OCR
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GCSE (9–1)

Examiners' report

HISTORY A (EXPLAINING THE MODERN WORLD)

J410

For first teaching in 2016

J410/13 Summer 2022 series

Version 1

Contents

Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates 'performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved.

A selection of candidate answers is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our [website](#).

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Paper 13 series overview

Paper 13 is Personal Rule to Restoration 1629–1660 with Castles: Form and Function c.1000–1750.

It was clear from most responses that candidates had been well prepared and were able to deploy their knowledge accurately. We were extremely impressed with the high standard of responses on this paper. Most candidates attempted all four questions, and very few seemed to have run out of time.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:
- read the question carefully and responded directly to what the question was asking - paid attention to the date range in the question and answered accordingly - clearly identified a point they wanted to make and then supported it with specific knowledge to explain that point - on source questions, used quotes or clear paraphrasing to prove a point - on source questions, showed how the source's provenance, purpose or context could support or question its validity or usefulness.	- used words in the question as a prompt to write about what they knew, rather than applying that knowledge to the question - ignored the date range in the question and so, while the knowledge used might have been correct, it could not be credited as the response didn't answer the question asked - identified the point they wanted to make but didn't back it up with appropriate detail – or gave the detail without making it clear what point they were making - on source questions, answered without referring to the source or the particular part of the source they were trying to discuss - on source questions, used generic or 'stock' comments about the provenance or used context without applying it to the validity of the source.

Section A overview

Candidates had obviously been well prepared for their depth study on Personal Rule to Restoration. The vast majority of candidates answered both questions, with a commendable level of contextual knowledge used in their responses. The range and quality of responses varied. Responses to both questions showed good knowledge of the period, although the selection of which specific knowledge to include, to appropriately address the question, was an issue for some candidates. The developed evaluation of the sources in Question 2 remains a significant challenge for candidates and could be an area for centres to address to support their students.

Question 1

Personal Rule to Restoration 1629–1660

1 Explain why, between 1646 and 1649, Parliament decided to place the King on trial. **[10]**

This question asks specifically about the period 1646-49 and is a causation question. Candidates were expected to give two distinct reasons for the King being put on trial. Many candidates were able to successfully reach Level 3 for identifying valid reasons, such as the King's refusal to negotiate with the different factions in Parliament or Charles' secret negotiations with the Scots, or Pride's purge. Most of these responses were able to move into Level 4 or Level 5 by giving specific historical context to explain these identified reasons. For example they detailed the Newcastle Propositions or the Heads of Proposals or explained why Pride's purge made it easier to put the King on trial (as shown in Exemplar 1). These explanations had to address the question to get into Level 3, 4 or 5. Some candidates did show good knowledge of the above, but without giving an indication of why this led to Parliament putting the King on trial.

Where candidates did not move beyond Level 2, it was usually because they described the situation before the period in the question. A significant number of candidates answered as if the question was asking about the causes of the Civil War. They described - and sometimes explained in detail - valid but general reasons for tension between King and Parliament, such as Charles' ideas about the nature of the Personal Rule or the raising of unfair taxes. Such responses did not address the question as to why they put him on trial in 1649, so could not be credited beyond Level 2.

A small number of candidates narrated the events which led to the King's execution, without clearly framing the reasons for putting Charles on trial. Where no clear link was made, such responses were also limited to Level 2.

Advice for centres

Most candidates showed a lot of knowledge in their responses to this question. However, many candidates could not get out of Level 2 because they had not focused on the precise question of why the King was put on trial. Candidates must stick to the dates and wording of the question to direct their response appropriately. They should be reminded that when their knowledge is used just to describe events, no matter how detailed, it will not be rewarded at the highest levels if it is not used to answer the question set.

Exemplar 1

Another reason that Charles was put on trial was because of his role in starting the second civil war. Charles managed to escape captivity in 1646, before being quickly recaptured and imprisoned on the Isle of Wight. Charles made a deal called the Engagement with the Scots, which meant that the Scots would invade England and begin a second civil war. This clearly showed to Parliament that Charles did not intend to have peace and Parliament became even more firmly against him upon seeing that he would happily start another war, this being one of his charges when the trial did commence. This in turn led to him being put on trial after the New Model Army emerged from the second civil war victorious.

> Exemplar 1 clearly identifies a reason for Charles being put on trial and then explains the reason using valid, specific knowledge of events. The candidate had already identified and explained a valid point in a similar style and achieved Level 5 for the whole response.

Question 2

2   Study **Sources A–C**.

'Between 1650 and 1658, Cromwell was motivated by religious belief rather than power.'
How far do **Sources A–C** convince you that this statement is correct?
Use the sources and your knowledge to explain your answer.   **[20]**

> Candidates knew how to approach this source-based question; they showed a good grasp of the context of the time to be able to understand the sources and their implications.
>
> Almost all candidates engaged with all three sources and attempted to relate them to the question, directly saying if they supported the statement or not. Most candidates ended up being placed in Level 2 or Level 3 for using the content of one, two or three of the sources in a valid way to address the question of whether Cromwell's motivation was religion or power. Responses included arguing that Source A showed that Cromwell was motivated by religion, since he refused the title of King; some chose a relevant quote to illustrate this, such as 'God…rejects this title of King'. Some candidates also used Source B to argue that the obituary shows Cromwell's religiosity because of his positive influence on the behaviour of the army, though alternatively, some argued that B proved that power was the motivation because he used religion to keep the army and the country under control. Again this was a valid use of the source content. Finally candidates also used Source C to demonstrate that Cromwell was more motivated by power because he had 'dreamt of being King'.

The sources proved accessible to most candidates and most were able to explain that the sources showed power or religion was the motivation implied, clearly answering the question. A small number of candidates did not reach Level 2 or Level 3 because they picked out detail from the content of the source(s) but did not relate the content to the statement or the question.

Although the sources were understood by most candidates, the most frequent misconception occurred with Source B. The meaning of 'obituary' was explained on the question paper, but a small number of candidates thought it had been written by Cromwell about Charles and therefore the inferences they made were not valid.

The question also required candidates to consider how 'convincing' they found the sources in relation to the statement. To achieve Level 4 or 5 they needed to evaluate the sources in a valid way. This continues to be the most challenging area for candidates. Although most did attempt evaluation, there were often simplistic comments about provenance, such as with Source A, for example, 'It was said by Cromwell himself, so we can/can't trust it' or with Source C, 'It was written by an historian so he will have studied it and know more about it.' There were also quite a lot of candidates who used the sources as a prompt to use their own knowledge and showed they knew about the period. However, while the range and depth of this knowledge was often impressive, it was rarely used to evaluate the source(s) as required by the question.

The most successful candidates addressed the precise purpose, motivation or context of one or more of the sources in order to address the question of how convincing they were as evidence about the statement. Typically, these candidates argued Source A was not convincing because, while Cromwell rejected the title of King, he did so because officers such as General Lambert had urged him to, in fear of alienating the army. They argued that he did later go through a 'coronation' ceremony, wearing purple robes and carrying a sceptre, showing that his words in this speech did not show he didn't want power, but were only used as a way of avoiding criticism from the army.

Some candidates argued that Source B was not particularly convincing since obituaries are usually written to highlight achievements and so would give a sympathetic picture of Cromwell, so the author would be likely to omit anything that would show he was driven by power.

Some responses argued that Source C's language/tone is hyperbolic and shows an obvious antipathy towards Cromwell, using words like 'sly' and 'cunning.'

The examples given above all say they were not convincing. Candidates could, of course, argue they were convincing, for instance by corroborating what the source said with relevant knowledge. These responses were rewarded at Level 4 or 5.

Exemplar 2

2 Source A agrees with the statement that Cromwell was motivated by religious belief rather than power as it ~~claims~~ states why he rejected the title of King. The source states that Cromwell declined the throne because ~~go~~ God 'rejects this title of king' and he would not 'bring back something that ~~g~~ God ~~had~~ has destroyed.' However, ~~in this time~~ Cromwell was one of the MPs who signed ~~this Ch~~ Charles' execution and had General Lambert (leader of the army) telling Cromwell he would be selfish to take the title. This suggests Cromwell didn't take the title as it would be hypocritical and would have a rebellious army, not because of Gods wishes. The source is also unreliable as although its an offical speak in parliament, it's biased and doesn't have a wide range of views.

This extract addressed the question by identifying the source as being 'convincing' that Cromwell was motivated by religion and choosing an appropriate quote to prove this. It would have reached Level 2 at this point. It then goes on to challenge the reliability of the source, using contextual knowledge to show there might have been another motivation for Cromwell saying these things and refusing the crown, namely the reaction of the army. At this point the response would have achieved Level 4 for the evaluation of one source.

Advice for centres

It would be advisable for candidates to have regular practice in handling contemporary sources and they should be supported to explore how to use the sources as evidence to address a particular statement or question. Responses which evaluate sources in a 'stock' way ('he's biased so it is not convincing...' or, 'she was there so she would know...' are unlikely to achieve the higher levels in this question.

Students would benefit from guidance in how to give a more focused consideration of the source and its provenance. It would be beneficial for them to consider for example the context of each source, the purpose/motivation of its author(s), and the other sources in the collection, and to think about what impact these factors may have in relation to the statement/question being asked.

Candidates also need to recognise that this question is assessing their skills in handling contemporary sources, so where contextual knowledge is employed, it needs to be used selectively, to argue whether sources are convincing or not about this particular question, not just to showcase what they know about the topic.

Section B overview

Again, it was clear that candidates were well prepared for the questions on Kenilworth Castle and knew the history of the site well. Almost all candidates attempted both questions. However, Question 4 remained the question where most marks were dropped and this is clearly the question where centres should concentrate on helping their students with how to approach the question of utility.

Question 3

Castles: Form and Function c.1000–1750

3   Explain why Kenilworth Castle changed between 1350 and 1500.   **[10]**

This question was a causation question. To get the highest marks, candidates were expected to give one or two reasons for changes to the castle between 1350 and 1500 and support this with examples of the changes that happened, in the time period mentioned in the question.

The candidates showed an impressive array of knowledge about the history of the site with most being able to identify several changes over the years and many being able to give reasons for the changes. However, to answer the question appropriately, candidates' knowledge needs to be selectively deployed to address the specifics in the question asked.

While there were many high scoring responses, there were others which were limited to Level 1 or 2 for the following reasons:

- Candidates didn't stick to the time period of 1350-1700 and just described changes from any period from 1100 to the 1700s. Where this happened, it tended to be to narrate events surrounding Robert Dudley and Elizabeth I, or Simon de Montfort.

- Candidates mistook a type of change for an actual reason. For example, they said 'it changed because it became a luxurious palace' or 'It changed because it was now used as a home', rather than giving a reason as to why it was possible to make it more homely or more palatial, or the motivation for wanting to do so.

Valid, explained reasons that were most frequently awarded at Level 4 or 5 were: the country was more stable/attack was less likely during this period; new weaponry made medieval defences less effective and so maintaining old style defences was pointless; John of Gaunt wanted to show off his wealth and status as the son of a king. These explanations on their own would be awarded Level 3, but most candidates who did this much, went on to support the explanations with examples to achieve Level 4 and sometimes Level 5. Such examples included the remodelled apartments and kitchens, or the use of glass windows, or a new hall, built by the same the people who had worked on the King's castle at Windsor (see Exemplar 3).

Assessment for learning

A s in other years, a clear understanding of the chronology of the site really benefits the candidates. The dates in the question must be adhered to if a candidate is to reach the higher levels. Without an understanding of the key people and events of each period in the history of the castle, candidates will find it hard to offer a coherent response to Question 3 on this paper.

For this question, to achieve higher levels, candidates need to focus on explaining rather than describing change. Opportunities for them to explore the difference between the two, perhaps using exemplars, would be beneficial.

As with the other questions in the paper, it is also important for candidates to be selective in the use of their knowledge. They should apply their knowledge to address the question being asked and not just write a general narrative of the history of the castle.

Exemplar 3

| 3 | | In 1361, Kenilworth castle came under the ownership of John of Gaunt, who made a number of changes to the castle. One of these changes was to build the Great Hall, and also John introduced impressive, massive windows. This change took place because John wanted Kenilworth to be a status symbol, a symbol for his wealth and to show what he can afford. This might've been |

Exemplar 3 identifies a reason for a change in the castle between 1350 and 1500, i.e. for barons to show off their wealth. It then explains the changes made to achieve this aim. The changes that are described illustrate the given reason very clearly, and are from the correct period, so the response achieves Level 4 at this point.

Question 4

4   Study **Sources D** and **E**.

Which of these sources is more useful to a historian studying the history of Kenilworth Castle from 1500 to 1750?   **[10]**

This was a question about source utility. It was expected that candidates would make inferences from the sources about the period in question, 1500-1750, and support the inference with detail from the source(s). We expect candidates to focus on why the sources are useful, not to dismiss them.

Many responses were limited to Level 2 because they just asserted that the sources were useful for the information they contained, such as that Source D told us the Brays had been converted to a tiltyard or that E showed the names of the different parts of the castle, such as Leicester's buildings and the tiltyard. To move above Level 2, candidates would be expected to make a valid inference about the castle from the sources.

The most common valid inference (awarded at Level 3 and above) from Source D was related to do with the fact that the castle's function had changed and that in the 1500s it was as a status symbol/desirable residence/place of entertainment. Where this inference was made, candidates usually went on to support it using detail from the source to attain Level 4. For example, 'the conversion of the Brays to a tiltyard for jousting tournaments shows historians that the castle was used more of a place to entertain guests and show off wealth in Dudley's time.'

A mistake that some candidate made with Source D was that instead of using it to make inferences about the castle, for example how it was used to show off wealth or position, they used it as a springboard to describe the relationship between Elizabeth and Dudley, which was irrelevant to the question.

There were also a few less successful responses that focused on the reliability of the provenance of Source D. While it is feasible to assert utility because of reliability, this wasn't a very effective way to address this question (especially if the argument was that it's not useful because it's not reliable, as most of these candidates did).

Source E was less successfully discussed than Source D. Where candidates were able to make a valid inference from Source E, they typically commented on the fact that it was drawn just before the Slighting and so was one of the last representations of the castle in its entirety, before its destruction in 1649. Another typical comment was that a historian would be able to see the development of the castle, showing how its function became more residential over the years, citing the large windows in Leicester's buildings as support. These responses achieved Level 3 and above. Some candidates attempted to support these inferences, but attributed details of the castle from before 1500 to the time period in the question, e.g. using the detail of Mortimer's Tower from the picture to prove the castle had become less defensive and more residential, which could not be credited for supporting the inference, as it is anachronistic.

As in previous years, most candidates seem to believe that pictures of the castle are more useful than written sources, 'because you can see what it looked like'. Ironically this conclusion often came at the end of a response that has made very astute comments about what we can learn from the written source, while giving only superficial comments about the picture source.

Advice for centres

As with the previous three questions, it is essential that the candidates read the question carefully, particularly the specifics of the period involved, and make sure the comments they make address the question being asked. They should be warned against falling back on ahistorical generalisations such as 'pictures always tell us more than written sources', or that sources are not useful because they are unreliable. In fact, they should be encouraged to think why an 'unreliable' source might be useful to a historian (for instance, for examining the purpose or tactics of the author).

All candidates should be encouraged to view the sources as a historian would, i.e. what can we work out from these sources? How do they help us?

Candidates would benefit from activities which allow them to practise making inferences from different contemporary sources. For example, centres might get students to explore a range of possible inferences to consider and ask them to apply the inferences, relevantly, to several different sources. Such possible inferences could include:

- Historians can infer from the source that castle was important to or valued by the King.
- Historians can infer that the castle was under threat.
- Historians would find the sources useful as evidence about the running of the castle or the roles of the people living in it.
- The source provides evidence about the purpose or function of the castle and how that was carried out.
- The sources provide evidence about changes the castle had undergone.

The guidance in the specification provides a helpful set of prompts to help candidates consider the ways in which sources might be useful as evidence.

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