

#### **Option A Germany 1918-1945**

Question 1 was more popular than the other two questions. The best answers to this question showed a full understanding of the idea behind 'doomed from the start' and kept this as the main focus throughout. Weaker answers simply explained or described the problems and achievements of Weimar. In response to Question 2 many candidates assessed the importance of Goebbels and Himmler but did not spend enough time comparing their importance. Question 3 produced many narratives but there were also some superb answers where candidates explained change over time not only in terms of the increase in persecution but also in terms of different reasons.

#### **Option B Russia and the USSR 1905-1941**

Question 1 produced the full range of answers from those that did little more than describe the events of the revolution to those that contained subtle assessments of short and long-term results. It was also good to see some candidates using criteria to assess success. Few candidates attempted Question 2 but those that did generally answered it well with some interesting comparisons of the two men. Question 3 was very popular. Many candidates explained Stalin's use of terror and other reasons why he was able to stay in power. The best answers connected these factors to his staying in power. In other words, they went out of their way to explain how the factor contributed to Stalin staying in power. They also focused on comparing the importance of the use of terror with the importance of other factors. Weaker answers wrote about each factor separately.

#### **Option C The USA 1919-1941**

Question 1 was very popular. The best answers focused on explaining a range of reasons why the fortunes of different groups differed. This was done most effectively by using the reasons, rather than different groups of people, as the organisational device. The former approach allowed candidates to ask interesting questions about the reasons e.g. did they change over

time, how far did the same reasons apply to different groups? Weaker answers consisted of descriptions of the lives of different groups. A good number of candidates attempted Question 2. There was a tendency to explain a range of different reasons but not leave much time or space to compare their importance. The same weakness was apparent in the small number of answers to Question 3. Life for black Americans in the two periods was described but there was not enough detailed comparison.

Option D The USA 1945-1975: Land of Freedom?

Few candidates attempted Question 1. There were, however, some interesting answers that referred to factors both inside and outside the US. Good use was made of the Cold War context. Some candidates wasted time by explaining why McCarthy eventually fell from favour. Question 2 was by far the most popular question. It produced a wide range of answers. The best kept their focus on the boycott and used criteria to assess its significance with argument and counter argument. However, many candidates simply explained the contribution to the struggle for civil rights of a range of factors with the boycott becoming simply one of many factors. When a factor such as the boycott is named in a question it is legitimate to consider other factors but the named factor should remain the main focus of the answer. Some of the answers contained not only comparatively little about the boycott, but also failed to spend much time comparing the importance of the boycott with the importance of the other factors. Few candidates answered Question 3 but there were some good comparisons before and during the mid-1960s.

## **A011 Aspects of international relations and Germany, 1918–1945**

### **General Comments:**

On the whole the standard was similar to previous years, although the standard of contextual knowledge did not appear to be as comprehensive as in previous years, which was most noticeable in the source sections. The majority of candidates selected the Cold War section, and demonstrated sound understanding of the period. The structural awareness of the 4, 6, 10 mark questions was generally excellent, which allowed access to the higher levels of the mark scheme. Spelling, punctuation and grammar were of a high standard.

With regards the Germany section, candidates displayed a strong factual knowledge of the period and good answer technique. The source section proved taxing for some, particularly question 7b and it is important that teachers take into account the advice offered below. However, the majority of candidates came to the Germany component well prepared, with well crafted, methodical answers. Both questions eight and nine were equally popular.

### **Comments on Individual Questions:**

1 a) On the whole candidates were better at looking for the specific cartoonist's viewpoint, which was an improvement on previous years. The greatest difficulty on this question, however, was that the candidates attempted to specifically look for criticism, rather than considering that a cartoonist might be supportive. In this source the cartoon was produced to support the American bombing campaign, by showing its success against Ho Chi Minh. Many candidates found it difficult to reach the main message, with a number offering general answers about the Vietnam War. A clear problem was those who tended to describe the source, with a specific problem surrounding the failure to develop 'air strikes' to relate to the bombing campaign. A number of candidates also incorrectly concluded that the cartoonist was criticising the American bombing campaign. It is important to consolidate the need for specific contextual knowledge in the source questions or else the answer cannot get past Level 2; here the context needed to focus on the bombing campaign, in particular on Operation Rolling Thunder.

1 b) There were some very good answers to this question, though a lot of candidates needed to read the wording of the question more carefully. The question specifically asked about the increasing US involvement in the 1950s, and as such those who spent time discussing the Gulf of Tonkin incident were incorrect. The majority of candidates could explain the Domino Theory, with excellent answers linking this to the specific nations in South East Asia. Further areas of interest were the military industrial complex, the retreat of the French and Diem's failed government. Again, it is important that candidates do not merely identify factors, but explain them with detailed contextual knowledge.

2 a) Many candidates displayed a detailed knowledge of the Truman Doctrine. However, lots of candidates tended to be repetitive in their answers, and a large number confused the Truman Doctrine with Marshall Aid.

2 b) This question was approached with varying degrees of success. On the whole candidates were able to explain at least one factor to reach at least L2. Mostly candidates focused on the Americans' atomic capabilities. Some candidates went past 1946, which was an error as the question gave a specific time-scale, and so discussions of Marshall Aid, for example, were incorrect. Candidates must be reminded to read the question carefully.

2 c) There were some very good answers which provided detailed knowledge of the period to 1949, using clear structure to break the essay into two sections. Many answers were very good at explaining the impact of Marshall Aid and the use of the airlift to overcome the Berlin Blockade to evaluate the American achievements, and this was generally set against Salami Tactics and the failure of the Berlin Blockade on the Soviet side. Weaker answers tended to be too general, without the specific depth of contextual knowledge to explain the key points. Again some answers strayed past 1949 to discuss events that did not come into the bounds of the question. In order to reach the top level 5, the conclusions needed to reach a clinching argument, rather than merely repeating the points raised during the essay.

3 a) Many candidates displayed a detailed knowledge of the USA's reaction to the Cuban Revolution, gaining good marks for the embargoes on sugar and trade, the end of diplomatic relations and the Bay of Pigs. The main mistakes that candidates made were to spend too long describing the Bay of Pigs, or else there were candidates who described the Cuban Missile Crisis itself.

3 b) This question was generally answered well, with most candidates able to explain at least one factor. Most candidates appreciated the ideas of re-balancing the arms race, bargaining for the removal of missiles in Turkey and defending Cuba from another attack. It is important that candidates do make sure to include detailed contextual knowledge to make sure that they make the move from 'identification' to 'explanation'; for example rather than just noting that 'the Soviet Union involved themselves in Cuba because it was close to the USA', it would be better to set out that the proximity of Cuba to America meant that missiles stationed there could threaten practically every major city in the USA.

3 c) This question was answered better than 2c, with candidates generally able to explain at least one factor on each side to access L4. Understanding of the Cuban Missile Crisis was strong, and though many candidates focused on Kennedy and Khrushchev, this was accepted for this question. This question also saw better clinching arguments put forward, with good comparison between each sides offered in the conclusions to reach an evaluated judgement. In particular a number of candidates stressed that the USA gained more because their successes were carried out under the gaze of public opinion, whilst the Soviet successes were kept secret.

4 a) Candidates for this question are required to identify the cartoonist's viewpoint, however in this instance very few candidates managed to offer a valid interpretation at all. Many used the source details to try and identify a message, for example, 'G W Bush is digging the USA into a bigger hole.' Also many, incorrectly, identified the message as the USA were digging for oil or looking for weapons of mass destruction. As a consequence, this question was poorly answered and many candidates failed to progress beyond level 1. Candidates needed to identify the cartoonist's viewpoint which was a criticism of Bush's policies.

4b) For candidates for who were well prepared for this topic this question was well answered. Good candidates were able to explain a range of issues confronting the international forces hence they could not leave. Weaker candidates used issues such as they had not found WMDs or they still needed to get oil as reasons, therefore often repeating the mistakes from question 1a. Specific contextual knowledge was often lacking for this question.

5 a) Many candidates were able to identify different ways in which the Communist governments controlled people's lives. The most successful answers identified a method and then provided an example of how or when.

5b) The focus of this question was why the Polish government acted rather than the Soviet Union. Many candidates referred to size of the Solidarity or the economic impact if they failed to deal with them. Some answers used the threat of action from the Soviet Union as a motivation for Poland to take action. This question was quite well answered, but candidates need to be aware of not slipping into a narrative of events.



5c) The key to this question was ensuring that events and policies connected to Gorbachev were focused on their impact on Eastern Europe. For example, many candidates explained glasnost and perestroika but failed to explain how this led to the collapse of Soviet control over Eastern Europe.

6a) Most candidates were able to identify at least one valid method used by the PIRA with some able to offer a range – or two developed methods – and so achieve full marks. Some candidates were, however, able to offer nothing past generalised material which could have been relevant to any group and so struggled to be credited past a general mark.

6b) Many candidates were able to offer valid reasons why the PLO used terrorism, with some able to add precise supporting detail or exemplification and so reach Level 2. Multiple explanations were rare, and were credited in Level 3. Some candidates were unable to offer material that was specific to the PLO and so found it difficult to achieve any credit.

6c) Whilst there were some good examples of answers to this question, many candidates addressed it in a very generalised way without pinning their reasoning to the three terrorist groups relevant to the specification. Some candidates struggled to articulate a valid understanding of 'nationalism'. It was rare to see candidates adding specific examples of nationalist or religious actions for a particular group and so achieve Level 3 (or Level 4).

7a) On the whole, this question was well answered. Many candidates were able to put the poster in the context of the invasion of the Ruhr and the subsequent passive resistance. Many were able to explain the purpose either in terms of the encouragement of the workers to continue their passive resistance or in terms rallying support from the German public. A few candidates thought, incorrectly, that the poster was intended for the French consumption. Candidates had obviously been well prepared for the purpose question on this depth study.

7b) This question was answered less successfully than 7a. Some candidates found it hard to progress beyond Level 1 in this question; there was a lot of description of the source. This type of question requires candidates to assess the source in terms of useful and not useful, and they are advised to use these terms in their answer. Candidates could often access Level 2 by putting the source in the context of the 'Golden Age', but failed to then explain about the cultural revival that took place in Weimar Germany.

7c) As on last year's exam paper there is now an interpretation question. Candidates should be advised that in order to attain the top level the context of the source in relation to the interpretation needs to be evaluated. In a large number of cases, if any evaluation took place it was very superficial stock evaluation. Nevertheless, many candidates were able to access Level 3 as both sides of the interpretation were explained using detailed contextual knowledge. In the case of the question there needed to be a reference to economic recovery / decline as this was the thrust of the source. Candidates are required to use the source, as instructed in the question, to access the top of Level 3.

8a) There was a lot of very good knowledge about the details of the Enabling Act itself and the situation around the passing of the Act.

8b) Some candidates confused this question with a previous one; some just wrote about the reasons Hitler carried out the Night of the Long Knives rather than about the significance of it for Hitler. There was also some confusion between the role of the SA and the SS. Many candidates related the significance to either the removal of Rohm or winning the support of the army. A few candidates described the events of the Night of the Long Knives rather than focussing on the question. In this situation a Level 1 response, at best, was achieved.

8c) There was lots of very good knowledge about the methods of control and methods of propaganda demonstrated. The best answers were able to explain how these methods helped control the German population e.g. the impact they had. It was difficult to award Level 3 or Level 4 where candidates just had a long description of the SS and Gestapo. There were some very high achieving answers for this question. This is where candidates had provided a clinching argument by weighing up the varying importance and impact of the different factors.

9a) The quality of knowledge on policies relating to the working class varied enormously. Candidates were either very well informed or knew very little. The best answers related to the policies such as Strength Through Joy or the Beauty of Labour. Some talked about women having to give up their jobs, however this was uncreditable as it applied to all classes of women, not just the working class.

9b) Candidates were well informed about the different groups (Jews, handicapped people, gypsies) who were persecuted and were often able to relate this to the Nazi ideal of an Aryan race and then explain why they did fit in with that ideal. There were less successful attempts to explain why political parties were persecuted. Other answers referred to the persecution of the Jews in the context of them being the scapegoats for a range of problems facing Germany. On the whole, this was a successful answer, but as always candidates need to avoid just listing those who were persecuted.

9c) There was lots of very good knowledge about the policies towards women and children. The best answers were able to explain the success of these policies in terms of the impact that they had on the German population e.g. the Motherhood crosses led to an increase in the birthrate, activities in the Hitler Youth led to a generation of boys who fought in the army. It was difficult to award Level 3 or Level 4 where candidates just had a long description of the policies. There were some very high achieving answers for this question. This is where candidates had provided a clinching argument by weighing up the varying importance and impact of the different factors.

## **A012 Aspects of international relations and Russia, 1905-1941**

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## Part 2: Depth Study: Russia.

**Q7 (a)** A number of candidates struggled with this question, with a number stuck towards description of the source itself, pointing out that the source showed the violence of the Tsar, rather than the fact that the source was useful because it showed that people disliked the Tsar because of his violence towards them. It is important that candidates read the information under the source, and use this to help in their evaluation, for the given dates and information should have pointed the candidates to the impact of Bloody Sunday. Most candidates did get this far, and were then able to relate to the source to the events of Bloody Sunday, though it is important to make sure that on a 'how useful' question that candidates not only explain why the source is 'useful', but also the opposite side, which most did not achieve. Source evaluation also tended to be weak, linked only to the stating that the source was 'biased', without actually evaluating the impact of that 'bias'. For example, that the source was from a political magazine impacts on the reliability of the information, for it may have been exaggerated to win people over to a particular view. In reality not all people did hate the Tsar in 1906, since the Tsar reacted to the events of Bloody Sunday by publishing the October Manifesto to re-gain support.

**Q7 (b)** This question was answered very well by the majority of candidates, who readily understood that the source demonstrated that people felt the Tsar was controlled by Rasputin. Most were also able to relate this to the cartoonist's view, which was **critical** of the Tsar. Contextual knowledge was strong on this question.

**Q7 (c)** This was another question where candidates struggled to access the higher levels of the markscheme. The question called for a two-sided response, though a large number of candidates consistently related all problems to the Tsar himself. This was especially seen in relation to the War, Rasputin and the Tsarina who were all seen as the Tsar's errors. The best answers were able to show both sides of the argument, make use of the source detail and contextual knowledge, and evaluated the information of the source as problematic given Kerensky's position as leader of the Provisional Government.

**Q8 (a)** Most candidates were able to achieve a good mark on this question, pointing clearly to Trotsky's role in the Civil War. Issues arose with candidates who did not pay attention to the dates in the question, and described Trotsky's role in the Revolution, before 1918.

**Q8 (b)** There were a number of good answers to this question, with many candidates able to identify the need to rebuild the economy and political support after the harshness of War Communism. Troubles were encountered with some candidates who described the NEP, rather than focusing on why it was introduced. Further, there was some confusion between the NEP and Stalin's Five Year Plans, though this was not common.

**Q8 (c)** With the two factors given, the answers to this question were well-structured, and the majority of candidates were able to develop a two-sided response. Lenin's April Thesis and his use of slogans were well understood, and this was generally countered with the failure of the Provisional Government to give people what they wanted in respect of ending the war and the land issue. A number of candidates struggled to develop more than one point on each side, which could be seen on the Lenin side with many failing to explain the positive impact that he had in increasing popular support for the movement and his determination to seize the opportunity against the desires of those in the Bolshevik party.

**Q9 (a)** Most candidates performed well on this question, being able to give plenty of detail about who the Kulaks were, and what happened to them. However, there were some issues. A minority believed that the Kulaks were Stalin's secret police, which led to no marks at all. Also, a significant number of candidates believed that the Kulaks were created during the NEP; it was good to see other candidates correctly linking back to Stolypin's reforms as their origin.

**Q9(b)** There were different ways to access marks to this question. Either the candidate could explain the use of Collectivisation and the Five-Year Plans to build up the USSR, or the methods used to achieve this, such as propaganda and the use of forced labour. At times more specific contextual knowledge would have bolstered the answers, though generally this question was done well.

**Q9 (c)** At times candidates developed some intelligent responses to this question, developing two-sided arguments that contrasted the position of the Soviet leadership against that of the ordinary people. In many responses, the difficulties of people's everyday lives with the terror of the Cheka, dangerous working conditions, de-Kulakisation and the labour camps was contrasted to Stalin's ability to consolidate his position by removing political opponents. Candidates could have benefits and difficulties of each side.

In general, though, candidates were much better at explaining the situation of the common people, and struggled with the idea of 'Soviet leadership'. Due to this a number of candidates contrasted the common people under Soviet rule and pre-Revolutionary Russia, which was not relevant, whilst others tended to merely focus on the common people.

# A013 Aspects of international relations and The USA, 1919–1941

## General Comments:

This is now a very mature specification and even with the added demands of GCSE ‘strengthening’ most centres are able to prepare candidates very well for this examination. In particular, the vast majority of candidates have a clear understanding of the demands of the three-part essay questions (2, 3, 5, 6, 8 and 9) and whilst not all candidates were able to validly explain factors in these essays, they had a clear awareness of the different requirements of each section.

## Comments on Individual Questions:

### Part 1: Aspects of International Relations

1 a) On the whole candidates were better at looking for the specific cartoonist’s viewpoint, which was an improvement on previous years. The greatest difficulty on this question, however, was that the candidates attempted to specifically look for criticism, rather than considering that a cartoonist might be supportive. In this source the cartoon was produced to support the American bombing campaign, by showing its success against Ho Chi Minh. Many candidates found it difficult to reach the main message, with a number offering general answers about the Vietnam War. A clear problem was those who tended to describe the source, with a specific problem surrounding the failure to develop ‘air strikes’ to relate to the bombing campaign. A number of candidates also incorrectly concluded that the cartoonist was criticising the American bombing campaign. It is important to consolidate the need for specific contextual knowledge in the source questions or else the answer cannot get past Level 2; here the context needed to focus on the bombing campaign, in particular on Operation Rolling Thunder.

1 b) There were some very good answers to this question, though a lot of candidates needed to read the wording of the question more carefully. The question specifically asked about the increasing US involvement in the 1950s, and as such those who spent time discussing the Gulf of Tonkin incident were incorrect. The majority of candidates could explain the Domino Theory, with excellent answers linking this to the specific nations in South East Asia. Further areas of interest were the military industrial complex, the retreat of the French and Diem’s failed government. Again, it is important that candidates do not merely identify factors, but explain them with detailed contextual knowledge.

2 a) Many candidates displayed a detailed knowledge of the Truman Doctrine. However, lots of candidates tended to be repetitive in their answers, and a large number confused the Truman Doctrine with Marshall Aid.

2 b) This question was approached with varying degrees of success. On the whole candidates were able to explain at least one factor to reach at least L2. Mostly candidates focused on the Americans’ atomic capabilities. Some candidates went past 1946, which was an error as the question gave a specific time-scale, and so discussions of Marshall Aid, for example, were incorrect. Candidates must be reminded to read the question carefully.

2 c) There were some very good answers which provided detailed knowledge of the period to 1949, using clear structure to break the essay into two sections. Many answers were very good at explaining the impact of Marshall Aid and the use of the airlift to overcome the Berlin Blockade to evaluate the American achievements, and this was generally set against Salami Tactics and

the failure of the Berlin Blockade on the Soviet side. Weaker answers tended to be too general, without the specific depth of contextual knowledge to explain the key points. Again some answers strayed passed 1949 to discuss events that did not come into the bounds of the question. In order to reach the top level 5, the conclusions needed to reach a clinching argument, rather than merely repeating the points raised during the essay.

3 a) Many candidates displayed a detailed knowledge of the USA's reaction to the Cuban Revolution, gaining good marks for the embargoes on sugar and trade, the end of diplomatic relations and the Bay of Pigs. The main mistakes that candidates made were to spend too long describing the Bay of Pigs, or else there were candidates who described the Cuban Missile Crisis itself.

3 b) This question was generally answered well, with most candidates able to explain at least one factor. Most candidates appreciated the ideas of re-balancing the arms race, bargaining for the removal of missiles in Turkey and defending Cuba from another attack. It is important that candidates do make sure to include detailed contextual knowledge to make sure that they make the move from 'identification' to 'explanation'; for example rather than just noting that 'the Soviet Union involved themselves in Cuba because it was close to the USA', it would be better to set out that the proximity of Cuba to America meant that missiles stationed there could threaten practically every major city in the USA.

3 c) This question was answered better than 2c, with candidates generally able to explain at least one factor on each side to access L4. Understanding of the Cuban Missile Crisis was strong, and though many candidates focused on Kennedy and Khrushchev, this was accepted for this question. This question also saw better clinching arguments put forward, with good comparison between each sides offered in the conclusions to reach an evaluated judgement. In particular a number of candidates stressed that the USA gained more because their successes were carried out under the gaze of public opinion, whilst the Soviet successes were kept secret.

4 a) Candidates for this question are required to identify the cartoonist's viewpoint, however in this instance very few candidates managed to offer a valid interpretation at all. Many used the source details to try and identify a message, for example, 'G W Bush is digging the USA into a bigger hole.' Also many, incorrectly, identified the message as the USA were digging for oil or looking for weapons of mass destruction. As a consequence, this question was poorly answered and many candidates failed to progress beyond level 1. Candidates needed to identify the cartoonist's viewpoint which was a criticism of Bush's policies.

4b) For candidates for who were well prepared for this topic this question was well answered. Good candidates were able to explain a range of issues confronting the international forces hence they could not leave. Weaker candidates used issues such as they had not found WMDs or they still needed to get oil as reasons, therefore often repeating the mistakes from question 1a. Specific contextual knowledge was often lacking for this question.

5 a) Many candidates were able to identify different ways in which the Communist governments controlled people's lives. The most successful answers identified a method and then provided an example of how or when.

5b) The focus of this question was why the Polish government acted rather than the Soviet Union. Many candidates referred to size of the Solidarity or the economic impact if they failed to deal with them. Some answers used the threat of action from the Soviet Union as a motivation for Poland to take action. This question was quite well answered, but candidates need to be aware of not slipping into a narrative of events.



5c) The key to this question was ensuring that events and policies connected to Gorbachev were focused on their impact on Eastern Europe. For example, many candidates explained glasnost and perestroika but failed to explain how this led to the collapse of Soviet control over Eastern Europe.

6a) Most candidates were able to identify at least one valid method used by the PIRA with some able to offer a range – or two developed methods – and so achieve full marks. Some candidates were, however, able to offer nothing past generalised material which could have been relevant to any group and so struggled to be credited past a general mark.

6b) Many candidates were able to offer valid reasons why the PLO used terrorism, with some able to add precise supporting detail or exemplification and so reach Level 2. Multiple explanations were rare, and were credited in Level 3. Some candidates were unable to offer material that was specific to the PLO and so found it difficult to achieve any credit.

6c) Whilst there were some good examples of answers to this question, many candidates addressed it in a very generalised way without pinning their reasoning to the three terrorist groups relevant to the specification. Some candidates struggled to articulate a valid understanding of 'nationalism'. It was rare to see candidates adding specific examples of nationalist or religious actions for a particular group and so achieve Level 3 (or Level 4).

## **Part 2: Depth Study**

### **The USA 1919-1941**

7a) Most candidates were able to offer a valid interpretation of this source, with many able to focus on the criticism of US immigration policy necessary to identify the cartoonist's viewpoint and so able to access Level 5 if appropriate contextual knowledge is brought to bear. Some candidates misinterpreted the source, often based around the definition of anarchism in the source's provenance. It was common to see answers well contextualised around the 'Red Scare', but some candidates offered material that was dated after the publication of the source (such as Sacco and Vanzetti). Centres are reminded that such knowledge is not credited, as the cartoonist could not possibly have known about them.

7b) It was rare for candidates to not reach at least Level 2, as almost all were able to offer valid contextual knowledge about the enforcement of prohibition (or the lack of it). Some candidates did, however, misinterpret the source and assumed that the agents shown in the picture were brewing or taking the alcohol for their own purposes. Answers that offered a valid purpose (for example 'to warn people not to brew their own alcohol) could reach Level 4 with accurate and relevant contextual knowledge, though as with 7(a), knowledge dated after the date the source was published was not credited.

7c) As with last year's 7b) – which had a similar question stem – relevant evaluation of the source was necessary for candidates to access Level 4, and very few did so. Most candidates were able to make valid inferences from the source to support the statement in the question, and so access Level 2. Many candidates could also offer reasons drawn from contextual knowledge – with most based around 'flappers' – to offer an alternative interpretation, and so reach Level 3. With relevant evaluation, these answers could have received even greater credit.

8a) Most candidates were able to offer valid events during the Wall Street Crash, though in many cases this was found within a broader narrative that also touched upon causes and then consequences of the Crash, which were not credited. Many candidates would have benefitted from a shorter, narrower, more focused answer.

8b) This was, overall, better answered than 9b), with almost all candidates able to offer valid identified factors, though in some cases these were then developed in a confused manner (especially around overproduction and tariffs) and so could not be credited as explanation. A relatively common issue were candidates who had clearly set out their factor immediately after the First World War, and so were not offering a valid response to a question focused 'in the Great Depression'. Many strong explanations regarding environmental issues were seen (more so around the 'dust bowls' than the boll weevil) and it was common to see answers with multiple explanations, and so rewarded in Level 3.

8c) Most candidates were able to offer valid examples of why Hoover's policies or other factors could have led to Roosevelt's election victory (and so reach Level 2) although many candidates did not then go on to develop reasoning about why those issues could be linked to the election victory (in order to access Level 3 and higher). Solid understanding of Hoover's policies and their relevance to his unpopularity was demonstrated by many, and most alternative arguments centred around the attraction of Roosevelt's campaign. Some candidates offered material about Roosevelt's actual successes of the New Deal as a reason for his election, which was clearly invalid, and some candidates placed New Deal events (such as the 'fireside chats') incorrectly within Roosevelt's election campaign. 'Clinching arguments' were rarely seen.

9a) This question produced many strong responses; many centres had clearly used the TVA as a New Deal 'case study' and it was pleasing to see such a range of precise information. Most strong answers were based around the environmental work of the TVA and its 'knock on' benefits for the region.

9b) Some candidates did not differentiate between Republican and other objections to the New Deal and as a result some material offered (for example around Huey Long or Father Coughlin) was irrelevant. Candidates are reminded to look carefully at the specific demands of the question. Elsewhere, many candidates were able to identify why Republicans would be opposed to aspects of the New Deal and then, through giving exemplification, progress to explanation. Several impressive responses – where candidates had provided two or more developed explanations – were seen.

9c) This question had a narrow – but accessible – focus on aspects of the First New Deal. It is clear that most candidates have strong understanding of New Deal agencies, but not all could focus this on the demands of the question. Many candidates were able to give examples of New Deal agencies which helped the poor, with most of these provided specific evidence of their work and the benefits, and so accessing Level 3. Some candidates did not focus their alternative argument around 'the poor' and so could not then access Level 4.

## **A014 Aspects of international relations and Mao's China c.1930–1976**

### **General Comments:**

On the whole the standard was similar to previous years, however, the standard of contextual knowledge did not appear to be as comprehensive as in previous years, which was most noticeable in the source sections. The majority of candidates selected the Inter War section, and demonstrated sound understanding of the period. The structural awareness of the 4, 6, 10 mark questions was generally excellent, which allowed access to the higher levels of the mark scheme. Spelling, punctuation and grammar were of a high standard.

With regards the China section, candidates displayed a strong factual knowledge of the period and good answer technique. The source section proved taxing for some, particularly question 7b and it is important that teachers take into account the advice offered below. However, the majority of candidates came to the China component well prepared, with well crafted, methodical answers. Question eight was much more popular than question nine.

### **Comments on Individual Questions:**

1a) The majority of candidates were able to gain some sort of accurate interpretation, commonly identifying the sub-message that the reparations payments were 'too harsh' on Germany. This was commonly supplemented with contextual knowledge referring to the amount set in reparations and/or the purposes behind these reparations payments. Candidates who gained Level 4 or higher focused on the main message of Germany being no longer able to function with such high reparations payments or the intentions of the French or British towards the Germans in relation to the reparations. The highest quality responses referred to the reasoning behind Lloyd George's leniency towards the Germans in comparison with the harsher attitudes of Briand and the French in general. Some candidates misidentified Briand as Clemenceau.

1b) Candidates generally had a good knowledge of the attitudes of the Big Three at Versailles and were able, often in a general sense, to apply this to Clemenceau not achieving all of his aims. Many candidates identified Wilson and Lloyd George as active in achieving a more peaceable compromise to Clemenceau's more aggressive agenda. Often candidates wrote narrative responses outlining the intentions of Wilson and Lloyd George but did not compare these directly to the views of Clemenceau. The best responses were those that included reference to terms of the Treaty that Clemenceau had intended to implement, reasons why they were opposed by the other leaders and the terms of the Treaty that were decided on as an alternative.

2a) Some candidates were able to specify the roles of the Assembly within the League, and the best responses referred to its role in setting budgets, voting on new members and setting recommendations to the Council. Many responses however, focused on the wider intentions, roles and motivations of the League which were not rewarded in this question. A common response was also to discuss the Assembly in generic terms as 'discussing conflicts' which was only able to gain a single, general mark.

2b) This question was answered well by some candidates who could highlight specific examples of failures of the League in the 1920s. Commonly, candidates had a better knowledge of the Corfu Crisis than the other acceptable examples such as Vilna. The weaker responses often highlighted more generic weaknesses of the League such as the lack of an armed force, or the absence of the United States. These were often limited to Level 1 responses, as only identifying

factors. Weaker candidates also mistakenly included 1930s examples such as Manchuria, Abyssinia and the rise of Hitler. Higher level responses saw candidates develop an example specific to the 1920s and develop this by defining it in terms of an inherent weakness in the League, such as the self-interest of the leading powers.

2c) Many candidates were able to accurately identify the key issues that arose for the League as a result of the Manchuria Crisis. Most commonly, the reference to the time taken by Lord Lytton was accurately identified as showing the League's ineffectiveness. Consequently, most candidates easily reached Level 2 and could identify reasons why both the Manchuria Crisis and other factors, including Abyssinia and the organisation of the League, were to blame for its eventual collapse. Developing each of these areas and referring them back to the collapse of the League was less common as many candidates provided a narrative of the different conflicts and why they failed rather than the effects of this on the League as an institution. The best responses, which allowed pupils to access Level 5, were those that looked at both Manchuria and other factors drawing direct conclusions as to why they led to the failure of the League. Commonly, these candidates discussed the concept of Manchuria leading to the aggressive foreign policy decisions of Mussolini, (and eventually Hitler) as they knew the League was ineffective.

3a) Candidates showed a good understanding of the Nazi-Soviet Pact and often identified that it was Hitler and Stalin who were the leaders of the two nations involved. Most candidates made reference to Poland and could describe the nature of the Pact as militarily non-aggressive rather than a military alliance. A number of candidates misapplied their knowledge and explained why the pact was signed or the outcomes of the Pact, neither of which were able to register on the mark scheme.

3b) A large number of candidates identified reasons why Stalin was concerned, such as his lack of involvement in Munich or his fears of German expansionism in the East, and this allowed them to access Level 1. Weaker candidates were often unable to attribute the Munich Conference to the annexation of the Sudetenland, or spoke in general terms only of Hitler and Stalin as opposing forces. Stronger candidates were able to develop identifications by explaining reasons behind Stalin's poor defensive position or paranoia concerning Allied attempts to discredit communism by 'pushing Hitler eastwards'. Similarly, there were some very good explanations of the ideological differences between Hitler and Stalin which were well linked to Stalin's fears of Nazi foreign expansionism.

3c) Candidates commonly represented a comprehensive knowledge of Hitler's foreign policy aims and actions, providing a plethora of examples from rearmament through to the invasion of Poland in 1939. Candidates often did not access above Level 2 however, as these descriptions of Hitler's intentions and actions were not directly linked to the outbreak of war in 1939 or the short-term causes. On the other side of the argument, candidates could largely identify appeasement, the Wall Street Crash and subsequent Depression and the failure of the League of Nations as valid causes of the war, although again these were often descriptive narratives rather than being linked as explanations of the outbreak of war. Strong candidates accessed higher levels by making specific reference to the immediate causes of the conflict and making convincing comparisons between the actions of Hitler and the international political situation at the time.

4 a) Candidates for this question are required to identify the cartoonist's viewpoint, however in this instance very few candidates managed to offer a valid interpretation at all. Many used the source details to try and identify a message, for example, 'G W Bush is digging the USA into a bigger hole.' Also many, incorrectly, identified the message as the USA were digging for oil or looking for weapons of mass destruction. As a consequence, this question was poorly answered and many candidates failed to progress beyond level 1. Candidates needed to identify the cartoonist's viewpoint which was a criticism of Bush's policies.

4b) For candidates for who were well prepared for this topic this question was well answered. Good candidates were able to explain a range of issues confronting the international forces hence they could not leave. Weaker candidates used issues such as they had not found WMDs or they still needed to get oil as reasons, therefore often repeating the mistakes from question 1a. Specific contextual knowledge was often lacking for this question.

5 a) Many candidates were able to identify different ways in which the Communist governments controlled people's lives. The most successful answers identified a method and then provided an example of how or when.

5b) The focus of this question was why the Polish government acted rather than the Soviet Union. Many candidates referred to size of the Solidarity or the economic impact if they failed to deal with them. Some answers used the threat of action from the Soviet Union as a motivation for Poland to take action. This question was quite well answered, but candidates need to be aware of not slipping into a narrative of events.

5c) The key to this question was ensuring that events and policies connected to Gorbachev were focused on their impact on Eastern Europe. For example, many candidates explained glasnost and perestroika but failed to explain how this led to the collapse of Soviet control over Eastern Europe.

6a) Most candidates were able to identify at least one valid method used by the PIRA with some able to offer a range – or two developed methods – and so achieve full marks. Some candidates were, however, able to offer nothing past generalised material which could have been relevant to any group and so struggled to be credited past a general mark.

6b) Many candidates were able to offer valid reasons why the PLO used terrorism, with some able to add precise supporting detail or exemplification and so reach Level 2. Multiple explanations were rare, and were credited in Level 3. Some candidates were unable to offer material that was specific to the PLO and so found it difficult to achieve any credit.

6c) Whilst there were some good examples of answers to this question, many candidates addressed it in a very generalised way without pinning their reasoning to the three terrorist groups relevant to the specification. Some candidates struggled to articulate a valid understanding of 'nationalism'. It was rare to see candidates adding specific examples of nationalist or religious actions for a particular group and so achieve Level 3 (or Level 4).

7a) This question was tackled quite successfully with many candidates able to provide a range of evidence for and against the interpretation. Many candidates were able to use the source successfully and often gave different examples to support the '70 million deaths' quoted in the source. However, very few candidates were able to access the top level as they had not evaluated the interpretation in relation to the source.

7b) This question was tackled with varying success. Some candidates, either, did not read the question properly and wrote down everything they knew about the role of the Red Guard in the Cultural Revolution or they simply described the source and provided a stock evaluation of the source. The question specifically asked about the aims of Mao in the Cultural Revolution and this should have been the thrust of the answer. Candidates should be advised that they must answer the question and it would be very useful if they used the terms 'useful' and 'not useful' in their answer.

7c) Despite this type of question being on the example candidates are still not necessarily identifying the purpose of a source and then explaining this using contextual knowledge. Purpose should be seen as something that evokes either a physical or mental reaction; meaning the source is trying to make somebody do or think something. Some candidates wasted time by describing the source, which is only a Level 1 response. Specific knowledge of the Four Olds was also very thin on the ground for this question.

8a) Almost all candidates were able to provide a wide range of evidence on social reforms in the 1950s.

8b) This question provided a range of responses. Some candidates merely listed different types of propaganda that Mao used, which was only a Level 1 response at best. The best answers gave reasons for why Mao used propaganda and then explained how Mao enforced this. For example they related the why to the aims of the Cultural Revolution and then used the Little Red Book as the explanation of how. Candidates need to be advised that providing a vague description of the use of posters is not enough for Level 2.

8c) Many candidates wrote very effectively about the failures of the Great Leap Forward, however an explanation of the successes was less successful. Answers that dealt with failures often used the famine and backyard furnaces as examples and many could explain why these were a failure. Whereas success was often dealt with in a simple sentence for example; The Great Leap Forward was a success because steel production doubled. This is not sufficient for a Level 3 or 4 response. As a consequence of there being few Level 4 9 mark responses, Level 5 was not attained by many.

9a) There was either very detailed knowledge of Chinese involvement in the Vietnam War or it was very sketchy.

9b) As with question 9a candidates were either well prepared for this topic on the paper or knowledge was very scant. Many candidates successfully explained the fleeing of the Dalai Lama to India as a cause and some quoted the building of the road through the Aksai Chin. There were a few answers that seemed to confuse events here with those in Manchuria in the 1930s.

9c) As question 9 was significantly less popular than question 8 there were few strong responses. Often candidates could explain how relations between the USSR and China broke down, but then failed to link this to how relations with the USA improved. Responses did try to explain why the USA sought to improve relations, but often the explanation was vague and lacked specific contextual knowledge. Candidates must ensure that they answer the question set.

## **A015 Aspects of international relations and causes and events of the First World War, 1890–1918**

### **General Comments:**

Candidates performed well on Section A, and there was a noticeable improvement in the style and structure of both source and exploratory answers. This said, there was a tendency to have contextual knowledge that was less comprehensive than in previous examination sessions.

In reference to the Depth Study on the First World War, candidates displayed some excellent knowledge and some good structural technique in their answers. The source section however proved difficult for many.

### **Comments on Individual Questions:**

1a) The majority of candidates were able to gain some sort of accurate interpretation, commonly identifying the sub-message that the reparations payments were ‘too harsh’ on Germany. This was commonly supplemented with contextual knowledge referring to the amount set in reparations and/or the purposes behind these reparations payments. Candidates who gained Level 4 or higher focused on the main message of Germany being no longer able to function with such high reparations payments or the intentions of the French or British towards the Germans in relation to the reparations. The highest quality responses referred to the reasoning behind Lloyd George’s leniency towards the Germans in comparison with the harsher attitudes of Briand and the French in general. Some candidates misidentified Briand as Clemenceau.

1b) Candidates generally had a good knowledge of the attitudes of the Big Three at Versailles and were able, often in a general sense, to apply this to Clemenceau not achieving all of his aims. Many candidates identified Wilson and Lloyd George as active in achieving a more peaceable compromise to Clemenceau’s more aggressive agenda. Often candidates wrote narrative responses outlining the intentions of Wilson and Lloyd George but did not compare these directly to the views of Clemenceau. The best responses were those that included reference to terms of the Treaty that Clemenceau had intended to implement, reasons why they were opposed by the other leaders and the terms of the Treaty that were decided on as an alternative.

2a) Some candidates were able to specify the roles of the Assembly within the League, and the best responses referred to its role in setting budgets, voting on new members and setting recommendations to the Council. Many responses however, focused on the wider intentions, roles and motivations of the League which were not rewarded in this question. A common response was also to discuss the Assembly in generic terms as ‘discussing conflicts’ which was only able to gain a single, general mark.

2b) This question was answered well by some candidates who could highlight specific examples of failures of the League in the 1920s. Commonly, candidates had a better knowledge of the Corfu Crisis than the other acceptable examples such as Vilna. The weaker responses often highlighted more generic weaknesses of the League such as the lack of an armed force, or the absence of the United States. These were often limited to Level 1 responses, as only identifying factors. Weaker candidates also mistakenly included 1930s examples such as Manchuria, Abyssinia and the rise of Hitler. Higher level responses saw candidates develop an example specific to the 1920s and develop this by defining it in terms of an inherent weakness in the League, such as the self-interest of the leading powers.

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4 a) On the whole candidates were better at looking for the specific cartoonist's viewpoint, which was an improvement on previous years. The greatest difficulty on this question, however, was that the candidates attempted to specifically look for criticism, rather than considering that a cartoonist might be supportive. In this source the cartoon was produced to support the American bombing campaign, by showing its success against Ho Chi Minh. Many candidates found it difficult to reach the main message, with a number offering general answers about the Vietnam War. A clear problem was those who tended to describe the source, with a specific problem surrounding the failure to develop 'air strikes' to relate to the bombing campaign. A number of candidates also incorrectly concluded that the cartoonist was criticising the American bombing campaign. It is important to consolidate the need for specific contextual knowledge in the source questions or else the answer cannot get past Level 2; here the context needed to focus on the bombing campaign, in particular on Operation Rolling Thunder.



4 b) There were some very good answers to this question, though a lot of candidates needed to read the wording of the question more carefully. The question specifically asked about the increasing US involvement in the 1950s, and as such those who spent time discussing the Gulf of Tonkin incident were incorrect. The majority of candidates could explain the Domino Theory, with excellent answers linking this to the specific nations in South East Asia. Further areas of interest were the military industrial complex, the retreat of the French and Diem's failed government. Again, it is important that candidates do not merely identify factors, but explain them with detailed contextual knowledge.

5 a) Many candidates displayed a detailed knowledge of the Truman Doctrine. However, lots of candidates tended to be repetitive in their answers, and a large number confused the Truman Doctrine with Marshall Aid.

5 b) This question was approached with varying degrees of success. On the whole candidates were able to explain at least one factor to reach at least L2. Mostly candidates focused on the Americans' atomic capabilities. Some candidates went past 1946, which was an error as the question gave a specific time-scale, and so discussions of Marshall Aid, for example, were incorrect. Candidates must be reminded to read the question carefully.

5 c) There were some very good answers which provided detailed knowledge of the period to 1949, using clear structure to break the essay into two sections. Many answers were very good at explaining the impact of Marshall Aid and the use of the airlift to overcome the Berlin Blockade to evaluate the American achievements, and this was generally set against Salami Tactics and the failure of the Berlin Blockade on the Soviet side. Weaker answers tended to be too general, without the specific depth of contextual knowledge to explain the key points. Again some answers strayed past 1949 to discuss events that did not come into the bounds of the question. In order to reach the top level 5, the conclusions needed to reach a clinching argument, rather than merely repeating the points raised during the essay.

6 a) Many candidates displayed a detailed knowledge of the USA's reaction to the Cuban Revolution, gaining good marks for the embargoes on sugar and trade, the end of diplomatic relations and the Bay of Pigs. The main mistakes that candidates made were to spend too long describing the Bay of Pigs, or else there were candidates who described the Cuban Missile Crisis itself.

6 b) This question was generally answered well, with most candidates able to explain at least one factor. Most candidates appreciated the ideas of re-balancing the arms race, bargaining for the removal of missiles in Turkey and defending Cuba from another attack. It is important that candidates do make sure to include detailed contextual knowledge to make sure that they make the move from 'identification' to 'explanation'; for example rather than just noting that 'the Soviet Union involved themselves in Cuba because it was close to the USA', it would be better to set out that the proximity of Cuba to America meant that missiles stationed there could threaten practically every major city in the USA.

6 c) This question was answered better than 2c, with candidates generally able to explain at least one factor on each side to access L4. Understanding of the Cuban Missile Crisis was strong, and though many candidates focused on Kennedy and Khrushchev, this was accepted for this question. This question also saw better clinching arguments put forward, with good comparison between each sides offered in the conclusions to reach an evaluated judgement. In particular a number of candidates stressed that the USA gained more because their successes were carried out under the gaze of public opinion, whilst the Soviet successes were kept secret.

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8c) The key to this question was ensuring that events and policies connected to Gorbachev were focused on their impact on Eastern Europe. For example, many candidates explained glasnost and perestroika but failed to explain how this led to the collapse of Soviet control over Eastern Europe.

9a) Most candidates were able to identify at least one valid method used by the PIRA with some able to offer a range – or two developed methods – and so achieve full marks. Some candidates were, however, able to offer nothing past generalised material which could have been relevant to any group and so struggled to be credited past a general mark.

9b) Many candidates were able to offer valid reasons why the PLO used terrorism, with some able to add precise supporting detail or exemplification and so reach Level 2. Multiple explanations were rare, and were credited in Level 3. Some candidates were unable to offer material that was specific to the PLO and so found it difficult to achieve any credit.

9c) Whilst there were some good examples of answers to this question, many candidates addressed it in a very generalised way without pinning their reasoning to the three terrorist groups relevant to the specification. Some candidates struggled to articulate a valid understanding of 'nationalism'. It was rare to see candidates adding specific examples of nationalist or religious actions for a particular group and so achieve Level 3 (or Level 4).

### **Depth Study Causes and Events of the First World War, 1890-1918**

10 a) The vast majority of responses relied entirely on the source for factual information and showed little knowledge of the First Battle of Ypres beyond what was written. A number of answers made connection to the 'race to the channel ports' or the 'beginning of trench warfare/war of attrition' as a result of Ypres which allowed candidates to reach Level 2. The best answers were those that utilised the information contained within the source to explain their understanding of the importance of the battle within the context of the war in 1914 and were able to provide the opposing argument, focusing on the losses of the BEF and the effects on the French forces, which are also not mentioned. Basic provenance of the source was common in candidate responses, but few had any knowledge of the role played by Joffre in the war.

10 b) Many candidates grasped the cartoonist's support for the use of tanks and superior British tactics driving back the German forces in 1918. Equally, some referred to the cowardice and failure of the German forces and the cartoonist's critical viewpoint of this. In the best cases, the contextual knowledge referred to the failure of the Ludendorff's Spring Offensive and the overpowering nature of the allied forces. Similarly, reference to the improved use of the tank after Cambrai was not uncommon. However, many candidates found themselves stuck at Level 2 as the contextual knowledge used was unsuitable, such as referring to the poor reliability of tanks at the Somme and, commonly, the entry of the Americans into the war and the withdrawal of the Russians in 1917. Weaker candidates were largely descriptive of the source and the surface features, while it was a common misconception that the source was referring to Allied victory after the conclusion of the war, when the source was from August 1918.

10 c) Although it was clear that the vast majority of students had a working knowledge of the role played by General Haig during the First World War, candidates often could only reach Level 2 as their answer was one-sided and relied on Haig's failures at the Somme. Weaker candidates relied on generic reference to Haig's 'inflexibility in tactics' or referred to his nickname 'The Butcher of the Somme' without any supporting evidence. Stronger candidates were eager to suggest that Haig has been directly responsible for the high number of deaths of the first day of the Somme and the long, attritional battle that followed. Stronger candidates were often able to provide a supportive argument of the suggestion posed in the question, commonly citing the relief of the French at Verdun in 1916 or Haig's efforts in the Hundred Days Offensive in 1918. This said, even the strongest of answers rarely made effective use of the source content and provenance. A few candidates referred to a generic bias that Foch may have held and fewer still attributed this bias to the fact that the piece was written as a 'tribute' to Haig, which would have allowed access to the highest level.

11a) Most pupils knew that the Triple Alliance was signed between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy, although did not describe when it was signed or what the terms of the alliance were. Similarly, a large number of responses made vague comments describing a 'military alliance' or a 'friendship' or even a 'defensive agreement' that rarely went beyond this. Some candidates showed understanding of Italy's role as a junior partner in the agreement, and the fact that it was a development of the existing Dual Alliance. Common mistakes were for candidates to attribute the alliance to the Entente powers, Britain, France and Russia, as well as assigning the Triple Alliance as a response to the signing of the Dual/Triple Ententes which, of course, were signed much later.

11b) This was effectively answered and most candidates had some understanding of colonial conflict in the pre-war period. Weaker candidates referred to German expansionism as a basic construct with vague references to jealousy of British and French dominance without examples or expansion. Less frequently, candidates would also reference the Balkans and Austro-Serbian disagreements. Stronger candidates made effective use of examples and by far the most common of these were the Moroccan Crises which were, as a whole, effectively described and showed some very good knowledge of events. Some candidates gained fewer marks however, by not tying their effective descriptions of the crises back to the creation/expansion of tensions between these countries. There were also some good examples of candidates with excellent understanding of the collapse of imperial domination and the Russo-Austrian conflict.

11c) Candidates showed good understanding of Anglo-German naval disputes, commonly citing the development of Dreadnoughts and the 'Two-Power' Standard as the basis of conflict. Similarly, in reference to the Alliance Systems, candidates were able to describe and develop the make-up and intentions of the two opposing alliances. Few candidates drew their effective descriptions back to the direct causes of the First World War. This meant that many candidates were limited to Level 2 (4 marks). Candidates often made vague reference to the Naval Race making Germany appear aggressive, or of Britain's fear of an ambitious Germany, while this was rarely drawn directly to the outbreak of armed conflict in 1914. This was done far better in reference to the Alliance Systems, where stronger responses could describe the sense of

unease that emerged from the two-armed camps, candidates developed this through explanation of the process leading from Ferdinand's murder to the declarations of war in July and August 1914. Some candidates made broader reference to British/Belgian agreements and their importance and were able to draw comparative parallels between increasing German militaristic tendencies and the British defensive position, by which animosity was increased by the Naval Race.

12a) This was well-answered amongst the majority of candidates, who had a good basic factual recall of the events of Gallipoli. Some weaker candidates made very vague reference to 'poor planning' and 'mines in the sea' or 'trenches on the beach'. The majority could describe well the tactical importance of the high position of the Turkish troops or the unexpectedly well-trained Turkish forces that were better prepared than their under-equipped opponents. It was also common for candidates to refer to the inadequacy of the British maps used and there was good use of key geographical locations such as Helles beach and the Dardanelles strait.

12b) There was a good understanding from candidates that this was a two-sided answer and the vast majority of attempts could make basic conclusions that the Germans had the numerical claim to victory, sinking more ships than the British, whereas the British had returned the Germans to port and protected their blockade. The higher standard response could develop these arguments to explain how Germany had 'embarrassed' the supposedly superior British force, while the British had contributed to eventual victory in the war by preserving the blockade that was so detrimental to the German war effort. Weaker candidates found it difficult to develop their basic understanding into this more holistic analysis.

12c) In response to this question, many candidates relied on basic knowledge rather than specific and developed examples. In reference to military failures, most candidates could make reference to the 'poorly equipped' Russian forces or the fact that the German/Austrian forces were 'better prepared' but they were limited in their reference to particular battles or military leaders. Many candidates made some reference to the fact that Tsar Nicholas led the forces poorly, but again gave few concrete examples. Similarly, in reference to the issues on the Russian home front, candidates often recognised that Russia was undergoing a revolution, but it was rare to see the connection between this and the direct impact on the war effort. Some candidates were side-tracked by the role of Rasputin and Alexandra at home and became descriptive of their supposed romantic involvement rather than the effects of discontent on the war effort.

Stronger Candidates discussed specific battles in reference to military failure- the long-term impact of the failure of Russian forces in early battles at Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes; the suicide of Samsanov and the inability of the Russian forces to recover; the failure to take advantage of the gains in the Brusilov Offensive; the failures of the Kerensky Offensive. Similarly, stronger candidates could make specific reference to the effects of poor equipment and food provisions for the troops and the effects of this on morale. On the other side of the argument, in reference to the home front the better standard responses referred to industrial strife, the unrest of the revolution, and made direct links with the poor provisions to the front, social discontent and military desertion as resultant factors. The best answers could draw direct comparison between the two-sides of the argument, often showing that the discontent at home increased the likelihood of military collapse on the Eastern Front.

## **A016 Aspects of international relations and End of Empire c.1919–1969**

### **General Comments:**

The entry for this unit remained very small with under 200 candidates. However, the answers covered the full range of ability. There were some outstandingly good answers and virtually all candidates were able to construct some worthwhile responses showing that they had benefited from studying this course. The three different sections on International Relations were roughly equally represented in candidates' answers. There were many good answers to the questions on End of Empire and the performance on this Depth Study was generally better than that on the various sections of International Relations. In the Depth Study, Questions 11 and 12 were equally popular.

There were occasional rubric errors with a few candidates attempting to answer all three sections on International Relations or both of the optional questions in End of Empire. Most candidates, however, knew exactly what they had to do. The majority of candidates made good attempts at all the required questions.

In general, candidates were able to interpret sources well but needed to make more use of their knowledge of the relevant period or topic to relate sources more firmly to their historical contexts. Most candidates showed the ability to construct historical explanations, but found writing multi-causal explanations much harder. They also struggled in part (c) to construct clinching arguments to explain why one side of a debate was stronger than the other.

### **Comments on Individual Questions:**

#### **Part 1: Aspects of International Relations, 1919-2005**

1a) The majority of candidates were able to gain some sort of accurate interpretation, commonly identifying the sub-message that the reparations payments were 'too harsh' on Germany. This was commonly supplemented with contextual knowledge referring to the amount set in reparations and/or the purposes behind these reparations payments. Candidates who gained Level 4 or higher focused on the main message of Germany being no longer able to function with such high reparations payments or the intentions of the French or British towards the Germans in relation to the reparations. The highest quality responses referred to the reasoning behind Lloyd George's leniency towards the Germans in comparison with the harsher attitudes of Briand and the French in general. Some candidates misidentified Briand as Clemenceau.

1b) Candidates generally had a good knowledge of the attitudes of the Big Three at Versailles and were able, often in a general sense, to apply this to Clemenceau not achieving all of his aims. Many candidates identified Wilson and Lloyd George as active in achieving a more peaceable compromise to Clemenceau's more aggressive agenda. Often candidates wrote narrative responses outlining the intentions of Wilson and Lloyd George but did not compare these directly to the views of Clemenceau. The best responses were those that included reference to terms of the Treaty that Clemenceau had intended to implement, reasons why they were opposed by the other leaders and the terms of the Treaty that were decided on as an alternative.

2a) Some candidates were able to specify the roles of the Assembly within the League, and the best responses referred to its role in setting budgets, voting on new members and setting recommendations to the Council. Many responses however, focused on the wider intentions, roles and motivations of the League which were not rewarded in this question. A common response was also to discuss the Assembly in generic terms as 'discussing conflicts' which was only able to gain a single, general mark.

2b) This question was answered well by some candidates who could highlight specific examples of failures of the League in the 1920s. Commonly, candidates had a better knowledge of the Corfu Crisis than the other acceptable examples such as Vilna. The weaker responses often highlighted more generic weaknesses of the League such as the lack of an armed force, or the absence of the United States. These were often limited to Level 1 responses, as only identifying factors. Weaker candidates also mistakenly included 1930s examples such as Manchuria, Abyssinia and the rise of Hitler. Higher level responses saw candidates develop an example specific to the 1920s and develop this by defining it in terms of an inherent weakness in the League, such as the self-interest of the leading powers.

2c) Many candidates were able to accurately identify the key issues that arose for the League as a result of the Manchuria Crisis. Most commonly, the reference to the time taken by Lord Lytton was accurately identified as showing the League's ineffectiveness. Consequently, most candidates easily reached Level 2 and could identify reasons why both the Manchuria Crisis and other factors, including Abyssinia and the organisation of the League, were to blame for its eventual collapse. Developing each of these areas and referring them back to the collapse of the League was less common as many candidates provided a narrative of the different conflicts and why they failed rather than the effects of this on the League as an institution. The best responses, which allowed pupils to access Level 5, were those that looked at both Manchuria and other factors drawing direct conclusions as to why they led to the failure of the League. Commonly, these candidates discussed the concept of Manchuria leading to the aggressive foreign policy decisions of Mussolini, (and eventually Hitler) as they knew the League was ineffective.

3a) Candidates showed a good understanding of the Nazi-Soviet Pact and often identified that it was Hitler and Stalin who were the leaders of the two nations involved. Most candidates made reference to Poland and could describe the nature of the Pact as militarily non-aggressive rather than a military alliance. A number of candidates misapplied their knowledge and explained why the pact was signed or the outcomes of the Pact, neither of which were able to register on the mark scheme.

3b) A large number of candidates identified reasons why Stalin was concerned, such as his lack of involvement in Munich or his fears of German expansionism in the East, and this allowed them to access Level 1. Weaker candidates were often unable to attribute the Munich Conference to the annexation of the Sudetenland, or spoke in general terms only of Hitler and Stalin as opposing forces. Stronger candidates were able to develop identifications by explaining reasons behind Stalin's poor defensive position or paranoia concerning Allied attempts to discredit communism by 'pushing Hitler eastwards'. Similarly, there were some very good explanations of the ideological differences between Hitler and Stalin which were well linked to Stalin's fears of Nazi foreign expansionism.

3c) Candidates commonly represented a comprehensive knowledge of Hitler's foreign policy aims and actions, providing a plethora of examples from rearmament through to the invasion of Poland in 1939. Candidates often did not access above Level 2 however, as these descriptions of Hitler's intentions and actions were not directly linked to the outbreak of war in 1939 or the short-term causes. On the other side of the argument, candidates could largely identify appeasement, the Wall Street Crash and subsequent Depression and the failure of the League of Nations as valid causes of the war, although again these were often descriptive narratives rather than being linked as explanations of the outbreak of war. Strong candidates accessed higher levels by making specific reference to the immediate causes of the conflict and making convincing comparisons between the actions of Hitler and the international political situation at the time.

4 a) On the whole candidates were better at looking for the specific cartoonist's viewpoint, which was an improvement on previous years. The greatest difficulty on this question, however, was that the candidates attempted to specifically look for criticism, rather than considering that a cartoonist might be supportive. In this source the cartoon was produced to support the American bombing campaign, by showing its success against Ho Chi Minh. Many candidates found it difficult to reach the main message, with a number offering general answers about the Vietnam War. A clear problem was those who tended to describe the source, with a specific problem surrounding the failure to develop 'air strikes' to relate to the bombing campaign. A number of candidates also incorrectly concluded that the cartoonist was criticising the American bombing campaign. It is important to consolidate the need for specific contextual knowledge in the source questions or else the answer cannot get past Level 2; here the context needed to focus on the bombing campaign, in particular on Operation Rolling Thunder.

4 b) There were some very good answers to this question, though a lot of candidates needed to read the wording of the question more carefully. The question specifically asked about the increasing US involvement in the 1950s, and as such those who spent time discussing the Gulf of Tonkin incident were incorrect. The majority of candidates could explain the Domino Theory, with excellent answers linking this to the specific nations in South East Asia. Further areas of interest were the military industrial complex, the retreat of the French and Diem's failed government. Again, it is important that candidates do not merely identify factors, but explain them with detailed contextual knowledge.

5 a) Many candidates displayed a detailed knowledge of the Truman Doctrine. However, lots of candidates tended to be repetitive in their answers, and a large number confused the Truman Doctrine with Marshall Aid.

5 b) This question was approached with varying degrees of success. On the whole candidates were able to explain at least one factor to reach at least L2. Mostly candidates focused on the Americans' atomic capabilities. Some candidates went past 1946, which was an error as the question gave a specific time-scale, and so discussions of Marshall Aid, for example, were incorrect. Candidates must be reminded to read the question carefully.

5 c) There were some very good answers which provided detailed knowledge of the period to 1949, using clear structure to break the essay into two sections. Many answers were very good at explaining the impact of Marshall Aid and the use of the airlift to overcome the Berlin Blockade to evaluate the American achievements, and this was generally set against Salami Tactics and the failure of the Berlin Blockade on the Soviet side. Weaker answers tended to be too general, without the specific depth of contextual knowledge to explain the key points. Again some answers strayed past 1949 to discuss events that did not come into the bounds of the question. In order to reach the top level 5, the conclusions needed to reach a clinching argument, rather than merely repeating the points raised during the essay.

6 a) Many candidates displayed a detailed knowledge of the USA's reaction to the Cuban Revolution, gaining good marks for the embargoes on sugar and trade, the end of diplomatic relations and the Bay of Pigs. The main mistakes that candidates made were to spend too long describing the Bay of Pigs, or else there were candidates who described the Cuban Missile Crisis itself.

6 b) This question was generally answered well, with most candidates able to explain at least one factor. Most candidates appreciated the ideas of re-balancing the arms race, bargaining for the removal of missiles in Turkey and defending Cuba from another attack. It is important that candidates do make sure to include detailed contextual knowledge to make sure that they make the move from 'identification' to 'explanation'; for example rather than just noting that 'the Soviet Union involved themselves in Cuba because it was close to the USA', it would be better to set out that the proximity of Cuba to America meant that missiles stationed there could threaten practically every major city in the USA.

6 c) This question was answered better than 2c, with candidates generally able to explain at least one factor on each side to access L4. Understanding of the Cuban Missile Crisis was strong, and though many candidates focused on Kennedy and Khrushchev, this was accepted for this question. This question also saw better clinching arguments put forward, with good comparison between each sides offered in the conclusions to reach an evaluated judgement. In particular a number of candidates stressed that the USA gained more because their successes were carried out under the gaze of public opinion, whilst the Soviet successes were kept secret.

7 a) Candidates for this question are required to identify the cartoonist's viewpoint, however in this instance very few candidates managed to offer a valid interpretation at all. Many used the source details to try and identify a message, for example, 'G W Bush is digging the USA into a bigger hole.' Also many, incorrectly, identified the message as the USA were digging for oil or looking for weapons of mass destruction. As a consequence, this question was poorly answered and many candidates failed to progress beyond level 1. Candidates needed to identify the cartoonist's viewpoint which was a criticism of Bush's policies.

7 b) For candidates for who were well prepared for this topic this question was well answered. Good candidates were able to explain a range of issues confronting the international forces hence they could not leave. Weaker candidates used issues such as they had not found WMDs or they still needed to get oil as reasons, therefore often repeating the mistakes from question 1a. Specific contextual knowledge was often lacking for this question.

8 a) Many candidates were able to identify different ways in which the Communist governments controlled people's lives. The most successful answers identified a method and then provided an example of how or when.

8b) The focus of this question was why the Polish government acted rather than the Soviet Union. Many candidates referred to size of the Solidarity or the economic impact if they failed to deal with them. Some answers used the threat of action from the Soviet Union as a motivation for Poland to take action. This question was quite well answered, but candidates need to be aware of not slipping into a narrative of events.

8c) The key to this question was ensuring that events and policies connected to Gorbachev were focused on their impact on Eastern Europe. For example, many candidates explained glasnost and perestroika but failed to explain how this led to the collapse of Soviet control over Eastern Europe.

9a) Most candidates were able to identify at least one valid method used by the PIRA with some able to offer a range – or two developed methods – and so achieve full marks. Some candidates were, however, able to offer nothing past generalised material which could have been relevant to any group and so struggled to be credited past a general mark.

9b) Many candidates were able to offer valid reasons why the PLO used terrorism, with some able to add precise supporting detail or exemplification and so reach Level 2. Multiple explanations were rare, and were credited in Level 3. Some candidates were unable to offer material that was specific to the PLO and so found it difficult to achieve any credit.

9c) Whilst there were some good examples of answers to this question, many candidates addressed it in a very generalised way without pinning their reasoning to the three terrorist groups relevant to the specification. Some candidates struggled to articulate a valid understanding of 'nationalism'. It was rare to see candidates adding specific examples of nationalist or religious actions for a particular group and so achieve Level 3 (or Level 4).



## Part 2: Depth Study, End of Empire, c.1919-1969

10 (a) This question was answered reasonably well. While most candidates were able to explain the main message of the cartoon - that Indians were united in their opposition to the Simon Report - some struggled to support their answers with detailed and accurate contextual knowledge. A much smaller number of candidates were able to move on and write about the opinion of the cartoonist - that the Simon Report was a failure. Nearly all candidates interpreted the cartoon in some way, with only a few going no further than describing its surface features.

10 (b) A few candidates simply paraphrased the content of the source, but most were able to infer Churchill's overall message about Britain and India. Almost no candidates misunderstood the source. To reach the higher levels of the mark scheme candidates need to focus on why Churchill made this particular speech in 1935. In other words, the speech had to be placed in its correct historical context. The majority of candidates who reached the top level of the mark scheme made valid use of the 1935 Government of India Act as the context.

10 (c) This question was not answered as well as parts (a) and (b). The best answers used the source and their knowledge of Gandhi and Nehru to compare their contributions to the achievement of Indian independence. Unfortunately, a number of candidates ignored the source. This limited their answers to the bottom of whatever level they reached. The instructions in the question are quite clear - 'Use the source and your knowledge to explain your answer.' Gandhi was much better known than Nehru. Many candidates produced good explanations of Gandhi's contribution, but struggled over Nehru. Often the part of answers about Nehru consisted of little more than assertions. To reach Level 3 of the mark scheme candidates needed to explain the contribution of both men. To reach the top level, the claim that Gandhi was more important needed to be evaluated by comparing the importance of the two men and by using and evaluating the source.

11 (a) Many candidates scored well on this question. Most focused on the different ways the war encouraged opposition to British rule e.g. the Quit India campaign or the removal of the idea that Britain was all strong and powerful. It is important in part (a) questions that specific examples are given. A few candidates scored just one mark because their answers were too general.

11 (b) Some candidates ignored the instruction in the question to focus on before 1947 and wrote about the violence that followed independence and partition. Most candidates were able to describe the violence that took place in 1946 while the stronger candidates explained how the Hindi/Muslim division split the independence movement as early as 1929 in terms of the kind of India that was being demanded. Two examples of the effects of the religious division on the struggle for independence needed to be properly explained for top marks.

11(c) The best answers explained mistakes that Mountbatten made, as well as the very difficult situation in India that he inherited and that was not of his making. They then balanced these two factors against each other in terms of importance. Generally, answers were stronger on explaining the situation in India than explaining the part played by Mountbatten. Many candidates were a little vague about what Mountbatten brought to this situation. Few candidates were able to reach the top level (10 marks) by adding to an explanation of both sides of the argument, a clinching argument for just one side or the other.

12 (a) Most candidates were able to identify ways in which the war increased demands for independence including the hopes of Kenyans who served in the armed forces, the ways in which white settlers benefited from the war and dissatisfaction caused by the raising of taxes. It is important in part (a) questions that specific examples are given. A few candidates scored only just one mark because their answers were too general.

12(b) There were many good answers to this question with candidates demonstrating knowledge of a range of different ways the British tried to deal with the Mau Mau Rebellion. When the top level was not reached it was usually because candidates failed to keep the different methods separate and allowed them to merge into a single explanation, or the methods were described rather than explained. Good explanations covered either the reason why a particular method was used or an account of its results or effectiveness.

12(c) This question was answered very well. A good number of candidates were able to explain the importance of how and why some of the British had changed their minds about empires, as well as the importance of other factors such as events in Kenya or more general factors such as American attitudes towards empires or the general decolonisation process that was underway by the 1960s. These factors were, of course, connected e.g. American pressure led to a change of mind in Britain. The best candidates made good use of these links while others struggled to use them effectively to such an extent that they failed to distinguish different types of factors from one another.

## **A017 Aspects of international relations and The USA, Land of freedom? 1945–1975**

### **General Comments:**

Overall, candidates performed well this year with some candidates performing very well. Most candidates answered the Inter War section, and demonstrated good knowledge and understanding. Question 2 was preferred to Question 3, possibly because the b part of Question 3 was a more unusual angle, although marks attained on both questions showed a similar spread, as candidates generally found the specific knowledge required on 2a more challenging. The general performance levels on New World were significantly lower, with a few notable exceptions.

With regards the depth study, candidates displayed stronger contextual knowledge than seen last year. The source section was answered quite well, although as always the source questions presented more difficulties than the knowledge and understanding section which followed. Centres should take note of the guidance offered below on how to prepare candidates for these questions, especially 7c and 7b, which presented particular issues.

### **Comments on Individual Questions:**

#### **Section A: Aspects of International Relations**

1a) The majority of candidates were able to gain some sort of accurate interpretation, commonly identifying the sub-message that the reparations payments were ‘too harsh’ on Germany. This was commonly supplemented with contextual knowledge referring to the amount set in reparations and/or the purposes behind these reparations payments. Candidates who gained Level 4 or higher focused on the main message of Germany being no longer able to function with such high reparations payments or the intentions of the French or British towards the Germans in relation to the reparations. The highest quality responses referred to the reasoning behind Lloyd George’s leniency towards the Germans in comparison with the harsher attitudes of Briand and the French in general. Some candidates misidentified Briand as Clemenceau.

1b) Candidates generally had a good knowledge of the attitudes of the Big Three at Versailles and were able, often in a general sense, to apply this to Clemenceau not achieving all of his aims. Many candidates identified Wilson and Lloyd George as active in achieving a more peaceable compromise to Clemenceau’s more aggressive agenda. Often candidates wrote narrative responses outlining the intentions of Wilson and Lloyd George but did not compare these directly to the views of Clemenceau. The best responses were those that included reference to terms of the Treaty that Clemenceau had intended to implement, reasons why they were opposed by the other leaders and the terms of the Treaty that were decided on as an alternative.

2a) Some candidates were able to specify the roles of the Assembly within the League, and the best responses referred to its role in setting budgets, voting on new members and setting recommendations to the Council. Many responses however, focused on the wider intentions, roles and motivations of the League which were not rewarded in this question. A common response was also to discuss the Assembly in generic terms as ‘discussing conflicts’ which was only able to gain a single, general mark.

2b) This question was answered well by some candidates who could highlight specific examples of failures of the League in the 1920s. Commonly, candidates had a better knowledge of the Corfu Crisis than the other acceptable examples such as Vilna. The weaker responses often

highlighted more generic weaknesses of the League such as the lack of an armed force, or the absence of the United States. These were often limited to Level 1 responses, as only identifying factors. Weaker candidates also mistakenly included 1930s examples such as Manchuria, Abyssinia and the rise of Hitler. Higher level responses saw candidates develop an example specific to the 1920s and develop this by defining it in terms of an inherent weakness in the League, such as the self-interest of the leading powers.

2c) Many candidates were able to accurately identify the key issues that arose for the League as a result of the Manchuria Crisis. Most commonly, the reference to the time taken by Lord Lytton was accurately identified as showing the League's ineffectiveness. Consequently, most candidates easily reached Level 2 and could identify reasons why both the Manchuria Crisis and other factors, including Abyssinia and the organisation of the League, were to blame for its eventual collapse. Developing each of these areas and referring them back to the collapse of the League was less common as many candidates provided a narrative of the different conflicts and why they failed rather than the effects of this on the League as an institution. The best responses, which allowed pupils to access Level 5, were those that looked at both Manchuria and other factors drawing direct conclusions as to why they led to the failure of the League. Commonly, these candidates discussed the concept of Manchuria leading to the aggressive foreign policy decisions of Mussolini, (and eventually Hitler) as they knew the League was ineffective.

3a) Candidates showed a good understanding of the Nazi-Soviet Pact and often identified that it was Hitler and Stalin who were the leaders of the two nations involved. Most candidates made reference to Poland and could describe the nature of the Pact as militarily non-aggressive rather than a military alliance. A number of candidates misapplied their knowledge and explained why the pact was signed or the outcomes of the Pact, neither of which were able to register on the mark scheme.

3b) A large number of candidates identified reasons why Stalin was concerned, such as his lack of involvement in Munich or his fears of German expansionism in the East, and this allowed them to access Level 1. Weaker candidates were often unable to attribute the Munich Conference to the annexation of the Sudetenland, or spoke in general terms only of Hitler and Stalin as opposing forces. Stronger candidates were able to develop identifications by explaining reasons behind Stalin's poor defensive position or paranoia concerning Allied attempts to discredit communism by 'pushing Hitler eastwards'. Similarly, there were some very good explanations of the ideological differences between Hitler and Stalin which were well linked to Stalin's fears of Nazi foreign expansionism.

3c) Candidates commonly represented a comprehensive knowledge of Hitler's foreign policy aims and actions, providing a plethora of examples from rearmament through to the invasion of Poland in 1939. Candidates often did not access above Level 2 however, as these descriptions of Hitler's intentions and actions were not directly linked to the outbreak of war in 1939 or the short-term causes. On the other side of the argument, candidates could largely identify appeasement, the Wall Street Crash and subsequent Depression and the failure of the League of Nations as valid causes of the war, although again these were often descriptive narratives rather than being linked as explanations of the outbreak of war. Strong candidates accessed higher levels by making specific reference to the immediate causes of the conflict and making convincing comparisons between the actions of Hitler and the international political situation at the time.

4 a) Candidates for this question are required to identify the cartoonist's viewpoint, however in this instance very few candidates managed to offer a valid interpretation at all. Many used the source details to try and identify a message, for example, 'G W Bush is digging the USA into a bigger hole.' Also many, incorrectly, identified the message as the USA were digging for oil or looking for weapons of mass destruction. As a consequence, this question was poorly answered and many candidates failed to progress beyond level 1. Candidates needed to identify the cartoonist's viewpoint which was a criticism of Bush's policies.

4b) For candidates for who were well prepared for this topic this question was well answered. Good candidates were able to explain a range of issues confronting the international forces hence they could not leave. Weaker candidates used issues such as they had not found WMDs or they still needed to get oil as reasons, therefore often repeating the mistakes from question 1a. Specific contextual knowledge was often lacking for this question.

5 a) Many candidates were able to identify different ways in which the Communist governments controlled people's lives. The most successful answers identified a method and then provided an example of how or when.

5b) The focus of this question was why the Polish government acted rather than the Soviet Union. Many candidates referred to size of the Solidarity or the economic impact if they failed to deal with them. Some answers used the threat of action from the Soviet Union as a motivation for Poland to take action. This question was quite well answered, but candidates need to be aware of not slipping into a narrative of events.

5c) The key to this question was ensuring that events and policies connected to Gorbachev were focused on their impact on Eastern Europe. For example, many candidates explained glasnost and perestroika but failed to explain how this led to the collapse of Soviet control over Eastern Europe.

6a) Most candidates were able to identify at least one valid method used by the PIRA with some able to offer a range – or two developed methods – and so achieve full marks. Some candidates were, however, able to offer nothing past generalised material which could have been relevant to any group and so struggled to be credited past a general mark.

6b) Many candidates were able to offer valid reasons why the PLO used terrorism, with some able to add precise supporting detail or exemplification and so reach Level 2. Multiple explanations were rare, and were credited in Level 3. Some candidates were unable to offer material that was specific to the PLO and so found it difficult to achieve any credit.

6c) Whilst there were some good examples of answers to this question, many candidates addressed it in a very generalised way without pinning their reasoning to the three terrorist groups relevant to the specification. Some candidates struggled to articulate a valid understanding of 'nationalism'. It was rare to see candidates adding specific examples of nationalist or religious actions for a particular group and so achieve Level 3 (or Level 4).

### **Depth Study – Land of Freedom**

7a) Candidates had little problem understanding that this cartoon was referencing the Montgomery Bus Boycott, and many showed good knowledge of its events and achievements. They were able to identify a range of messages, and many correctly identified that the cartoon was positive about events. However surprisingly few candidates made the connection between positivity and the success of the boycott and its methods, and went on to support it with specific knowledge about how they enabled success. As a result, many answers were limited to Level 3 or Level 4 rather than higher. Many candidates wasted time telling the whole story of the boycott, rather than focusing on specific points to support the message they gave, which is what is required. Some did not give a message at all, simply telling the story of events, which unless linked to the cartoon could not be credited.

7b) This question required an understanding that 1951 was before major achievements had been made in the struggle for civil rights, and therefore the contextual knowledge that could be credited needed to be about the situation before change, rather than on events generating change. For example a common error was to focus on the 1963 Birmingham campaign. These kind of answers did not get beyond Level 2. Centres should focus students' attention on the date provided in the question, and the chronological overview of events, which would avoid these

kinds of contextual errors. That said, many candidates were able to correctly describe the nature and extent of racism and Jim Crow Laws in the south, and importantly, were also able to determine the purpose of the publication: to motivate people into action against the status quo. Some students are still confusing the message given by, rather than the purpose of a publication, so centres should continue to work on guiding students to focus on the intended impact, or action required by a publication, when answering these questions.

7c) This type of question requires candidates to use their own knowledge and the given source to evaluate an interpretation, here, that of the importance of brave individuals in achieving civil rights. Most candidates knew much about the individuals involved in the progress towards civil rights, and so were able to do this well, correctly comparing individuals' achievements to those of whole groups like boycotters, CORE and the NAACP, or the political establishment. As a result, most were able to achieve in Level 3. However, centres must encourage candidates to address the question: it is not enough to tell the story of a person's contribution, here their bravery and achievement needed to be focused on. Most importantly the source itself needs to be used and evaluated. Without an attempt to evaluate the source by looking at its provenance, tone or purpose, Level 4 cannot be accessed. Very few students even attempted stock evaluation, let alone any decent evaluation of why a journalist might be eulogising a civil rights individual. Equally, a reference to the source needs to be made for full marks in Level 3. Finally, some candidates had clearly not read the attribution and confused the description given with the life of Martin Luther King.

8a) Most candidates offered a good response to this question, showing solid knowledge of the work of the HUAC and its remit. Many commented on the investigation into the Hollywood Ten. A large number of candidates scored 3 marks, needing to reference other investigations correctly or groups the Committee focused on.

8b) Most candidates were able to identify the consequences of McCarthyism, for example blacklisting, or the paranoia that enveloped society, and so achieved Level 1. Some found it more challenging to develop this into an explanation which involved substance or examples of the impact it had and often provided answers that were too general to credit at Level 2.

8c) This question required an answer that looked at both internal and external factors that caused McCarthyism and the climate of fear around communism. There were some very good answers which provided detailed knowledge of the Cold War and the impact this had on US attitudes towards communism. However a sizeable minority of candidates contrasted the Cold War as a factor with international events which inspired fear, which failed to gain credit above Level 3. Knowledge and understanding of events within the USA was also strong, although some candidates failed to take this to explanation by simply giving an account of the event, for example, the Rosenberg case. Candidates in general seem to have ignored McCarthy's ambition and political motivation.

9a) This question was answered very well. Many candidates displayed detailed knowledge of the case, correctly identifying the events of the hours leading up to the murders and the targets. As a result many gained 3 or 4 marks. Only a few confused the case with that of Emmett Till, or offered very general answers showing no specific knowledge.

9b) This question was generally answered well, and most students correctly focused on the motivation for 'marches in the south' rather than simply 'doing peaceful protests'. Most candidates were able to explain the focus on the south being the result of its segregation, and also Dr King's awareness of the likely hostile reaction from southern racists which would gain him the oxygen of publicity. It is important that candidates identify two separate reasons in answer to this type of question, and do not merge them into one: some clearly able candidates achieved Level 2 only because they started off arguing about segregation and then did not establish anticipated media reaction as a distinct point.

9c) This question was answered less well than 8c, as candidates struggled to develop their answers into an explanation of how the actions of each president improved African-Americans' lives. The focus of the question is this improvement so candidates need to do more than state what laws were introduced and what they did. As a result many students achieved Level 2 only. This was disappointing as many adopted an evaluative approach, trying to compare the actions of the two presidents, and introducing constraining factors, but without enough sense of the significance of actions.

That said, knowledge of the contributions of each President was good, although there was the inevitable confusion where weaknesses in revision meant that candidates confused Kennedy and Johnson's actions. Too many had a weak sense of chronology and claimed Kennedy's responsibility for desegregation of buses and protecting the Little Rock Nine.

## **A021 How was British society changed, 1890–1918?**

### **General Comments:**

As usual the great majority of candidates were well prepared for the paper and made serious attempts to tackle all of the questions. There were some really excellent responses to Questions 1 and 2 in particular. Questions 3 and 4 proved to be more challenging for some students. However, the most disappointing aspect of the responses was the very large proportion of candidates who did not use their knowledge to try to answer Question 5. To be clear, this is not a reference to candidates who tried to use knowledge and failed to do so effectively. A very significant number of candidates were clearly under the impression that Question 5 was to be answered using sources only. This proved to be a significant factor in depressing the marks for many candidates.

### **Comments on Individual Questions:**

#### Question 1

This question was generally handled very well. The great majority of candidates focused their efforts on answering the question asked and as a result a very large proportion of candidates were able to reach Level 4. They did this by making inferences such as the source being useful because it revealed the arguments used for or against female suffrage and then went on to support the inference with reference to the source. Relatively few candidates reached Level 5 but it was pleasing to see some do so, pointing out that the act of publication of the source was useful information to historians about the climate of opinion as well as the material in it.

Many candidates were also able to reach Level 3. Some were able to do so by claiming the source was not useful because the author was a pro-suffrage campaigner and the source was therefore unreliable, usually without explaining what it was unreliable about. Such responses were valid but the mark scheme limited such comments to Level 3. The higher levels are reserved for responses which explore how the source is useful. Indeed some candidates pointed out that the bias of the source is useful because it revealed how Fawcett felt about the issue and how she tried to make her case. This is clearly a superior comment on bias than a generalised assertion of unreliability.

Some candidates continue to respond to utility questions either by writing their own narrative with no reference to the question of utility or argue the source is not useful because it does not contain a range of information which they go on to list. Such responses usually ended in Level 1 or 2. The argument that a source does not contain particular pieces of information will gain some credit but it is worth pointing out to candidates that the same argument could be made about any other paper on the source, or indeed a source on a completely different topic.

#### Question 2

This question was generally done very well and most candidates scored highly on it. There were many responses at Level 4 and 5. To achieve these levels candidates correctly recognised that both sources were trying to prevent women getting the vote but that they were using differing methods to do so. Some candidates identified the similar intent of each source but failed to see the persuasive methods being used and simply listed reasons why the authors of each source held their views. These responses reached Level 3. It was a relief to see the great majority of candidates focusing on the actual question asked, i.e. how similar the two sources were, rather than getting themselves confused with routines involving assessing reliability or bias.



### Question 3

A significant proportion of the candidates tackled this question with ease. They recognised that the cartoon was attacking the arguments against female suffrage, specifically the ‘different spheres’ argument and was doing so by portraying them as prehistoric. Plenty of candidates gained the extra mark for Level 5 by pointing out that the cartoonist was critical of these attitudes or wanted them to change. This type of question usually generates a range of responses and indeed some candidates reached Level 3 with sub-messages such as women being unhappy about being stuck in the house. What was unexpected was the very large number of candidates who took the cartoon absolutely literally and concluded that the anti-suffrage movement had published the cartoon in order to support the argument against votes for women by arguing that women had been in the house since the Stone Age and it should stay that way. These misinterpretations were rewarded at Level 1.

A further important point to raise with this question is the growing tendency of some candidates to attempt to produce two answers within the same response. Examiners reported a large number of responses which effectively argued in one paragraph that the source was pro-suffrage and in another paragraph was anti-suffrage. On the whole examiners rewarded whichever response they felt reflected the main argument candidates were putting forward. However, there were some rare responses where examiners simply could not tell which answer the candidate was proposing. As such, the candidate was effectively saying ‘I don’t know and I want the examiner to decide’. This is an invalid answer. We strongly advise centres to advise candidates against this approach.

### Question 4

This question presented a very similar story to Question 3. Almost all of the same positive and negative issues arose, including the issue of candidates attempting to answer the question twice. Candidates who looked at the source carefully could clearly understand that the source was being sarcastic. Most candidates had a good knowledge of the argument that women should not vote because they do not fight and made good use of the reference to this as the ‘stale old argument’. They were also aware of the contribution of women during the war and used this knowledge effectively. With so much relevant knowledge available and the clear steers in Source E it is particularly difficult to see why candidates misinterpreted the source. Many candidates made good use of the text at the foot of the source to interpret the source correctly. Conversely, it was disappointing to see a number of candidates quoting the text at the bottom about a woman not fighting, but then completely ignoring the point about this being a ‘stale, old argument’. It seems that many candidates still respond to sources by looking for confirmation of what they already know. They seem to find it hard to grasp the concept that sources often challenge the standard textbook view of a given topic and that examiners are interested in candidates’ views on how and why a particular source does so.

### Question 5

Disappointingly a very high number of candidates did not perform well on this question as they did not use knowledge at all but relied solely on the sources. Such responses were capped at Level 2, 4 marks. It was very disappointing to see many candidates score top or very high marks on Questions 1-4 and then achieve only 4 marks for Question 5. This was especially disappointing when it was clear from responses to Questions 1-4 that candidates clearly had knowledge of relevant issues such as contemporary attitudes, the Suffragettes and women’s war work which could have been deployed in a knowledge based answer.

Candidates who did use their knowledge as required usually scored well. Examiners recognised that the question was challenging, particularly on the ‘yes’ side of the argument. As a result examiners accepted relatively thin knowledge about areas such as the ‘different spheres’ argument. On the ‘no’ side of the argument there was plenty of knowledge to work with and candidates usually made effective use of it. Typically they argued that force feeding or ‘Black Friday’ provided evidence that opponents were not trying to protect women. Others pointed out that many people opposed the vote for women because they were alienated by the activities of the Suffragettes. Many candidates covered the whole range of the period up to 1918 by pointing out that letting women work in munitions and other hazardous areas did not constitute protecting them.

## **A022 How far did British society change, 1939–1975?**

### **General Comments:**

This was the second examination sat after the specification had been ‘strengthened’ to meet the new Ofqual requirements and it was pleasing to see that the majority of candidates appeared to have been adequately prepared for the new exam.

In Questions 1-4, candidates seemed well prepared for the topic of women and responded effectively to most of the sources in this session’s paper; the exception was Source A (see comments on Question 1 below). Effective answers focused closely on answering the questions and supporting the answer with reference to the sources and/or use of contextual knowledge. Contextual knowledge continues to be rewarded only where it is relevant and where it is being used to answer the questions set, and it is pleasing to see many candidates tightly focusing on answering the question set, rather than working through a formulaic approach. There remains a minority of candidates who attempt to insert enormous amounts of irrelevant knowledge and force its relation to the source(s) in the question, without pausing to carefully select appropriate nuggets.

### **Comments on Individual Questions:**

#### **Question 1**

The question required candidates to compare 2 sources from the Second World War and comment on how similar they were. Source A showed a group of ‘housewives’ being encouraged to recycle household items in order to supply the war effort with materials to make ‘planes, guns, tanks, ships and ammunition.’ Source B depicted a female worker participating in welding, with the comment that ‘the average woman takes to welding as readily as she takes to knitting.’ Candidates were rewarded at Level 2 for a simple comparison of provenance or isolated details. Those achieving Level 3 drew out an (apparent) difference in the portrayal of women (A showed women in their traditional role; B showed women taking on more skilled, industrial work). At Level 4, candidates recognised that the sources were similar in their purpose (encouraging women to support the war effort) or in their portrayal of women in a positive light. The very best answers (Level 5) picked up on the patronising tone of Source B and were thus able to argue successfully that the sources were similar in their traditional attitudes towards women. This question was a stumbling block for a large number of candidates who misinterpreted Source A, believing the source to be showing women off to work in the factories. This limited the valid comparisons that they were therefore able to make between the 2 sources, and many candidates failed to progress beyond 4 marks. The work of many candidates seemed to suggest that they were imposing their contextual knowledge of women working in factories in the war onto the Source, and saw what they expected to see, rather than scrutinising the source carefully.

#### **Question 2**

Candidates generally achieved far more highly on this question, which required candidates to explain the cartoonist’s message from Source C, a cartoon from 1954 related to the issue of Equal Pay. The vast majority of candidates achieved Level 3 or above, with a high number being rewarded at Level 4 for recognising the main message, that women should be given Equal Pay. A pleasing number achieved top marks (Level 5) for recognising that the cartoonist was also criticising the government for not introducing Equal Pay. Those who picked up on a valid sub-message achieved Level 3. Only a tiny minority of candidates simply described the source or misinterpreted it completely. Most candidates were also able to place their answer within the context of 1954 and relate the cartoon to the issues surrounding Equal Pay at this time.

However, there was a portion of candidates who digressed into much unnecessary detail about the 1970 Equal Pay Act and attempted to relate this cartoon to a time 16 years after its publication!

### Question 3

The question asked why the two sources disagreed. The vast majority of candidates were able to explain the ways in which the sources differed, Source D advocating that women stay at home to look after their children, saying it brings satisfaction, and Source E implying that women should not have to give up work if they don't want to. Other valid comparisons were also drawn. These candidates were thus able to achieve 4 or 5 marks. However, a significant minority of candidates took Source E at face value and argued that the source was agreeing with Source D (despite the question being why they differed, and despite its publication in a radical magazine) by saying that women are the only ones capable of looking after children properly. These responses were invariably awarded at Level 1, or at Level 2 if they had also compared the provenance of the sources.

Some candidates were able to explain why the sources differed given the context in which they were produced. Many pointed out that in 1958, when Source D was written, it was not controversial to recommend that mothers should give up work; in fact this view was typical. Fewer candidates were able to explain the context in which Source E (1967) was written; some tried to argue that by 1967 women had achieved equality (with many attempting to 'shoe-horn' in legislation and relate it to the source – there were many irrelevant references to the Abortion Act). Of course, this was not why the author was writing. In fact, she was arguing that attitudes were still broadly similar. Some candidates did pick up on the context of the growing women's movement by this point and fact that feminists were questioning these traditional assumptions. Candidates who compared the sources and explained the differences by using valid and developed explanations of context were awarded at Level 4 and received 6 or 7 marks. Very few candidates picked up on the fact that Source E, written in a radical magazine, was actually trying to challenge traditional ideas and change people's attitudes, which helps to explain the disagreement.

### Question 4

In this question, candidates were faced with a source from a Women's Liberation journal, which discussed the women's lib protests at the 1970 Miss World contest. The question was: why was this source published at this time? This meant that candidates were obliged to discuss both the context surrounding 1970, and to find a message or purpose within the source. Candidates who only did one or the other found themselves unable to progress beyond Level 2. It is important that candidates are able to explain what intended impact a source was expected to have (its purpose) at the time of publication (context). Candidates who were successful in this respect performed well on this question, finding a variety of valid purposes (L4) and messages (L3) within the source and explaining that it was published in 1970 because women were still being discriminated against in 1970, despite legal progress like the Equal Pay Act. The top marks were awarded to candidates who could explain the context of the aims or methods of the women's liberation movement and how this related to the source (e.g. groups who organised consciousness raising, challenging everyday sexism, empowerment of women, etc.) and it was pleasing to see that many candidates were able to discuss these issues at length. However, some candidates tied themselves in knots by making the case that the source was published (for example) to change attitudes towards women, then attempted to argue that this was because, by 1970, women had virtually achieved equality, citing positive changes for women such as the Divorce Reform Act, abortion or the contraceptive pill. Again, it is worth centres underlining with candidates the importance of constructing a logical argument over artificially inserting knowledge where it is not relevant to the source or to the question.

The very top mark, 8 marks, was only very occasionally awarded to responses which picked up on the intended audience of the source. As the source was published in a women's liberation journal, it was aimed at individuals who were supporters of the feminist movement, as a morale-booster or momentum-builder.

#### Question 5

As noted above, Question 5 proved to be far more successfully answered this year. The impression was that the majority of candidates were expecting the question and understood its demands. Where candidates were aware of its parameters, there were usually few problems. Most candidates in this category had strong contextual knowledge and used it well to offer evidence suggesting that attitudes towards women did/did not change across the time period of 1939-75. These responses then used relevant sources to extend explanations or emphasise the points made. They achieved Level 4 (one-sided) or Level 5 (balanced). The very best of the candidates developed a 'clinching argument' in their overall judgement. Some candidates were able to cite many examples of events and developments related to women during this period (usually war work, the contraceptive pill, abortion, divorce and equal pay) but did not fully explain how they related to the question of changes/lack of changes in attitudes. These responses were awarded at Levels 2 and 3. A small proportion of candidates seemed unaware of the changes to this paper and responded on a source by source basis in the style of the pre-strengthened question 6. Such answers were limited to Level 2, although many responses did manage to raise their answers higher through an incidental use of their contextual knowledge which had been stimulated by the sources.

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